Heritage Grants Programme impact, September 2017

01/09/2017

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Ten years on: evaluating the heritage, social and economic/community impacts of our Heritage Grants Programme (2002-2007) across the UK.

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In 2016 HLF commissioned Mott MacDonald, with The Leisure Consultancy, to evidence the heritage, social and economic/community impacts of the Heritage Grants Programme (2002-2007) for the UK.

The basis for the 2002-2007 programme was HLF's second strategic plan 'Broadening the Horizons of Heritage'.

This impact evaluation uses evidence from a representative sample of 133 projects (13% of all completed projects) drawn from the population, and is based on:

- An online survey of 83 projects that received grants.
- Case studies of an additional 50 projects that received grants, with in-depth economic modelling of six of these projects.

Key findings

The programme has been particularly effective at **increasing involvement in heritage** – visitor numbers have been raised by **developing heritage sites as successful visitor attractions**. This is demonstrated by 58% of projects which evidenced moderate to high increases in visitor numbers as a direct result of HLF investment.

High rates of volunteering growth have also contributed to increased involvement in heritage, demonstrated by the 45% of projects reporting a sustained increase in the numbers of volunteers for at least five years after their projects completed.

The programme has also **generated considerable economic benefit** for local communities, in terms of new jobs (both direct and indirect), Gross Value Added (GVA) and positive regeneration effects:

- Of the 107 projects providing employment data, **64 projects (60%) led to the creation of new jobs.**
- For the **six case studies** for which wider economic impacts were modelled, **net GVA of £8.4m was generated annually and 135 direct / indirect jobs supported annually. Over the last 10 years, this equates to £84m GVA across just six projects**. The combined grant awarded for these six projects was £27.5m, which is a return of over three times what was originally invested. In addition, there were temporary economic benefits during the construction phases of net GVA of £3.1m and 70 net jobs.
- Eleven case study projects (22%) reported regeneration impacts. By enhancing the character and distinctiveness of their local areas through the renovation, restoration and improvement of heritage assets, places have become

more inviting and have attracted further investment.