

# HERITAGE COUNTS 2016

## Heritage and Place Branding

Heritage Counts 2016 presents research on the use of heritage in place brands. New research commissioned this year highlights the value of heritage as a source of identity; a source of character and distinctiveness; and as an important driver of competitiveness and place.

Place branding is about communicating and managing the identity and perception of a place

Local organisations in England are actively engaged in place branding



Economic benefits from the UK's GREAT national branding campaign

£1 investment



£23 return

Source: The GREAT campaign

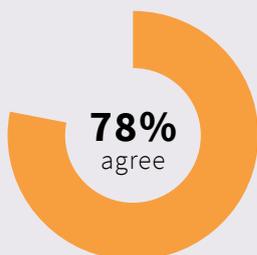
Value of the UNESCO brand to the UK



£85m  
2014/15



Evidence from Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)



BIDs see place branding as a part of their responsibilities

“ Today’s consumer is very market savvy and if a brand is constructed from scratch they are suspicious; using heritage brings credibility and authenticity to the offer...  
Newcastle NE1 Business Improvement District Company, 2016 ”

Is heritage important to...  
...your image and identity? ...achieving your objectives?



## Research summary

The existing evidence and literature on place branding is often based on international, national, city -region place branding experiences, suggesting that place branding is not commonplace at the local level.

Research commissioned for **Heritage Counts 2016** shows that local organisations in England **are** actively engaged in place branding. However, the term place branding is cautiously used, as it can be perceived as marketing jargon.

The decentralisation agenda and public sector cuts have resulted in the emergence of new agents actively involved in place-making and place branding. Almost four fifths (78%) of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) surveyed in this research see place branding activities as part of their responsibilities.

Heritage is used in place branding in the UK at national **and** local level. Heritage provides authenticity, distinctiveness and brings credibility to place brands. The UK's national branding campaign, the GREAT campaign, identifies heritage as one of 12 'unique selling points' of the UK.

Where BIDs do engage with heritage, this invariably extends beyond the built environment and beyond the most obvious heritage assets in their area to include less prominent, intangible heritage. Evidence shows that BIDs choose to work with a collection of lesser known heritage assets, as it is not always straightforward to integrate 'household name' heritage assets into a coherent local place brand.

However, the use of heritage in local place branding is often implicit and is seldom integrated into BIDs' wider strategic plans. Heritage is primarily used to provide images for corporate materials.

As BIDs mature, they tend to adopt a more coordinated approach and engage in more complex place branding activities, placing a greater strategic emphasis on place identity and heritage. The number of BIDs and other local place-making organisations is growing in the UK. As they grow and mature, the role of heritage in place-making and place branding will also grow.

## 1. Introduction

Creating places where people want to live, work and visit is a challenge and one that **place-making** aims to address. Place-making includes regeneration, development, design and community building. While the concept is one that is well used, often overlooked in place-making is the importance of managing the identity of a place and the value of communicating the strengths of a place.

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Over the long term, places with strong, distinctive identities are more likely to prosper than places without them

Robert Solow, Economist and Nobel laureate,  
in *Economics of Uniqueness* 2012

”

Places must develop their strengths and unique characteristics to be competitive. ‘Sameness’ is an economic disadvantage.

- **Place branding** focuses on developing, communicating and managing the perception of a place and is often used interchangeably with the term ‘place marketing’. Place brands build on the distinctiveness, character and unique identity of a place.

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Economic development is about creating places where people want to invest, work and live. It’s about making connections between people, companies, institutions, and communities...Place management and place branding are an essential part of that...

Jeff Finkle, Place Brand Observer, 2015

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- **Heritage** highlights the unique character of a place and plays an important part in shaping peoples’ perceptions and authentic experiences of a place. Heritage has the potential to form a key element of place brands by providing authenticity, distinctiveness and credibility to place brands.

Research presented in *Heritage Counts 2016* suggests that identity, place branding and heritage are becoming even more important in determining the future social and economic outcomes of our local places.



