



AOS evaluation

1. Introduction

This is the final report of the evaluation of the All Our Stories (AOS) programme. This section sets out the background to this Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) programme, the aims and objectives of this evaluation, and the structure of this report.

1.1 All Our Stories

All Our Stories was a national programme that offered grants of £3,000 to £10,000 for community groups to carry out activities that help people explore, share and celebrate their local heritage in the second half of 2012.

The programme had the following broad aims to:

- Allow community organisations to undertake a range of activities to help people explore, learn about and share their local heritage; and
- Enhance the heritage skills and digital capacity of community organisations.

Projects had to produce a digital record of their activities, 'telling the story' of how the project has been delivered. Projects were supported in this activity by the Media Trust which was also commissioned by HLF to assist with increasing groups' digital skills. Alongside this, the Arts and Humanities Research Council supported projects' activity by providing access to specialist staff within universities, via the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE). Universities were expected to provide any relevant support that projects needed in relation to research and interpretation.

In October 2012, 542 projects were awarded grants with a total value of over £4.5m, encouraging the discovery of local heritage across the four countries of the UK and every region of England. Funded projects had plans to undertake a wide range of activities, such as visits to historic buildings and sites, using archives and collections, holding heritage workshops, recording memories, and attracting new visitors to heritage sites. Projects were expected to be completed by April 2014.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the evaluation and this final report

ICF GHK was commissioned by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to assess from a large sample of projects whether:

- The All our Stories programme has met its aims as described above;
- Projects have achieved the outputs and outcomes expected of them as a result of their awards; and
- The approach to promoting this programme, supporting grantees and managing the awards has been effective in the light of HLF's aim to simplify the process for

awarding and managing small grants and set realistic expectations of their contribution to HLF outcomes.

This is expected to inform how future small grant programmes are run and to demonstrate the range of outcomes that projects of this size can expect to achieve.

The final evaluation report is also expected to:

- Detail and map the project activities and the participants within the sample of projects;
- Provide an account of the outputs and outcomes achieved, such as the skills and knowledge gained by participants and the digital resources produced;
- Consider the contribution of the Media Trust and university support to the projects' achievements;
- Collect the views of grantees about the application process;
- Draw out what projects have learned from participating in the programme; and
- Provide case studies of the sampled projects.

1.3 Structure of this report

The rest of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the methods used to carry out the research for this evaluation;
- Section 3 sets out applicants' views of the processes followed by HLF to promote the programme, consider applications and administer the awards;
- Section 4 sets out applicants' views of working with the Media Trust and universities;
- Section 5 provides an overview of sample projects' activities funded by HLF; section 6 sets out the outcomes achieved; section 7 sets out what is broadly described as the added value of the projects' outcomes (additionality, legacy and sustainability); and section 8 describes the digital records produced;
- Section 9 draws together the findings and considers them in relation to the evaluation's aims and objectives to draw some conclusions and provide some recommendations for HLF's management of future small grants programmes.

2. Overview of method

This section presents a summary of the method for the evaluation, the approach to sampling, and details of the final sample achieved.

2.1 Approach to the evaluation

Grantees under the All Our Stories programme are not asked to provide detailed information on grant expenditure. They are required to complete an end of project report but this would not necessarily be available for the evaluation.

As a consequence the evaluation planned to interview a representative of a sample of 110 grantees, about 20% of the total, and to interview them three times: at the beginning (to establish intentions and expected outcomes based on the application), around the middle (to establish progress and any changes to plans), and towards or just after the end of their projects (to capture achievements and outcomes). We used semi-structured topic guides to

steer these conversations about the grantees' experience of applying for AOS; carrying out project activities; accessing support from universities and the Media Trust; and achieving what they set out to do.

In addition, we encouraged grantees to maintain records of activities and outputs and outcomes achieved, through conducting headcounts, recording time contributed, and retaining any feedback collected. We provided simple guidance on this. Projects' digital records were consulted as evidence to support outputs and outcomes achieved.

This approach means that the evaluation:

- Minimised the burden on grantees to encourage their participation in the evaluation;
- Checked what participants expected to achieve against what they have stated they have achieved and used self-reported data;
- As far as possible, triangulated what grantees have reported with the evidence recorded on project/grantees' websites and in the digital record.

However, these other sources of evidence were not always available nor have we any independent evidence from other participants and beneficiaries or the records kept by the grantees. At the conclusion of the evaluation fieldwork in February 2014, we were only able to locate digital record outputs for 53 of the projects. From conversations with grantees, this is mainly because many projects have not completely finished and so are not yet required to upload their digital records. Some projects were not aware of how their digital records were to be shared and were awaiting direction from HLF or the Media Trust.

2.2 Sampling approach and methodology

We aimed to base the evaluation on a sample of 20% of the total number of projects funded (110). Because we recognised that some would not be able to continue to participate in the evaluation over the course of a year we selected a sample of 125 at the outset which would be representative in terms of the geographical spread of projects in the UK, the organisation types and the area of heritage activity. We engaged 125 of these at the start of the evaluation, 118 at mid-term and achieved a final sample of 105 projects (enabling the team to produce case studies), which is broadly representative of the population in terms of region, organisation type and heritage type. Further information about our sampling methodology and achieved sample is included at Annex 1.

We conducted three interviews with each grantee across the life of their projects to gather evidence on expectations, achievements, outcomes and added value. The interviews followed a semi-structured methodology using a topic guide (see Annex 2 to prompt a conversation with the grantees. The nature of this method of collecting evidence means that rich qualitative data has been captured from interviewees but it is not possible to standardise all responses and enumerate responses to specific questions.

We also encouraged grantees to collect evidence on their project's achievements that could be shared with the evaluation team. Our guidance to grantees on the approach to collecting this evidence can be found at Annex 3.

3. Grantee views on the application process

This section presents a summary of grantees' views on the process of applying for the grant.

3.1 Awareness

The majority of grantees (over 70%) are new applicants to HLF, but overall more than half had some experience of applying for grants more generally.

The most common way they heard about the programme was through established information sources, such as special interest networks, a trustee, or a contact within a university or local authority. Some grantees heard directly from HLF, or found the programme when searching on the website for funding opportunities. A few grantees found out about the grant in connection with the programme, The Great British Story, on the BBC.

3.2 Application

More than half of the grantees spoke positively about the application process and less than 10% had a significant complaint. The remainder made comments which were indifferent, neutral or mixed.

"I have to say, it's a joy. It's very easy to go overboard and give far too much information - a lot of funding bodies want this. This one, they're interested in the things that really mattered. It was very simple, straightforward and directed at the things that satisfied both me and the funders."

Across both new and repeat applicants to HLF, the word most often used to describe the process was "straightforward." The questions were largely seen as relevant and appropriate to the size of grant.

"Fairly straightforward...[in comparison to] other HLF applications which can be quite complex and require a lot of effort."

"It's very much aimed at grassroots groups."

Time taken to complete the application varied between a few hours and a few weeks, but overall grantees did not see it as an undue burden. The variance was largely attributed to the time required to research and plan the project sufficiently to complete the form, and to secure partner inputs to the project. Schools were often cited as requiring longer to confirm their role in a project.

"[I have done] nothing as in depth as this. You have to cost it down to the last penny so a lot of research was required."

"Straightforward in terms of the form... it just takes time to collect the relevant information."

"It took longer than I thought – particularly the consultation part, checking people were interested in doing it... trying to involve as many people as possible took a while – and trying to involve schools always takes time." However, many noted the benefits of the requirement to plan the project in some detail:

"It was good that it made you think about the process."

“Very good... thought provoking... forces you to consult widely, create a succinct template and a good focus for taking it forward.”

While generally new applicants did not struggle with the process, a few of these reported that they had to establish some formal arrangements. For example, one small community group with three members said that:

"I think it was too much hassle. We had a lot of things to get sorted. I had to get the Group set up and open a bank account." →

Although grantees with negative views were in the minority, it may be useful to highlight the most common concerns:

- Costing activities was challenging and in some cases this led to fairly arbitrary assignment of costs to tasks, particularly where costs were required to be divided across tasks in a non-intuitive way;
- Similarly, there was some difficulty in assigning a cost to professional time;
- Online submission of applications was welcomed. However, a few reported that it would be useful to have a PDF copy of the form so that they could plan and write out what was required in advance of online submission; and
- An ‘example’ application form may have been useful.

“I had a problem with entering the numbers on the online form. It was different because it was very prescriptive – it had ‘Visit 1, ‘Visit 2’ etc. – it made it very narrow what you were going to do. Initially it was a bit difficult to explain within these constraints – but I understand why they do that... it’s good because it makes you focus.”

Where grantees had contacted HLF for support, they received prompt and helpful responses. Some grantees also praised the role of support events during the application phase. Most often these were led by participating universities.

“The form was fine... what was really beneficial was the information seminar, it allowed us to put down our ideas and ask questions... it's not often you're able to discuss your ideas with funders.”

3.3 Award

Grantees reported no problems engaging with HLF to obtain the grants and to seek extensions. Most had not yet completed their final reports when this evaluation was concluded.

Projects often appreciated the flexibility within their project plans and contractual arrangements to ensure that activities were delivered despite delays.

