

Evaluation of the Impact of the Heritage at Risk Repair Grants Programme

Prepared for

Historic England

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August 2019



Acknowledgements

Nordicity and Saffery Champness would like to thank Adala Leeson, Alex Hayes, Mike Payne, Andy Brown and all the Business Managers at the Historic England local offices for their input and assistance with this research. We'd also like to thank the numerous grantees who were very generous with the time in both completing the online survey and hosting the study team for site visits.

Table of Contents

Executive summary	i
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 About the brief	2
2. Approach and methodology	3
2.1 Overview	3
2.2 Logic model and evaluation framework	3
2.3 Literature review	4
2.4 Primary research	4
3. About the Repair Grants Programme	6
3.1 Programme outputs	6
3.2 Regional profile of grants	7
3.3 Types of supported sites and grantees	7
3.4 Frequency distribution of grants	9
4. Process review	11
4.1 Awareness and uptake of the programme	11
4.1 Operations and management	15
4.2 The application experience	18
4.3 Post-completion monitoring	23
5. Impact evaluation	25
5.1 Overview	25
5.2 Development grants	25
5.3 Repair grants enabling effects	28
5.4 Historic-environment benefits	29
5.5 Social benefits	32
5.6 Economic benefits	39
5.7 Relative importance of programme to outcomes	43
5.8 Counterfactual	45
5.9 Summary of outcomes achievement	46
6. Summary of key findings	48
6.1 Process review	48
6.2 Impact evaluation	49
6.3 Recommendations	52
References	53
Appendix A: Logic model	54
Appendix B: Respondent sample profile	55
Appendix C: Business manager questionnaire	56
Appendix D: Site visit sample	58
Appendix E: Grantee interview guide	59
Appendix F: National Lottery Heritage Fund Outcomes	61

Executive summary

Background

The historic environment represents one of England's most important cultural assets. Historic buildings and other sites enrich people's lives by often giving them a source of pride and identity, and a sense of familiarity and belonging.¹ The historic environment also gives people a connection to their own past and the pasts they share with others in their community and society.² By doing so, the historic environment can bring communities together and reaffirm those communities' sense of their place in the world.³ Indeed, in 2017, over 94% of adults in England agreed that it was important that heritage buildings or places were looked after.⁴

Historic England is the public body first established by the Government under the name English Heritage in 1984; it adopted its current name on 1 April 2015. From its original founding in 1984, Historic England's role has been to champion and protect England's historic environment. To that end, Historic England provides a range of programmes, grants, local-government support and research – all designed around the objective of helping people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's historic environment.

Among its various responsibilities, Historic England maintains the Heritage at Risk (HAR) Programme, through which it works with private landowners, friends groups, property developers and other stakeholders to find solutions for 'at risk' historic sites throughout England. In particular, the HAR Programme helps government, stakeholders and the general public understand the overall state of England's historic sites, including: (i) buildings and structures, (ii) places of worship, (iii) archaeological sites, (iv) conservation areas, (v) registered parks and gardens, (vi) registered battlefields and (vii) protected wreck sites.

In order to help remove sites from the HAR Register, Historic England operates the HAR Repair Grants Programme ("Repair Grants Programme"). Under this programme, Historic England provides grants to site owners in order to help them carry out repairs or help plan for future repairs (i.e. "project development"). Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2018, Historic England provided £19.9m in grants to 260 projects at 230 sites through the Repair Grants Programme.⁵

Given that funding from the Repair Grants Programme is often combined with additional funding from local authorities or private owners, Historic England's funding supported a total of £44.2m in development or repair expenditures. In other words, each £1.00 of funding from Historic England helped to directly attract an additional £1.22 in funding from other sources. And this does not include the additional follow-on funding that Repair Grants Programme grants often enable grantees to secure at a future date.

About the evaluation brief

In the light of the above, Historic England commissioned Nordicity and Saffery Champness to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the Repair Grants Programme. This evaluation was to include a review of the programme's application, selection and grant-awarding process (i.e. the "**process review**") as

¹ Historic England (2018), [Heritage and Society 2018](#), p. 3.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ DCMS (2017), ["Taking Part focus on: Heritage"](#), p. 10.

⁵ On a cash-basis, Historic England disbursed the funding over a longer period of time, since many of the projects started earlier than 1 April 2013. For this evaluation, however, projects are classified on an accrual basis, based on the year in which their funded projects were completed.

well as an analysis of the impact that the programme had on the historic, social and economic environments in England (i.e. the “**impact evaluation**”).

Approach and methodology

To complete the evaluation research and analysis, the study team first developed a logic model and evaluation framework. A combination of primary and secondary research was then used to address the various evaluation questions and key performance indicators (KPIs) within the evaluation framework.

The primary research consisted of a (i) an online survey of all 230 unique grantees, (ii) an internal questionnaire circulated to Historic England business managers (iii) a half-day roundtable with those same business managers, and (iii) site visits and in-depth interviews with a sample of 20 grantees.

The secondary research consisted of a literature review that included a review of several public and internal programme documents, as well project files and grant-application data held by Historic England.

Process review

The process review analysis focused on four main areas: (i) awareness and uptake of the Repair Grants Programme, (ii) operations and management of the application process, (iii) grantees’ application experience and (iv) post-completion monitoring.

Awareness and uptake

We found that most applicants had little prior knowledge of the programme and most applied following discussions with Historic England staff about their property as part of the HAR process and their entry onto the HAR Register. This means that those approached as being high risk and eligible are highly likely to receive grant funding.

This is an effective and targeted approach but does mean that there is little competition for public funding. There is scope for the programme to be promoted more widely, particularly to suitable intermediaries. The fact that the programme is not oversubscribed means that Historic England should continue to review the application criteria with a view to extending the scheme as appropriate. A clearer two-step process might be way to mitigate any problems caused by an increase in the volume of applications so that any ineligible or low-priority applications are quickly weeded out.

Operations and management

The Repair Grants Programme has been in operation for many years and the operations and management of the application process has evolved over time. A comprehensive set of desk instructions, forms and supporting documents has been developed to be used as part of the process. These documents have benefits in terms of the accrued knowledge that they contain. However, their length and complexity are problematic, and many Historic England staff said that they found the documents hard to navigate and use in practice.

The desk instructions would benefit from being reviewed and possibly simplified. Most importantly, it would be beneficial to bring the various systems and guidance into line so that there is a single, seamless, digital process that can be followed throughout the lifetime of a project. As part of this revised system, many consultees reiterated the possible value of a two-step application process which invited more applications, then weeded them out at an early stage.

At the moment, the Repair Grants Programme is highly focused on the heritage value and need of the project. This is seen as one of the most valuable aspects of the programme. One respondent referred to the idea that Historic England acts as a ‘funder of first and last resort’ – being among the first to become involved at an early stage to stabilise buildings that are in urgent need of repair and before other funders are able to consider funding, demonstrating the heritage value of a site and encouraging other funders to consider funding; whilst also stepping in as the funder of last resort to

support important projects that are not eligible for other funding programmes. This role would not always be possible if Historic England moved to a position where it was looking for immediate social and economic benefits.

Conversely, many of the projects that the programme supports do bring such benefits to the local community, economy and society more widely. These benefits are currently not adequately explored as part of the funding process. In future, it will be important for Historic England to assess projects in a way that these wider social and economic benefits are captured.

The application experience

A very large majority of grantees found the advice from Historic England's local offices to be very helpful, both before and after they submitted their application. The application form itself was also rated highly with most applicants (with a few exceptions) finding the application form simple to use and the information requirements appropriate.

There are a series of internal and external Historical England targets for processing applications. However, these targets are seen as aspirational guidelines because of the complexity of individual applications and the different timescales involved. That being said, the information from these targets could provide valuable information and we have recommended that these targets should, in future, be monitored and used for management purposes.

Post-completion monitoring

Following the completion of their project, grantees are asked once a year to provide follow-up information about their project. Most grantees found the post-completion monitoring and reporting requirements to be reasonable. These returns are generally completed and submitted as required. However, Historic England's local offices did report some problems in obtaining information. A small proportion of grantees do not submit returns when requested. Also, Historic England's local offices reported that the information required (i.e. on access arrangements and maintenance plans) is relatively narrow, making it difficult to demonstrate the wider social and economic benefits of projects.

Impact evaluation

The results of this research, in general, indicate that the Repair Grants Programme is achieving its outcomes and, thereby, generating a positive impact. However, in a few cases, the achievement can only be considered partial or potentially limited to selected cases, rather than being widespread. In other cases, the level of achievement is indeterminate because of the type of data available or the time horizon of projects.

Development grants

The development grants, which typically are used to engage specialists to conduct surveys or other investigatory work, were found to be highly valued by grantees and very important to achieving certain programme outcomes. Development grants gave grantees not only financial resources, but also access to expertise, so that they could authoritatively plan and cost their main repair projects. In many cases, grantees used development grants to prepare more comprehensive conservation managements plans.

The outputs of the development grants were important in enabling grantees to realise other project objectives. First and foremost, the upfront work was important in helping to increase the quality of the ultimate main repairs for 79% of development grantees (Figure 1). Secondly, the outputs of the development grants were important (for 65% of development grantees) in accessing other funding for their main repairs. In particular, several development grantees noted how their development projects furnished them with the more detailed information required for subsequent applications to other funders, including the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). The development projects also gave

many previously unknown grantees the initial credibility needed to compete for the larger sums available from NLHF and other funders.

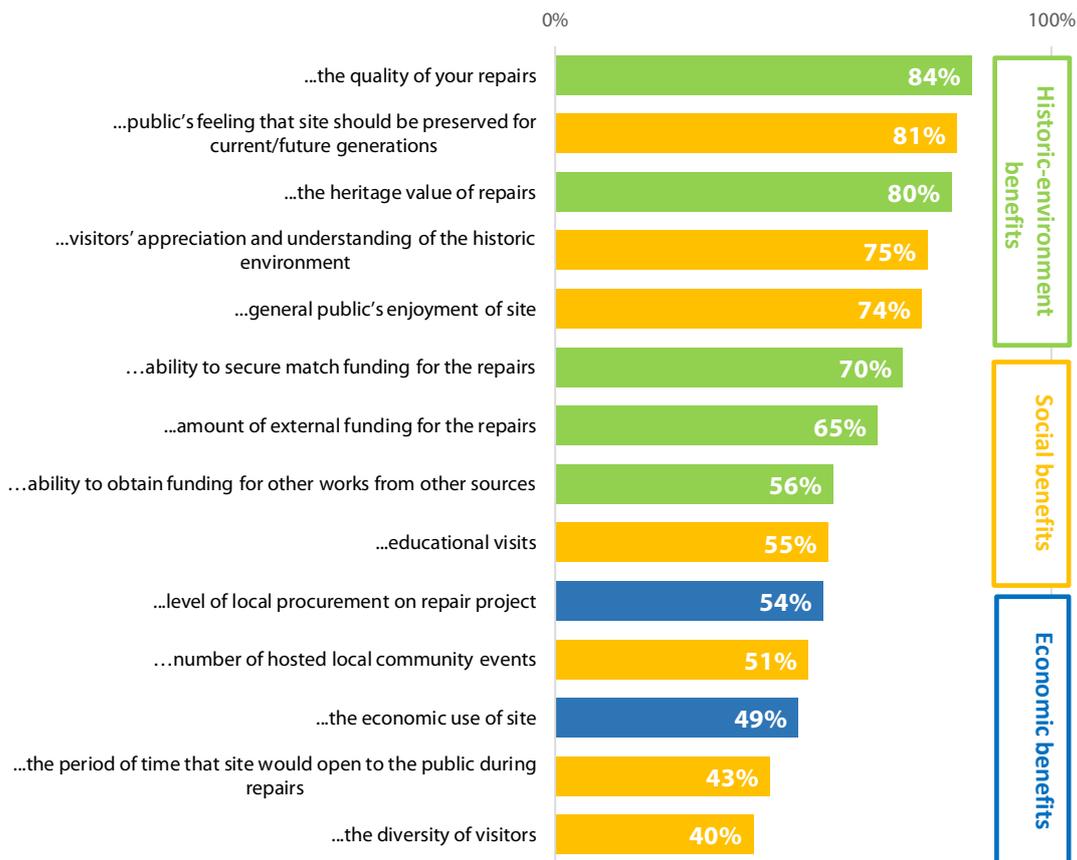
The development projects were also important to 74% of development grantees in terms of commissioning local professionals and craftsman (Figure 1). And 42% of development grantees indicated that the investigative works conducted as part of the development projects were important to reducing the time that their site would ultimately be closed to the public for repair works.

Repair grants

For the main repair projects, the relatively strongest areas of achievement were with respect to historic-environment outcomes. Several grantees remarked how the Repair Grants Programme was instrumental in quickly stabilising their heritage assets or making them safe for public access. Through both the repair and development streams, grantees could access skilled professionals as well as Historic England’s own expertise, in order to develop effective plans for protecting or re-using their heritage assets. Given that the primary objective of the Repair Grants Programme has been to remove sites from the HAR Register, the programme’s strong achievement on this front is not surprising.

Figure 1 Summary of programme outcomes

How would you rate the importance of the repairs funded by Historic England in terms of enabling you to increase...



Source: Grantee survey 2018
n=70

Historic-environment benefits

It is probably also not surprising that grantees viewed the Repair Grants Programme as having a relatively important effect on other historic-environment outcomes, including the quality and heritage value of the main repairs, and the ability to obtain match funding for main repair projects. The repairs funded by Historic England also played an important enabling role. Over half of grantees reported that Historic England's repair grants were important to their ability to obtain more funding from external sources or follow-on funding from other sources, namely NLHF.

As some grantees portrayed it, Historic England's repair grants helped to 'kick start' the larger restoration or redevelopment plans for their sites and unlock significantly more funding sums from NLHF. These more extensive restoration and redevelopment plans ultimately generate significant social and economic benefits for the host communities.

Social benefits

The Repair Grants Programme was also relatively important in contributing to grantees' ability to generate certain – but not all – types of social benefits through their heritage assets. Several grantees pointed to how the repairs funded by Historic England helped to make their heritage sites safe or suitable for public access, thereby helping to increase the number of visitors. On average, grantees were able to open to the public for 37% more days annually (post-repair) and saw their average annual visitor count increase from 12,207 (pre-repair) to 17,714 (post-repair) – an increase of 45% (Figure 2).

The vast majority of grantees reported that the repair grants were important to improving the public's appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment. Several grantees described how the repaired heritage sites raised the profile of the site, leading to additional interest and support from the local community. And some grantees remarked how once-neglected heritage sites that acted as magnets for anti-social behaviour had, in some cases, become beacons of civic pride.

With this in mind, approximately half of grantees (51%) reported that the repair grants projects were important to their ability to host more local community events. This outcome was probably achieved, in large part, because sites were made safe for public access but also appreciated more by local residents. The average annual number of hosted local community events was up by 20% (post-repair) and the number of attendees to the events was by 214% (post-repair).

Educational engagement was also higher after completion of repairs. The average annual number of formal educational visits per site was up by 114%, post-repair. The number of student visitors was up by 68%.

There are areas where outcomes achievement was relatively weaker or less evident. With regards to social benefits, the repair grant projects themselves had limited impact on grantees' ability to increase the diversity of their visitors (i.e. diversity of age, gender, ethnicity, race, other protected groups). The repair works themselves – as opposed to any development work – were also much less important to minimising closure of the site during those said repairs.

Economic benefits

The role of the repair grants projects in terms of affecting economic benefits is also less definitive. On average grantees reported that 65% of their project spending was through local procurement (i.e. within 50 miles of their site). This translated into £28.7m in local procurement spending. However, several grantees commented how a significant portion of repair grant funding – sometimes close to 50% – had been devoted to fees for architects and other conservation professionals. In some parts of England, there are not any such professionals local to the site, so repair spending leaks from the local economy. Furthermore, whilst a significant portion of this local procurement is likely to be beneficial to local economies, it is unclear (at this time) what portion would be additional to England's overall economy.

Figure 2 Summary of impact KPIs

	Pre-repair	Post-repair	Change
 Days open to public	130.3 days	178.4 days	+37%
 Annual number of visitors	12,207 persons	17,714 persons	+45%
 Annual number of local community events hosted	17.6 events	21.1 events	+20%
 Annual number of attendees at local community events	1,516 attendees	4,760 attendees	+214%
 Formal education visits	6 events	14 events	+114%
 Number of student visitors	332 students	558 students	+68%
 Floorspace available for commercial use	3,184 sq. ft.	9,241 sq. ft.	+190%

Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

For half of grantees, the repair grants were important to their ability to increase the economic use of their heritage site. This increased economic use could have come from the use of the site for accommodation, office space, function space or filming, or simply by increasing the tourism offer of the site. However, the case study research indicates that the impact on economic use has to be viewed through a broader process of conservation and redevelopment, whereby Historic England funds initial repairs that can stabilise a heritage site and give it the time and credibility needed to successfully apply for larger sums from NLHF and other funders. These larger sums then underwrite the redevelopment projects that more directly alter the economic use of many sites.

The evaluation research indicated that even though the scale and sums involved in Historic England's Repair Grants Programme were often smaller than those available from NLHF, the programme played an extremely important enabling role in the overall conservation process. Historic England's funding is available more quickly than funding from NLHF and subject to less competition in some cases. For many grantees, therefore, it acted as vital source of first-line funding that forestalled ruinous decline in a heritage asset and positioned the grantee to eventually launch a longer-term conservation or redevelopment project. It is through this enabling role that Historic England's Repair Grants Programme helps to deliver the social and economic benefits that accompany the full conservation and redevelopment of heritage assets.

Counterfactual

The evaluation research evidence also indicated that there is a low degree of deadweight associated with the development and repair projects funded by Historic England. According to grantees, 48% of projects supported through the Repair Grants Programme would not have gone ahead at all in the absence of funding from Historic England. And of the remaining 52% that would have gone ahead,

most would have been delayed (37%) and only a very small minority (1%) would have gone ahead as planned.

Summary of recommendations

Awareness and uptake

1. As part of the ongoing HAR Programme, local Historic England offices should promote the Repair Grants Programme more widely, aiming that promotion at all eligible at-risk sites on the HAR Register and working with other professionals and organisations.
2. Historic England should consider introducing a two-step application process to manage any increase in applications so that initial enquiries can be considered quickly and assessed for eligibility.
3. Historic England should retain the existing eligibility criteria for the Repair Grants Programme but should keep this under review and consider extending the scheme in the future.

Operations and management

4. Desk instructions should be simplified.
5. Desk instructions should be brought into line with the ConcaseGIS system and the Engagement, Grant Assessment and Prioritisation (EGAP) form so that there is a single, seamless digital process.
6. Pre-application guidance should be strengthened to allow for greater assessment and genuine prioritisation between competing projects at an early stage.
7. As well as heritage significance and risk, applications should also be assessed on the added social and economic benefits that they might bring, in order to align them more closely with Historic England's Public Value Framework (PVF).
8. To enable more effective prioritisation, a weighted assessment and scoring system should be used, including the range of historic-environment, social and economic benefits, which could become the basis of comparing and ranking applications in the future.

The application experience

9. External targets for application processing should be monitored and reported against.
10. Internal targets for application processing should be monitored and used for management purposes.

Post-completion monitoring

11. Local offices should consider an enhanced process for following up post-completion reports to achieve a higher level of returns.
12. Grant awards and contracts should set out more explicitly the range of outcomes that projects are aiming to achieve.
13. Post-completion monitoring reports should, in future, request additional information about the historic-environment, social and economic benefits that the grant funding has helped to achieve.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The historic environment represents one of England's most important cultural assets. Historic buildings and other sites enrich people's lives by giving them a source of pride and identity, and a sense of familiarity and belonging.⁶ The historic environment also gives people a connection to their own past and the pasts they share with others in their community and society.⁷ By doing so, the historic environment can bring communities together and reaffirm those communities' sense of their place in the world.⁸ Indeed, in 2017, over 94% of adults in England agreed that it was important that heritage buildings or places were looked after.⁹

The local planning regime in England recognises the importance of the historic environment and offers protection through listed-building and conservation-area status. The government and local authorities also provide a range of monetary and non-monetary support, either directly or through arms-length government bodies that can draw upon lottery or grant-in-aid funding. Building preservation trusts (e.g. The National Trust) also help to raise funds to conserve the historic environment.

Historic England is a public body established by the Government on 1 April 2015 to champion and protect England's historic environment. Up until 2015, Historic England's current remit was executed by English Heritage. As an organisation, English Heritage originated with the National Heritage Act 1983. Since the formation of Historic England on 1 April 2015, English Heritage has been operating as the English Heritage Trust, with the responsibility for looking after the National Heritage Collection consisting of 400 historic sites.

Historic England provides a range of programmes, grants, local-government support and research – all designed around the objective of helping people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's historic environment.

Among its various responsibilities, Historic England maintains the Heritage at Risk (HAR) Programme, through which it works with private landowners, friends groups, property developers and other stakeholders to find solutions for 'at risk' historic sites throughout England. In particular, the HAR Programme helps government, stakeholders and the general public understand the overall state of England's historic sites, including:

- Buildings and structures
- Places of worship
- Archaeological sites
- Conservation areas
- Registered parks and gardens
- Registered battlefields
- Protected wreck sites

The HAR Programme identifies those sites that are most at-risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development, and then adds these to the HAR Register. The HAR Register

⁶ Historic England (2018), [Heritage and Society 2018](#), p. 3.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ DCMS (2017), ["Taking Part focus on: Heritage"](#), p. 10.

includes buildings and sites that are listed as Grade I, Grade II*, Grade II listed places of worship across England and Grade II listed buildings in London. Grade II listed buildings outside London, other than places of worship, are not included.

The first edition of the HAR Register, published in 1998, listed 1,930 sites. Over the ensuing two decades, 1,326 sites were removed from the list.

In order to help remove sites from the HAR Register, Historic England operates the HAR Repair Grants Programme.¹⁰ Under this programme, Historic England provides grants to site owners in order to help them plan for future repairs (i.e. “project development”) or actually carry out repairs.

Through the Repair Grants Programme, Historic England provides grants for the repair and conservation of listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and registered parks and gardens. The grants can be used to pay the cost of actual repairs, or they can be used to pay for pre-repair work. This pre-repair work is referred to as “development”, and includes such actions as (i) the commissioning of specialist investigative surveys, (ii) preparation of a conservation management plan or (iii) even the cost of erecting scaffolding for stabilisation or future repairs.

Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2018, Historic England provided £19.9m in grants to 260 projects through the Repair Grants Programme.¹¹

1.2 About the brief

The Repair Grants Programme plays an important role in Historic England’s overall mandate and also disburses a large amount of public money. Since the establishment of Historic England in 2015; however, there has been no evaluation of the impact of the Repair Grants Programme, particularly in terms of its cost-effectiveness and value-for-money.

In the light of the above, Historic England commissioned Nordicity and Saffery Champness to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the Repair Grants Programme. This evaluation was to include a review of the programme’s application, selection and grant-awarding process (i.e. the “**process review**”), as well as an analysis of the impact that the programme had on the historic, social and economic environments in England (i.e. the “**impact evaluation**”).

Both the process review and impact evaluation – but the latter in particular – would consider the performance of the programme with respect to projects funded by it for which all works were completed at some point between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2018 (2013/14 to 2017/18).

This report presents the study team’s findings with respect to both the process review and impact evaluation.

¹⁰ The scheme was formerly called Grants for Historic Buildings, Monuments and Designed Landscapes.

¹¹ On a cash-basis, Historic England disbursed the funding over a longer period of time, since many of the projects started earlier than 1 April 2013. For this evaluation, however, projects are classified on an accrual basis, based on the year in which their funded projects were completed.

2. Approach and methodology

2.1 Overview

To complete this evaluation, the study team first developed a logic model and evaluation framework. A combination of primary and secondary research was then used to address the various evaluation questions and key performance indicators (KPIs) within the evaluation framework.

2.2 Logic model and evaluation framework

At the outset of the project, the study team reviewed various programme and organisational documents in order to identify the Repair Grants Programme’s objectives, activities and outputs, and to ascertain how the programme aligned with Historic England’s strategic objectives, particularly its newly established Public Value Framework (PVF). The study team also consulted with Historic England officials before finalising the programme logic model. A copy of the programme logic model can be found in [Appendix A](#).

With respect to the process review component of the overall evaluation, the evaluation framework (presented below) was developed to investigate and assess the delivery of the programme with regards to programme awareness, operations and management, the application experience and monitoring.

Figure 3 Evaluation framework for process review

	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators
Programme awareness	<p>How does Historic England publicise the repair grants programme?</p> <p>Do local offices contact potential applicants? Or is it a reactive process?</p> <p>How did successful grantees hear about the programme?</p> <p>Does the programme reach the most at-risk /highest-priority sites?</p>	<p>Number on HAR register receiving information or publicity about the programme</p> <p>Number of applications received</p> <p>Method by which applicants heard about the programme</p>
Operations and management of the programme	<p>Have local offices met targets for uptake, application processing times, etc?</p> <p>Do local offices consistently apply the internal programme guidelines?</p> <p>Have ineligible projects inadvertently been funded?</p> <p>How do local offices prioritise between eligible projects?</p> <p>Is there unmet demand (i.e. lots of applications that are eligible and high priority but cannot be funded due to lack of available grant monies)?</p>	<p>Targets for applications processed</p> <p>Number of applications approved/rejected/withdrawn</p>
The application experience	<p>Do grantees feel the application process is transparent, fair and efficient?</p>	<p>Applicants’ rating of application process</p>

	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators
	<p>Do grantees feel they received useful and helpful guidance from Historic England officers?</p> <p>Is this in advance? During the application process? After grant award made?</p>	
Monitoring of projects	Do grantees and Historic England officers apply the project-reporting and completed-project-reporting requirements?	Number of projects fully meeting project reporting requirements / incidence of incomplete/late reporting

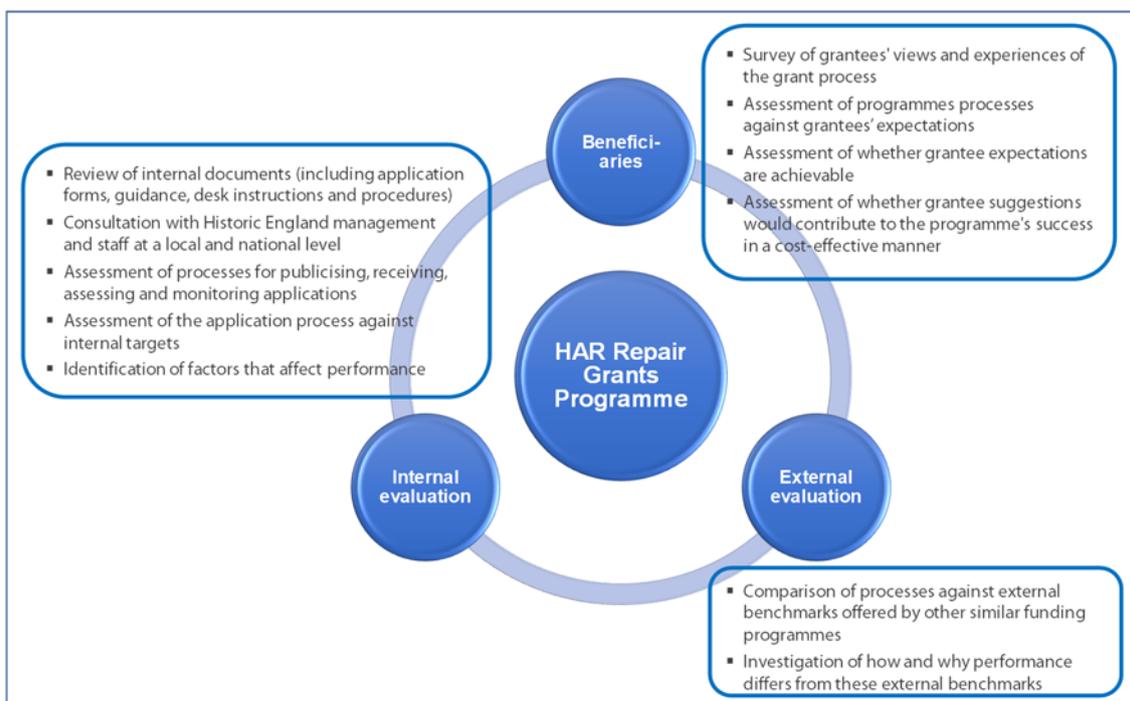
2.3 Literature review

Before conducting primary research, the study team conducted a literature review that included a review of several public and internal programme documents, as well as project files and application data held by Historic England. As part of the literature review, we also reviewed evaluations of similar programmes delivered by other organisations such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). A full list of the documents reviewed for the evaluation can be found in the [References](#) section.

2.4 Primary research

The primary research consisted of a grantee survey, an internal questionnaire circulated to Historic England business managers and a half-day roundtable with those same business managers.

Box 1 360-degree research approach



This primary research, in combination with the literature review permitted the study team to adhere to a '360-degree' approach to the process review, which gathered and synthesised insights and programme perspectives from beneficiaries (i.e. grantees), internal sources (e.g. business managers)

and external benchmarks (e.g. similar programmes). Box 1 provides a more detailed description of the implementation of this 360-degree research approach.

2.4.1 Grantee survey

An online survey was distributed to the 230 grantees, which, among other things, requested their feedback on the programme's application and monitoring process. The survey was open from November 2018 to February 2019, and received a total of 83 completed responses (36% response rate). Whilst the response rate was lower than the target response rate, the profile of the respondent sample was largely consistent with that of the overall grantee population, thereby, providing added assurance that the results were highly representative of the overall population.

The profile of the respondent sample can be found in [Appendix B](#).

2.4.2 Business manager questionnaire

Prior to convening the roundtable, the study team circulated a questionnaire to business managers responsible for the Repair Grants Programme in each of Historic England's local offices. The questionnaire gave the business managers an opportunity to provide their own perspectives on the evaluation questions in relation to programme awareness, operations and management, the application experience and monitoring.

A copy of the business manager questionnaire can be found in [Appendix C](#).

2.4.3 Business manager roundtable

In addition to the questionnaire, the study team facilitated a half-day roundtable with the business managers from the local offices. This roundtable was used to discuss the key findings from the questionnaire and attempt to clarify and reconcile differing perspectives across the local offices. The roundtable also gave business managers an opportunity to discuss noteworthy Repair Grants Programme projects and key learnings. Another key feature of the roundtable was an interactive workshop exercise designed to give the business managers the opportunity to suggest how Historic England could change the Repair Grants Programme in order to deliver it more cost-efficiently, improve its value for money and better align it with the PVF.

2.4.4 Site visits and interviews

In addition to the grantee survey, the study team also selected a sample of 20 grantees for site visits and in-depth interviews. These 20 sites were selected in a quasi-random manner, so that the sample included sites from nine different regions of England and six different grant bands.

In some cases, a site in the original sample of 20 had to be replaced because the site owner/operator was not available for a site visit and interview, or the current site owner/operator was different from the one that received the repair grant from Historic England. In some cases, we also asked Historic England's local offices to recommend sites where they thought the owner/operator would likely agree to a site visit.

A full list of the 20 sites can be found in [Appendix D](#). A copy of the interview guide used for the site visits can be found in [Appendix E](#).

The information collected by the study team through these 20 site visits and interviews were used to prepare 20 case studies. These case studies can be found in the companion report, *Evaluation of the Impact of the **Heritage at Risk Repair Grants Programme: Repair Grant Case Studies***. The results of these case studies were the incorporated into the evaluation of programme outcomes and impacts.

3. About the Repair Grants Programme

The following section provides a statistical profile of the Repair Grants Programme, based on project data compiled by Historic England at the time of grant application and award decision.

3.1 Programme outputs

Between 2013/14 and 2017/18, a total of 260 projects funded through the Repair Grants Programme completed their development or repair works. Because a single heritage site can have more than one Repair Grant project, these 260 projects were across 230 unique sites throughout all regions of England.

Historic England provided a total £19.9m in funding for these 260 projects across the 230 sites. Given that funding from the Repair Grants Programme is often combined with additional funding from local authorities or private landowners, Historic England's funding supported a total of £44.2m in development or repair expenditures. In other words, each £1 of funding from Historic England helped to attract an additional £1.22 in funding from other sources.

These 260 projects consisted of 78 development projects, 117 repair projects and 65 two-stage projects (which included development and repair phases).



- The 78 **development projects** received £1.7m from Historic England and an additional £2.3m in funding, thus bringing the total value of the projects to £4.0m. The average grant was £21k and the average project value was £52k.
- The 117 **standalone repair projects** received £11.7m in funding from Historic England and an additional £15.4m in funding from other sources, thus bringing the total value of the projects to £27.1m. The average grant was £100k and the average project value was £232k.
- The 65 **two-stage projects** received £6.5m in funding from Historic England and an additional £6.6m in funding from other sources, thus bringing the total value of the projects to £13.1m. The average grant was £100k and the average project value was £202k.

Figure 4 Completed Repair Grants Programme projects, 2013/14 to 2017/18



Source: Historic England

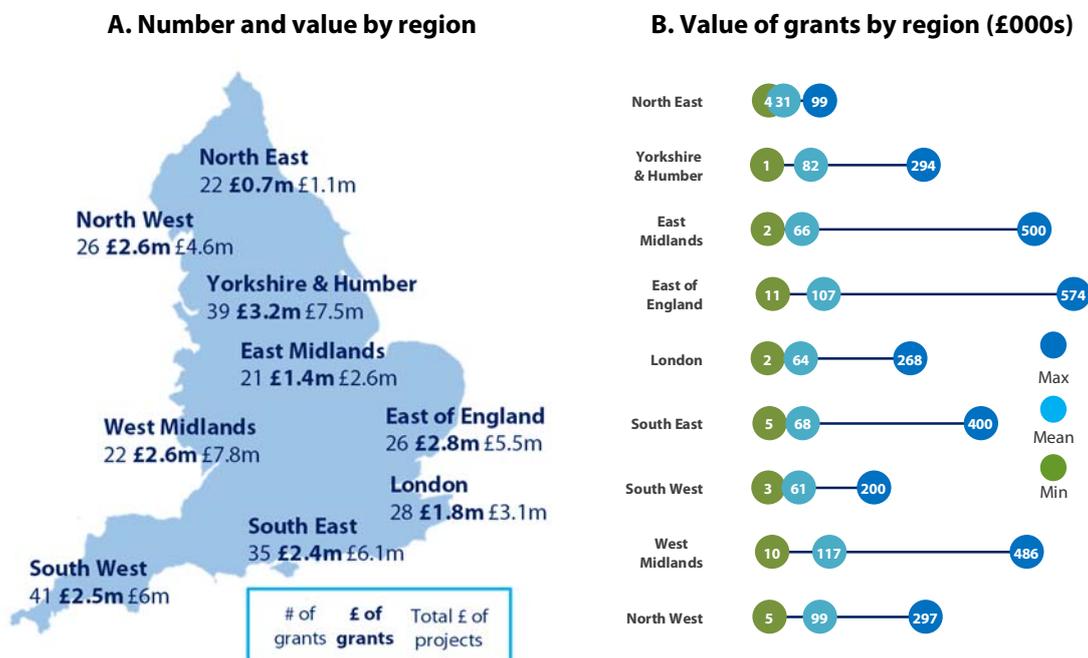
* Includes three site acquisitions funded with Historic England grants

3.2 Regional profile of grants

As noted above, the Repair Grants Programme supports heritage sites in all parts of England. Figure 5 provides a region-by-region breakdown of the total grants for the period, 2013/14 to 2017/18 (Panel A). It also presents statistics on the minimum, mean and maximum grant size in each region (Panel B).

Yorkshire & Humber accounted for the largest share of activity, with 39 projects, £3.2m in Historic England funding, and a total of £7.5m in project expenditures. The largest single grant was for £574k, and was awarded to Pentney Priory in the East of England. Sites in the East Midlands, South East and West Midlands were also awarded grants of £400k or more. The West Midlands displayed the highest average grant size: £117k.

Figure 5 Completed Repair Grants Programme projects*, by region, 2013/14 to 2017/18



Source: Historic England

* Includes, development, repair and two-stage projects.

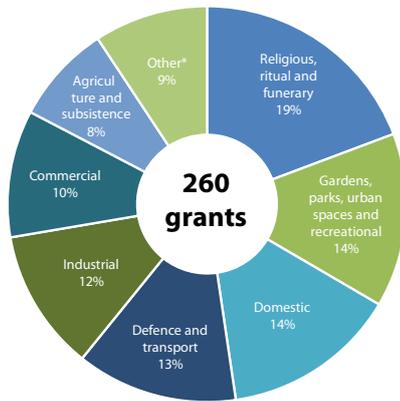
3.3 Types of supported sites and grantees

Between 2013/14 and 2017/18 the Repair Grants Programme supported a wide range of different types of sites and grantee organisations. Figure 6A provides a breakdown of grants by type of site. Religious, ritual and funerary sites grouping accounted for the largest single share of grants (19%). Among the sites in this grouping were several former priories that were on the HAR Register. There was, effectively, a broad distribution of the grants across all the main site types, including gardens, parks, urban spaces and recreational; domestic (e.g. manor houses); defence and transport; (e.g. castles); industrial; and commercial.

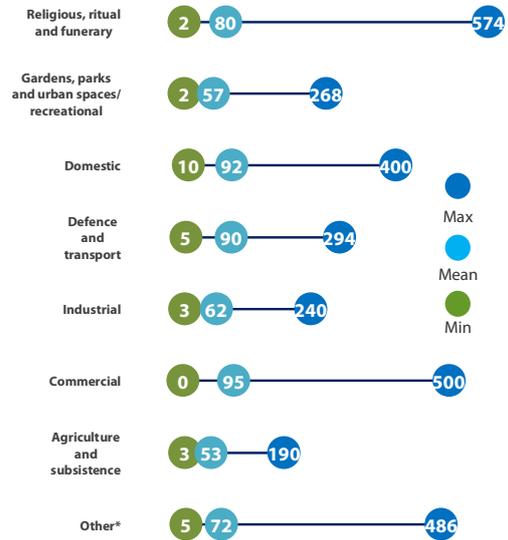
Figure 7A provides a breakdown of grants by the type of grant applicant – or effectively the owner of the site. Local authorities accounted for the largest single share of grants (27%), followed by private landowners (23%), and charities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The breakdown demonstrates how a broad range of different types of public, private and non-profit organisations have been able to access the Repair Grants Programme.

Figure 6 Completed Repair Grants Programme projects, by site type, 2013/14 to 2017/18

A. Number of projects



B. Value of grants (£000s)

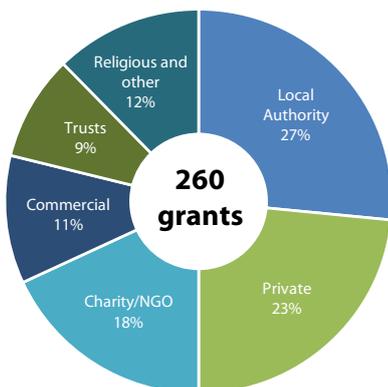


Source: Historic England

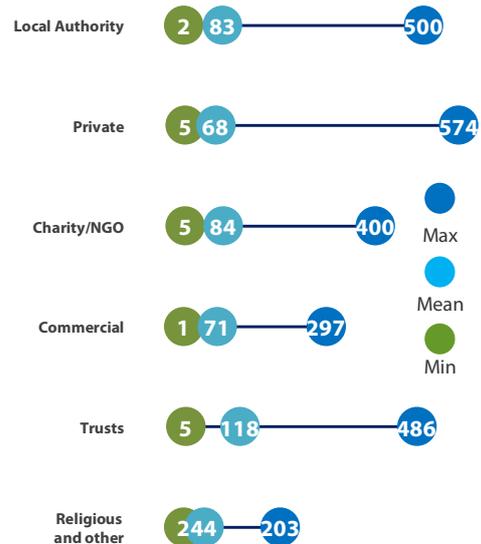
* Health and welfare, civil, maritime, education, commemorative, water supply and drainage

Figure 7 Completed Repair Grants Programme projects, by applicant type, 2013/14 to 2017/18

A. Number of projects



B. Value of grants (£000s)



Source: Historic England

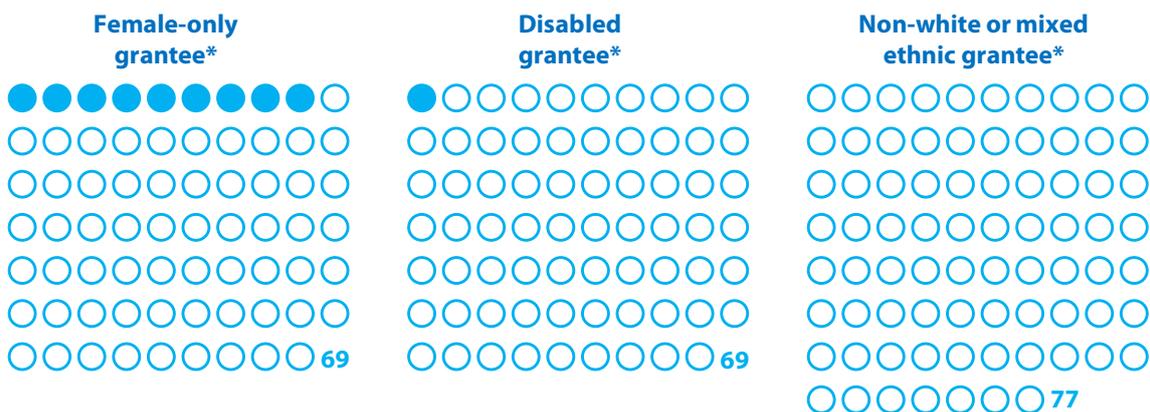
3.4 Diversity of grantees

Whilst there was a broad range of grantee types, there was very little diversity among grantees in terms of gender and certain other protected characteristics. The data in the Repair Grants application permitted us to identify grantees that were female-only (i.e. not including grants that listed both a female and male grant recipient, such as a wife and husband); self-identified as disabled; and self-identified as non-white or mixed ethnicity.

Our assessment of diversity was restricted to the two applicant types: (i) private individuals and (ii) commercial organisations (e.g. private limited companies). All of the other applicant types represented organisations (e.g. local authorities) where the diversity of the applicant would not necessarily be correlated with the diversity of the overall organisation.

Based on an analysis of the data for these two applicant types, we found that of the 69 grantees reporting their gender, only 9 (13%) were female only (Figure 8). Only one (1%) of the sixty-nine grantees self-identified as being disabled. And out of the 77 applicants that reported their ethnicity, not a single applicant (from the private and commercial applicant types) self-identified as non-white or of mixed ethnicity.

