Funding for community asset transfer

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Research examining how National Lottery funding has provided for projects that enable, support or follow a community asset transfer.

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Research, undertaken by Locality, examining the extent of the funding we have provided for asset transfer projects.

The transfer of ownership and management was encouraged in the 2011 Localism Act which sought to achieve “a substantial and lasting shift in power away from central government and towards local people.” According to research by the New Local Government Network, over 70% of local authorities have carried out at least one asset transfers and 95% of local authorities expect asset transfer to play an increasingly important role in the next 5 years.

The review covers all our funding since 2011.

Summary findings:

- We have funded 96 projects involving a community asset transfer (CAT):
    - 47 (49%) grant awards were for projects that involved planning for the transfer of management or ownership of assets
    - 32 (33%) grant awards incorporate a transfer of the management or the ownership of land or buildings from LAs to community orgs.
    - 17 (18%) grant awards were for projects run by community organisations following a transfer of ownership or management
- Since 2011 there has been an upward trend in the number of projects funded for CAT. However, the value of individual awards has tailed off in the last two years and we seem to be doing more, smaller value schemes of late.
- There was at least one project funded from all of the HLF programmes, but most project awards were made under the Start-Up Grants programme – 40 projects (42%). Heritage Grants was the next most popular programme with 23 projects (24%). For more substantial/advanced CAT projects, the upper limit of £100k for this grant programme would have been relevant.

- The majority (40 – 42%) of community organisations supported have been classified by Locality as ‘Heritage Organisations’. The next most frequent organisation type was ‘Community organisation’ – 28 organisations (29%). In these cases, the heritage asset was more of a means to serve the needs of their local population rather than their core reason for being.

To find out more about the research, please contact research@hlf.org.uk.