Summary and conclusions

Most applicants were new to HLF (about 70%), though more than half had experience of applying for grant funding. Responses to the application process were largely positive; it was seen as straightforward and as not imposing an undue burden. For grantees that did struggle, this was attributed to the functionality of the application form and difficulties in costing activities. The support offered to grantees was welcomed.

Overall, the simplified application form developed for All Our Stories has proven successful in engaging new applicants to HLF funding. The process causes a relatively manageable, burden, while still ensuring that applicants carry out the necessary planning to ensure projects are well thought through and financially viable

4. Support from universities and the Media Trust

In this section we present grantees' experience of working with universities through NCCPE and the Media Trust.

4.1 Support from universities

About half of the case study grantees reported receiving support from the programme partner universities. This is more than double the number that expressed interest in working with universities in their application forms – this is because many projects were contacted for the first time after the grant award with offers of support. Consequently, most support was arranged after the award of the grant, though in some instances support was given during the application process. Where this was the case, it was largely informal and ad hoc in nature, mainly through responses to questions by email.

In most cases, universities approached the project – sometimes projects were approached by more than one university in their region. This often resulted in a new relationship being formed, although for a few a prior relationship existed between the grantee and the organisation. A few grantees met universities at an AOS event.

Most grantees were positive about the quality of the assistance they received from universities and its value.

Often the research organisation provided something which was necessary for the project's success. This included providing:

- Training, such as in archive indexing or interpretation, and archaeological techniques;
- Directly contributing essential skills which the grantee did not have, such as in digital reconstruction of buildings, 3D printing, developing a phone app; and
- Providing specialist knowledge of historical periods or other particular areas such as gypsy culture to guide interpretation and understanding.

In a few cases university partners were used to source student volunteers for the projects. For example, PGCE students were used to review an educational pack for a school.

In the main grantees reported that universities delivered what was agreed and expected. However, a few were not satisfied with universities' support. The main reasons for this are that the university was not able to fully deliver the support initially promised, or did so with significant delays, such as workshops delivered too late in the life of the programme for the skills learnt to be fully applied to their projects. Where this was critical, such as with training or filling a skills gap, this caused delays to projects or diminished their scale.

Because of their broad remit in providing support as necessary to the grantees, universities were also offering digital skills – as a result, there was some overlap with the support offered by the Media Trust. Some universities also offered courses in using spreadsheets and using social media to grantees.

Most grantees who did not receive support said that they did not require any help, though a few were not aware that university support was available, or what they could offer. Some grantees made use of university support outside this partnership.

“It wasn’t clear what they could provide – I would have been interested to hear more but that wasn’t clear to me.”

4.2 Support from the Media Trust

In November 2012, the Media Trust was appointed to provide training and support to enable grantees to create their digital record. Particular emphasis was given to grantees which were identified as lacking technical competences and therefore most in need of help with developing their records. About one in three of the grantees received some form of bespoke support from the Media Trust – mostly in the form of responses to email enquiries.

Most of these grantees were positive about the quality and value of the support received. Mostly requests for support were framed in terms of the digital record; what is required and how best to meet the requirements. Support covered developing and maintaining blogs and websites, as well as help with filming and DVD making, and the use of social media. This was mainly provided through email responses to grantee questions.

Some attended Media Trust workshops on digital skills. These had mixed reviews by grantees. Some more experienced grantees found the sessions too basic. Feedback suggests that the level at which the sessions were pitched might have been better communicated. Grantees who attended Media Trust workshops often noted that they represented a good opportunity to network with other projects.

Less commonly, the Media Trust acted to put grantees in touch with other support organisations in the grantee’s region.

Beyond the grantees receiving bespoke support, many in the wider sample reported that the online guides provided by the Media Trust were very useful in planning their digital record.

For most grantees who did not access support from the Media Trust, this was mainly because they did not require it. Most grantees reported that they had sufficient capacity; either within the organisation, or through volunteers they could source or through existing relationships with other organisations who could provide support.

“We’ve had contact from the Media Trust and their suggestions are useful, but we don’t need intensive support.”

Very few organisations were not aware of the Media Trust; most received frequent emails and made use of the online resources advertised. However, the scope and range of support the Media Trust offered or how this related to the specific needs of projects, was not always clear to grantees from the outset. As a result several grantees commented that support

came too late in the life of the project, especially in relation to meeting the digital record requirement.

“Had an email from Media Trust – said they would provide support but that was it. It was not specific on what it was and how it was accessed – this was not helpful.”

Summary and conclusions

About half of the grantees received support from universities. Most projects were positive about the timeliness and value of this support: in many cases this was essential to the delivery of project activities. Where grantees were not satisfied with universities, this was most often because the partner was not able to deliver the support initially promised, or did so with significant delays?

About one in three grantees accessed bespoke support from the Media Trust, usually in the form of responses to emailed questions about the digital record requirement. This support was positively received by grantees. Media Trust workshops received a mixed response; feedback suggests they would have been more useful if the level and content of support offered was more clearly communicated.

Overall, support provided by both the Media Trust and the partner universities played a key role in achieving the programme’s aims to undertake arrange of new activities, enhance heritage skills and build the digital capacity of community organisations. In the main, where support was accessed it usefully supported project activities; where it was not taken up, this was most often because grantees already had access to the relevant expertise.

The new skills and expertise brought to the projects were often invaluable to identifying and sharing heritage, whether through training of project participants or partnership work with experts. Results were more likely to be achieved when these resources were accessed early, with a long lead time. For a few projects hold ups were caused by delays in partner contributions to the project.

5. Project activities

This section sets out an overview of grantees' project activities, their adherence to predicted time scales, and their achievement of the planned outcomes.

5.1 Overview of activities

All Our Stories grantees have delivered (and are continuing to deliver) a diverse range of activities, often within a single project. These are too many and diverse to be exhaustively listed, but the most common activities are set out (in order of frequency) in the box below.

- Community exhibitions;
- Workshops and talks;
- Visits to museums, libraries and archives;
- Oral history interviews;
- Celebration events (sometimes as part of an exhibition, sometimes separate);
- Scanning photographs and documents;
- Visits to cultural and historical sites;
- Research;
- Producing videos and other digital media (not including Digital Record requirements);
- Developing and delivering walks and tours;
- Producing education packs and other materials for schools; and
- Digs and other archaeological activities.

Projects have typically engaged in a wide range of the different activities listed above. Most commonly projects engaged in between four and seven of the activity types. For example, a project may have started with workshops for participants or the project audience; visits to museums, libraries and archives and/or local historical sites for to inspire participants or prompt memories; oral history interviews and/or scans of photographs/documents; and the use of the material to tell a story and produce a community exhibition with a celebration event, inviting project participants as well as members of the wider community.

Volunteers were at the heart of projects. Calling on a wide volunteer base often helped projects expand their activities and to overcome challenges caused by illness to key contributors to the project. However, many projects found that securing the commitment of volunteers can be challenging and cause delays.

5.2 Training and community support

For many grantees, their activities were often supported and enabled by training in digital skills as well as in a range of other skills relevant to their projects. Digital skills were most often photography and filming/recording, as well as the use of websites and social media, and more basic IT literacy. Other skills most commonly developed were in oral history/interviewing techniques and the use/indexing of archives.

Many projects also worked in partnership with heritage organisations in their local areas, such as museums, libraries and archives, to draw on additional expertise. Many worked with schools and other community groups to expand the audience for heritage and develop their interest in heritage activities.

Working with schools brought many benefits: engaging children and young people, providing teachers with heritage materials, and allowing intergenerational work. However, engaging schools was sometimes challenging. Effective approaches included engaging with schools in advance of the project to secure 'buy in' from a senior level, emphasising the broad range of benefits, integrating the work with the curriculum, offering out of school activities with appropriate assistance, and ensuring projects were structured around school terms.

5.3 Project timescales

Most projects have run broadly to schedule. Where delays have occurred these were mainly caused by adverse weather, illnesses to core team members, or delays in engaging partners or volunteers (because of personal time constraints). As indicated in section 4, delays were also caused by universities and the Media Trust in a few cases. While the wide volunteer base and significant goodwill towards the project has enabled most grantee organisations to overcome these days, projects have been grateful of the opportunity given by HLF to extend their projects, in some cases by six months.

Grantees often commented that having a defined, formal plan worked well to coordinate activities and participants and ensure the project was delivered to schedule, particularly when partners were involved. The application process helped to form this plan and obtain agreement from volunteers and partners.

While planning was an important factor, many grantees found that flexible project management was also necessary, to cope with issues relating to their own organisational capacity, delays with project partners, and a reliance on the weather for outdoor activities. Successful projects adapted their plans to achieve the same outcomes through different means.

5.4 Outputs

Most projects planned to make use of the internet and social media applications. Their use in recording and promoting the work of the project is covered in our analysis of the digital record outputs in Section 8; for some projects, the outputs themselves made use of digital technologies. This has included smartphone apps, digital reconstructions of buildings, and the uploading of old photographs (including the use of Historypin to link these to geographical locations).

The most common outputs have been:

- Interpretative materials for exhibitions, displays, talks and demonstrations (at least 81 projects);
- Oral history recordings (and transcripts) (at least 75 projects);
- DVDs, books or websites, many featuring old pictures often accompanying people's stories (at least 29 projects); and
- Learning packs for schools (at least 20 projects).