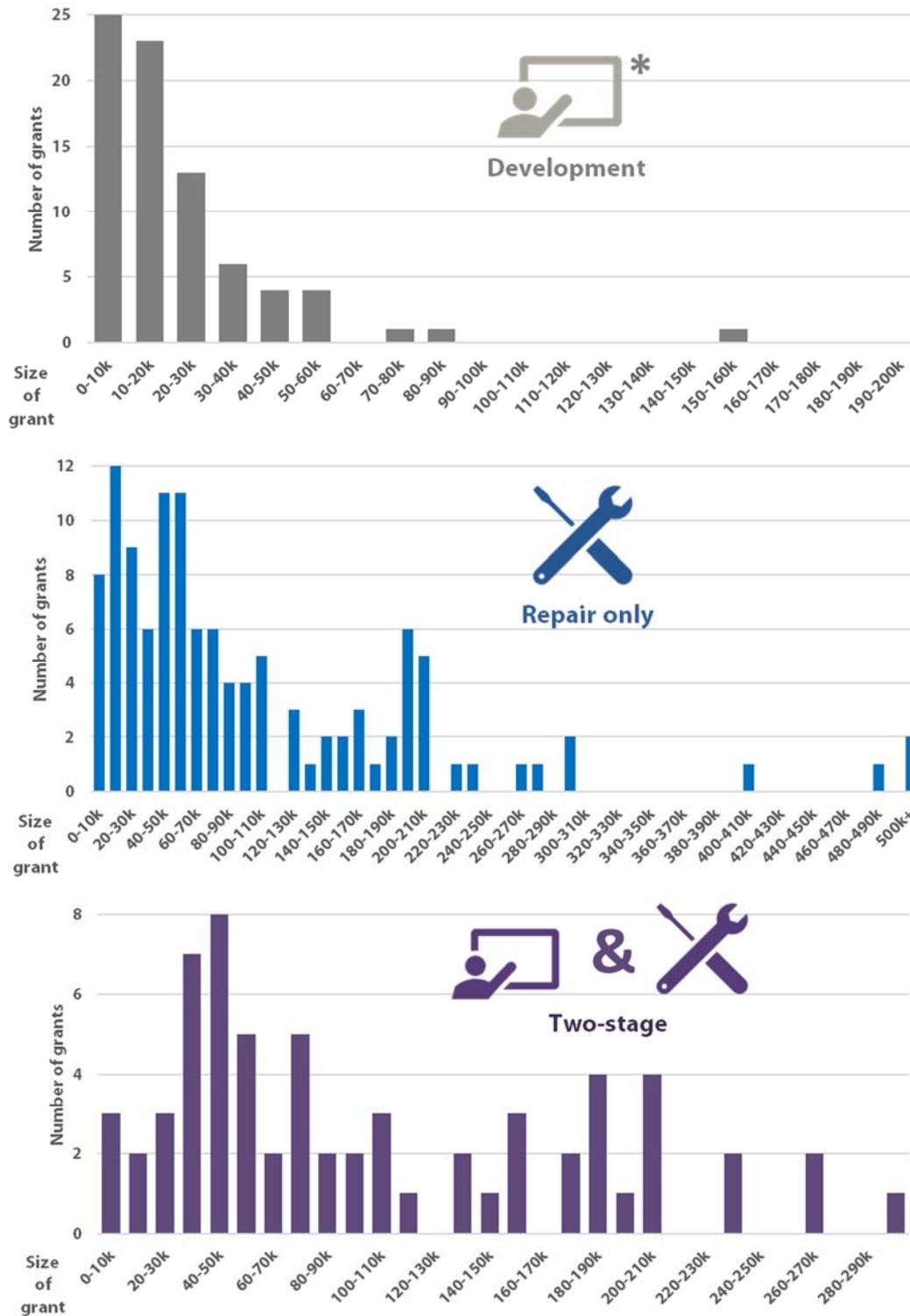
Figure 8 Diversity of grantees



Source: Nordicity/Saffery-Champness analysis based on data from Historic England
 * Based on the number of private and commercial applicants that reported application details

3.5 Frequency distribution of grants

Figure 9 presents the frequency distributions for the three streams of the Repair Grants Programme. For development projects – which have relatively smaller budgets compared to main repair projects – the vast majority of projects received grants of under £20k. The frequency distribution for standalone repair projects indicates that even though the average grant was approximately £100k, it was more common for grants to be in the £30k to £60k range. Another cluster of grants appeared around £200k. For two-stage projects, the average was also approximately £100k. However, as with the standalone repair grants, it was more common for grants to actually be in the £30k to £60k range, or around £200k.

Figure 9 Frequency distribution of Repair Grants Programme projects, 2013/14 to 2017/18


Source: Historic England

* Includes three site acquisitions funded with Historic England grants

4. Process review

4.1 Awareness and uptake of the programme

We started by looking at what Historic England has done to promote the Repair Grants Programme.

There is information on the Repair Grants Programme, and other Historic England grants, on the national Historic England website. The website explains that the Historic England's local offices handle applications to the grant scheme. It strongly recommends that potential applicants contact the relevant local office to discuss their project before they make an application. The website also contains links to the Guidance for Applicants, which contains detailed information about applying for a grant, and to the Application Form, both of which can be downloaded from the website.

"...for the past several years, all applications...have come through us encouraging an application. We contact those who we know will fit our regional priorities and who are on the risk register."

- Business manager

When we spoke to the business managers at Historic England's local offices, they confirmed that Historic England does not specifically promote or advertise the Repair Grants Programme. Instead, potential applicants are generally already in contact with Historic England officials as part of the wider HAR Programme. Repair Grants are considered as part of a wider discussion on the work required to secure a heritage site and the potential sources of funding for this. One local business manager said that all recent applications came following encouragement by Historic England. Essentially, Historic England's local

staff would contact sites that were on the HAR Register and fit the regional priorities. Other business managers said that that this route (i.e. encouraging applications as part of wider HAR discussions) accounted for 90-100% of their local offices' applications.

Figure 10 Sources of awareness of Historic England's Repair Grants Programme



Source: Grantee survey 2018. n=83; margin of error = +/-7.2%.

Survey question: How did you first become aware that your heritage site was eligible to receive a grant from Historic England?

Note: Choices receiving zero responses: HE leaflet of other publication, from another grant-giving body (e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund), from a trade body or sector-wide organisation (e.g. Historic House), Internet search, Gov.uk, heritage sector publication.

This situation was confirmed by successful grant applicants. The survey of grantees indicated that 55% first became aware of the Repair Grants Programme from an official in one of Historic England's local offices. In terms of more general promotion by Historic England, 7% of applicants found out about the programme from the Historic England website but none of those surveyed said that they found out about the programme from a leaflet or publication. Some Historic England officials did suggest that there could be more effective promotion targeted at owners of HAR sites or through the Historic England blog or social media pages and this may be a fruitful area to explore in the future.

Interestingly, one grantee said that they first became aware of the programme when they saw a feature on the local television news, showing that local publicity about grant schemes can be effective in reaching new applicants. In fact, one grantee suggested publicising the grants more widely so that other applicants could benefit.

"It would be helpful to publicise these grants more openly where appropriate so others will benefit from successful case studies and best practice."

- Grantee

In July 2018, the Cabinet Office published [Government Functional Standard for General Grants Guidance](#) ("Grants Guidance"). The Grants Guidance contains guidance on grant schemes and is aimed at both government departments and their arm's length bodies. It promotes effective grant making, and helps to ensure that taxpayers' money, awarded through grants, is properly agreed and spent. The Grants Guidance sets out ten standards for grant making. The fifth standard covers competition for funding and states that "Government grants should be competed by default".

The Grants Guidance recommends that an important stage in the grant process should be "Market Engagement". The guidance explains that:

This stage of grant making process serves to support the development of an active pool of applicants, as well as ensuring that the grant is publicised and the opportunity made available to the right potential recipients, leading to healthy and appropriate competition for funding and delivering cost-effective outcomes. The benefits of appropriate competition have been clearly proven to outweigh the costs of competition and should be supported throughout the grant making process.¹²

In practice, staff in the Historic England's local offices work together to prioritise projects so that the Repair Grant process is carefully targeted at priority projects identified by local staff. According to business managers, the programme rarely receives ad hoc applications. In fact, the local offices use their monthly regional grants meetings to present proposed projects and prioritise their engagement

"It is entirely counter-productive to invite hundreds of unsolicited, ineligible and low priority applications, process them, and then have to reject the majority."

"...[the current process] minimised ineligible applications and unnecessary processing but could be risking not reaching all eligible and most needed cases."

- Business manager

with sites – i.e. decide which sites to engage with. As a consequence, the programme does not currently include active market engagement and there is consequently a lack of competition for grants.

In order to ensure more fair and open competition for public funds, Historic England needs to consider how to promote wider awareness and uptake of the programme by eligible sites. Historic England officials recognise this problem, but some have concerns about the idea of advertising and promoting the Repair Grants Programme more widely.

¹² Cabinet Office (2018), [Guidance: Government Functional Standard for General Grants](#), p. 5.

There was a widely shared concern that wider promotion would lead to more applications that were either of poor quality, lower priority or not eligible. There was also understandable concern that there would be insufficient capacity in terms of staff time and resources to be able to manage an increased number of grant application.

However, some Historic England officials suggested that targeted promotion, through wider Historic England channels or using intermediaries, would be a good way to promote the programme to eligible applicants and achieve a greater degree of competition.

Grantees that responded to the survey seem to confirm this: 10% of them said that they first became aware of the programme through other heritage professionals such as accountants, architects or contractors. A further 8% found out about the programme from a local authority. Surprisingly, none of the grantees surveyed said that they found out about the programme from other grant givers, trade bodies, sector-wide organisations or from heritage sector publications. So, there may be a need to raise awareness of the grant scheme amongst these related organisations.

Also, in order to manage any potential increase in applications, Historic England could consider introducing a brief two-step process – such as an initial expression-of-interest (EOI) stage or the short project enquiry form that the NLHF has used for its Our Heritage grant fund (grants from £10,000 to £100,000). This would allow a formal process to consider projects in brief at an early stage and reject any that were not eligible.

“We could certainly target the promotion of our grant schemes more effectively – ensuring Local Planning Authorities, regeneration organisations, Building Preservation Trusts, conservations professionals etc, know more about them and our priorities.”

- Business manager

Recommendations

- 1. As part of the ongoing HAR Programme, local Historic England offices should promote the Repair Grants programme more widely, aiming that promotion at all eligible at-risk sites on the HAR Register and working with other professionals and organisations.**
- 2. Historic England should consider introducing a two-step application process to manage any increase in applications so that initial enquiries can be considered quickly and assessed for eligibility.**

Following on from this, we explored whether the Repair Grants Programme was reaching the most at-risk and highest-priority sites on the HAR Register.

“Other providers of grants are less likely to fund at such an early stage.”

- Business manager

Local Historic England business managers felt that the nature of the way in which the scheme works in practice, as part of ongoing discussions with sites on the HAR Register, means that officials are able to target the scheme towards encouraging applications from the highest-priority sites.

Some pointed out that the most at-risk sites are not necessarily the ‘highest-priority’. By their very nature, sites that are eligible for Repair Grants funding (e.g. sites that are on the HAR Register and are Grade I or II* listed) are both important and at risk.

However, some of the relatively smaller or less significant heritage sites might be more at risk in terms of needing urgent repairs to stabilise their condition. One such mentioned benefit of the Repair Grants

Programme is that it can be responsive to these urgent needs and address sites that are in imminent danger. Because Historic England seeks out and engages with buildings at risk, rather than reactively waiting for applications, it fills a gap in the funding landscape.

“HE funding helps, often where no other funding can.”

“The Repair Grants Programme is very helpful in that it confirms the Heritage value of the site and encourages other funders to engage.”

“Without the HE grant there was a real risk that the building would be lost.”

“The grant was helpful in enabling us [to] secure the building so future longer terms plans and sources of funding could be explored to fully restore the site and bring it back into beneficial use.”

- Grantees

Grants funding because of the scale or complexity of the work needed or because the site itself would not meet the eligibility criteria. In these cases, it is more appropriate for Historic England to work with the sites and signpost them to other funding options.

Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2018, 230 unique heritage sites completed Repair Grants projects with the support of 260 individual grants. As a (direct or indirect) result of the Repair Grants Programme, 185 sites have been removed from the HAR Register; the other 45 sites were not on the HAR Register to begin with. This is a tribute to the success of the programme but also means that the remaining sites are trickier to tackle. As one local business manager put it, most of the ‘low hanging fruit’ have now received grants and their future has been made secure. Many of the remaining sites on the HAR Register raise challenges that are more difficult and time-consuming.

Some suggested that consideration should be given to opening up eligibility of the Repair Grants Programme to a wider range of sites, such as other Grade II listed buildings that are ‘at risk’. This does, however, present problems in terms of both resources and priorities. A broader grant programme would mean more applications, creating greater demands on the time of the teams in local offices and the need for more careful prioritisation between grants.

Also, the reputation of Historic England means that its grants are seen to add credibility to a project and provide reassurance to other funders. Historic England funding can, therefore, be crucial in leveraging funding from other larger grant givers. This was confirmed in the survey where 56% of respondents said that the grant for repairs from Historic England was important in enabling them to obtain funding for other works from other sources (Figure 19). For development grants, 65% said that Historic England’s funding was important for obtaining funding for other works from other sources (Figure 15). The Repair Grants Programme has an important role as a first funder and a funder of last resort. The importance of the Repair Grants Programme was reiterated in comments from applicants.

Conversely, some relatively larger or more significant sites might not be suitable for Repair

“...[those applications that are made] require a lot of hand-holding and chivvying.”

“Very often the task is to persuade an owner to make a grant application”

“Above all, the time might therefore be approaching for HE to consider promoting the scheme more widely or opening up the grant scheme to a wider range of projects.”

- Business managers

Recommendations

- 3. Historic England should retain the existing eligibility criteria for the Repair Grants Programme but should keep this under review and consider extending the scheme in the future.**

4.1 Operations and management

A comprehensive set of Desk Instructions has been developed for the Repair Grants Programme. These run to a total of 106 pages, consisting of a Pre-application Advice Note, a Workflow Guide and a Reference Document. The desk instructions are simplified into two flow charts showing the pre-application to decision phase and the implementation to post-completion phase.

[re: desk instructions]

"...large gaps and a good deal of ambiguity"

"...don't drill down far enough"

"...don't have enough detail"

"...sheer volume and complexity [is] scary"

- Business managers

In addition, there is a series of Engagement, Grant Assessment and Prioritisation (EGAP) forms. There are five EGAP forms (A to E) that cover each stage of the application process and are completed by the officer handling the application as it progresses. The EGAP forms are used to assess other Historic England grants (not just Repair Grants) so there is separate guidance on these.

There are also other supporting documents referred to in the Desk Instructions which form part of the assessment and case-handling process. These include Risk Assessment Forms, File Completeness Form, Grant Authorisation Form and Financial Need Assessment Desk Instructions.

Local business managers had mixed views on the value and user-friendliness of the Desk Instructions.

Most business managers believed that updated advice was needed in some areas and that, in particular, the various paper and digital guidance and systems should be more closely aligned. The general conclusion was that there needs to be more flexibility and that a simpler and more integrated digital application processing and guidance system would be more user-friendly.

More complex cases can be referred to the Advice Group or the Grant Advice Panel (GAP). Some referrals are triggered because of the scale of the grant or because they are novel or contentious cases. Case handling officers also have the option of seeking advice on individual cases where they have other specific questions.

"Mismatch between the experience of actually running grants on the ground and drafting policy guidance and instructions."

- Business manager

The Advice Group and GAP are seen as valuable sounding boards and sources of advice but their use varies between local offices. In some areas an estimated 5% to 10% of cases are referred for advice while other local areas estimate that this is as high as 50%. These differences may be accounted for by the different average size or complexity of grants in different local areas. Or it may be that some local offices have come over time to rely more on seeking external advice to validate decisions as a matter of course. There was support for the idea of developing a database of 'case-law' with details of novel and contentious cases that could be used in the future to support decision-making at a local level.

Recommendations

4. **Desk instructions should be simplified.**
5. **Desk instructions should be brought into line with the ConcaseGIS system and the EGAP form so that there is a single, seamless digital process.**

The Repair Grants are primarily for urgent repairs or other work required to address risk by preventing loss of or damage to important architectural, archaeological or landscape features. Historic England states that the outcome of every project should therefore be the protection of the significance of the site.

The grant process begins by assessing all applications to check whether they meet the published eligibility criteria for the grant scheme. Eligible sites include:

- a scheduled monument
- a building listed at Grade I or II*
- a building listed at Grade II and within a conservation area or a London borough
- a park or garden registered at Grade I or II*
- a park or garden registered at Grade II and within a conservation area or a London borough
- an unlisted building of significant historic or architectural interest and within a conservation area or a London borough

In addition, applicants must also be able to show that:

- the project is for eligible repair or development work
- the project has financial need for a Historic England grant

Lastly, some types of projects are normally ruled out of the Repair Grants Programme because they are catered for by other schemes, such as those for public places of worship or war memorials.

For those applications that do meet the eligibility criteria, Historic England then assesses:

- the work which is needed
- how best the project would be carried out to achieve the necessary outcomes
- the amount of grant needed

This is done through discussions with the applicant, professional advisors and colleagues within Historic England.

Historic England's guidance also explains that:

We are not always able to offer a grant to every eligible project. We therefore also gauge how well projects meet our grant priorities.¹³

Historic England sets out that these priorities are:

- Significant elements of the historic environment at risk; and

¹³ Historic England (2015), [Repair Grants for Heritage at Risk: Guidance for Applicants](#), p. 2.

- Activities that strengthen the ability of the sector to reduce or avoid risk to the historic environment by understanding, managing and conserving.

By definition, all eligible applications are from sites that are both 'significant' and 'at risk'. This means that, in theory, it would be difficult to apply these priorities to decide between competing applications. However, as most applications come following substantial, previous discussions with Historic England officials, prioritisation is seldom an issue in practice. The informal pre-application process means that the number of applications is closely managed and matched to the funding available.

Applications are normally successful and are rarely refused, once they have reached the full application phase.

Prioritisation is, in practice, currently being done in a relatively informal way at the pre-application phase, as most applications that are encouraged to progress to a full application are subsequently approved. It might therefore make sense to place a stronger emphasis on formal assessment and

prioritisation at the pre-application stage and for there to be clearer guidance developed for this stage.

"...[there is] possibly a need to revise the Desk Instructions and EGAP to include the pre-application checklist and a record of discussions."

- Business Manager

One business manager raised the idea that these pre-application discussions should be more formally recorded. Alternatively, as recommended above, Historic England could consider introducing a brief two-step process. This would be particularly important to manage the workload, if the quantity of applications were to increase.

"[there is] sufficient budget and resources for our grants"

"We haven't rejected a grant since 2013."

- Business managers

Recommendations

6. Pre-application guidance should be strengthened to allow for greater assessment and genuine prioritisation between competing projects at an early stage.

At present, the priorities for the Repair Grants Programme focus on the heritage value and need of the potential grantee's project. However, Historic England is aware that, as well as the heritage benefits of Repair Grants, this funding for repairs often also helps to achieve wider social and economic impacts. These are currently seen as desirable but not essential 'spin-off' benefits. The Guidance for Applicants states that:

You will need to think about the heritage benefits your project will bring, such as providing training and development for conservation skills at a professional or craft level. Your project may also have wider benefits for your community and the wider public, such as by providing social or educational activities or by providing employment opportunities or accommodation for rent. It is worth considering whether your project makes use of opportunities that might not arise again.¹⁴

However, these wider benefits are not considered as part of the application process and the programme does not, therefore, assess the value of these additional benefits.

¹⁴ Historic England (2015), [Repair Grants for Heritage at Risk: Guidance for Applicants](#), p. 8.

Some other funders take a more mixed approach. For example, NLHF describes 14 potential outcomes that they want their grants to make in three areas - to the heritage, people and communities (see [Appendix F](#) which describes 'The Difference We Want to Make'). NLHF applicants are not expected to contribute towards all of the nine outcomes, but NLHF does ask projects to demonstrate how they will achieve a minimum of one or two outcomes (depending on the grant scheme). Some of the outcomes are weighted to give them greater priority for different schemes.

"We shouldn't go down the same path as HLF and expect that every project can have a wider community aspect."

- Business manager

Some Historic England officials warned against this approach. In particular, business managers pointed out the value of the Repair Grants Programme associated with its ability to 'step in quickly' and its ability to support projects in which the public benefit is less immediately obvious, thereby, making them ineligible for support from other funders.

We recognise this unique role played by the Repair Grants Programme, and so, applications should not necessarily be precluded if they do not bring other benefits. However, we believe that, alongside their undoubted heritage benefits, there is scope to consider the wider potential social and economic impacts of funding where appropriate. This is particularly important in the current environment, whereby Historic England is developing its PVF and working to align its activities, and funding programmes to demonstrate how they are delivering its objectives. Before this could be done, business managers explained that there would need to be further research and analysis at a national level to be able to define exactly what the wider benefits being sought were and how these could be measured. The application form would also need to be revised to capture these wider potential social and economic benefits.

Recommendations

- 7. As well as heritage significance and risk, applications should also be assessed on the added social and economic benefits that they might bring, in order to align them more closely with Historic England's PVF.**
- 8. To enable more effective prioritisation, a weighted assessment and scoring system should be used, including the range of historic-environment, social and economic benefits, which could become the basis of comparing and ranking applications in the future.**

4.2 The application experience

The survey of grantees looked at whether they felt that the application process was transparent, fair and efficiently run and whether they felt that they received useful and helpful guidance from Historic England officials. Overall, 95% of those responding to the grantee survey thought that the advice and guidance they received from Historic England before they submitted their application was either very helpful or somewhat helpful (Figure 11). Advice received after they submitted their application was also rated highly, with 93% of respondents saying that it was either very helpful or somewhat helpful.

Pre-application advice was seen as a crucial part of the process, helping to shape the scope of projects and guide applicants, many of whom would have been new to the world of making complex funding applications. Such advice helps to identify the most at-risk elements of projects, identify other funding sources and determine what the desired outcomes will be. This early and comprehensive advice means that very few projects progress to a full application and are then rejected. Indeed, many of those grantees responding to our survey commented on the importance of Historic England's advice and guidance.

Most applicants rated the application process highly and 74% agreed that the application form was simple to use (Figure 12). Applicants also generally thought that the information requirements were reasonable and 82% agreed that the information required was appropriate and proportionate.

"Good to have someone to guide you through the process."

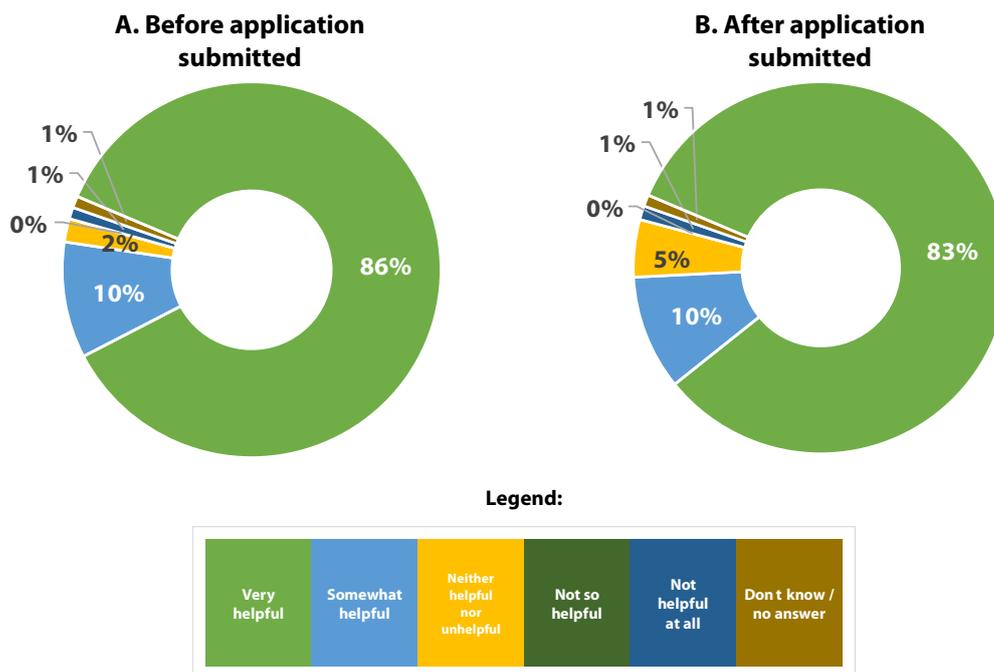
"HE were very helpful."

