Facing the Dragons

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An exciting new event took place this week to challenge community groups across the UK to pitch their projects to the ‘Heritage Dragons’, a team of heritage experts looking to hand out professional advice.

Four diverse projects competed against each other to secure over 400 hours of free professional advice to help bring their plans to fruition. The event, developed by the Heritage Investment Working Group (HIWG), took place in London. The day began with each group attending intensive workshops with sector experts, building up to their pitch to the Dragons.

The projects consisted of community groups looking to regenerate local historic buildings which are at risk. Lister Drive Library; Hill Primary School; The Old Black Lion and Northern Counties Club faced the three Heritage Dragons; Clive Dutton, Director for Regeneration at Newham Council; George Ferguson, leading architect and Ian Marcus, Chairman of the Prince’s Regeneration.

Taking inspiration from the popular TV show *Dragon’s Den*, one representative from each group delivered a short five minute pitch to the Dragons before being quizzed by for up to 10 minutes. The winner was awarded 20 days of free support tailored to meet the project’s individual needs, with the three runners up receiving 10 days.

Ian Lush, Chair of HIWG ‘The event itself was both fun and informative, with a very positive atmosphere and some excellent discussion.’