Less common outputs include radio broadcasts, plays, comics and an Anderson shelter.

Summary and conclusions

Projects typically carried out a wide range of activities which included workshops and research, developing a walk or producing exhibitions and organising an event. These activities were often enabled and supported by training in a range of digital, research and interpretation skills. They were also often delivered through partnerships with heritage organisations and sometimes schools or other local community organisations.

In the main, projects ran to schedule. Where delays occurred these were generally due to factors beyond their control such as illness, adverse weather or delays caused by partners. Activities produced a range of outputs: most commonly oral history recordings, exhibition panels, and DVDs, books and websites.

6. Project outcomes

HLF introduced its outcomes framework in April 2013. Projects funded under All Our Stories were therefore not required to set out which outcomes they expected to achieve. As part of the evaluation, we have applied the outcomes retrospectively to help understand the impacts that the projects have had. In this section we present an overview of the outcomes achieved, before presenting evidence for each outcome in turn.

6.1 Overview of outcomes achieved

There were no formal expectations for the number or type of outcomes to be achieved by All Our Stories projects, as they were funded prior to the publication of the HLF Outcomes Framework. This Framework indicates that a grant of between £3,000 and £10,000 under the Sharing Heritage programme will be expected to deliver one outcome for people (with no corresponding expectations for communities or heritage).

We found that the wide range of activities undertaken by projects achieved, on average, nine of the 14 outcomes. Where a project had told us that they expected to achieve an outcome, the outcome was nearly always achieved (although the practical means of achieving it had changed in some cases).

All projects achieved both of these outcomes:

- People will have had an enjoyable experience; and
- People will have learned about heritage.

Nearly all projects achieved each of these outcomes:

- More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage;
- Your organisation will be more resilient.
- Heritage will be better interpreted and explained; and
- Heritage will be identified/recorded.

Over three quarters of the projects achieved each of these outcomes:

- People will have volunteered time;

- People will have developed skills; and
- A wider range of people will have engaged with heritage. People will have changed attitudes or behaviour.

Less than half of the projects achieved this outcome:

- Your local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit.

About one in ten projects achieved this outcome:

- Heritage will be in better condition.

Only a few projects achieved these outcomes:

- Heritage will be better managed (6 projects); and
- Your local economy will be boosted (2 projects).

Finally, no projects achieved this outcome:

- Environmental impacts will be reduced.

6.2 Outcomes for heritage

6.2.1 Heritage will be better managed

This outcome is relevant for grantee organisations who directly manage the heritage involved in the project. It might refer to recruitment of staff for the management or maintenance of heritage or progress towards national or sector quality standards.

None of the projects explicitly aimed to achieve this outcome. This is unsurprising, given that most grantees are relatively small community organisations and very few are directly responsible for managing heritage materials or sites. However, a few projects achieved this unexpectedly. For example, in Martham Stories, Media Project East's research activities in partnership with Martham Local History Group led to the latter's extensive archives being consolidated and catalogued for the first time.

6.2.2 Heritage will be in better condition

This outcome refers to improvements in the physical state of heritage. This might be evidenced by changes in official 'status' e.g. a site being designated national heritage site status, or biodiversity status designated. More broadly, it might include repair or renovation; or new work such as constructing or restoring a building to protect historic ruins or display exhibits.

About one in ten grantees achieved this outcome. In half of these cases, this was an unexpected outcome. In Bedlington... Our Heritage, a mural celebrating the town's industrial heritage was created as a permanent fixture on a bandstand in need of improvement. The grantees reported that the bandstand was often the target of graffiti previously, but has not been since the mural was painted.

New work was also created at heritage sites. In The Irwell Valley Mining Project, the creation of a permanent memorial was the key focus of the project. The memorial consisted of a ceramic wall at the site of the colliery (built by construction students from the local college), with the wall covered by tiles and surrounded by flowers (created by children from the local school).

Other projects saw participants improve heritage sites through trail clearance and litter picking, for example the Gowan Hill Heritage Trail project which made improvements to the physical condition of this heritage site in addition to a range of other activities.

6.2.3 Heritage will be better interpreted and explained

This outcome captures new or clearer ways to help people make sense of heritage. This can take many forms including displays, use of digital technologies and social media, talks and tours, and physical and digital reconstructions.

Nearly all projects aimed at this outcome and achieved it. Most commonly this was through:

- Community exhibitions;
- Workshops and talks;
- Producing new interpretative materials;
- Developing and delivering walks and tours; and
- Producing education packs and other materials for schools.

In some cases the digital skills support provided to grantees enabled them to look at heritage in new ways. In Looking Up Local Heritage: Engaging and Inspiring Young Women, the Wolverhampton Civic and Historical Society located the original plans of a former Women's Hospital and worked with a partner university to produce a digital reconstruction and 3D-printed model of the building. The physical model worked well to engage people's interest – the team found that it “really draws a crowd” and works well as a prop to spark conversation,

Many projects presented the stories uncovered through community exhibitions. Amersham Museum's Metroland: the Birth of Amersham-on-the-Hill provides a particularly effective example. The project researched the story of Amersham-on-the-Hill through oral history interviews, talks by experts on the area, and through collecting photos, books and other artefacts donated by the project. The research was brought together at a three-week pop-up exhibition held in a vacant shop, renovated by project volunteers, in a central location in the town. Collaboration with London Transport Museum and promotion through the regional London press contributed to a total audience of over 5,000 visitors.

Cambridge University Botanic Garden's Voicing the Garden project presented a dynamic project website that encourages ongoing community engagement. Visitors to the site can share recollections of visiting the Garden; identify on a map their favourite parts and give reasons why; and share their creative work inspired by the site. These features complement the archive of oral history recordings, new and archive film collected by the project and stored on the website.

Where this outcome was not achieved, this was most often related to practical problems and delays in arranging an exhibition or producing new interpretative material such as a DVD.

Some projects had not yet reached the stage of exhibiting at the end of the evaluation fieldwork period in February 2014.

6.2.4 Heritage will be identified/recorded

This outcome covers the new identification of the heritage of a place, person or community, as well as the recording of heritage for people now and in the future. It might include recording customs and traditions, oral histories, or languages and dialogues.

Nearly all projects aimed for and achieved this outcome. None that aimed for this outcome were unable to achieve it. Most commonly projects:

- Recorded the memories of older people through oral histories; and/or
- Recorded local heritage, customs and traditions through collecting and often digitising old photographs contributed by participants.

These tasks were sometimes supported by additional research. For example, Proverbs and Stories – Jamaica @ identified and recorded 300 Jamaican proverbs, which were then explored in workshops at a number of events.

For oral history interviewing, training project participants to interview people known to them was found to be a successful way of generating a sufficient number of interviewees.

Less frequently, projects catalogued or digitised archives, or made records of archaeological activities. For example, of Understanding Our Past, Exploring the Hidden History of Meldreth, archaeologist Dr Carenza Lewis commented that the event conveyed “in a way that I think better than other exhibitions of finds that I’ve seen from test pitting, what test pitting is all about and how it works.” The group passed on its finds, including Bronze Age pottery and Roman pottery, to Cambridge University.

In Plotting Plymouth’s Past, 530 boundary stones, milestones, and markers of the city were documented. Now that the stones have been recorded and catalogued on Plymouth City Museum’s public web-based catalogue, there is a greater chance that they can be maintained and protected from development.

6.3 Outcomes for people

6.3.1 People will have developed skills

This outcome refers to project participants and/or the project audience gaining skills relevant to ensuring heritage is better managed, understood or shared. This might be through formal or informal learning to develop skills in, for example, conservation, interpretation, research or digital technologies.

More than three quarters of projects reported that participants developed skills. Projects often provided training to participants to conduct the key research activities: this most commonly included training in audio recording and interviewing techniques to collect oral histories, and training participants to access archives to research local history. For example in My Archway: a Memoir, Scarabeus reported that “the skills gained in working with older people have been especially valuable – capturing oral history, fictionalising real stories and putting them into a performance.”

All Our Stories enabled a range of training opportunities – often within a single project. For example, Moulsecoomb Medieval Heritage offered participants more than 20 practical workshops across a variety of themes and skills including archaeological digs, weaving, dyeing and cooking. The workshops targeted both pupils and teachers, enabling the latter to fill practical gaps in their training with a view to being able to subsequently deliver the training themselves.

In *Plotting the Past: Archaeology of York's Allotments*, Yorkshire poet Ian McMillan led volunteers in the development of a collaborative poem on the subject of what the allotments meant to the participants. These same volunteers would later undertake training in geophysical and test pit surveys to uncover the archaeological history of the allotment sites; as well as training in the use of archives, and in photography to create a digital record.

Many grantees also developed skills in digital technologies to produce heritage interpretative materials, promote project activities, and create the digital records.

The new heritage and digital skills and expertise brought to the projects were often invaluable to identifying and sharing heritage, whether through training of project participants or partnership work with experts. As indicated in section 4 above without such skills, projects could be delayed in achieving other outcomes.