"The application process and advice given from the staff made the submission very straightforward."

"Historic England officer[s] have been very supportive within this grants system this itself make[s] the grant process a lot easier than other[s] available."

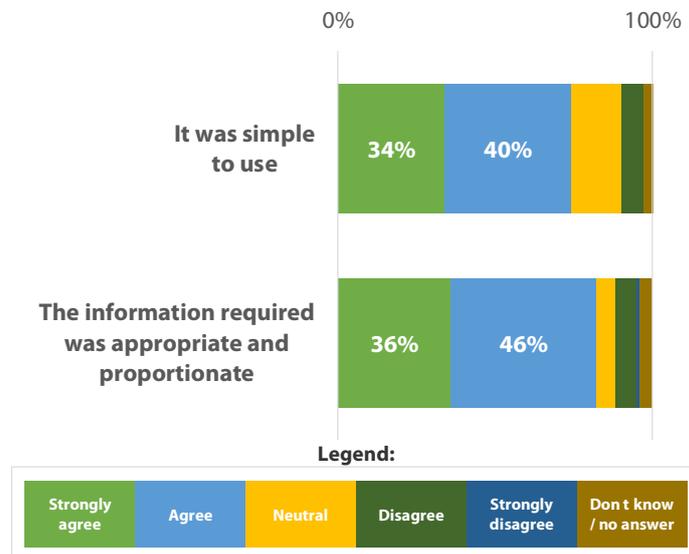
- Grantees

Figure 11 Advice and guidance before and after application submission



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=83; margin of error = +/-5.0%

Question: How helpful was the advice and guidance you received from officials at Historic England?

Figure 12 Application form


Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=83; margin of error = +/-7.2%

Question: How would you rate the application form for the Repair Grants Programme?

This high approval rating was confirmed by the generally positive comments about the application form. That being said, several grantees suggested that the form should be available to complete online. The application form can now be downloaded from Historic England’s website as a MS Word or PDF document and text can be entered and submitted electronically. However, a fully integrated online application form that linked to the single, seamless digital process recommended above would simplify the system for both applicants and Historic England staff.

Grantees also held positive impressions of the clarity and transparency of the application process. Approximately 90% agreed that Historic England’s staff and documentation clearly communicated the Repair Grants Programme’s eligibility criteria (Figure 13). Similarly, 89% agreed that Historic England clearly communicated the assessment criteria for being awarded a grant; and 82% agreed the time required for grant approval was clear from Historic England’s written and verbal communications.

“Much too long, much too bureaucratic”

“Cut the ridiculous red tape”

- **Grantees**

A small proportion of respondents to the survey thought that the application process was too onerous. As noted above, Historic England staff recognise that the process can be daunting, especially for smaller applicants and private owners and it is for this reason that Historic England staff work hard to support and guide applicants. However, as always, there is a balance to be struck in ensuring value for money when allocating public funding as grants.

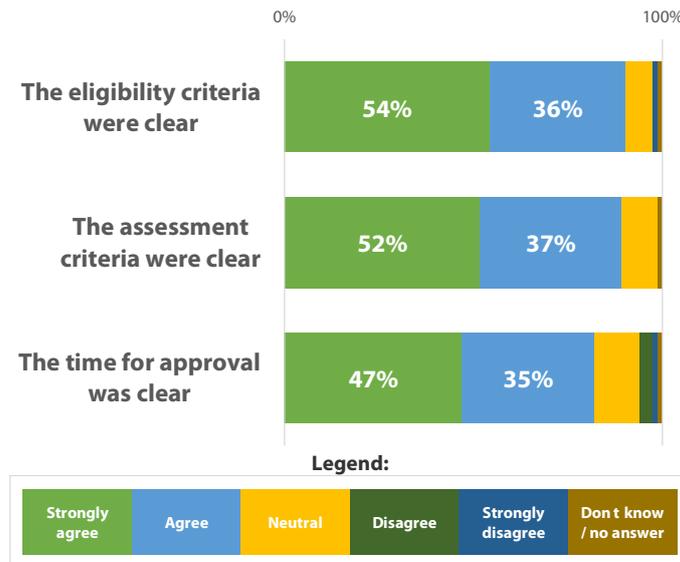
We looked at the external targets that Historic England set for processing applications. The Historic England website and *Guidance for Applicants* sets the following two targets for the Repair Grants Programme:

- *We aim to tell you our decision within six months of receiving a complete application. Complex or large projects may take longer to assess, so we advise you to contact us as early as possible when planning your project.*

- *If we find that your project is not eligible for a grant under this scheme, we will let you know in writing within four weeks of receiving your application, explaining why.*¹⁵

These are sensible targets that give applicants an indication of how long the application process is likely to take. Other funders also set targets for application processing. For example, the NLHFs Sharing Heritage, Our Heritage and Resilient Heritage grant fund programmes all indicate that they aim to make funding decisions within eight weeks.

Figure 13 Application process



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=83; margin of error = +/-7.2%

Question: How would you rate the clarity of the advice and guidance – written and verbal – you received during the application process?

Historic England does not specifically collect information on processing times, so it is not possible to monitor performance against these targets. They are seen more as something to aim for rather than a target that is monitored and reported on. Several Historic England officials emphasised that, because of the variety and complexity of projects, it is very hard to set general targets for processing applications. However, there are advantages in monitoring and reporting against these two targets to be able to assess how long applications are actually taking to process and to compare these results against other benchmarks (including internal comparisons between local offices and between different size and type of applications, and against the performance of other funding bodies).

The Desk Instructions also include a series of internal targets to guide case-handling officers. There are a total of eight targets covering each stage of the application process. These targets are listed in the table below.

¹⁵ Historic England (2015), p. 13.

Internal targets for Repair Grants case officers

1. Target timeframe for checking and logging the grant application and completing EGAP Form C: **2 weeks (10 working days)**
2. Target timeframe for production of Historic England report: **6 weeks (30 working days)**
3. The target timeframe for assessment of the grant application following the completion of the Historic England report to the issue of the grant offer (or rejection letter) is **4 weeks (20 working days)**. This may be longer if referral to the GAP is required.
4. The target timeframe for this assessment [of the draft tender documents] is **4 weeks (20 working days)**.
5. The target timeframe for the business officer's initial checking and review of the project development submission is **2 weeks (10 working days)**.
6. The target timeframe for assessment of the project development submission is **4 weeks (20 working days)**. If the stage two offer involves an enhancement, then it is expected that this stage will take longer.
7. The target timeframe for completion of the Risk Assessment (R2) form, confirmation of the payment plan and sending out the stage two offer is **2 weeks (10 working days)**.
8. The target timeframe for assessing and processing the final payment claim is **2 weeks (10 working days)**.

Again, these target times provide a helpful guide to the likely timescale at different stages of the application process. However, as with the external targets, they are not monitored or reported upon and therefore have a limited use in terms of management. Proper monitoring and reporting would allow HE management teams to identify potential problems, backlogs or blockages and allocate resources to tackle these.

Recommendations

9. **External targets for application processing should be monitored and reported against.**
10. **Internal targets for application processing should be monitored and used for management purposes.**

4.3 Post-completion monitoring

Historic England's local offices write to grantees once a year to request post-project monitoring information. Local offices experience three main problems in carrying out this post-project monitoring.

Firstly, some grantees are slow to return information and others do not respond at all to requests for information. This varies by area, with some local offices reporting a near 100% response rate while others estimate that an average of 75% of returns are submitted. Many local offices reported that the initial request for information elicits relatively few responses (perhaps only 50%), with further reminders in writing needed. Some local offices then follow up the remaining 'stragglers' with a phone call or e-mail request and those local offices are generally the most successful in achieving a high proportion of responses.

The second issue that Historic England's local offices face is that, at the moment, grantees are only asked to provide a relatively narrow range of information. In particular, grantees are asked to confirm the continuing public-access arrangements and maintenance plans that were agreed as part of the grant conditions. This means that local offices have a limited ability to measure and demonstrate the true impact and value of the projects they have funded.

Lastly, local offices reported that they are not resourced to be able to visit sites regularly and confirm whether grantees are in practice complying with the public access requirements and maintenance agreements. Instead, they have to rely on self-reporting. In the past, Historic England conducted a sample of 'mystery shopper' visits to selected sites to confirm that public-access arrangements are as published and agreed but this is no longer done.

The Cabinet Office's Grants Guidance also includes a standard for Performance and Monitoring. It recommends that:

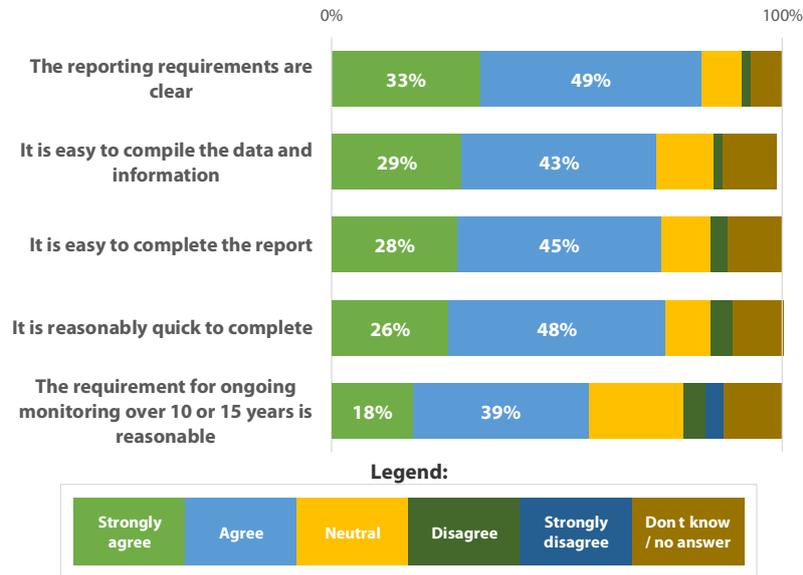
All government grants should have outputs agreed and longer-term outcomes defined, wherever possible, to enable active performance management, including regular reviews and adjustments where deemed necessary.¹⁶

At present, the Repair Grants process does not explicitly set out the wider outcomes that the funded projects are expected to achieve. By more clearly defining the range of benefits that projects will achieve, it should be possible to establish performance measures that can be agreed and monitored once the project is completed.

We have recommended that, in the future, Historic England should consider moving towards assessing applications on both their heritage significance and risk, and also on the social and economic benefits that they will bring. This would suggest that future monitoring of projects should also include the opportunity for grantees to report on how they have achieved these broader social and economic goals. Business managers also suggested that projects should end with a completion report. Such case studies would start to build a body of evidence that would be a useful resource and would over time allow better recognition and analysis of project impacts.

According to the results of the online survey, grantees find post-completion monitoring and reporting requirements to be reasonable. Approximately 82% of respondents agreed that the reporting requirements are clear (Figure 14); 72% agreed that it is easy to compile the data and information and 73% agreed that it was both easy and quick to complete the annual return. Approximately 57% agreed that the requirement for ongoing monitoring over 10 or 15 years is reasonable.

¹⁶ Cabinet Office (2018), p. 8.

Figure 14 Post-completion reporting


Source: Grantee survey 2018

n=82; margin of error = +/-7.3%

Question: How would you rate the annual reporting requirements that Historic England has placed upon you or your organisation?

At the moment, therefore, most grantees do not find monitoring requirements to be unduly onerous. If additional information is to be gathered in the future, then applicants may need additional support and guidance on how to monitor and report on these outcomes.

Recommendations

- 11. Local offices should consider an enhanced process for following up post-completion reports to achieve a higher level of returns.**
- 12. Grant awards and contracts should set out more explicitly the range of outcomes that projects are aiming to achieve.**
- 13. Post-completion monitoring reports should, in future, request additional information about the historic-environment, social and economic benefits that the grant funding has helped to achieve.**

5. Impact evaluation

5.1 Overview

In the following section, we analyse how well the Repair Grants Programme performed in relation to the outcomes and impacts in the programme logic model – a copy of which can be found in [Appendix A](#). We begin with an assessment of development projects' outcomes achievement, followed by an assessment of how the repair projects (including two-stage projects) generated historic-environment, social and economic benefits, in accordance with the programme logic model.

5.2 Development grants

As outlined in Section 1, in addition to the funding of repairs, the Repair Grants Programme also provides funding to organisations that have a need to commission specialist studies or surveys before engaging in actual repairs to their heritage asset. These types of grants are referred to as **development grants**, and can be used by grantees to pay for the professional fees associated with the preparation of: investigative surveys, conservation management plans, repair-procurement plans, repair-project drawings, or architectural, engineering or conservation reports.¹⁷ Development grants can also be used to pay the costs of erecting scaffolding or other temporary measures to prevent a structure from collapsing.¹⁸ In three cases, Historic England has also used development grants to assist an applicant to purchase an at-risk heritage site.

Between 2013/14 and 2017/18, Historic England awarded 78 development grants to 76 unique sites (See Section 3.1). It also funded an additional 65 development projects (64 unique sites) through its two-stage grants.

The preparatory or investigatory nature of development projects are such that they enable grantees to realise a follow-on objective. For example, the development work could improve the quality of planned repairs; help the grantee formulate a successful application for funding for repairs or conservation work; help the grantee identify local craftspeople for future procurement; or develop a repair plan that minimises the impact of those repairs on public accessibility to the site.

According to grantees, the development grants did play a very important role in increasing the quality of the repairs to their heritage asset. Approximately 63% of development grantees (i.e. grantees that only received a development grant) reported that the development grant played a 'very important' role in **increasing the quality of their repairs** (Figure 15); 79% reported that it was 'important'¹⁹ to **increasing quality of their repairs**.

As an example, the High Peak District Council received a development grant so that it could obtain specialist advice on the historical significance of the early 20th century ceiling paper found in the Assembly Room of the Buxton Crescent and the means to preserving it. This has proven to be a key element in the restoration of the Assembly Hall, which will be reserved for 60 days a year for community events.

Development grants also played relatively important roles in helping development grantees to both commission local services and craftspeople, and obtain funding from other sources (i.e. sources other than Historic England, such as the NLHF and other funders). Approximately 74% of development grantees reported that the development grants were either 'important' or 'very important' to their

¹⁷ Historic England (2015), *Repair Grants for Heritage at Risk: Guidance for Applicants*, p. 4.

¹⁸ Historic England (2015), *Repair Grants for Heritage at Risk: Guidance for Applicants*, p. 4.

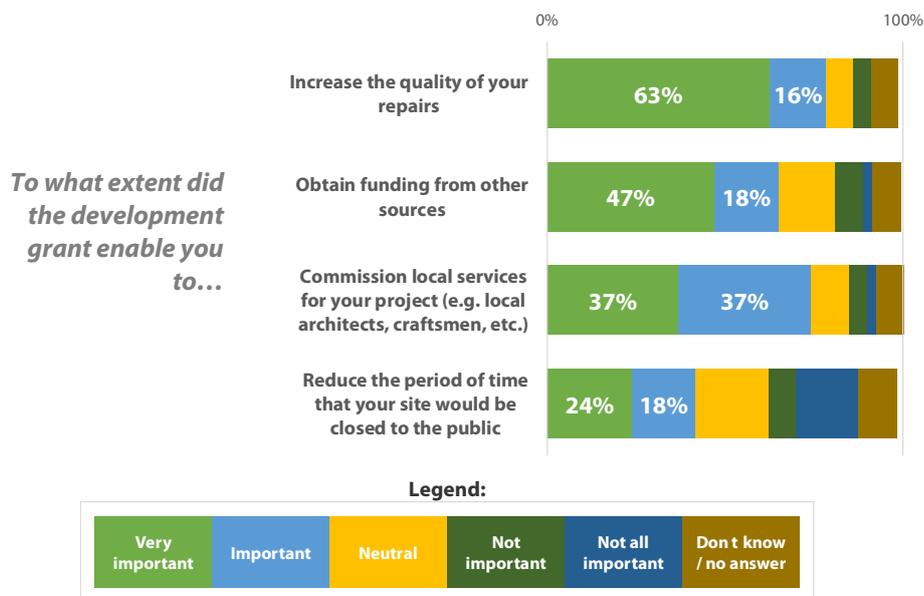
¹⁹ Throughout this section, the percentage of grantees reporting "important" refers to the sum of grantees reporting "important" or "very important".

ability **to commission local services and craftspeople**. Meanwhile, 65% of development grantees reported that development grants helped them **obtain funding from other organisations**.

Some grantees noted that the application process for funding from the NLHF can be very rigorous and competitive, given that larger funding amounts are usually in play. The development grant from Historic England gave these grantees the ability to engage specialists and collect more detailed information (e.g. through investigative surveys) that could directly help with their application to the NLHF and other funders.

For 42% of development grantees, the development grants helped them to **reduce the time that their site was closed to the public for planned repairs**. Priory House in Dunstable provides a specific example of this particular benefit. In 2016, Historic England awarded Dunstable Town Council a development grant of £35k to prepare a detailed study examining the condition of the clunch vaults in the 13th century undercroft within the Georgian-era Priory House and recommend feasible solutions to halt the undercroft’s structural decline. This study not only arrived at a coherent solution to the structural challenges posed by the undercroft put at risk by damp and a destabilised foundation, it also provided a plan to minimise disruption to the Priory House Tea Rooms, which use the undercroft as a seating area.

Figure 15 Enabling role of development grants



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=38; margin of error = +/-10.9%

The conservation of heritage assets often requires more than one-time repairs: ongoing care and maintenance are also needed. Several development grantees were able to use their funding from Historic England to produce conservation management plans or sustainability development plans, which gave these grantees clear long-term direction for preserving their heritage assets.

In some cases, development projects also go on to be repair projects funded through Historic England’s Repair Grants Programme or programmes offered by other funding bodies. According to the data from the survey, 63% of development grantees subsequently went on to receive funding for their repairs from Historic England (Figure 16).

Development grants play an important role in helping grantees engage specialists and gain a detailed understanding of the conservation issues, thereby, strengthening their ability to secure subsequent funding

"...enabled us to prepare accurate costs and carry out initial surveys so that as much information as possible was available to complete the grant applications to HLF..."

"...helped considerably with focusing our grant application to ensure it not only met Historic England's own strict funding criteria but also ensured we could also meet the funding criteria from other match funding sources..."

"We were able to assess the work required for a very problematical building and make sure the grade 2 [sic] listed building was restored to an appropriate standard."

"...used to carry out investigation into the structure of the house and provide an understanding [of the] scale of repair needed as well as how best to carry out the works. It enabled a thorough paint and plaster analysis along with some dendrochronology as well inspection of the external roof structure via scaffolding. We also facilitated a visit from the SPAB [Society of Protection of Ancient Buildings] scholars who spent the day studying the house."

"...enabled the Trust to agree a work programme and methodology and to obtain grant funding for emergency repairs to a structure which had become dangerous...provided an opportunity to display the ability to manage a project, which was useful in funding applications for a wider project on the site..."

"...enabled me to source the appropriate qualified people to ensure the project was completed to standard and in a timely manner..."

"A comprehensive management plan was produced to enable us to plan works for the next 10 years."

"...funding allowed us to put together a Sustainability Development plan that can be and is being used to seek further grant funding for the development of the historic site. The works has [sic] brought together all the aspects of the work required and an understanding of the significance of the work needed to restore the buildings."

"...grant was to finance a conservation accredited architect to obtain listed buildings consent to restore [site]..."

"...a vital catalyst both to enable the long term regeneration of the building make [sic] its first key steps...as well as giving us access to advice from HE's [Historic England's] professional staff..."

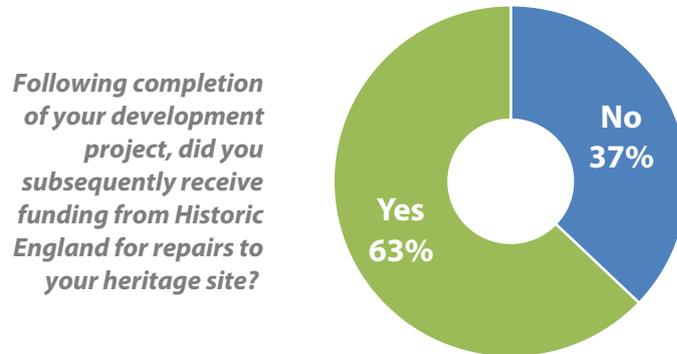
"...enabled us to fully understand and appreciate not just the actual restoration works that would be required to fully restore the [site]...but also the costed options..."

"...to development [sic] a holistic management plan for the site..."

"Helped us produce a comprehensive conservation management plan for the property, in turn assisting with decision-making and where to focus resources..."

"...development work enabled us the create a conservation plan that would remove the hazard [to the site] and allow access to the ruins..."

"...found that the project was unlikely to succeed."

Figure 16 Subsequent funding of development projects


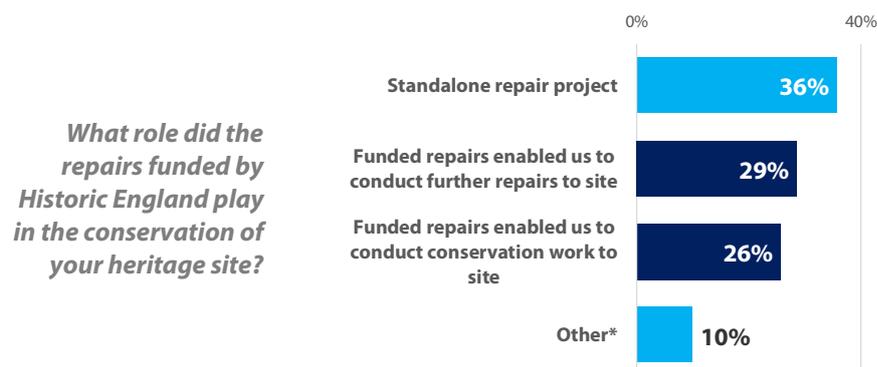
Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=38; margin of error = +/-10.9%

5.3 Repair grants enabling effects

Between 2013/14 and 2017/18, Historic England funded a total of 182 repair projects at 169 unique sites (see Section 3.1). This included 117 repair-only projects and 65 two-stage projects, which included both development and repair work.