Boscombe's Royal Arcade. © Bournemouth Tourism

## 2. Place matters

Local places are becoming more not less important for our economies and for society. This is often referred to as the paradox of the global age – that is, while our businesses and economies are increasingly independent of administrative boundaries, place still matters.

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Places are not simply somewhere to build a factory. To have heart and soul, they need galleries, music centres, cherished heritage sites, libraries, and museums and sports facilities.

**Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, in The Culture White Paper, 2016**

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In literature and policy, terms such as ‘sense of place’, ‘space and place’ and the contemporary practice of place-making and place shaping, has given renewed emphasis to the importance of place. Place is a producer of wealth and wellbeing as well as provider of a sense of belonging and identity.

### 2.1 Place: a producer of wealth and wellbeing

- **Economists and regeneration experts have long debated the economic value of place.** Jane Jacobs’ seminal work on cities as places that produce wealth, inspired generations of urban economists, planners and regeneration specialists (Jacobs, 1961). Influential authors such as Michael Porter, argue that economic success and innovation depends on geographic concentrations – *clusters* (Porter, 2013). Physical proximity, it is argued, is an economic necessity – without it formal and informal knowledge would not be transferred from one firm to another. This, in turn would have an adverse impact on innovation, competitiveness and growth (Porter, 2013).
- **Author and Urbanist Richard Florida’s acclaimed writing on the Creative Class argues that creativity and culture are the new economic drivers, and quality of place is a core competitive advantage (Florida, 2004).** Business and investment follow people, and people and talent require place distinctiveness, authenticity and amenities (Florida, 2004).

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Every place must identify its strongest, most distinctive features and develop them or run the risk of being all things to all persons and nothing special to any. [...] Livability is not a middle-class luxury. It is an economic imperative.

**Robert Merton Solow, Economist and Nobel laureate, in *Economics of Uniqueness* 2012**

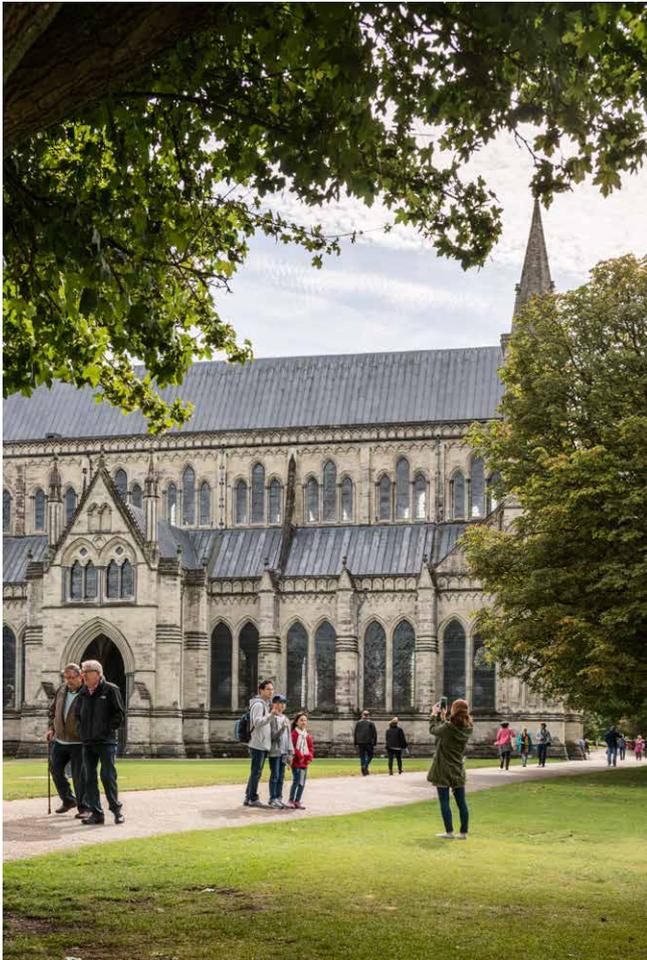
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- **Heritage signifies the culture of places and adds value to their attractiveness and competitive advantage by providing authenticity and distinctiveness.** Evidence from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in 2013 confirmed that innovative, new businesses flourish in places that possess a good stock of historic, distinctive buildings. Furthermore, independent retail and leisure businesses seek to cluster in historic areas of towns and cities – adding to the distinctive sense of place and attracting successful businesses (HLF, 2013).
- ***Heritage and Society 2016* reports that local heritage has an impact on quality of life and wellbeing.** The wellbeing value of visiting heritage sites has been calculated as equivalent to £1,646 per person per year (Fujiwara et al, 2014). This is higher than the value of participating in sports or the arts (£1,127 and £1,084 respectively).
- **Heritage also contributes to the local and cultural economy directly and indirectly.** *Heritage and the Economy 2016* reports the economic benefits of heritage: in total, domestic and international heritage-related visits generated £18.4bn in expenditure in England. Heritage generates an estimated £21.7 billion in Gross Added Value (GVA) and employs over 328,700 people (TBR, 2016).

