Assessment of local authority heritage priorities and support needs

08/07/2021

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This report presents insights from local authorities to help deliver resilient heritage and long-term improvements to places and communities.

Attachment	Size
PDF View Assessment of local authority heritage priorities and support needs as PDF(387.9 KB)	387.9 KB

Working closely with local authorities

We invest in projects that connect people and communities to the local, regional and national heritage of the UK.

Local authorities are key heritage stakeholders. They have responsibility for heritage assets and for realising the potential impact of heritage within a place. This includes the important role of heritage in supporting local economic, environmental and social priorities.

They have undertaken a critical leadership role for their areas in response to coronavirus (COVID-19). And they are at the forefront of developing plans for the recovery of their places from the pandemic.

We work closely with local authorities across the UK as part of our place-based approach to heritage. This includes our local area and local economy outcomes.

About this report

We wanted to hear more from local authorities as we consider how to best resource and support local areas. This will help deliver resilient heritage, and long-term improvements to places and communities. We commissioned Golant Innovation to gather insights from local authorities across the UK to help inform our approach.

The report highlights the financial and resourcing challenges arising from the pandemic, but also the opportunity for heritage to take a prominent role in recovery.

The research shows the important role that local authorities are giving to heritage in local recovery plans. This reflects our reframed priorities for 2021-22 which highlight the role of heritage in building back for positive change.

Some key findings

- Before the pandemic, local authorities were already operating in a challenging financial climate. COVID-19 has increased the financial strain on local authorities. There is a possibility of further spending cuts which could come at the expense of heritage and culture.
- The pandemic has deeply affected the provision of heritage services and the management of heritage assets by local authorities.

- COVID-19 has accelerated existing societal shifts, and innovation work around these, such as changes in usage of high streets, digital engagement, social inequalities and a shift to localism.
- Heritage is increasingly being linked to wider local policy priorities, such as health and wellbeing, inclusion, and economic growth.
- Local authorities are looking for funders to help them develop a high-level, strategic view of the issues they face, both within authority boundaries and across regions.

Read the full report to find out more.

Our research and evaluation

We regularly conduct research to discover what is happening in the heritage sector, and we evaluate our work to better understand the change we are making. Read more of our insight.