The repairs funded by Historic England often play a role in larger repair or heritage conservation projects. This can mean that the Historic England project runs alongside conservation work supported by other funding bodies (e.g. NLHF) or precedes other conservation work. In this regard, the repairs funded by Historic England can have an enabling role much in the same way that development projects enable grantees to do repairs in the future – with or without funding from Historic England.

According to the survey, over 54% of repair projects funded by Historic England enabled grantees to conduct either further repairs or conservation work (Figure 17). This consisted of 29% of projects for which the funded repairs enabled the grantee to conduct **further repairs** to their site, and 26% of projects for which the funded repairs enabled the grantee to conduct **conservation work** to their site.

Figure 17 Nature of funded repairs


Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=70; margin of error = +/-7.3%

* Part of a series of repair projects conducted over time; change windows from a shop front back to cottage windows; repairs due to start in a few months; enabled emergency repairs as part of a larger phased repairs and conservation project.

Within the 'Other' response category – which accounted for 10% of repair projects – some of the grantees reported that their situations also displayed enabling effects. Approximately 36% of repair projects were considered standalone projects without any direct observable enabling effects.

5.4 Historic-environment benefits

At its core, the Repair Grants Programme is designed to have a positive impact on England's historic environment, by funding the urgent repairs of heritage assets so that they can be removed from the HAR Register. However, the benefits to the historic environment go well beyond this core objective. The repairs can also prevent loss or damage to a site's historically important architectural, archaeological or landscape features.

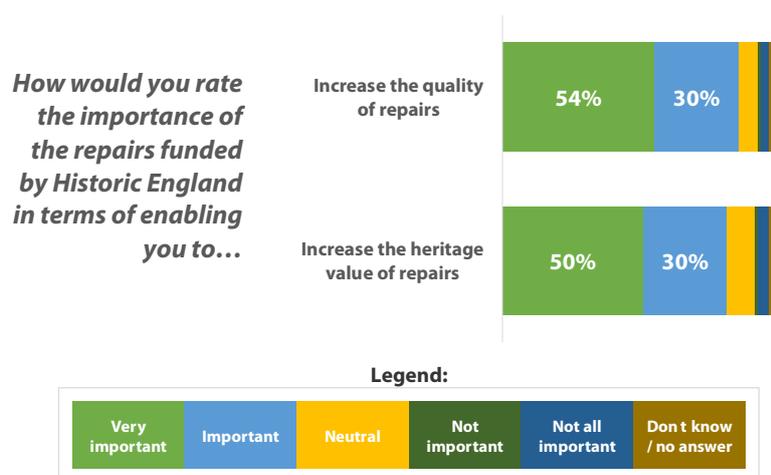
Funding from the Repair Grants Programme can also act as 'first-in money' that helps attract match funding from other organisations. In addition to the match funding for repair projects, the repairs completed with Historic England funding can lend significant credibility to a site, so that it is in a much stronger position to secure subsequent funding from NLHF or other funding bodies for more extensive conservation or regeneration works.

Through the development and repair projects funded by Historic England, grantees receive significant guidance and access to specialists. Their participation in the programme also compels them to develop long-term maintenance plans. And the actual repair works produce opportunities for local craftspeople to gain new skills, and England's conservation sector, in general, to gain valuable applied experience and knowledge.

According to the vast majority of grantees, repair grants were important to increasing both the quality and heritage value of repairs. Approximately 84% of grantees reported that repair grants were 'important' to **increasing the quality of repairs** (Figure 18). Just over two-thirds of grantees reported that the repair grants were 'very important' to the **increasing the quality of repairs**. This higher quality comes not only from the additional financial resources available from Historic England, but also from the advice and guidance provided by Historic England staff and by the external specialists introduced to grantees by Historic England.

Similarly, 80% of grantees reported that repair grants were 'important' to **increasing the heritage value of repairs**. Once again, the access to Historic England's guidance and advice and external specialists helps the grantee to develop repair solutions that maximise the preservation of the historical fabric of their heritage assets.

Figure 18 Impact on quality of repairs



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=70; margin of error = +/-7.6%

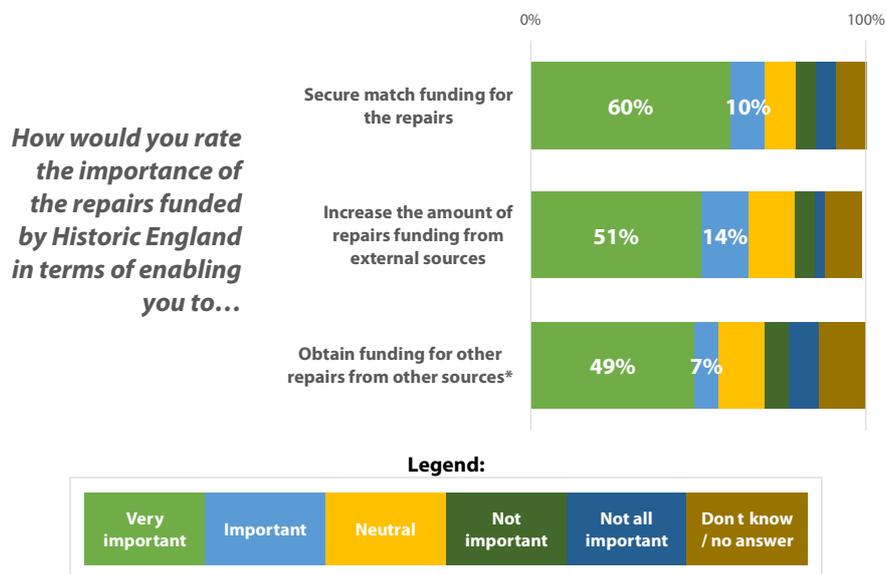
The majority of grantees reported that Historic England’s repair grants programme was important to their ability to not only obtain match funding, but also obtain more match funding than they would have otherwise obtained. Approximately 70% of grantees reported that repair grants were ‘important’ to **securing match funding** (Figure 19); 60% reported that they were ‘very important’. In fact, across the 260 projects included in this analysis, only 15 (6%) actually went ahead without some type of match funding.

The majority of grantees (65%) also reported that repairs funded through the Repair Grants Programme also helped to them to **increase the amount of repairs funding from external sources**. In other words, grantees were able to obtain more funding from third parties for the specific repairs funded by the Repair Grants Programme than in the absence of the grant from the programme. The Repair Grants Programme, therefore, not only helps grantees to obtain match funding, but more of it than they otherwise would.

The majority of grantees also reported that Historic England’s repair grants helped them to **obtain funding for other repairs from other sources** (i.e. sources other than Historic England). Approximately 56% reported that the repair grant was ‘important’ to obtaining funding from other sources for other repairs, with 49% reporting that it was very important (Figure 19).

The response to the question in Figure 19 reflects the all-important enabling role that the Repair Grants Programme plays in helping grantees obtain additional – and often significantly larger amounts of – funding from the NLHF and other funders. As noted elsewhere, several grantees described how Historic England’s repair grants stabilised their heritage structures, thereby, ‘buying time’ for them to successfully apply for funding from the NLHF and other organisations. It also gave them access to the specialist advice and surveys often required to assemble a successful application to NLHF and other funders. Grantees also reported that the repair grant gave their conservation projects the ‘added credibility’ needed to compete for other funding.

Figure 19 Enabling funding leverage



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=70; margin of error = +/-7.6%
 * E.g. National Lottery Heritage Fund

The Repair Grants Programme generates benefits for the historic environment by giving grantees access to expertise and advice, and opening up match funding and follow-on funding, so that they can rescue, restore and maintain at-risk heritage assets

"Saving the structure from its totally rundown state and restoring it to its former glory."

"...protected a Grade 2 listed building until it can be brought back into beneficial economic use."*

"...instrumental in saving [site] from irretrievable collapse and loss."

"...absolutely vital in pump priming good quality heritage conservation and re-use. "

"...enabled the Trust to move forward with a wider programme of works to restore and adapt the [site] for new use."

"The grant has allowed time to identify new occupiers and approach HLF [Heritage Lottery Fund] with a view to a more comprehensive scheme that will bring the building back into use."

"...major contributor in achieving our overall goal of bringing a derelict building back into economic use and an asset to the local community. It helped funding with from other funding agencies."

"The grant helped us secure additional funding (e.g. S106 planning offsetting), so that we could deliver the restoration...and have it removed from the Heritage at Risk Register. "

"The Historic England grant kicked off a series of incremental projects which greatly helped our profile and fundraising capacity and has led to an HLF bid."

"A comprehensive management plan was produced to enable us to plan works for the next 10 years."

"...enabled us to attract match funding as well as giving us access to advice from HE's [Historic England's] professional staff."

"Helped us produce a comprehensive conservation management plan for the property, in turn assisting with decision-making and where to focus resources on urgent repairs and renovations."

"...instrumental in the Trust obtaining further grant aid for emergency repairs and its long term restoration."

"HE [Historic England] funding helps, often where no other funding can."

"...alongside the direct financial contribution, [the Repair Grants Programme] gives other funders the confidence to support these vital works."

"...a very important programme which can kick start major projects by providing an early funding commitment for other funders and brings with it access to expertise."

"The major problem with HE/EH [English Heritage] grants is the percentage of the grant that needs to be spent on professional fees - architects and quantity surveyors. This reduces by up to 50% the actual amount of the grant used on the actual repair."

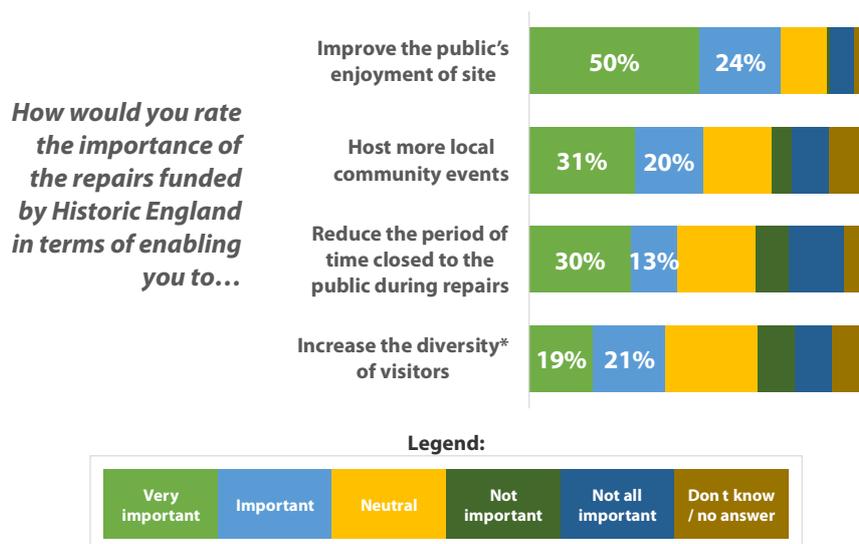
5.5 Social benefits

Extensive research shows that heritage assets and the historic environment can yield significant social benefits when individuals and communities are able to interact with them. Heritage assets can be sources of pride, identity and shared experiences.²⁰ They can give people a much stronger sense of their place in the world and a stronger feeling of familiarity and belonging, whilst inspiring learning and understanding of not only history but also science and other disciplines.²¹ Heritage assets also often act as focal points for bringing people together and connecting communities with their shared past.²²

At a very basic level, the repairs funded by Historic England ensure that many heritage assets can stay open to the public or be newly opened to the public. Indeed, a key condition of all repair grants is the requirement for public access. Numerous survey respondents described how Historic England's repair grants helped to make previously derelict buildings suitable and safe for public access. Indeed, many grantees noted that that Historic England's rapid provision of funding for emergency repairs helped to address situations that had become too dangerous for public access.

The public accessibility enabled by repair grants is consistent with the fact that 50% of grantees reported that repair grants were 'very important' to **improving the public's enjoyment of the historic site** (Figure 20). Nearly three quarters of grantees (74%) reported that repair grants were 'important' to improving the public's enjoyment of the site.

Figure 20 Impact on public access and community engagement



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=70; margin of error = +/-7.6%

*e.g. diversity of age, gender, ethnicity, race and other protected groups

In many cases, the public's enjoyment of the site was not simply due to access, but also included new interpretation materials. For about 43% of grantees, the repair grants also played a role in protecting public access by **reducing the period of time that a site would have to closed to the public due to repairs** (Figure 20). Approximately 40% of grantees reported that the repair grants were important in

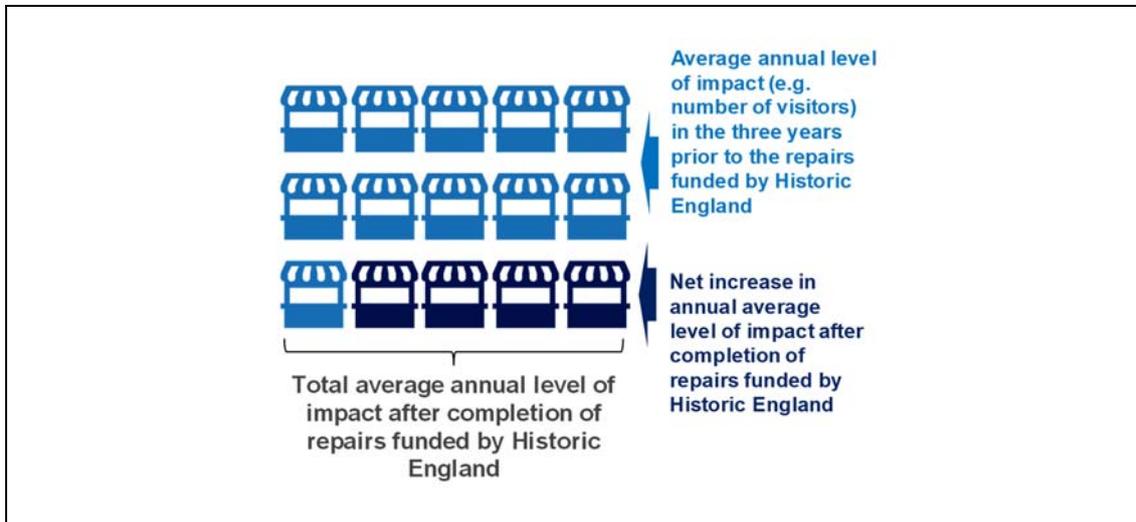
²⁰ Historic England (2018), [Heritage and Society 2018](#), p. 3.

²¹ Historic England (2018), [Heritage and Society 2018](#), p. 3.

²² Historic England (2018), [Heritage and Society 2018](#), p. 3.

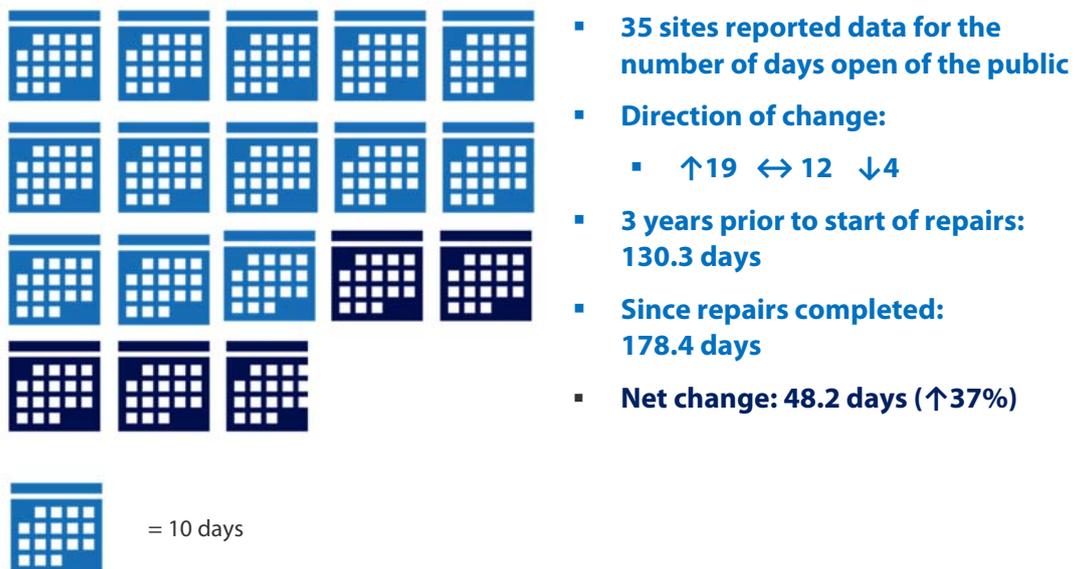
enabling them to **increase the diversity (e.g. diversity of age, gender, ethnicity, race and other protected groups) of their visitors.**

Box 2 Illustration of KPI infographic



The improved accessibility enabled by repair grants was also borne out in the KPIs. Out of 35 sites that reported data for the annual number of days open to the public, 19 (55%) reported an increase in the number of public-access days; 12 (34%) reported no change (Figure 21). Four sites (11%) actually reported that their number of public-access days actually decreased following Historic England repairs.²³

Figure 21 Impact of repair grants on the annual number of days open to the public



Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

²³ The decrease in public-access days could be due to the fact that a grantee's overall conservation project is not yet complete, and thereby, the site is not yet re-opened to the public. Further investigation is required.

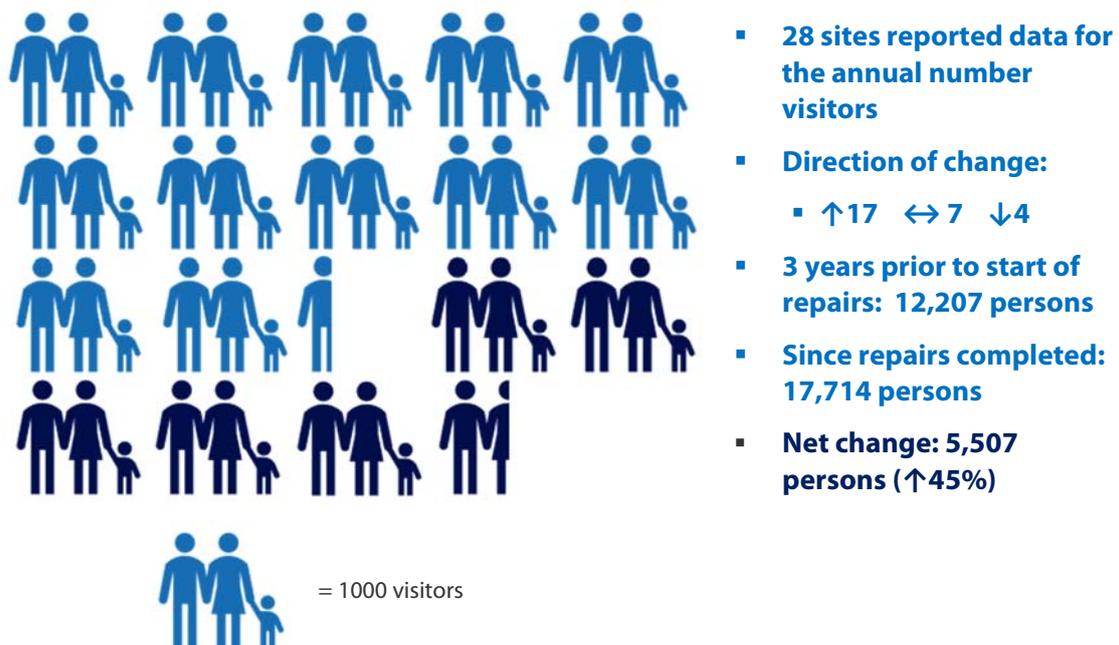
Across all 35 reporting sites, the annual average number of days open to the public increased from 130.3 before Historic England repairs (“pre-repair”) to 178.4 after the repairs (“post-repair”). In other words, public accessibility increased by an average of 48.2 days per year, or 37%.

This increase in accessibility translated into a significant increase in visitor numbers, according to the survey responses. Out of 28 sites that reported visitor data, 17 (61%) reported an increase in the annual number of visitors (Figure 22); 7 (25%) reported no change. Four sites (14%) actually reported a decrease in the number of visitors following completion of their repair-grant project.²⁴

Across the 28 sites reporting visitor data, the average annual number of visitors increased from 12,207 (pre-repair) to 17,714 (post-repair). This implies that the average annual number of visitors per site increased by 5,507 after the Historic England repairs – an increase of 45%.

Historic England’s support had an even deeper impact on the public’s involvement with sites, beyond enabling access. The repair grants had a very strong impact on the public’s perceptions and appreciation of heritage assets. Over half of grantees (51%) reported that the repair grants were very important to **increasing the public’s feeling that the site should be preserved for current and future generations** (Figure 23). And 81% of grantees reported that repair grants were important to increasing the public’s feeling about preservation of the site.

Figure 22 Impact of repair grants on the annual number of visitors to heritage sites



Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

²⁴ As with the number of public-access days, the decrease in the annual number of visitors to a heritage site could be due to the fact that a grantee’s overall conservation project is not yet complete, and thereby, the site is not yet re-opened to the public. Further investigation is required.

By making heritage assets safe or helping to launch larger restoration projects, the Repair Grants Programme has made sites accessible to visitors and suitable for a wide range of social and educational activities, whilst also restoring their place within local communities' social and historical fabric

"...made sure that we could make the structure accessible to the wider community so they could understand, appreciate and enjoy a unique heritage asset..."

"...due to its state of previous dereliction for many years, it had become a focus for antisocial behaviour, and detracted from the street scene. The repairs have enabled a new lease of life for this building, and has triggered considerable interest from residents in the town."

"...a first step in helping us to make the site safe and [sic] we work with Historic England and others to secure a long term future for the site. It has kick started this project and raised awareness of the site to local people..."

"The repairs will enable a site closed to the public for health and safety reasons to be open to visitors and the local community."