“

We will promote the role that culture has in building stronger and healthier communities and boosting economic growth.  
**The Culture White Paper, 2016.**

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Salisbury Cathedral, Wiltshire. © Historic England

## 2.2 Place: a provider of social belonging and identity

- Social and political scientists debate the challenges facing nation-states of the 21st century. Political liberalism, technological change, migration and interdependent global economies are driving more pluralist societies. As nations become more diverse the very foundations of the nation are challenged including its shared common ethnicity, culture and history, language and politics (Castells, 1997).

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Places are almost never the product of a singular, evenly-connected community, but the intersection and overlapping of multiple or many diverse groups. “The community” often includes people who never speak to each other, or may not even notice each other...

Project for Public Spaces, 2013

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- In the UK the quest to engage citizens and communities has resulted in significant, rapid constitutional change in recent years. A strong push from a highly centralised system towards a devolved system has emerged. Local place is increasingly seen as the most appropriate platform to engage people and create a sense of place and community (APPG, 2016). Devolution, it is argued, will reconnect people to their local communities and create a positive identity and sense of place. It will also provide a sense of accountability and confidence that decision makers are delivering the interests of local people and local communities (CFPS, 2016).

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In the devolved nations, the primary driver has been that of identity, whilst regional disquiet across England from an electorate that has often expressed feelings of disconnection and difference from Westminster has also played its part.

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Reform, 2016

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- Recent constitutional and political events bear witness to the “devolution revolution” in the UK, including the Scottish Referendum, Scotland Bill, Wales Bill, English Votes for English Laws, the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act, and most recently the EU referendum and Brexit vote.

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We are in the middle of a devolution revolution.

We want our national and local cultural institutions to work together to support places to harness the power of culture to drive economic growth, education and wellbeing.

Rt Hon Greg Clark MP Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, 2016,

The Culture White Paper

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- Evidence shows that there is a significant, positive correlation between community attachment and economic growth. Cities with the highest levels of community attachment had the highest rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth (John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, 2010).

- **Heritage fosters a stronger sense of place and community attachment.** *Heritage Counts 2009* reports that adults who live in areas of higher concentrations of historic environment have a stronger sense of place (CURDS, 2009). Other studies also support these findings:
  - 92% of respondents to an on-street survey in areas that had seen significant historic environment led regeneration felt that heritage projects had raised pride in the local area and 93% that it had increased their sense of place (AMION et al, 2010).
  - Evidence from the Taking Part survey shows that British history was the third most quoted factor that makes adults proud of Britain (37 per cent) (DCMS, 2015). British architecture and historic buildings are also recognised as key factors, with 19 per cent of adults identifying this as one of the main factors that made them most proud of Britain.
  - Recent research from the Heritage Lottery Fund finds that 80% of people think local heritage makes their area a better place to live (HLF, 2015).
  - Evidence from HLF’s Community Heritage programme shows that heritage gives a sense of belonging (HLF, 2016).