6.3.2 People will have learnt about heritage

This outcome refers to the development of individual's knowledge and understanding of heritage

All of the projects aimed at this outcome either through direct participation or through the production of something for people to experience. The majority of projects feature the social and cultural history of the grantee's local area. In a smaller number of cases, projects focus on particular topics such as industrial heritage or oral traditions, including language or the heritage of asylum seekers. For example, in *Immigrant experiences of first generation Chinese immigrants in Swansea and surrounding areas*, the grantee Swansea Chinese Culture found that the DVD of immigrants' oral histories can help young people to understand their grandparents' struggles: "you find out more about the person behind their smile." In other projects, the project's scope encompasses a broad historical period. For example, *Hartlepool Hidden History* participating school children learned about the town's social and industrial heritage, maritime and railway history and prominent figures from 1651 AD through to the Second World War.

More than half of the projects involved structured learning sessions for participants, such as workshops on particular techniques or heritage subjects. For example in *Our Flax and Hemp Heritage*, schoolchildren learned about flax production and enjoyed the hands-on work of producing hanks of dressed flax; while in *Nesting Primary School's The ping of Nesting*, a wide range of participants across the community learned about the town's Viking heritage.

The National Trust's *Living Memories* developed an innovative learning programme that was well received by participants. The project, which aimed to encourage greater engagement of younger audiences with the Trust's properties, worked with the Media Studies department at King Edward VI Community College to devise a programme of activities for two groups of students. The project's oral history interviewing, and production of exhibition materials from

photographs donated, were integrated with the curriculum. This proved effective in engaging and sustaining the interest of the young people involved. The course tutor commented: “It was brilliant to see my students moving from being witnesses of other people’s stories about High Cross House, to becoming part of the narrative itself... it has been a really worthwhile community project.”

Exhibitions were often well attended and succeeding in sharing learning with a larger and broader audience than the groups usually attracted. For example, The Candy Girl developed and performed a play exploring Chesterfield’s industrial heritage. The play attracted an audience of more than a thousand people.

The Dog Rose Trust’s Clun Valley Voices provides a good example of a project that delivered a range of activities and outputs to enable people to learn about local history. This included a comic about Norman life, Baron’s Revolt, produced for 90 local schoolchildren; guided walks around Clun and Clun and Castle by experts in conservation and archaeology; and a Norman Living History event open to all and attended by more than 200 people. This event featured demonstrations of heritage trades such as weaving, spinning and calligraphy; participants were entertained by period musicians signifying Anglo-Norman songs.

6.3.3 People will have changed their attitudes and/or behaviour

This outcome captures changes to individuals’ attitudes and behaviour. Evidence of this outcome could include new groups of people visiting, using or enjoying the heritage, changed attitudes or behaviour towards groups such as young people or older people, improved attitudes towards other cultures or engaging in heritage activities beyond the scope or life of the project.

More than half of the projects achieved this outcome. Some projects specifically aimed to improve community cohesion by bringing together a wide range of people to discover and celebrate their shared local heritage. In the words of one young person who participated in the project Open Roads and Eastern Skies: Stories of Gypsy Women: “I think this work shows that we are good people and that we do have good things going on in our community. It gives you a nice warm feeling”.

Then, Now, If, which used university student volunteers to enable asylum seekers in Sheffield to explore their heritage, has reportedly changed these volunteers’ attitudes and behaviour towards asylum seekers, as most had not previously engaged with people from this group. “They find they’re not different... you can hear them say ‘this is great,’ getting quite excited about the fact that their work can make a difference, getting involved in something creative that can have some meaning.”

In All Our Stories, Hereford, the grantee reported a ‘massive change in attitude’ from the participating young people. In the initial visits to heritage organisations they were ‘shuffling their feet’ but by the end of the project they had engaged with heritage, with older people and with the world of work in “significant and meaningful ways” through interviewing long-serving employees of heritage employers in the region on their experiences of the work and culture of local employment.

Improved awareness of local heritage sites can generate changed attitudes and behaviour. In Fryston Woods: Digitally Mapping its Past, Present and Future, project staff reported that

the project has generated a new found respect for the woods among some young people – “we get dumping still but kids are now saying they’ve stopped lighting fires.”

6.3.4 People will have had an enjoyable experience

This can include enjoyment from engaging with heritage, working on the project, and interacting with others.

All projects achieved this outcome. A wide range of participants enjoyed the experience of engaging with heritage. For example, in Black People in Tudor England, using archives contributed to participants’ enjoyment:

“Being able to look at original parish records, to see physically that history is stored in a certain way and being able to interact with documents that are 500 years old really brought history alive for us.”

Grantees were keen to point out that in addition to various other benefits, projects were often fun for participants, For example in Bridging the Gap, a project recording older people’s memories, “the sessions justified everything we were planning on doing, it was amazing how people came out of themselves... there was so much laughter!”

Similarly in the Now Here’s a Story project, celebrating the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the interviewers and interviewees alike enjoyed collecting the oral histories:

“For some people it’s about their part in history, for others it’s just being able to have a chat.”

6.3.5 People will have volunteered time

This outcome covers the contribution of volunteers to any project activity including the management of projects, one-off contributions to events and support with creating and delivering project activities and outputs.

More than three quarters of projects engaged volunteers to deliver activities. Most often these volunteers were members of their groups or people previously known to the organisation. Some projects were able to enlist additional support. Volunteers were very much at the heart of most projects – often having key skills to contribute to core research activities. Sometimes many voluntary organisations worked in partnership – for example in People and Places – the Story of Our Local Community the grantee worked with six local community groups from other parts of Northern Ireland, all volunteer-led, to explore aspects of their local histories.

Some grantees achieved a diversification of their volunteers. For example, the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust’s Objectage project was an intergenerational digital media project exploring the stories of everyday objects in the lives of people from Wigan. The project attracted a new audience of 12 participants not in education, employment or training and 13 new older people to the Trust, many of whom have maintained engagement beyond the life of the project. Similarly, through Mobile Memories and Lost Communities, a project collecting oral histories of the ‘lost communities’ of North Liverpool, the grantee FACT successfully worked with local sheltered housing schemes to find volunteers for the project who are new to the organisation. Grantees found that calling on wider networks of volunteers often helped projects expand their activities and overcome constraints on their existing volunteers’ time

and skills. However, some projects found that gaining volunteer commitment and commitment from other organisations was difficult.

For the small number of projects (12) who did not report this outcome, the project was delivered by core project staff without volunteer support.

6.4 Outcomes for communities

6.4.1 Negative environmental impacts will be reduced

This outcome refers to projects minimising or reducing the environmental impacts of their activity in the areas of energy and water use, and visit transport. This outcome can also be achieved in other ways, for example by enhancing the biodiversity of a natural heritage site.

This was not a planned or achieved outcome for any of the projects.

6.4.2 More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage

This outcome refers to whether projects have expanded the audience for heritage and whether the heritage audience profile has changed – for example whether it includes people from a wider range of ages, ethnicities and social backgrounds.

Nearly all projects attracted new people to heritage. Most projects involved exhibitions and celebration events, often attracting larger audiences than the immediate participants in project activities or an increase in the number of usual visitors. In some cases, grantee organisations were able to reach larger audiences than they normally would through usual activities, making use of the grant funding to hire relatively large venues for exhibitions. In others, wide distribution of outputs enabled the project to reach a larger audience. For example, Craven Vale – People and Place drew on interviews with residents, and both historic and recent photographs of the area, to produce a book that was distributed to all 900 residents of the Brighton estate.

In a few cases, activities were focussed exclusively on engaging a new group in a heritage activity. For example, the Scarborough Blind and Partially Sighted Society's In My Day project enabled its members, most of whom are older people unable to travel to local places of historic interest due to the high cost of public transport, to visit these sites and record their memories.

More than three quarters of projects increased the diversity of their audiences. Often this was through targeted work with groups the grantee did not usually engage with, such as older people or younger people. This was often through intergenerational work, for example where older people visit a school to compare experiences of school life or be interviewed about their experience. In many cases, well-attended exhibitions brought a wider audience.

Tailoring activities to different audiences has also enabled projects to reach a wider range of people. For example, Moulsecoomb Medieval Heritage's focus on practical learning was seen as particularly helpful for the young participants from a primary school in which approximately 80% have special educational needs. Other projects have found that being able to offer free trips to local heritage sites was effective in attracting the interest of potential participants.

The Making of Wessex successfully introduced adults with learning disabilities, among others, to local heritage through storytelling. Workshop leaders facilitated participants' own storytelling about the history of Wessex and their own family backgrounds and heritage. Participants who had difficulties in speaking used a 'Kavad' device to tell their stories this traditional storytelling cabinet, specially designed to feature changeable images on its many sides, helped participants develop communication skills and confidence.

"The group of [participants] had varied levels of abilities and it was amazing that they all had opportunities in their own ways to take part in this project... we were all surprised at the success of this project and how some individuals who we thought may have struggled actually were the ones that excelled and grew within this experience."

In Kurh: Celebrating Letchworth's Sikh Heritage the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation worked with a new audience by celebrating the Sikh heritage of Letchworth through oral history and creative arts. The project's celebration event, which featured a presentation, Bhangra dancing, drumming and cooking demonstrations, attracted 50 project participants and their families.

6.4.3 Your local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit

This outcome refers to a better quality of life for local residents and that, overall, the area will be more attractive. It may also reflect that people have an increased sense of connection and belonging to their local area, or get on better with others in the area.

Bringing people together was very much the main means of achieving this outcome.