"The conserved ruins reawakened local interest in the site and greatly enhanced the appearance of the [site]. A local resident funded further restoration..."

"HE [Historic England] grant made a considerable contribution towards keeping this important historic building open to the public and by making it safe to enter..."

"The repairs enabled the Trust to move forward with a wider programme of works to restore and adapt the [site] for new use... The gardens and park are much safer and the Trust has been able to use the gardens to trial outdoor theatre, archery and other activities. It has also been able to increase the amount of volunteering on site and educational visits."

"...added an amenity to the village, which has been used by charity groups and for arts events."

"...helped the local and wider community to understand more about heritage, created employment, volunteering and education opportunities, created opportunities for sharing heritage through oral history recording, working with schools and colleges, local history and special interest groups."

"...able to put on more programs for the community to attend, because the building is in a much better condition."

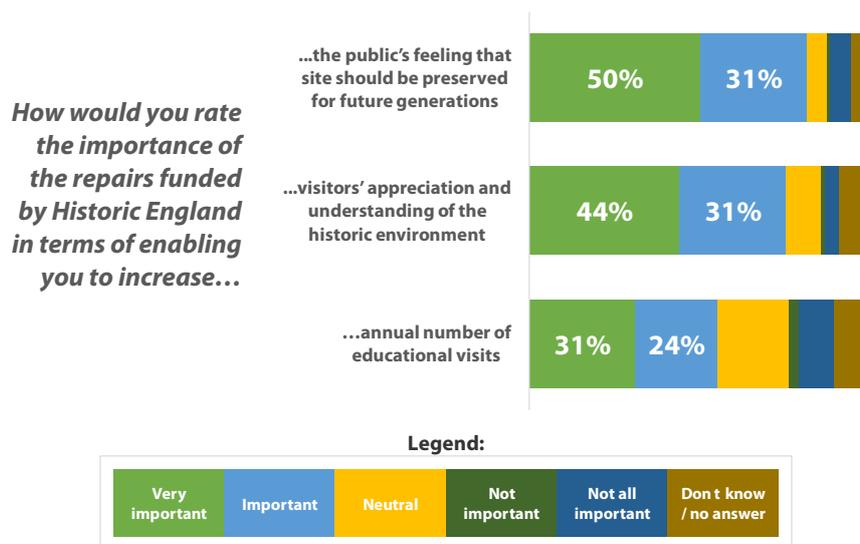
"These works form part of our wider programme of conservation and renovation, to safeguard the future of the [site] as a community arts space and heritage asset, used by [tens of thousands] people every year."

"...enable access to areas previously unsafe prior to restoration, to organise an outreach programme, and expand our education programme to include school groups from lower economic areas."

"...significantly improved both our and our local community's ability to access, experience and enjoy their local heritage"

This improvement in the public’s perception of the site has several related outcomes. By enabling access and conservation works, the repair grants raised the local population’s awareness of and interest in the affected heritage asset. This in itself is positive. But by helping to increase the public’s support for a particular heritage asset’s role in the community, the repair grant helped to open up other sources of funding for further conservation work – whether that be from NLHF, local authorities or other funding bodies. Being able to demonstrate how strongly the local population takes pride in a heritage asset and will support a conservation project is important.

Figure 23 Impact on public perception and educational engagement



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=70; margin of error = +/-7.6%

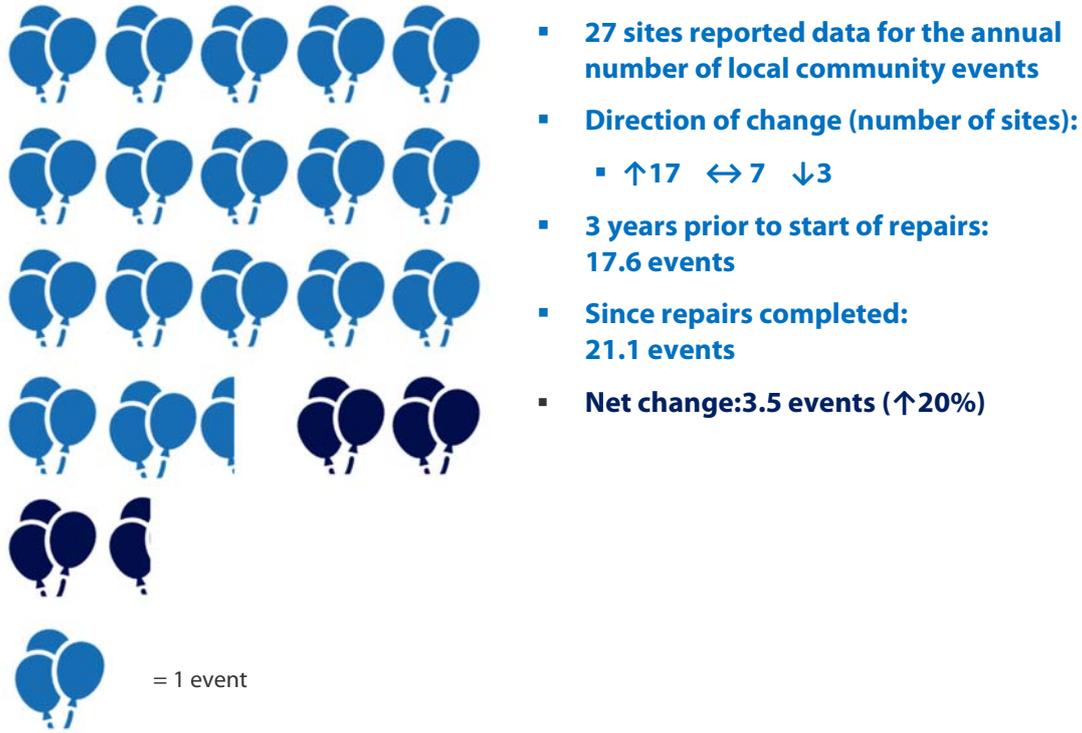
The impact of repair grants on a site’s ability to host local community events was less than the impact on public access and visitor numbers, but still significant. Approximately 31% of grantees reported that repair grants were very important to their ability to **host more local community events** (Figure 20). And for just over half of grantees (51%), repair grants were at least ‘important’ to their ability to host more local community events.

A total of 27 sites reported data on the annual number of local community events hosted at their sites. Out of these 27 sites, 17 (63%) reported that their annual number of local community events increased following the repair grant project (Figure 24); 7 (26%) reported no change. Three grantees (11%) reported that the annual number of community events hosted at their site actually decreased following completion of the repair grant project.

Across the 27 projects, the annual average number of hosted local community events increased from 17.6 (pre-repairs) to 21.1 (post-repairs). On average, therefore, the number of hosted local community events increased by 3.5 per site, or 20%.

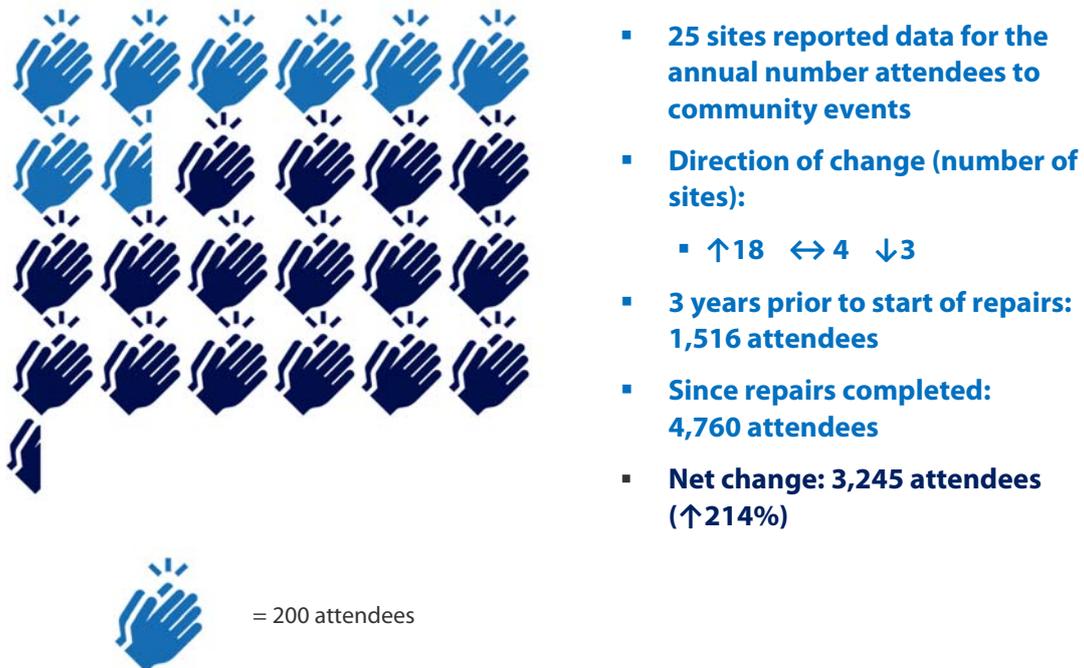
Whilst the number of hosted local community events increased by 20%, the data provided by grantees indicated that the size of those events increased by considerably more, resulting in a substantial increase in the annual average number of attendees to hosted local community events. Out of 25 sites that reported data on the annual number attendees to community events, 18 (72%) reported an increase; 4 (16%) reported no change; 3 (2%) reported a decrease (Figure 25). The average number of annual attendees per site increased from 1,516 (pre-repairs) to 4,760 (post-repairs) – a net increase of 3,245 per site, or 214%.

Figure 24 Impact on annual number of hosted local community events



Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

Figure 25 Impact on annual number of attendees to local community events

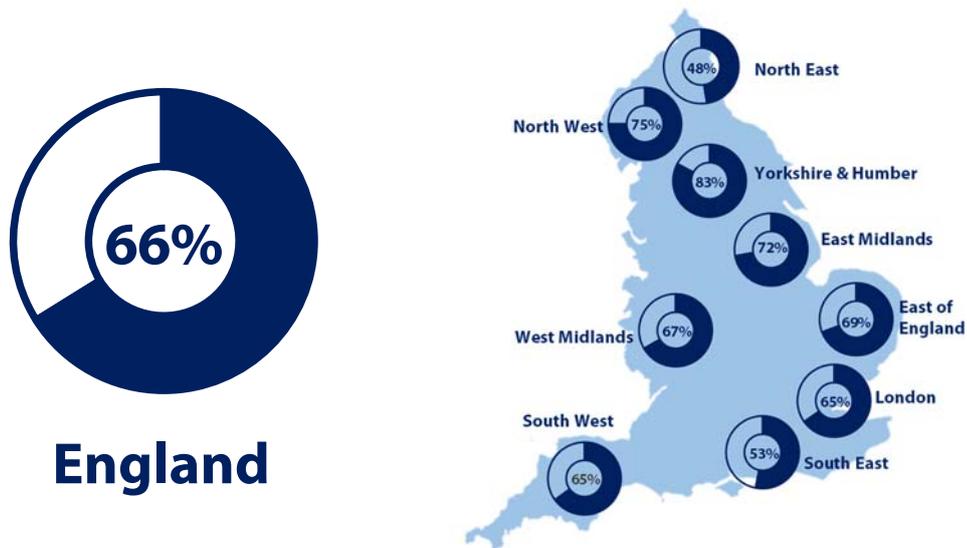


Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

Educational engagement is another important channel through which historic sites can generate social benefits. At the time of their grant applications, two-thirds of grantees identified young people (ages 0 to 18) as key beneficiaries of their site (Figure 26).

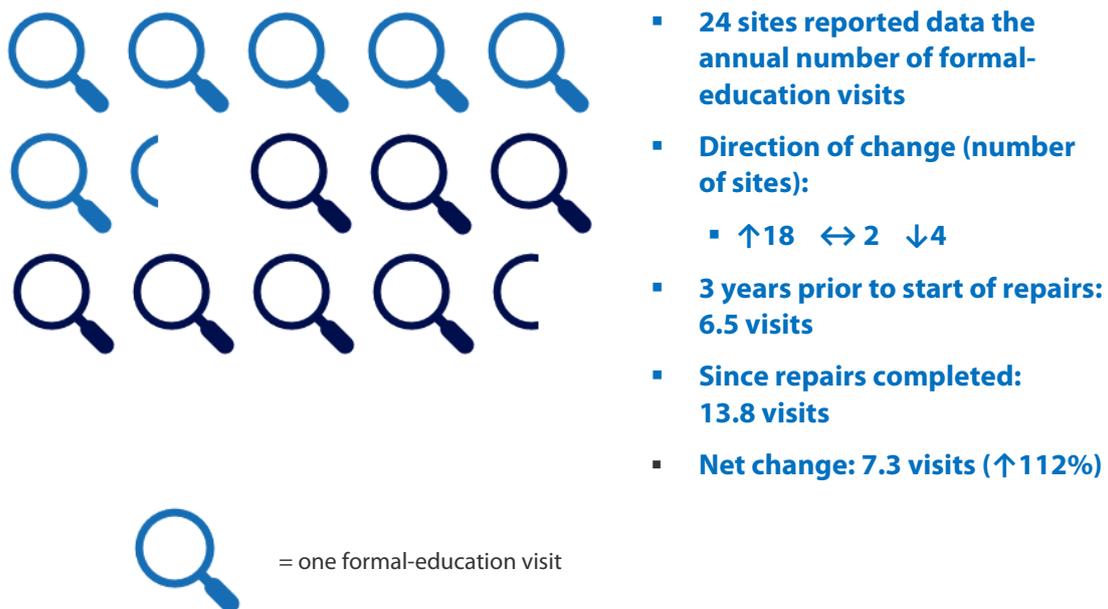
Just over half (55%) of grantees reported that the repairs were at least 'important' to their ability to **increase the annual number of educational visits to their site** (Figure 23). Approximately 31% of grantees reported that the repair grants were 'very important'.

Figure 26 Share of grantees identifying young people (0 to 18) as key beneficiaries of the historic site, 2013/14 to 2017/18



Source: Historic England

Figure 27 Impact on annual number of formal-education visits



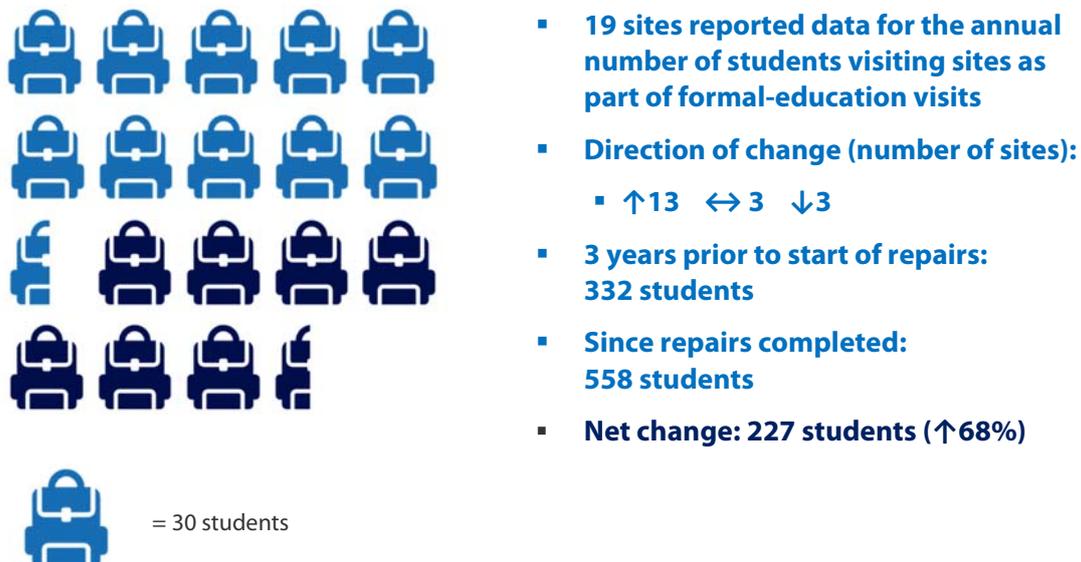
Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

These educational visits are from all levels of education and a variety of disciplines. For example, during the study team’s site visit to John Taylor & Co Bell Foundry in Loughborough, the foundry was also expecting an educational visit from students at the University of Loughborough, School of Architecture, Buildings and Civil Engineering. The foundry also writes to local schools and educational institutions promoting how it can provide all ages with educational experiences ranging from history to metallurgy to science.

A total of 24 sites reported data on the annual number of educational visits, of which 18 (75%) reported an increase; 2 (8%) reported no change; and 4 (16%) reported a decrease (Figure 27). On average, the annual number of educational visits per site increased from 6.5 (pre-repairs) to 13.8 (post-repairs) – an increase of 112%

The increase in the number of educational visits is accompanied by an increase in the number of students. A total of 19 sites reported data on the annual number of student visitors, with 13 (68%) reporting an increase; 3 (16%) reporting no change; and 3 (16%) reporting a decrease (Figure 28). Across all 19 sites, the average annual number of visiting students increased from 332 (pre-repairs) to 558 (post-repairs) – an increase of 68%.

Figure 28 Impact on annual number of student visitors



Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

5.6 Economic benefits

The repairs to heritage assets can also generate significant economic benefits in a number of ways. First, through local procurement, the actual repair expenditures can stimulate higher incomes and employment within the local economies in which the repaired sites are situated. In some parts of England where the economy is operating under full capacity, this local procurement can lead to additional economic activity.

The second key channel for economic benefit is through additional tourism spending. Repaired heritage assets often have the potential attract more visitors if the repairs improve – or protect – public accessibility to the site. In some cases, repairs can even improve a site’s tourist offer. For example, the repairs can allow a site to open a visitor centre or open up new areas of a site to tourists. In fact, at the time of their grant application, just over half of grantees (54%) identified their site as being a tourist destination (Figure 29).

As with local procurement, when more tourists – domestic or foreign – are attracted to local areas operating below full economic capacity, there can be an additional economic impact for those local economies. More importantly, when the repairs help a site attract more international visitors there can be an additional impact for the economies of England and the UK.

A third path in which repairs can generate economic benefits is through the role they play in regeneration projects that bring sites and floorspace into economic use. This economic use could be residential, commercial or industrial. These types of regeneration projects not only generate substantial construction employment, but can be longer-lasting sources of higher income and employment within local economies, particularly if they increase the retail footfall for an area.

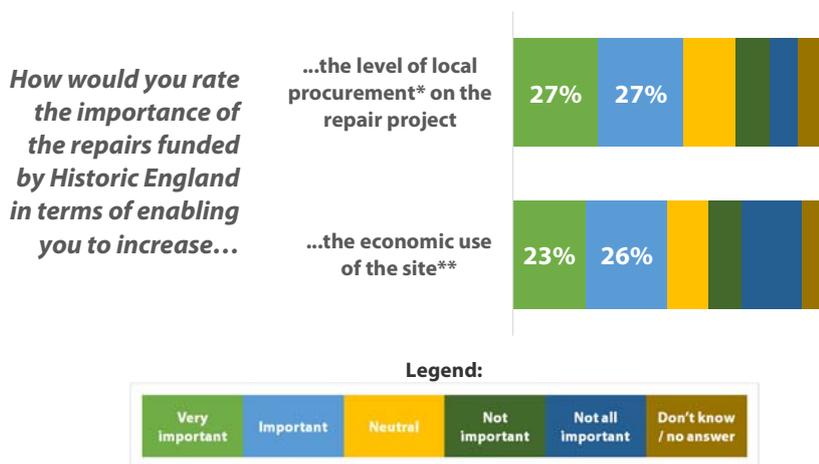
Figure 29 Share of grantees identifying their historic sites as tourist destinations



Source: Historic England

Just over half of grantees (54%) reported that their repair grant was ‘important’ to enabling them to **increase the level of local procurement on their repair project** (Figure 30). Nearly half (49%) of grantees reported that their Historic England repair grant was ‘important’ to enabling **to increase the economic use of their site, by allowing it to be used as accommodation, office space, function space or a filming location**.

Figure 30 Economic benefits



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=70; margin of error = +/-7.6%

* Local procurement includes any supplier located within the 50 miles of the site.

The wider economic benefits of Historic England’s repair grants are often realised as part of larger redevelopment schemes or longer-term programmes

“The repairs stopped the building from falling down but it is still in a very poor condition. The grant has allowed time to identify new occupiers and approach HLF [Heritage Lottery Fund] with a view to a more comprehensive scheme that will bring the building back into use.”

“...funding has helped maintain the building from further deteriorating until the [redevelopment] scheme is completed.”

“Its help has turned the site into a major local driver of economic prosperity. As a consequence of EH / HE’s [Historic England / English Heritage] support and encouragement [the site] hosts many community events, attracts over 100,000 visitors p.a., is a resource for education and volunteering and is an inspiration to thousands of landscape lovers.”

“Has protected a Grade 2 listed building until it can be brought back into beneficial economic use.”*

“...a vital catalyst both to enable the long term regeneration of the building make its first key steps...as well as giving us access to advice from HE’s professional staff...”

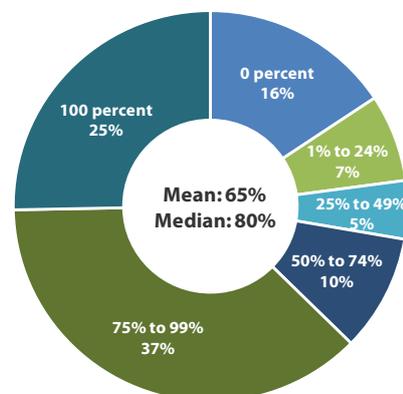
“Re development [sic] to the building as not yet completed but the funding [from Historic England] has helped maintain the building from further deteriorating until the [redevelopment] scheme is completed.”

** e.g. through use as accommodation, office space, function space, filming

With respect to local procurement, the survey results indicated that there was a very high level on Repair Grants Programme projects. Approximately 72% of grantees spent 50% or more of their project budgets within 50 miles of their site (Figure 31). In fact, 25% of grantees spent 100% of their project budgets within 50 miles of their sites. Across all grantees, the mean (unweighted) rate of local procurement was 65% – that is, 65% of project budgets were spent local. The median rate was 80%.

Figure 31 Local procurement

What portion of your repair costs was spent on purchases of material, equipment or services from local suppliers (i.e. suppliers located within 50 miles of your site)?



