Young people and heritage in Wales

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HLF has identified young people as a priority audience.

This is because people under 25 years old are:

- the future champions for heritage
- an under-represented audience in many heritage organisations
- able to bring new and fresh ideas to your organisation
- often keen to learn new skills and get work experience
- best placed to encourage other young people to work with or visit you
- often looking for creative and positive things to do and places to go
- the future heritage workforce

Heritage might not seem like something that young people are excited about, but our research shows that the richness and diversity of the UK's heritage can inspire young people from all backgrounds.

We are committed to ensuring that young people are represented in the work that we do. This commitment is not only demonstrated through a dedicated grant programme for youth led projects (Young Roots) but also by challenging all applicants to engage young people with their heritage projects.

Cymryd Rhan - Get Involved

We asked a group of young people from Mess Up The Mess Theatre Company in Ammanford, South Wales to produce a short film demonstrating that young people do have an interest in their heritage. They rose to the challenge and produced a film, ‘Cymryd Rhan - Get Involved’ which challenges the stereotype of the disengaged teenager by getting involved in a heritage project in their own, free time.

The group of 12 attended weekly evening meetings, as well as weekend filming sessions over a 12 week period. They participated in brainstorms, research, writing and music sessions, and filming and editing workshops during the preparation stages. They then led the directing, acting and filming on location, and also helped edit the final film.

The film will not only be used as a tool to encourage young people to get involved directly but will also be used to help future applicants think of ways to involve young people in their projects.

Jennifer Stewart, Head of HLF Wales, said: “We’re delighted with the film as it’s a unique and contemporary piece of work, which is sure to capture the imagination of other young people. It’s brilliant to see a film about heritage that has been created by young people, as they are ultimately the ones who will keep our heritage alive in the future.

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"We continue to invest in young people as the future custodians of our heritage. Through our Young Roots grant programme we have helped make a big difference to young people’s lives, helping them take up new opportunities and

often influencing their life choices and their attitude towards their future and their wider community.

“So far in the six years the programme has been running, over 1,500 young people have taken part in Young Roots projects in Wales and had the chance to learn new skills, while exploring their heritage and finding out what has influenced who they are today. We want more young people to do the same.

“We also want applicants to all our other grant programmes to consider how they might involve young people in their proposals and realise the creativity, energy and enthusiasm they can bring to a project. By giving young people a role, they not only gain new skills themselves, but in turn inspire others to learn about heritage or take part in a project.”