Less than half of projects achieved this – for most projects, this was not an expected outcome. Some projects succeeded in connecting people more closely with their local area. For example, A Walk in the Park found that for the residents of Chorlton, an area with a transient population, the project gave them a better sense of its heritage and "some ownership of where they live." Similarly, Craven Vale – People and Place, which produced a book to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the Craven Vale estate in Brighton, allowed residents to express their connection to the area and use this to bring the community together:

"It has given voice to the pride that many of the long-residents feel in their area... it has got people out of their houses and engaging with the wider community." The project celebration event in turn provided a great way "to get people to mix together for a common purpose."

Through The Spirit of Southwark, the mental health charity Mental Fight Club aimed to uncover how the area's cultural heritage promotes or inhibits a sense of mental wellbeing. Participants produced a total of four films exploring a different area within Southwark and the film makers' emotional relationship to it: "mental illness is about alienation and detachment, so this was about re-connection."

6.4.4 Your local economy will be boosted

This outcome refers to additional income for existing local businesses, or establishment of new businesses in the local area.

The scale of grant awarded under All Our Stories meant that the majority of projects did not seek to achieve this outcome. Gatehouse Development Initiative's Gatehouse of Fleet in the Dark Ages created a permanent exhibition at the community and visitor centre which adds to their offer to visitors and is expected to provide a sustainable boost to income. Promotion of the exhibition through Archaeology Scotland Week resulted in additional visitors and income.

A few projects featured activity that may support activity to boost the local economy without achieving it directly. For example A Golden Age of Steam timed their celebration of the Bluebell Railway's history to coincide with its reconnection to the national rail network. The DVD produced by the project, which featured re-enactments, interviews, photographs and footage of the workshops delivered, was sent out to schools alongside a learning pack, was exhibited to a range of community groups in the region, and has also been on display at the local museum. These activities, coinciding with wider media activity reporting on the reconnection, may have contributed to the large increase in visitor numbers to the area, although this is difficult to ascertain.

6.4.5 Your organisation will be more resilient

This outcome captures organisations' capacity to withstand threats and to ensure a secure future. Evidence could include increased skills within the organisation, new partnerships established increased capacity to respond to funding sources and more volunteer capacity.

While most grantees did not explicitly set out to achieve this outcome at the outset of the project – and it was not an aim of the programme – nearly all projects did present some evidence of building resilience. Within the limits of what might be expected of projects of this size, projects reported new heritage and research skills; development of new partnerships; digital skills; increased capacity to manage grant projects; and extra volunteers. These are all indicators of increased resilience, though further evaluation at a future date would be required to confirm that genuine resilience had been developed.

Projects also developed grantees' capacity to engage with different target groups. For example in My Archway: A Memoir, the grantee Scarabeus learned a lot about engaging and working with older people – a group the organisation previously had little experience in engaging and working with.

For many projects, involvement in the activities gave participants and the audience a new or renewed interest in volunteering or heritage. As a result, many projects have been able to attract new volunteers; for example, through The Restoration Story, Fort Amherst Heritage Trust has drawn in 12 new volunteers.

In some cases projects have additionally been able to secure in-kind contributions of time and venue hire from partners, mainly heritage organisations and schools. This development of new partnerships may indicate increased resilience. For example, in Unlocking Victorian Leicester – a Digital Tour of Welford Road Cemetery, the grantee developed a mobile phone app to offer a tour of the cemetery. The interest generated by the project has enabled the grantee to develop relationships with local schools and begin discussions about integrating the material generated from the project within the curriculum.

Similarly Swannington Trust's Surrounded by Heritage project successfully increased the interest of local schools in the industrial heritage sites the Trust manages as well as

engaging several community groups to work with them to improve exhibits (a local art group) and tours (the Women's Institute which produced historic clothes).

"We did not try and get local schools interested in visits because we could not cope with them. Now we feel we can; some schools are interested in returning and we will market ourselves to over 50 schools. The reading books which link the stories to the sites which we are going to distribute to schools will help with this."

In most projects, grantees are conducting activities they had limited experience of previously: for example a heritage organisation making use of new digital skills, or a non-heritage organisation applying their specialist skills (for example in architecture or media) to community heritage. For example in *The Lost Pubs of Chapel Street, Salford*, the grantee People's Voice Media has been encouraged to consider more heritage projects in the future, having realised that "it's not just about history... but about creative ways to do history, about stories, not just facts and figures."

Summary and conclusions

While there were no formal expectations for the number or type of outcomes to be achieved by projects, we found that the wide range of activities undertaken by projects delivered many HLF strategic outcomes, an average of nine outcomes per project.

All people participating in all projects had an enjoyable experience through volunteering, learning, socialising with other members of the community and taking part in visits to heritage sites. All projects were also successful in enabling people to learn about the heritage of their local area. What the participants and audiences learned about varied widely across the projects, and a range of learning methods were employed. Audiences learned about heritage largely through exhibitions, talks and products, such as DVDs, radio programmes and books, while participants often learned hands-on through oral history interviewing, archival research and practical workshops.

Nearly all projects engaged either a greater number or wider range of people with heritage. Most projects strived to be engaging and inclusive both in attracting participants to undertake project activities and in exhibiting the heritage materials opened up as a result. The wide range of project participants usually undertook training to carry out project activities, such as interviewing and archival research, to develop their skills to be applied in the project. New local community heritage was recorded in nearly all cases – most commonly through oral histories or through collecting photographs and other heritage artefacts. It was then interpreted and explained through exhibitions, workshops and talks, learning packs for schools or new interpretive materials, such as sign boards on a heritage trail.

As a result of the activities undertaken, including community engagement and partnership working in many cases, most grantees reported potential boosts to organisational resilience. This is reflected in new volunteers recruited beyond the life of the project, promising and sustainable partnerships with other organisations, and a new or strengthened commitment to bid for and manage heritage projects in future.

The inclusive and engaging approach taken by projects resulted in many reporting changed attitudes among participants and their audiences. This was achieved in various ways: for example by involving people with little previous experience of or interest in heritage; or by

encouraging different groups within the community to take part in project activities and exhibitions. As a result, almost half of the projects showed signs of making their local communities a better place to live, work or visit; with participants reporting an increased sense of connection with their local community and a better understanding of other groups, such as young people, older people or asylum seekers.

7. Added value of the grants and their wider impact on grantees

This section sets out our analysis of the added value of the grants, and considers the longer term outcomes for grantees and the legacy of the projects.

7.1 Added value

We asked grantees to consider whether the project would have proceeded without the AOS grant, whether they were aware of other sources of funding, and how much they did which was additional activity as a result of delivering the project. From this we are able to draw some insights as to the added value of the AOS programme over and above what grantees might have done anyway.

The funding has clearly provided significant added value to grantees' normal activities. Approximately two thirds of the grantees indicated that without the AOS funding the project would not have gone ahead in any form. Most often the reason for this was cost – whether for specific techniques, such as dendro-dating; visits to heritage organisations; or the production and exhibition of materials.

A few grantees also reported that the project would not have been possible without the expertise provided by universities, or the digital training provided by the Media Trust.

For many organisations, running heritage projects of this type was new to the organisation – grantees reported that the opportunity to participate in the AOS programme presented them with the idea and the impetus, and the application form enabled them to form a clear project plan. As a consequence this generated enthusiasm and additional volunteering activity.

This means that for most projects, AOS funding did not displace other heritage activities of a comparable nature or scale and would not have taken place without the funding.

About a fifth of the projects suggested that the project could have proceeded without AOS funding, but would have been scaled back in some form, such as fewer activities or taking place over a longer time period. None were aware of other sources of funding which they might have accessed. Most often these projects suggested that they would not have included digital products (through loss of university and/or Media Trust expertise), exhibition and promotion materials, and outreach activities (for example, production and wide dissemination of DVDs containing heritage materials produced through the project).

It is clear that the large majority of projects have called on significant in-kind contributions from volunteers inside and outside their organisations to make contributions to the project far in excess of the value of grant received. This has enabled the delivery of activities beyond what might be expected of the grant size and enabled many projects to overcome unexpected setbacks. In some cases projects have additionally been able to secure in-kind

contributions of time and venue hire from partners, mainly heritage organisations and schools.

7.2 Building capacity

While projects did not see development of their own organisational capacity as the primary goal of applying to the programme, nearly all grantees reported benefits to participating.

The most frequently reported benefits to the project were:

- New heritage and research skills, such as using archives, conducting oral history interviews, mounting exhibitions, archaeological skills and field walking;
- Development of new professional contacts and networks through partnership working with universities, museums, libraries, archives, community organisations, heritage organisations and schools;
- Digital skills, including the use of websites and social media, photography, producing DVDs and recording podcasts;
- The experience, skills and confidence to apply for, manage and deliver projects. Many grantees had not previously managed a grant but as a result of their participation in AOS now feel they have the capacity and drive to build upon their success and lead further projects;
- Some organisations have taken on and retained extra members or volunteers as a result of project activity. For some projects this has brought additional expertise, for others this has meant an infusion of 'fresh blood' to a community or heritage organisation. For all projects it brings additional longer term capacity;
- Some grantees, with previous experience in project management and in community engagement, used the AOS funding opportunity to develop their expertise in heritage. For these grantees, the AOS project has enabled them to broaden the organisational focus or 'service offer' to include a wider range of heritage activities through the knowledge and/or skills developed.