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=83; margin of error = +/-6.9%

With respect to the tourism impact and the number of visitors, the statistics presented in Section 5.5 indicate that the Repair Grants Programme led to significant increases in the number of visitors. The average annual number of visitors per site increased by 45%, from 12,207 to 17,714 (Figure 22).

Whilst the increase in the number of visitors was significant, there is no indication how of much this increased tourism would be additional to England's economy, since it is unclear what portion of the additional visitors were from outside England.

Sheerness Dockyard Church

In 2017, Historic England awarded the Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust (SDPT) £199k to fund a £249k project to erect scaffolding to stabilise and preserve the fabric of the Grade II* listed Dockyard Church built in 1828, and to make it safe for subsequent works. These repairs were part of the SDPT's larger plan for a £4.7m refurbishment of the church. Once completed, this refurbishment will convert the church into a hub for the arts, tourism and for youth business support. As part of the youth business support, the SDPT is aiming to create a workspace incubator for young people, where they will have access to affordable facilities and professional business advice.

With regards to increased economic use, the survey data also permitted us to arrive at some quantification of this outcome. A total of 10 sites reported data on the total floorspace available for accommodation, office space, function space or other business use, both before and after the repairs funded by Historic England.

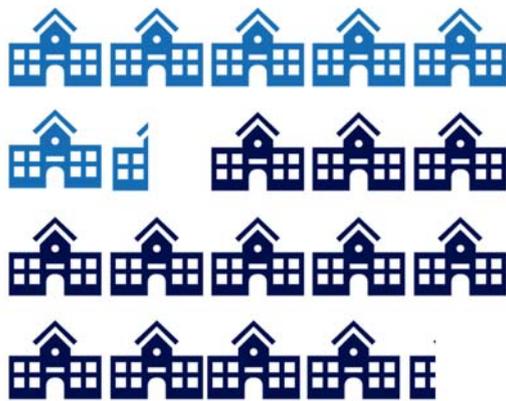
The low number of response rate – i.e. 10 out of 83 – reflects several factors. First, the limited number of actual sites for which there is some type of commercial use. Across the 260 grants, only 10% were awarded to commercial sites.²⁵ Even among commercial sites, many may not have before and after data. Finally, many commercial sites may not have completed their entire regeneration works at the time of the survey; so it would have been too early to report post-repair data on floorspace brought back into economic use.

Despite these caveats, of the 10 heritage sites that did provide floorspace statistics, 6 reported an increase in floorspace in commercial use following the repairs; 3 reported no change; and one reported a decrease.

Across all 10 sites, the average amount of floorspace available for commercial use increased from 3,184 sq. ft. per site prior to the repairs to 9,241 sq. ft. per site after the completion of the repairs. Available floorspace, therefore, increased by 6,057 sq. ft. per site or 190%. This rate of increase is not surprising. For many sites that are part of regeneration projects, the amount of available floorspace increased from zero to tens of thousands.

²⁵ An additional 12% of grants were awarded to industrial sites; however, these are often historical industrial sites that are no longer in operation.

Figure 32 Impact on the total floorspace available for commercial use



- **10 sites reported data for the total floorspace available for accommodation, office space, function space or other business use**
- **Direction of change (number of sites):**
 - **↑6 ↔ 3 ↓1**
- **3 years prior to start of repairs: 3,184 sq. ft.**
- **Since repairs completed: 9,241 sq. ft.**
- **Net change: 6,057 sq. ft. (↑190%)**



= 500 sq. ft.

Source: Source: Grantee survey 2018

Buxton Crescent Hotel and Thermal Spa

In 2017, Historic England awarded the High Peak Borough Council £500k for a £1.4m project of various repairs and restoration works to Buxton Crescent, Natural Baths and Pump Room. These works play a key role the £68m redevelopment of the crescent into a luxury hotel and thermal spa experience.

Once completed (in December 2019), the redevelopment is expected to attract 30,000 additional visitors to Buxton, inject £4.5m in additional tourism spending into Buxton's economy and generated 140 permanent jobs. On a pro-rata basis, therefore, Historic England's funding will account for £33k in annual additional tourist spending, thereby, offsetting its £500k investment after only 15 years.

A large portion of this additional tourism spending is very likely to originate from outside England, with the hotel and spa being operated by Hungary-based Danubius Hotel Group – the largest owner of natural resource health spas in Europe²⁶ – thereby providing a global business outlook for marketing Buxton as a spa destination across Europe.

5.7 Relative importance of programme to outcomes

Figure 33 provides a side-by-side of comparison of the importance of the Repair Grants Programme to all the outcomes assessed through the survey, including outcomes related to the historic environment, social benefits and economic benefits. This comparison indicates the relative importance of the Repair Grants Programme to the various outcomes linked to the programme logic model.

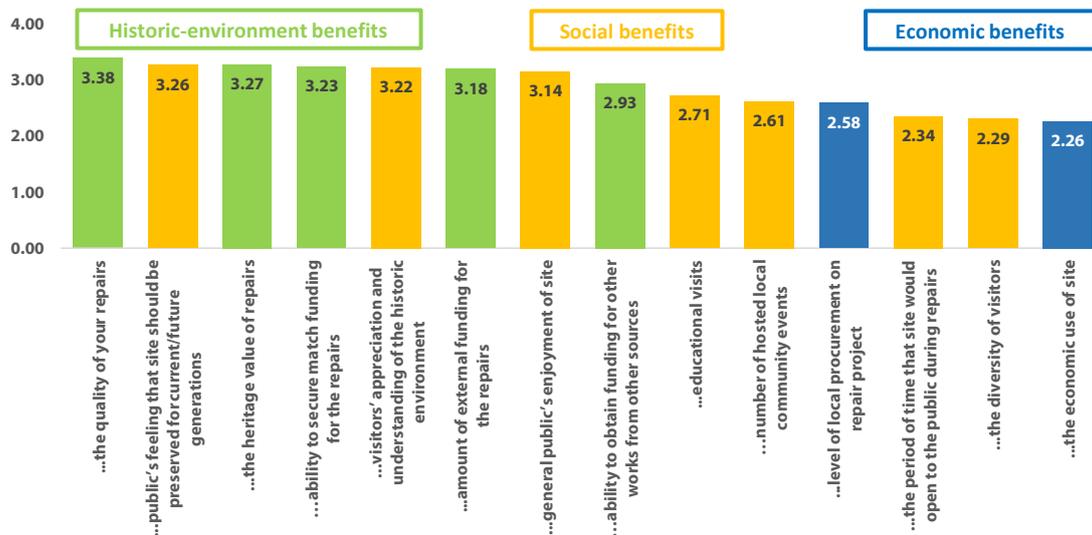
The comparison shows that the programme has the greatest impact on historic-environment outcomes. Historic-environment outcomes posted the first, third and fourth-highest importance

²⁶ Buxton Crescent & Thermal Spa (2019), "[Crescent Project Partners](#)".

scores. And all but one of the historic-environment outcomes (i.e. the ability to obtain funding for other works from other sources) received a score of 3 out of 4 or higher.

Figure 33 Summary of outcomes

How would you rate the importance of the repairs funded by Historic England in terms of enabling you to increase...



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=70

Scoring: 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = neutral, 1 = not important, 0 = not at all important

At the other end of the spectrum, it would appear that the programme had the weakest impact on the economic outcomes. The local-procurement and economic-use outcomes were in the bottom half of the scores.

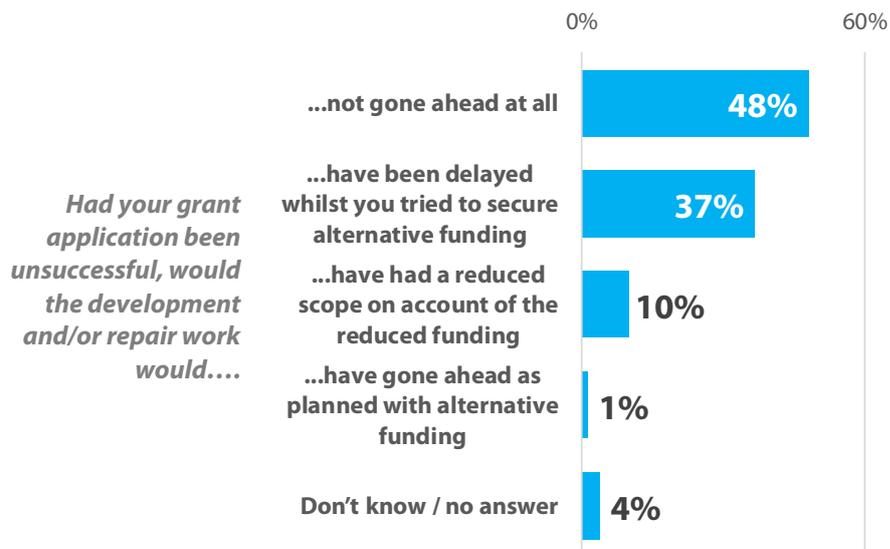
The impact of the programme on the social-benefits outcome was quite varied. Some outcomes displayed high importance scores. This included the public's feeling towards preservation and visitors' appreciation and understanding of the historic environment. In some ways, both of these social-benefits outcomes are very closely linked to historic-environment outcomes.

The programme's impact was much lower with regards to social-benefits outcomes, such as increasing the number of local community events, increasing the diversity of visitors and minimising the site-closure time.

5.8 Counterfactual

From an outcomes-assessment perspective, a key question is what would have happened in the absence of the Repair Grants Programme (i.e. the counterfactual). Across both development and repair projects, only 1% of grantees reported that, in the absence of funding from Historic England, their projects **would have gone ahead as planned with alternative funding** (Figure 34). At the other end of spectrum, just under half of grantees (48%) reported that their projects **would not have gone ahead at all**.

Figure 34 Counterfactual



Source: Grantee survey 2018
 n=79; margin of error = +/-7.5%

Approximately 37% of Repairs Grants Programme projects would, in the absence of funding from Historic England, have eventually **gone ahead with a delay whilst their commissioning organisations sought alternative funding**. And approximately 10% of projects would have **gone ahead with a reduced scope**, which would have reflected the reduced funding.

5.9 Summary of outcomes achievement

In the following section we draw upon the evidence collected through primary research to assess Repair Grants Programme against each of the interim outcomes identified in the programme logic model.

Table 1 Summary of outcomes achievement

Interim outcome	Key finding	Key evidence
Historic environment		
Protection of significant heritage sites	Achieved	- A significant number of grantees report that the repair grants were instrumental in protecting their heritage sites from further decline
Match funding secured from NLHF, local authorities, philanthropic sources, private sources	Achieved	- 85% of projects secured match funding - £19.9m in grants levered an additional £24.3m from other sources
Advice/Guidance/Research/ Grants from Historic England lead to effective protection and/or re-use of heritage assets	Achieved	- The vast majority of grantees found the advice and guidance from Historic England to be very helpful both before (86%) and after (83%) the application process
Regular ongoing maintenance programme	Indeterminate	- Some grantees highlighted the role that development or repair grants played in helping to create conservation management plans or sustainability plans
Skilled professionals protect, repair and maintain properties and sites	Achieved	- Grantees are able to access Historic England's in-house conservation expertise and receive funds to engage external professionals (eg. architects) - For over 80% of grantees, repair grants were 'important' to increasing the quality and heritage value of the funded repairs
Expertise, skills, knowledge and best practices are shared	Achieved in selected cases	- Some case studies highlighted sharing of innovative conservation techniques
Social benefits		
Increased visits from the public - local and other domestic	Where relevant, achieved in majority of cases	- Average annual number of visitors per site 37% higher post-repairs
Communities are empowered to take a more active role in understanding and enhancing the historic environment	Achieved	- Several grantees described how the repaired heritage sites raised the profile of the site with the local community and led to additional interest and support from the local community
Improved appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment	Achieved	- For 75% of grantees, repair grants were 'important' to improving visitors' appreciation and understanding of historic environment

Interim outcome	Key finding	Key evidence
More opportunities for children and young people to engage with and learn from our heritage.	Achieved in majority of cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For 55% of grantees, repair grants were 'important' to increasing the annual number of educational visits - Average annual number of educational visits per site up by 114% post-repair - Average annual number of student visitors per site up by 68% post-repair
More opportunities to increase the diversity of audiences (i.e. diversity of age, gender, ethnicity, race, other protected groups)	Limited achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For 40% of grantees, repair grants were 'important' to increasing the diversity of visitors
More local community involvement and events hosted around properties and sites	Partially achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For 51% of grantees, repair grants were 'important' to enabling them to host more local community events - Annual number of hosted local community events per site up by 20% post-repair - Annual number of attendees to hosted local community events up by 214%
Economic benefits		
Repairs stimulate local procurement and increase income and employment within the local economy	Achieved, but no quantification of additional impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On average 65% of project spending was within 50 miles – that translates into £28.7m - However, a large share of project budgets devoted to fees for professionals often based far from grantee site
Additional economic activity undertaken in and around heritage assets	Achieved in selected cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certain large redevelopment projects (e.g. Buxton Crescent, Lowther Castle) are expected to yield significant tourism spillovers for local businesses

6. Summary of key findings

6.1 Process review

Through our 360-degree approach, including the survey of grantees, consultations with Historic England staff at a national and regional level, assessment of documents and comparisons with other similar funding programmes, the process review formed a balanced picture of the Repair Grants Programme from different perspectives.

What was clear was that the Repairs Grants Programme is widely valued. Also, the input and dedication of Historic England staff in the local offices was widely praised. Their experience and knowledge of repairs to important historic sites is one of Historic England's greatest assets.

In accordance with the evaluation framework, the process review analysis focused on four main areas of the process:

- Awareness and uptake of the programme
- Operation and management of the application process
- The application experience
- Post-completion monitoring

For each of these four areas, we considered the responses we received and made a series of recommendations for how Historic England might be able to improve the process in the future.

We started by looking at applicants' awareness of the programme and the level of uptake. We found that most applicants had little prior knowledge of the programme and most applied following discussions with Historic England staff about their property as part of the HAR process and their entry onto the HAR Register. This means that those approached as being high risk and eligible are highly likely to receive grant funding.

This is an effective and targeted approach but does mean that there is little 'competition' for public funding and does risk the possibility that other worthy projects may be being overlooked. There is scope for the Repair Grants Programme to be promoted more widely, particularly to suitable intermediaries. The fact that the programme is not oversubscribed means that Historic England should continue to review the application criteria with a view to extending the scheme as appropriate. A clearer two-step process might be a way to mitigate any problems caused by an increase in the volume of applications so that any ineligible or low priority applications are quickly weeded out.

The Repair Grants Programme has been in place for many years and the operations and management of the application process has evolved over time. A comprehensive set of desk instructions, forms and supporting documents has been developed to be used as part of the process. These resources have benefits in terms of the accrued knowledge that they contain. However, their length and complexity are problematic and many Historic England staff said that they found it hard to navigate and use in practice.

We recommend that the desk instructions would benefit from being reviewed and possibly simplified. Most importantly, it would be beneficial to bring the various systems and guidance into line so that there is a single, seamless, digital process that can be followed throughout the lifetime of a project. As part of this revised system, many consultees reiterated the possible value of a two-step process which invited more applications then weeded them out at an early stage.

We looked carefully at the way in which the benefits of projects are assessed. There were conflicting views about this. At the moment, the Repair Grants Programme is highly focused on the heritage value and need of the project. One respondent referred to the idea that Historic England acts as a "funder of first and last resort" – being among the first to get involved at an early stage to stabilise

buildings that are in urgent need and before other funders are able to consider funding. This relatively quick action by Historic England helped to demonstrate the heritage value of a site and encourage other funders to consider funding it. As a 'lender of last resort' Historic England steps in to support important projects that are not eligible for other funding programmes.

This role would not always be possible if Historic England moved to a position where it was looking for immediate social and economic impacts. Conversely, many of the projects that the Repair Grants Programme supports do bring such benefits to the local community, economy and society more widely. These benefits are currently not adequately explored as part of the funding process. In future, it will be important for Historic England to assess projects in a way that these wider social and economic benefits are captured. When prioritising projects, Historic England should use a more effective weighted system that looks at a range of historic-environment, social and economic benefits.

The survey of grant applicants looked at the application experience from the grantees' point of view. This found that a very large majority of grantees found advice from Historic England's local offices to be very helpful, both before and after they submitted their application. The process itself was also rated highly with most applicants (with a few exceptions) finding the application form simple to use and the information requirements appropriate.

There are a series of internal and external Historic England targets for processing applications. However, these are seen as aspirational guidelines because of the complexity of individual applications and the different timescales involved. That being said, the information from these targets could provide valuable information and we have recommended that these targets should in future be monitored and used for management purposes.

Following the completion of their projects, grantees are asked once a year to provide follow-up information about their projects. Most grantees found the post-completion monitoring and reporting requirements to be reasonable. These returns are generally completed and submitted as required. However, Historic England's local offices did report some problems in obtaining information. A small proportion of grantees do not submit returns when requested. Also, they reported that the information required (on access arrangements and maintenance plans) is relatively narrow, making it difficult to demonstrate the wider benefits of projects. Our recommendations therefore suggest that Historic England consider an enhanced process for following up these returns. Also, that projects funded in the future should be asked to report more explicitly on the historic-environment, social and economic benefits that they have achieved.

6.2 Impact evaluation

The results of this research, in general, indicate that the Repair Grants Programme is achieving its outcomes, and thereby, generating a positive impact. However, in a few cases, the achievement can only be considered partial or potentially limited to selected cases, rather than being widespread. In other cases, the level of achievement is indeterminate because of the type of data available or the time horizon of projects.

6.2.1 Development grants

The development grants, which typically are used to engage specialists to conduct surveys or other investigatory work, were found to be highly valued by grantees and very important to achieving certain programme outcomes. Development grants gave grantees not only financial resources, but also access to expertise, so that they could authoritatively plan and cost their main repair projects. In many cases, grantees used development grants to prepare more comprehensive conservation managements plans.

The outputs of the development grants were important in enabling grantees to realise other project objectives. First and foremost, the upfront work was important in helping to increase the quality of the ultimate main repairs for 79% of development grantees (Figure 15). Secondly, the outputs of the

development grants were important (for 65% of development grantees) in accessing other funding for their main repairs. In particular, several development grantees noted how their development projects furnished them with the more detailed information required for subsequent applications to the NLHF and other funders. The development projects also gave many previously unknown grantees the initial credibility needed to compete for the larger sums available from NLHF.

The development projects were also important to 74% of development grantees in terms of commissioning local professionals and craftspeople. And 42% of development grantees indicated that the investigative works conducted as part of the development projects were important to reducing the time that their site would ultimately be closed to repair works.

6.2.2 Repair grants

Historic-environment benefits

For the main repair projects, the relatively strongest areas of achievement were with respect to historic-environment outcomes. Several grantees remarked how the Repair Grants Programme was instrumental in quickly stabilising their heritage assets or making them safe for public access. Through both the repairs and development streams, grantees could access the skilled professionals as well as Historic England's own expertise, in order to develop effective plans for protecting or re-using their heritage assets. Given that the primary objective of Repair Grants Programme has been to remove sites from the HAR Register, the programme's strong achievement on this front is not surprising.

It is also probably not surprising that grantees viewed the programme as having a relatively important effect on other historic-environment outcomes, including the quality and heritage value of the main repairs, and the ability to obtain match funding for main repair projects. The repairs funded by Historic England also played an important enabling role. Over half of grantees reported that Historic England's repair grants were important to their ability to obtain more funding from external sources or follow-on funding from other sources, namely NLHF.

As some grantees portrayed it, Historic England's repair grants helped to 'kick start' the larger restoration or redevelopment plans for their sites and unlock significantly more funding sums from NLHF. These more extensive restoration and redevelopment plans ultimately generate significant social and economic benefits for the host communities.

Social benefits

The Repair Grants Programme was also relatively important in contributing to grantees' ability to generate certain – but not all – types of social benefits through their heritage assets. Several grantees pointed to how the repairs funded by Historic helped to make their heritage sites safe or suitable for public access, thereby, helping to increase the number of visitors. On average, grantees were able to open to the public for 37% more days annually (post-repair) and saw their average annual visitor count increase from 12,207 (pre-repair) to 17,714 (post-repair) – an increase of 45%.

The vast majority of grantees reported that the repair grants were important to improving the public's appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment. Several grantees described how the repaired heritage sites raised the profile of the site, leading to additional interest and support from the local community. And some grantees remarked how once-neglected heritage sites that acted as magnets for anti-social behaviour, had, in some cases, become beacons of civic pride.

With this in mind, approximately half of grantees (51%) reported that the repair grants projects were important to the ability to host more local community events. This outcome was probably achieved, in large part, because sites were made safe for public access, but also appreciated more by local residents. The average annual number of hosted local community events was up by 20% (post-repair) and the number of attendees to the events was up by 214% (post-repair).

Educational engagement was also higher post-repair. The average annual number of educational visits per site was up by 114%, post-repair. The number of student visitors was up by 68%.

There are areas where outcomes achievement was relatively weaker or less evident. With regards to social benefits, the repair grant projects themselves had limited impact on grantees' ability to increase the diversity of their visitors (i.e. diversity of age, gender, ethnicity, race, other protected groups). The repair works themselves – as opposed to any development work – were also much less important to minimising closure of the site during those said repairs.

Economic benefits

The role of the repair grant projects in terms of affecting economic benefits is also less definitive. On average grantees reported that 65% of their project spending was through local procurement (i.e. within 50 miles of their site). This translated into £28.7m in local procurement spending. However, several grantees commented how a significant portion of repair grant funding – sometimes close to 50% – had been devoted to fees for architects and other conservation professionals. In some parts of England, these professionals are not local to the site, so repair spending leaks from the local economy. Furthermore, whilst a significant portion of this local procurement is likely to be beneficial to local economies, it is unclear (at this time) what portion would be additional to England's overall economy.

For half of grantees, the repair grants were important to their ability to increase the economic use of their site. This increased economic use could have come from the use of the heritage site for accommodation, office space, function space or filming, or simply by increasing the tourism offer of the site. However, the case study research indicates that the impact on economic use has to be viewed through the broader conservation and redevelopment process, whereby Historic England funds initial repairs that can stabilise a heritage site and give it the time and credibility needed to successfully apply for larger sums from NLHF. These larger sums then underwrite the redevelopment projects that more directly alter the economic use of many sites.

