5 ways heritage helps keep the January blues at bay

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Runners in Heaton Park

Getting outside and enjoying your local park can help boost wellbeing Peter Neal We know that January can feel like a struggle, so on #BlueMonday we're looking at ways that HLF-supported heritage helps lift our post-Christmas mood.

1. Visit a heritage site and feel the benefits

At HLF we believe that being around heritage makes you feel better, and we have research to prove it. <u>A report produced in 2016</u> showed that visiting any kind of heritage boosts wellbeing and happiness.

So whether it's a castle, a museum, or a national park - why not go and enjoy some fabulous UK heritage this January?

2. Volunteer and learn new skills

Volunteering can be hugely beneficial for wellbeing, as <u>John Priestley</u>, the <u>subject of our September</u> Changing Lives story, found out.

Participating in the Improving Futures: Volunteering for Wellbeing project enabled John to go from his lowest point of homelessness to a position at the National Football Museum in Manchester.

If you'd like to find out about volunteering opportunities offered by HLF projects, check out our <u>Online</u> Community.

3. Access safe and inclusive spaces and groups

If you're struggling this January, remember that heritage spaces and organisations are often safe and inclusive, where everyone is welcome.

[quote=Lizzie Guntripp, Heritage Ambassador]"Heritage is not exclusive: it is relevant to all."[/quote]

<u>Quay Place in Ipswich</u> is one such example. This beautiful old church is now a unique heritage and wellbeing centre, with therapy rooms, spaces for quiet reflection, and opportunities to socialise and learn new skills.

4. Have a breath of fresh air

Does being outside make you feel better? You're not alone - research indicates that <u>spending time outdoors is</u> a key positive factor in physical and mental health.

HLF has invested over £800million in public parks, meaning more of us can get outside, get active, and feel happier.

Why not visit your local park, and see if you feel the benefits?

5. Enjoy what your community has to offer

Walthamstow's transformation from a down-at-heel London suburb to a thriving destination shows how investing in community heritage boosts the wellbeing of the people that live there.

Our Chief Executive, Ros Kerslake, <u>explored this transformation</u>, looking at how National Lottery funding improved Walthamstow's natural and built environment.

She explains that the effects of investing and engaging with community heritage include health, happiness and wellbeing – so everyone wins!

You might also be interested in...

HISF's Heritage Ambassadors at the Geffrye Museum
HLF's Heritage Ambassadors at the Geffrye Museum Jeff Gilbert

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Heritage and positive mental health