Grantee organisations that did not report any organisational capacity development gave the reason that they already had significant experience relevant to the project and had not expected to further develop their capacity,

7.3 Sustainability and legacy

Most grantees that had finished their project at the end of the evaluation were able to demonstrate some legacy beyond increased capacity. The most common examples given were:

- Production of a heritage resource made permanently available to the public: for example heritage trails, community gardens, and collections and records stored with museums and archives;
- Films, often distributed on DVD to project participants and through libraries and museums;
- Exhibitions, often at the local museum;
- Learning packs for local schools;

- Improved working relationships with local universities, heritage organisations, community organisations and schools; and
- Heritage-based artistic performances such as radio broadcasts, plays and a novel which have been recorded and published for performance and dissemination beyond the life of the project. .

However, while some grantees worked with archives and record offices to store heritage outputs such as oral histories and archaeological finds, many had not made plans to ensure the longer term conservation of these outputs in this way.

We asked grantees how they are ensuring sustainability of project activities. Fewer had commitments to this than to the legacy of project outputs, but there are examples of intentions to continue to:

- Develop new digital materials to share the heritage opened up by project activities, such as digital collections of photos and uploads of oral history recordings;
- Further interpret the heritage opened up by the project, for example through further collection of photographs and oral histories; and
- Provide school visits to heritage sites.

Summary and conclusions

The grants have brought about significant added value, through a combination of: inspiring and structuring the project idea; enabling heritage and digital activities that would not have been possible without funding; and providing the catalyst for grantees to call on in-kind contributions in excess of the grant value.

Projects have acted to support the legacy of the heritage opened up, mainly through the production of heritage resources made available to the public, exhibitions, and learning packs for schools. However, not all projects at the conclusion of the evaluation fieldwork in February 2014 had acted to ensure that heritage outputs produced would be conserved over the long term. In some cases project activity is continuing beyond the life of the grant, for example through continuing to collect and upload photographs and oral histories from community members and making these available online.

As a result of being awarded AOS funding, grantees reported new skills, networks, and an improved ability to bid for, manage and deliver similar projects. In this way, the programme should generate a legacy from grantee organisations' increased capacity.

8. Digital record outputs

For the first time, HLF required grantees from the All Our Stories programme to create a digital record of their activity. The digital record was separate from any of the digital heritage material created through the project such as digital versions of old photographs, documents or digital survey data. Using images, film and /or sound, the records tell the story of how the

project was delivered and what it achieved. The aim was to combine the individual records into one large one to deposit with a UK archive, to be preserved and made accessible for the longer term.

HLF recognised that many of the applicants to this programme would have limited experience, confidence and resources to fulfil this requirement. In response, the following support was made available:

- The Media Trust was contracted to offer a range of free support in using digital media to grantees, from online guides, to face to face training and mentoring;
- Guidance on creating a Historypin channel for the grantees' All Our Stories projects was developed, tested by five grantees, and shared with the cohort; and
- Historypin and the Media Trust provided technical assistance in using Historypin.

In 2013, HLF contracted Historypin to be the repository for the All Our Stories digital record archive, providing email support to grantees and creating tailored user guidance.

In this section we report on and analyse the digital record outputs produced by projects.

8.1 Digital records

Grantees were asked to include at least one of the following in their digital record:

- Photography: At least 20 photographs showing key activities/people;
- Film: 3 short films (2-5 minutes) or one longer film (15 minutes+); or
- Audio: 3 short interviews (2-5 minutes) or one longer (15 minutes+).

Grantees were also required to provide accompanying text and were encouraged to include blogs or social media created as part of the project.

The evaluation found 278 digital records out of a total of 534 funded projects (although not all projects had completed at the end of the evaluation). Of the 53 projects within our sample that had produced a digital record at the end of the evaluation fieldwork period in February 2014, 20 had satisfied or exceeded these required criteria. It should however be noted that grantees were not required to meet the requirement within the timeframe of the evaluation period, so these findings may not be indicative of the final figures.

Across the projects, photography was the most popular medium. Overall, projects in the evaluation recorded 510 photographs, 76 short films, 8 long films, 14 short audio files, and 5 long audio files.

At their best, projects have incorporated multiple media into curated thematic "collections" and linked these to specific areas within their local areas, creating a dynamic interpretive resource open to the public. Whitby – Then and Now is a good example.

8.2 Awareness and use of Historypin

Historypin enabled grantees to upload images, film and audio linked to specific locations on an interactive map. It also allowed the grantees to organise media into 'collections' to

present different facets of the project and its findings, This functionality has enabled the production of dynamic and interactive presentations of the story of the projects.

However, at the end of the evaluation fieldwork in February 2014, the level of awareness of Historypin was mixed, with some grantees unaware of the site in connection to the digital record requirement or otherwise. We also found, at the time of evaluation, that some grantees required technical support in uploading their digital records to the site and were not aware of where to seek this. Finally, some grantees have uploaded digital heritage media to the site in addition to the digital record of their activity.

8.3 Use of websites and social media

Facebook was being used by at least 14 of the projects, and Twitter by 10. A further 12 had a blog. Where grantees had an existing website, this was sometimes used to promote project activities; but in most cases the blog or website was created specifically for the project. The blogs were generally well updated with information as projects progressed, but very few have continued to update blogs beyond the life of the project. Often project's digital records link to blogs and websites where these exist, offering additional images and outputs from the projects than can be found in the digital record; but blogs/websites do not often link to the digital record. This is likely because the digital record was created after the grantees had typically finished updating project blogs.

Few projects developed websites with functionality beyond that of a blog, but the interactive multimedia website Fryston Memories is a good example of a dynamic community heritage resource produced as a result of project activities.

Summary and conclusions

For the first time, HLF required grantees from the All Our Stories programme to create a digital record of their activity. The digital record was to be separate from any of the digital heritage material created through the project.

At the conclusion of the evaluation fieldwork period in February 2014, 53 projects had uploaded a digital record; of these, 20 met or exceeded the HLF requirements for the number and type of media presented. Across the projects, photography was the most popular medium. Overall, projects in the evaluation recorded 510 photographs, 76 short films, 8 long films, 14 short audio files and 5 long audio files.

Grantees were offered support in uploading their digital records to Historypin, but we found that at the time of the evaluation the level of awareness among grantees was mixed. Some were not aware of the site; and of those that were, the distinction between uploading a digital record of activity and not digital heritage material was not always understood.

Although not a part of the digital record requirement, approximately 10% of the projects used websites, social media or blogs to share their project activities. Most commonly blogs were developed specifically for the project – rather than forming part of an existing blog – and were updated with project progress. Websites and blogs often supplemented digital records in presenting additional media and outputs from the projects. However, very few blogs have continued after the end date of the projects.

Participants welcomed the support from the Media Trust to complete their digital records (see Section 4). While we did not put the question directly, grantees did not generally describe difficulties in recording their activities. However, at the conclusion of the evaluation, we heard that a significant proportion of the grantees were not aware of Historypin or able to use it. This may suggest a need for clearer communication and support to grantees in future.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

In this section we draw together the findings and consider them in relation to the evaluation's aims and objectives to draw some conclusions and provide some recommendations for HLF's management of future small grants programmes. As a consequence we set out the findings to assess each of the questions for the evaluation set out in section 1.1, then consider what we have learnt about how HLF and the projects have achieved this, and what it tells us to inform HLF's development of small grants programmes for community organisations.

9.1 What we have found in relation to the evaluation questions

9.1.1 Meeting the programme's aims

The All Our Stories programme succeeded in funding a broad range of organisations and heritage activities across the UK. Organisations and projects funded were largely community based. Place-based organisations such as community history groups, community organisations, friends groups, housing associations and development trusts accounted for around half of the grantees; with a further third made up of local communities of interest, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and disability-led organisations, faith groups, sports clubs and youth organisations. Around two thirds of the projects focussed primarily on social/community history.

AOS grantees have delivered (and are continuing to deliver) a diverse range of activities, often within a single project. Most commonly projects engaged in between four and seven broad types of activities.

While there were no formal expectations for the number or type of outcomes to be achieved by projects, we found that the wide range of activities undertaken by projects delivered many HLF strategic outcomes, an average of nine outcomes per project. The projects were particularly effective at engaging a larger and wider audience for heritage; and recording, interpreting and providing opportunities to learn about local heritage.

The grants have brought about significant added value. Two thirds of grantees would not have carried out the project activities at all without the funding; most of the remainder would have had to significantly scale back their projects, most often at the expense of the 'sharing' aspects.

Grantees reported that the AOS programme gave them the idea, structure or impetus to develop a clear project plan for the first time. Most of the projects have been able to call on significant in-kind contributions from volunteers to make contributions to the project far in excess of the value of grant received. This has enabled the delivery of activities beyond what might be expected relative to the size of grant, and enabled projects to overcome setbacks caused by the weather and illnesses to the team.

Most projects acted to ensure that heritage opened up by the project was able to be accessed beyond the life of the project,. Most often this was a heritage resource which has been created, such as walking trails, collections and records; films; or exhibitions available to other members of the public, community groups or heritage organisations.