The evaluation research indicated that even though the scale and sums involved in Historic England's Repair Grants Programme were often smaller than those available from NLHF, the programme played an extremely important enabling role in the overall conservation process. Historic England's funding was available more quickly than funding from NLHF and was subject to less competition in some cases. For many grantees, therefore, it acted as vital first-line funding that forestalled ruinous decline in a heritage asset and positioned the grantee to eventually launch a longer-term restoration or redevelopment project. It is through this enabling role that Historic England's Repair Grants Programme then becomes linked to the social and economic benefits that accompany the restoration and redevelopment of heritage assets.

Counterfactual

The research evidence also indicates that there is a low degree of deadweight associated with the development and repair projects funded by Historic England. Approximately half (48%) of supported projects would not have gone ahead at all in the absence of funding from Historic England. And of the remaining 52% that would have gone ahead, most would have been delayed (37%) and only a very small minority (1%) would have gone ahead as planned.

6.3 Recommendations

Summary of recommendations

Awareness and uptake

1. As part of the ongoing HAR Programme, local Historic England offices should promote the Repair Grants Programme more widely, aiming that promotion at all eligible at-risk sites on the HAR Register and working with other professionals and organisations.
2. Historic England should consider introducing a two-step application process to manage any increase in applications so that initial enquiries can be considered quickly and assessed for eligibility.
3. Historic England should retain the existing eligibility criteria for the Repair Grants Programme but should keep this under review and consider extending the scheme in the future.

Operations and management

4. Desk instructions should be simplified.
5. Desk instructions should be brought into line with the ConcaseGIS system and the EGAP form so that there is a single, seamless digital process.
6. Pre-application guidance should be strengthened to allow for greater assessment and genuine prioritisation between competing projects at an early stage.
7. As well as heritage significance and risk, applications should also be assessed on the added social and economic benefits that they might bring, in order to align them more closely with Historic England's PVF.
8. To enable more effective prioritisation, a weighted assessment and scoring system should be used, including the range of historic-environment, social and economic benefits, which could become the basis of comparing and ranking applications in the future.

The application experience

9. External targets for application processing should be monitored and reported against.
10. Internal targets for application processing should be monitored and used for management purposes.

Post-completion monitoring

11. Local offices should consider an enhanced process for following up post-completion reports to achieve a higher level of returns.
12. Grant awards and contracts should set out more explicitly the range of outcomes that projects are aiming to achieve.
13. Post-completion monitoring reports should, in future, request additional information about the historic-environment, social and economic benefits that the grant funding has helped to achieve.

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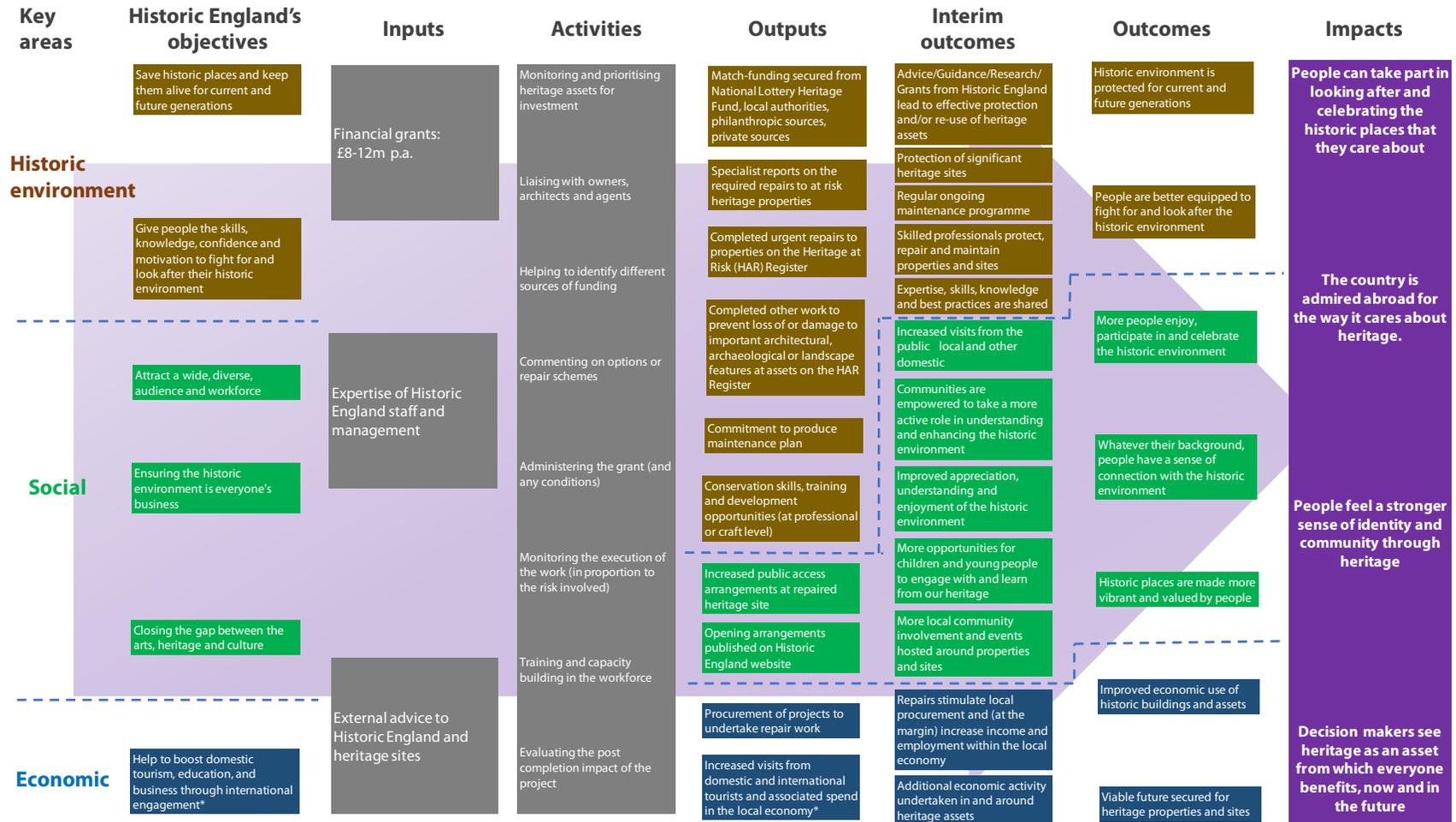
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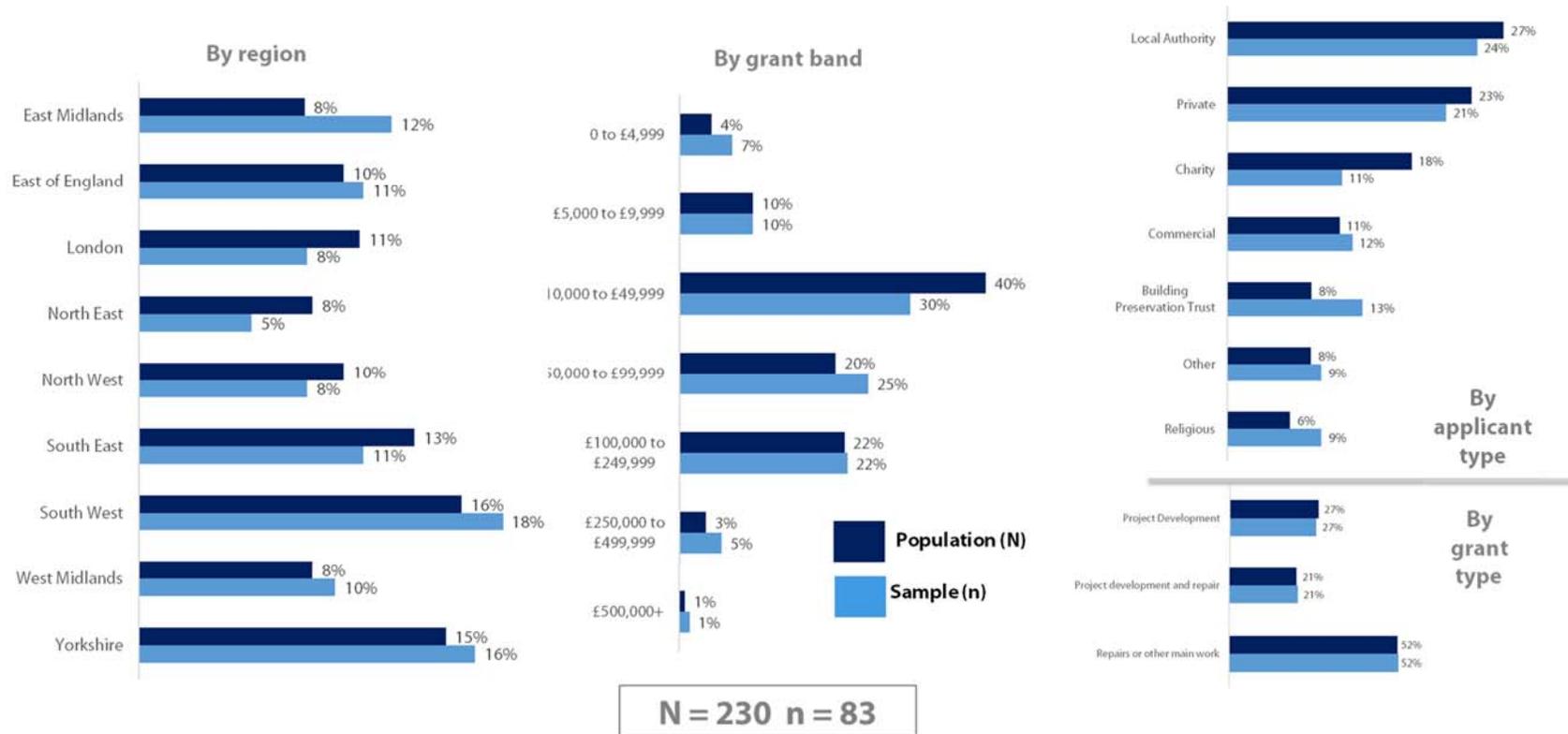
National Lottery Heritage Fund (undated) "[Outcomes – the detail](#)".

Appendix A: Logic model



* Note that the Repair Grants Programme is aligned with the Historic England's objective to boost domestic tourism, education and business, but not necessarily through international engagement.

Appendix B: Respondent sample profile



Appendix C: Business manager questionnaire

Awareness:

1. How effectively does Historic England promote the Repair Grants Programme nationally?
 - a. Could this be improved in any way?
2. How does your local office publicise or build awareness of the Repair Grants Programme among potential recipients?
 - a. Does your local office contact potential applicants and encourage them to apply?
 - b. And if so, what proportion of applicants is accounted for by this group?
 - c. How do you choose which potential applicants to contact?
3. Do you think the Repair Grants Programme is currently successful in reaching the highest-priority sites on the Risk Register?
 - a. Why do you think this is?
 - b. How could the programme be improved in this respect?
4. Is there unmet demand (i.e. applications that are eligible and high priority but cannot be funded due to insufficient grant monies)?
 - a. What proportion of eligible applications is represented by this unmet demand? For example, "10% of eligible applications could not be funded during the previous fiscal year".

Operations and management:

5. Does your local office find it easy to apply the desk instructions and other internal programme guidelines?
 - a. Why is this?
6. Please describe the process that you use to prioritise between different eligible projects?
 - a. Is this process applied on a consistent basis across offices and from year-to-year?
 - b. Do you ever encounter any difficulties in applying the prioritisation process?
7. Can you describe any instances in which an ineligible project was inadvertently funded?

Application experience:

8. How important is it for local offices to be able to give advice to potential applicants?
 - a. Can you provide examples of how your local office's pre-application advice had a significant effect on an application or project?
9. How do the Advice Group and Grants Advice Panel (GAP) factor into your local office's application-review process?
 - a. What portion of applications are referred to the Advice Group or GAP?
10. Do unsuccessful applicants to the Repair Grants Programme understand the rationale for Historic England's decision?

Monitoring:

11. What do you view as the most challenging aspects of the project-implementation?

- a. What proportion of grantees miss milestones or other deadlines?
- 12. What difficulties do you encounter in receiving post-completion reports?
 - a. What rates of compliance do your experience?

Project benefits:

- 13. How well do applicants articulate the heritage outcomes, and wider economic and social outcomes of their projects in the application forms?
- 14. How successful are grantees in achieving their expected heritage, and wider economic and social outcomes?
- 15. What, if any, evidence do grantees supply as part of their post-completion reporting to support the assessment of outcomes achievement?

Post-completion strategy:

- 16. Sustainability of HE funding for the Repair Grants Programme: To what extent is the Repair Grants Programme facilitating and supporting projects' progress to a next phase of conservation (e.g. leverage where necessary)?
- 17. Should HE do more to monitor and support projects after the completion of their Repair Grants project?

General programme feedback:

- 18. Can you suggest any ways that the Repair Grant Programme processes – from pre-application to post-completion reporting – could be improved in any way?
 - a. To reduce the time required to manage a project file?
 - b. To maximise the conservation and heritage, economic, and social outcomes of the programme?

Appendix D: Site visit sample

Table A - 1 List of sites in site-visit sample

No.	Site name	Region	Site Type
1	Anfield Cemetery	North West	Religious, Ritual and Funerary
2	Blue Idol Quaker Meeting House	South East	Religious, Ritual and Funerary
3	Broomfield House	London	Domestic
4	Buxton Crescent, Natural Baths and Pump Room	East Midlands	Commercial
5	Castle Howard	Yorkshire	Gardens, parks and urban spaces
6	Clifford Castle	West Midlands	Defence
7	Eagle Works and Green Lane Works	Yorkshire	Industrial
8	Former Royal Dockyard Church, Sheerness	South East	Defence
9	Former Smoke House, Hull	Yorkshire	Industrial
10	Licensed Victuallers Chapel, Caroline Gardens	London	Religious, Ritual and Funerary
11	Medieval Market Cross, Castle Combe	South West	Commemorative
12	Naze Tower	East of England	Maritime
13	Pontefract Castle	Yorkshire	Defence
14	Priory House, Dunstable	East of England	Commercial
15	RAF Bicester	South East	Defence
16	Snodhill Castle	West Midlands	N/A
17	Taylor's Bell Foundry	East Midlands	Commercial
18	Thornhill Gardens	London	Gardens, parks and urban spaces
19	The Trinity Community Arts Centre	South West	Recreational
20	Workshop Priory, remains of cloister wall	East Midlands	Religious, Ritual and Funerary

Appendix E: Grantee interview guide

Background:

Historic England has commissioned Nordicity and Saffery Champness (the “study team”) to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the Heritage at Risk Repair Grants Programme (the “Repair Grants Programme”).

As part of this evaluation, you will have already been invited to participate in an online survey. In order to better understand the outcomes and impacts that the Repair Grants Programme, we would also very much appreciate it if you would participate in an interview with the study team. At a future date, a member of the study team would also like to visit your heritage site.

Some or all the information gathered through this interview will be used to write a case study of your heritage site, for inclusion in the study team’s final report. If there is any information that you deem confidential, or would not like to share with Historic England or the general public, please inform the study team interviewer(s), so they can exclude it.

About your site and repair project:

1. Please describe your heritage site – including its history and heritage value – and the specific project funded by Historic England’s Repair Grants Programme.
2. What prevented you from carrying out these specific repairs prior to receiving funding from Historic England (e.g. lack of funds; time/cost of application process; lack of time to raise funds; length of time required to gain approval for repairs from governing bodies)?
3. Had your grant application with Historic England been unsuccessful, would the development/repair work...
 - a. have gone ahead as planned with alternative funding
 - b. have been delayed whilst you tried to secure alternative funding
 - c. have had a reduced scope on account of the reduced funding
 - d. not gone ahead at all
4. How would you compare Historic England to similar funding organisations in terms of the quality and efficiency of the specialist technical advice it provides and the entire funding process?

Heritage benefits:

5. Please describe how the funding and/or advice from Historic England has enabled you to:
 - a. Protect or re-use your heritage site.
 - b. Halt the decline in or improve the fabric of the heritage site.
 - c. Prevent irreversible damage to the site or prevent major problems from developing.
 - d. Enable you to better plan for carry out maintenance in the future (following the completion of the project).
 - e. Promote skills development for local craftsman/tradespeople (e.g. development of conservation skills).

Social benefits:

6. Do you participate in Heritage Open Days or other partnerships/initiatives? How else do you actively try to amplify the impact of your heritage site?

7. Please describe how the funding from Historic England has enabled your heritage site to:
 - a. Improve how it engages with the local community and domestic population.
 - b. Improve physical and social accessibility.
 - c. Improve its capacity to enrich visitors' knowledge and understanding of the site and its historic environment.
 - d. Increase educational opportunities for children and young people.
 - e. Improve engagement with under-represented groups (e.g. protected characteristics) within the UK population.

Economic benefits:

8. Please describe how the funding from Historic England has enabled your heritage site to:
 - a. Increase its capacity to attract more visitors – especially foreign visitors.
 - b. Help bring a building or site back into use; improve a building or site's existing use; allow for more productive use of a building or site; or enable a new use of a building or site.
 - c. Contribute to local regeneration in other ways (e.g. increased floorspace for economic or social use, increased footfall for local businesses, additional employment in local economy).

Other observations and feedback:

9. Have there been any unintended outcomes that have occurred, or you expect to occur?
10. How critical was the grant from Historic England in realising these heritage, social and economic outcomes directly, and also indirectly by enabling you to access additional funds or resources?
 - a. Could you apportion a split between Historic England and other funders/resources for these realised benefits?
11. Do you have any other comments about your site's outcomes and impacts, the Repair Grants Programme, this interview or the overall evaluation analysis?

Appendix F: National Lottery Heritage Fund Outcomes

1. A wider range of people will be involved in heritage

There will be more people engaging with heritage and this audience will be more diverse than before your project. Changes will have come about as a direct result of your project, and particularly your audience development work and community consultation, by collecting and analysing information about the people who engage with your heritage – and those who don't – before, during and after your project.

How you will know what you have achieved? You will be able to show that your audience profile has changed; for example, it includes people from a wider range of ages, ethnicities and social backgrounds; more disabled people; or groups of people who have never engaged with your heritage before. You will be able to show how more people, and different people, engage with heritage as visitors, participants in activities, or volunteers, both during your project and once it has finished.

2. Heritage will be in better condition

There will be improvements to the physical state of your heritage. The improvements might be the result of repair, renovation or work to prevent further deterioration, such as mending the roof of a historic building, conserving an archive, clearing field ditches or repairing a ship. Improvements might also result from new work, for example increasing the size of an existing habitat to benefit priority species, or constructing a new building to protect historic ruins, archaeology or vehicles.

How you will know what you have achieved? The improvements will be recognised through standards used by professional and heritage specialists, and/or by people more generally, for example in surveys of visitors or local residents.

3. Heritage will be identified and better explained

There will be clearer explanations and/ or new or improved ways to help people make sense of heritage. This might include new displays in a museum; a smartphone app with information about the biodiversity and geodiversity of a landscape; talks or tours in a historic building; an accessible guide to a historic house; or online information about archives.

How you will know what you have achieved? Visitors and users will tell you that the interpretation and information you provide are high quality, easy-to-use and appropriate for their needs and interests, that they enhance their understanding, and that they improve their experience of heritage.

4. People will have developed skills

Individuals will have gained skills relevant to ensuring heritage is better looked after, managed, understood or shared (including, among others, conservation, teaching/training, maintenance, digital and project management skills). Structured training activities could include an informal mentoring programme, on-the-job training or external short courses.

How you will know what you have achieved? People involved in your project, including staff and volunteers, will be able to demonstrate competence in new, specific skills, and where appropriate, will have gained a formal qualification.

5. People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions

Individuals will have developed their knowledge and understanding of heritage because you have given them opportunities to experience heritage in ways that meet their needs and interests.

How you will know what you have achieved? Adults, children and young people who took part in the project, or who are visiting your site or engaging with your heritage in other ways e.g. through digital technology, will be able to tell you what they have learnt about heritage and what difference this makes to them and their lives. They will also be able to tell you what they are doing with that knowledge and understanding; for example, sharing it with other people, using it in their professional or social life, or undertaking further study.

6. People will have greater wellbeing

Individuals will feel more connected to the people around them and/or the place where they live as a result of involvement in your project – this is what we mean by greater wellbeing. To achieve this outcome, your project should be designed to impact on wellbeing (and developed with expert organisations if you plan to involve people using mental health services or learning disabled people). You might provide opportunities for people to be more active (for example, volunteering in a park, taking part in community archaeology, sharing digital skills) or to build new connections with others.

How will you know what you have achieved? You or your external evaluator will use recognised evaluation methods for measuring wellbeing and ask the people involved about how they feel. Participants will report increased happiness, greater satisfaction and/or that life feels more worthwhile as a result of their involvement in your project. Some people might report reduced levels of anxiety.

7. The funded organisation will be more resilient

Your organisation will have greater capacity to withstand threats and to adapt to changing circumstances to give you a secure future. You will achieve this greater resilience through stronger governance and greater local involvement in your organisation; increased management and staff skills; fresh sources of expertise and advice; and working in partnership to share services, staff and resources.

How you will know what you have achieved? You might have new volunteers who increase your capacity and skills; or new sources of income through commercial activity, endowments or new fundraising programmes. You will be able to show that your organisation is stronger and in a better position for the future as a result of the changes you made as part of your project.

8. The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit

Local residents will have a better quality of life and overall the area will be more attractive. As a result of improving the appearance of heritage sites or of the opportunities you have provided for local people to visit, use, get involved with, and enjoy heritage, residents will report that they feel greater pride in the local area and/or have a stronger sense of belonging.

How you will know what you have achieved? Community members will report a greater sense of shared understanding and a better sense of getting on with each other. Visitors to your heritage will also tell you that the area has improved as a direct result of your project and what they value about it.

9. The local economy will be boosted

There will be additional income for existing local businesses and/or there will be new businesses in your local area. You will be able to show that local businesses have benefited from your project.

This will be because you spent your grant locally, or because you encouraged more tourism visits to the local area, or because you provided new premises for businesses that moved into the area or expanded their operations within it.

How you will know what you have achieved? You will be able to show that these changes have come about as a direct result of your project using information about the local economy before and after your project available from organisations such as the local authority or tourism organisation.

Source: <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/outcomes-detail>

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