Young people's soapbox event kicks dust off heritage

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This month, HLF's Heritage Ambassadors, or #Dustkickers, organised an event to explore how young people can better influence and participate in heritage.

'Heritage Soapbox' invited speakers from museums, parks, art collectives, dance groups and more, to share their experiences of including new audiences.

Fostering dialogue

Over 50 delegates, from heritage professionals, to those beginning their careers, to students and other young people, heard about a range of topics, such as how visual arts charity Into Art work with people with learning disabilities, or how representation of different ethnicities, sexualities and ages is important to help people value archives.

The event also fostered dialogue, with delegates being invited to discuss issues like funding, employment and training opportunities, and what heritage organisations and young people can teach one another.

[quote=Halima Khanom, The Royal Parks]"Everyone felt really energised."[/quote]

Asking questions

The day was designed to allow ideas to be shared easily, with anyone being invited to stand on the soapbox and ask questions about how young people can be better served by, and have more ownership of, heritage organisations.

It was a thought-provoking event full of discussion, challenges and inspiration.

Speaker Halima Khanom, from The Royal Parks, said "Everyone felt really energised. It's definitely down to how we formatted today's sessions, where you could just get up on a soapbox and shout something, which is fantastic."

[quote=Jasmine Bigden, Heritage Soapbox delegate]"It was great to hear everyone's interpretation of what heritage means to them."[/quote]

Looking to the future

This event follows a year of work undertaken by the #Dustkickers, who have also helped HLF allocate £10.4million to young people's projects across the UK.

It is hoped that the event will spark further awareness of the benefits of creating opportunities for young people at all levels of heritage, from volunteering, training and apprenticeships to decision-making. #Dustkicker Floria Lundon said "I'm feeling really good about the event. It feels less like an event, and more of a massive chat."

Delegate Jasmine Bigden, who had never been involved in heritage before but attended with a friend, said: “It was great to hear everyone’s interpretation of what heritage means to them, and the ways in which they can all help out each other.”



Young people taking part in an Ambition project at Woodford House Ambition

Kicking up a storm! Young people shake up heritage