Many projects reported that participation in the programme had developed their capacity. This included new heritage and research skills, development of professional networks, digital skills to explain and display, new recruits and partnerships with other community groups, and the capacity to bid for, manage and deliver grant aided projects.

9.1.2 Achieving the outputs and outcomes expected

While there were no formal expectations for the number or type of outcomes to be achieved by projects, we found that the wide range of activities undertaken by projects delivered many HLF strategic outcomes, an average of nine outcomes per project.

All people participating in all projects had an enjoyable experience through volunteering, learning, socialising with other members of the community and taking part in visits to heritage sites. All projects were also successful in enabling people to learn about the heritage of their local area. What the participants and audiences learned about varied widely across the projects, and a range of learning methods were employed. Audiences learned about heritage largely through exhibitions, talks and products, such as DVDs, radio programmes and books, while participants often learned hands-on through oral history interviewing, archival research and practical workshops.

Nearly all projects engaged either a greater number or wider range of people with heritage. Most projects strived to be engaging and inclusive both in attracting participants to undertake project activities and in exhibiting the heritage materials opened up as a result. The wide range of project participants usually undertook training to carry out project activities, such as interviewing and archival research, to develop their skills to be applied in the project. New local community heritage was recorded in nearly all cases – most commonly through oral histories or through collecting photographs and other heritage artefacts. It was then interpreted and explained through exhibitions, workshops and talks, learning packs for schools or new interpretive materials, such as sign boards on a heritage trail.

As a result of the activities undertaken, including community engagement and partnership working in many cases, most grantees reported potential boosts to organisational resilience. This is reflected in new volunteers recruited beyond the life of the project, promising and sustainable partnerships with other organisations, and a new or strengthened commitment to bid for and manage heritage projects in future.

The inclusive and engaging approach taken by projects resulted in many reporting changed attitudes among participants and their audiences. This was achieved in various ways: for example by involving people with little previous experience of or interest in heritage; or by encouraging different groups within the community to take part in project activities and exhibitions. As a result, almost half of the projects showed signs of making their local communities a better place to live, work or visit; with participants reporting an increased sense of connection with their local community and a better understanding of other groups, such as young people, older people or asylum seekers.

9.1.3 Effectively promoting and managing the awards and supporting the grantees

Most grantees generally had no complaints about the process followed by HLF to allocate and manage the grants nor the support provided by universities or the Media Trust which was available to assist them.

Although more than half of the grantees had prior experience in applying for grant funding, most were new to HLF. The simplified application form developed for AOS has proven successful in engaging new applicants; the process was reported to be manageable by nearly all the grantees, with most recognising that it ensured that they carried out the necessary planning and budgeting to ensure their projects were well thought through and deliverable.

About half of the grantees received support from universities, and about a third received bespoke support from the Media Trust. In most cases the support was believed to add value. It enabled projects to carry out research and create products, including the use of digital technologies beyond the scope or scale of what would otherwise have been achievable. Where support was not accessed this was nearly always because the grantee did not require it. Overall the take-up of support and the outputs and outcomes produce suggest that the involvement of these partners was an integral part of delivering the programme's aims.

It is clear from the interviewees with grantees that support could have been improved by clearer communication about the nature and potential benefits of support – particularly from the Media Trust – more responsive and timely inputs from some of the universities, and clearer direction and technical support on transferring the digital record to Historypin.

9.2 Enabling projects to achieve their aims

Interviews with grantees have revealed some common factors that have enabled the effective delivery of project activities.

9.2.1 Project management

We have found that:

- Grantees noted that having a defined, formal plan worked well to coordinate activities and participants and ensure the project was delivered to schedule, particularly when partners were involved. The application process helped to form this plan, consult and get sign up.
- While planning is important, for many projects limited organisational capacity, dependence on partnership working and a reliance on the weather for outdoor activities meant flexibility was also important. Successful projects adapted their plans to achieve the same outcomes through different means; they were also appreciative of extensions to the project deadline were necessary.

9.2.2 Working with partners

Working with partners successfully was a key ingredient of many projects. We found that:

- The new heritage and digital skills and expertise brought to the projects were often invaluable to identifying and sharing heritage, whether through training of project participants or partnership work with experts.
- Results were more likely to be achieved when these resources were accessed early, with a long lead time. Project delays were often caused by partners, either through delays to their contributions to the project, or the project not being able to progress without acquiring the necessary skills.
- Most partnership working was informal in nature, without the use of contracts or other formal agreements. Some grantees suggested they would have liked more formal agreements with universities so that they could be better held to account.
- Working with schools brought many benefits: engaging children and young people, supporting teachers with heritage materials, and allowing intergenerational work. However, engaging schools was sometimes challenging. Effective approaches were engaging with schools in advance of the project, securing 'buy in' from a senior level, emphasising the broad range of benefits, seeking to integrate the work with the curriculum, and ensuring projects were structured around school terms.

9.2.3 Working with volunteers

Volunteers were the lifeblood of the projects. Lessons learned here were that:

- Volunteers, with training where necessary, were able to successfully coordinate and deliver a wide range of activities. Grantees reported that allowing volunteers to choose which parts of the project to dedicate themselves to, in line with their own interests, was often an effective means of securing their continued commitment to the project.
- A flexible approach to coordinating volunteers' inputs was another feature of good practice. Grantees reported that organising group meetings at venues and times to suit volunteers worked well.
- Grantees should carefully consider the balance of responsibility for the project between a small number of core staff and the capacity offered by wider networks of volunteers. Calling on the wider volunteer base often helped projects expand their activities and overcome illness to core staff; however, some projects found that securing the commitment of volunteers can be challenging and can cause delays.
- Oral history interviewing was a feature of many projects. Training project participants to interview people known to them was found to be a successful way of generating a sufficient number of interviewees – otherwise potential interviewees can be more reluctant to engage.

9.2.4 Engaging more and a wider range of people

Effective practice in engaging a large and broad audience included:

- Conducting activities to make the project appealing to different groups, for example through intergenerational oral history interviewing, or offering workshop on a range of heritage skills to appeal to different interests.
- Sharing the heritage opened up by the project through organising and promoting exhibition events to appeal to a large and wide audience. This included whole-day

open air events at local public spaces, where the audience enjoyed walks, talks and period music.

- Disseminating project outputs to a wide audience. For example, producing learning packs based on project findings and distributing these to schools across the area; or producing DVDs and disseminating through a wide range of stakeholders including libraries, museums, universities and local historical societies.
- Grantees reported that being able to offer free trips to local heritage sites was effective in generating interest, particularly from groups who may otherwise have difficulties in using transport.

The main challenges reported by grantees were in encouraging people to come forward for oral history interviews; and engaging schools in order to involve school children.

9.3 Recommendations for the Heritage Lottery Fund

On the basis of these conclusions we would make the following recommendations:

- Continue the light-touch monitoring and reporting requirements of the AOS programme with future small grant programmes because they do not appear to have caused grantees to under-deliver or fail to complete projects.
- Consider further improving the well-received application form by providing supporting material on how to cost activities and professional time, a PDF version of the application form and an example of a completed application form.
- Provide clearer direction and technical guidance to grantees on how and where to upload their digital records.
- Continue to allow projects room for extensions where possible. Projects often appreciated the flexibility within their project plans and contractual arrangements to ensure that activities were delivered despite delays.
- Facilitate the networking of projects and the sharing of good practice possibly with regional events since grantees attending AOS workshops appreciated the opportunity to network with other projects.
- Consider providing programme funding for advice and guidance to grantees on conserving oral history archives and other products of research to reduce the risk that grantees will not be able to conserve and provide access to these
- While not directly relevant to HLF, the findings further suggest that:
- It is important that the scope and scale of the offer by the support services is clearly communicated to grantees so that they are able to make greater and more appropriate use of them and repeat this in the first stages of project implementation since some grantees will not register their need until after they have started.
- Grantees should be provided with a clear written agreement of the support provided by universities and a separate point of contact if support is not delivered as agreed.

Annex 1: Sampling strategy and sample achieved

We aimed to include 110 projects, a sample of 20% of the total population of projects funded to provide strong evidence for qualitative assessment. To achieve this, we oversampled by 15 projects at the beginning of the evaluation to mitigate against potential attrition.

As a consequence, we interviewed the full sample of 125 projects for the baseline interview, 118 of these for the second interview, and 110 of the original sample for the final interview.

In order to ensure the evaluation reflects the range of activity funded across the UK, we aimed to sample proportionally from across the four countries and the regions of England.

The table below demonstrates that the final achieved sample has succeeded in being broadly reflective of the programme in this respect.

Table A1.1 Number and proportion of projects by region in the population and achieved sample

Region	Number of projects in population	Proportion of total	Number of projects in achieved sample	Proportion of total
London	70	13%	13	12%
North West	65	12%	11	10%
East of England	55	10%	13	12%
Yorks. & Humber	57	11%	14	13%
Scotland	51	9%	8	8%
South West	50	9%	8	8%
East Midlands	46	8%	10	10%
South East	44	8%	8	8%
Wales	32	6%	7	7%
West Midlands	29	5%	4	4%
North East	26	5%	4	4%
Northern Ireland	17	3%	5	5%
Total	542	100%	105	100%

We also aimed to account for the range of organisation types that were funded by the programme. Table A1.2 shows that our achieved sample is broadly reflective of the population.

Table A1.2 Number and proportion of projects by organisation type

Organisation type	Number in programme	% in programme	Number in achieved sample	% in achieved sample
Heritage organisations	79	15%	20	19%

Organisation type	Number in programme	% in programme	Number in achieved sample	% in achieved sample
Archaeology organisation	2	<1%	2	2%
Archive	2	<1%	2	2%
Historic Buildings and Monuments organisation	10	2%	2	2%
Library	3	1%	2	2%
Museum/Collection	30	6%	7	7%
Natural Heritage	32	6%	5	5%
Education organisations	31	6%	5	5%
College	3	1%	2	2%
School	26	5%	2	2%
University	2	<1%	1	1%
Communities of interest	170	32%	37	35%
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led organisation	19	4%	4	4%
Disability-led organisation	19	4%	4	4%
Faith group	15	3%	2	2%
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender-led organisation	2	<1%	1	1%
Older community focus	4	1%	1	1%
Women-orientated organisation	3	1%	2	2%
Uniformed organisation	2	<1%	1	1%
Arts organisation	74	14%	14	13%
Type of heritage-focused organisation	2	<1%	1	1%
Sports organisation/club	10	2%	3	3%
Youth organisation	12	2%	2	2%
Other community of practice	3	1%	1	1%
Other charity	5	1%	1	1%

Organisation type	Number in programme	% in programme	Number in achieved sample	% in achieved sample
Place-based organisations	252	47%	55	52%
Community/development trust	14	3%	5	5%
Community history group/historical society	103	19%	22	21%
Community centre	13	2%	2	2%
Community Health organisation	17	3%	2	2%
Community organisation	56	10%	13	12%
Community radio	3	1%	2	2%
Friends group	23	4%	4	4%
Local authority	6	1%	1	1%
Parish council	4	1%	2	2%
Resident/housing association	13	2%	2	2%
Training/Consultancy/Support services	7	1%	1	1%

Data quality limitations precluded us from setting formal quotas for sampling by heritage type. However, our achieved sample reflects the diversity of heritage types funded. Table A1.3 sets out the number of projects in our achieved sample corresponding to the results of analysis of the focus of projects across the All Our Stories programme.¹

Table A1.3 Types of heritage sampled

Type of heritage	Projects in achieved sample
Social/community history	58
Oral history	16
Industrial, Maritime and Transport	14
Built environment	11
Archaeology	10
Women's heritage	5
Natural heritage	4
Second World War	4
Community archive	3
Cultures and traditions	3

¹ The eight remaining heritage areas, which we have not included in this table, each account for less than 1% of the total population.

Annex 2: Case study topic guides

Case study baseline interview topic guide

Applying for the grant

1. Why did you decide to apply for an All Our Stories Grant?
 - Awareness of HLF and how they heard about All Our Stories
 - Community newsletters?
 - Online?
 - BBC programme?
 - Rationale for the project
 - What do they want to achieve?
 - Current situation in relation to project aims (*are they trying to make a significant change to their organisation or the community?*)
2. Tell me about your experience of the application process.
 - Previous experience in applying to HLF/other grant-making bodies in group
 - Help received from universities or other sources outside the group
 - How much time/resource required to complete

Your project

3. Please give me an overview of any changes in the key activities you plan to do and when, compared with what you stated in the application form.
 - Record list of changes to key project outputs and dates e.g. *workshop for 20 people on 3rd March*. Prompt for:
 - Activities:
 - Visits
 - Exhibitions
 - Speaking to people who know about heritage
 - Workshops, talks and sessions and other community interactions
 - Using collections
 - Archaeological digs
 - Surveying built heritage
 - Training sessions for project participants
 - Training for project audience
 - Celebration/sharing events at the end
4. Any changes in stated plans to create a digital record of your project?
 - What will the outputs be? *Photos, website, app, recording?*
 - What is their prior experience in producing these types of output?
5. Any changes in who will be delivering the project?
 - Size, structure and membership of the team
 - How much time are different team members likely to contribute to the project
 - Local partners involved
 - Any financial and in-kind contributions such as venue hire or volunteers towards costs of project
6. Any changes in stated expected use of support available from universities for the project?

- Awareness and knowledge of university support for applications; and for project activity
 - Experience to date of communications with/support from them
 - Expected future use of support and reasons for this
7. Have you, or do you expect to make use of the support in producing your digital record?
- Awareness and knowledge of Media Trust support
 - Experience to date of communications with/support from them
 - Expected future use of support and reasons for this

Expected outcomes

8. What outcomes might you expect for individuals? *Distinguish between project participants and the audience for the project.*
- New knowledge about heritage
 - Developed heritage skills
 - Developed digital skills
 - Had an enjoyable experience
 - Volunteered time
9. What outcomes might you expect for the community and for your organisation?
- More people engaged with heritage
 - A wider range of people engaged with heritage
 - Grantee heritage skills increased
 - Grantee heritage knowledge increased
 - Grantee digital skills and confidence increased
10. What outcomes might you expect for heritage?
- Heritage is identified/recorded
 - Heritage is better interpreted and explained
 - Heritage is in better condition
11. What evidence can you collect to demonstrate outputs and outcomes?
- Remember we aim to keep burden at a minimum. Explore what they might easily collect to evidence each of the outputs and outcomes discussed earlier:
 - Simple record keeping of outputs (register of attendance at workshops, visits, training etc)
 - Evidence of participant profile if relevant (age group, gender etc)
 - Any evidence collected as part of producing the digital record (may include interviews with participants, photographs of activities)

Next steps

12. *Determine when the mid-way point of the project is. Arrange to speak again at that point to catch up on project activities.*
13. Finally, we'll talk again after the project has finished to explore how it went and what we can learn from it. We will use all three interviews to write up a case study of your project which you can share with others. We can speak more about this nearer the time.

Thank you for your time and all the best for the project.

Case study monitoring interview topic guide

Progress to date

1. What activities has the project undertaken so far?
 - Check against the plans expressed at baseline interview
2. What use have you made of the consultancy support?
 - Views on communications from Media Trust and universities on support available
 - Experience of support received, if any
3. Have there been any changes to the plans made at the start of the project?
 - Explore reasons for changes and record the new plans made
4. Have you been able to gather any evidence on the outputs and outcomes, as we discussed earlier in the year?
 - Go through the sources of evidence agreed in the baseline interview and prompt for evidence collected to date
 - If it is convenient for the interviewee to send this across electronically, arrange for this

Next steps

5. What are the key dates planned for the project from this point forward?
6. Agree when the final interview will take place, based on when the project is scheduled to finish and a date convenient for the interviewee
7. Remind the interviewee about the evidence agreed to corroborate key outcomes

Thank you for your time.

Case study final interview topic guide

Activities completed

1. What activities have been completed since we last spoke?
 - Check against plans made at the monitoring interview
2. Could you tell me about who delivered the project?
 - Check for changes in team structure and inputs from that projected at the baseline interview
 - Probe for reasons for changes and how these acted as barriers or facilitators to success
3. What evidence do you have to support your outputs?
 - Check against evidence agreed, and probe for any additional evidence that might be available for example an article in the local media
4. What evidence do you have to support your outcomes?
 - Check against evidence agreed; this might be feedback from participants, further use of skills gained etc

5. What worked well in delivering your activities?
6. What could have been better and why?

Experience of consultancy support

7. What support did you receive from the Media Trust? Was it useful?
 - Nature of support received, its value, and how it might be improved
8. What support did you receive from research organisations? Was it useful?
 - Nature of support received, its value, and how it might be improved

Additionality, legacy and sustainability

9. What would you have done without AOS funding?
 - Would the project have gone ahead, perhaps in a different form? Would they have obtained funding from their own resources and other sources?
10. Has the size and profile of participants been different to your usual activity before the project?
 - We are looking for evidence of the project extending the scale or diversity of participation in heritage:
 - Project delivery staff
 - Project participants
11. How is the project ensuring longer-term access to the heritage materials it has created/opened up?
12. How has the project benefited the organisation?
 - Seek evidence of knowledge and digital or heritage skills gained being used beyond the project
 - Has the project increased their awareness of, or ability to respond to, grant programmes?

Thank interviewee for all their support.

Annex 3: Guidance email to grantees on collecting evidence for the case study

Dear [Project contact],

Thank you for working with us to undertake a case study of [name of project]. In order to bring the case study to life, we need to base it partly on the facts and figures of what participants have been doing and what the project has achieved.

Collecting evidence of your project's achievements can be quick and easy, especially if you remember to do it as you go along. The best way to keep track of things is to:

- Complete registers (or do a simple head count) at your activities, events and visits;
- Compare number of members, volunteers and active participants at the start and end of the projects and record numbers of new members, volunteers and active participants;
- Record any time contributed by volunteers to the project and the number of volunteers;
- Keep copies of any promotional materials you create, or any press clippings that might appear;
- Keep copies of any feedback collected from participants in activities, events and visits;
- Be able to provide evidence of any new heritage assets and interpretative materials created from the project and their availability; and
- Be ready to pass along any materials collected as part of your Digital Record (especially photos of activities and any interviews with participants).

If you are able to pass these on to me at the end of the project, I will be better able to share the project's achievements.

Do get in touch if you have any questions – my details are below.

Kind regards,

[Case study lead]

[Contact details]