- **Heritage provides people with a link to the past, a symbol of permanence and stability, a sense of belonging, an identity.** Post Brexit identity, heritage and sense of place are likely to become even more important in determining social and economic outcomes.

### 2.3 Local place: emerging new actors

- **The recent constitutional and political shifts in the UK have occurred within an exceptional economic circumstance.** That is, the nation’s slow recovery from the recession of 2008/9 - the deepest recession to hit the country, and indeed the global economy, for the past 80 years.
- **Some recent economic indicators suggest that the effects of the financial bust and deep recession have passed, with consumer confidence near record highs, growing housing market transactions and unemployment levels below 2006 levels in October 2016 (GfK, 2016; RICS, 2016; ONS 2016).** However, other key indicators of the health of the economy, such as the public sector balance sheet, continue to be of great concern. Meanwhile, the Brexit vote has ushered in a new era of uncertainty and volatility. In October 2016 the pound displayed its lowest levels against the dollar in 30 years.
- **Since 2010 when the Government introduced its deficit reduction programme, public sector budgets have reduced dramatically.** In the March 2016 Budget, the Chancellor announced further cuts of £3.5bn to public spending by 2020. This is on top of the 7.8 per cent cuts since 2010 (IFS, 2015). Local authorities in England have lost 27 per cent of their spending power between 2010/11 and 2015/16 in real terms (JFR, 2015). Some services, such as planning and ‘supporting people’ have seen cumulative cuts to the order of 45 per cent (JFR, 2015). The impact of these cuts has been shared across the heritage sector: *Heritage Indicators 2016* evidence a 27 per cent cut in Historic England and English Heritage spending since 2014/15, and a 35 per cent reduction in Local Authority Historic Environment staff since 2006.



Glastonbury Tor, Somerset. © Historic England

- **Austerity and the tightening public purse strings have had and continue to have a considerable impact on delivery of local services.** Evidence from the Local Government Association shows that 60 per cent of councils say they are considering some degree of service reduction to help meet the budget gap (LGA, 2014).

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Our future funding outlook model predicts that the amount of money available to deliver some of the most popular local services will shrink by 66 per cent by the end of the decade. This is likely to result in less money to spend on things such as filling potholes, providing youth services and funding leisure facilities (pools, gyms and parks). It will also mean less money to spend on libraries and a significant reduction in the help that councils can provide to local businesses.

LGA, 2014

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- **Evidently devolution is expected to be the most efficient means of responding to society’s needs, however budget cuts have severely reduced the public sector’s capacity and resources to deliver.** The result has been the emergence and growth of private and voluntary sectors now engaged to a much greater degree in the delivery of local services.
- **Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) have emerged in this context of declining local government capacity and resources, and the implementation of the devolution agenda (TBR et al., 2016).** BIDs have assumed localised powers and resources in order to promote their area, to undertake environmental improvements and respond to problems of street crime, litter, and negative associations with their area. Research commissioned for *Heritage Counts 2016* focuses on BIDs as an example of new organisations engaged in place-making. The research examines the extent to which BIDs are involved in place branding and whether and how heritage is used.

## Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

BIDs were first established in England in 2005 following enabling legislation through the Local Government Act (2003) and subsequent regulations in 2004. There are now over 200 BIDs in the UK.

A BID is funded through the BID levy, which is a percentage of a businesses’ rateable value. The majority of BIDs charge 1 per cent of rateable value, however, some have opted for higher levies. Once a ballot is successful the BID levy is mandatory for all eligible businesses.

There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a BID. The only requirement is that it should be something that is in addition to services provided by local authorities.

## 3. Place-making

Place-making is about developing places that are attractive to residents, businesses and visitors. The challenge for place makers is to proactively develop and build on the strongest attributes of a place as the competitive advantage of a place depends less on the assets present, and more on how those assets are used (Porter, 2013; RSA and HLF, 2015).

The concept of place-making is widely used within academic, policy and commercial development circles in the context of a rapidly urbanising and growing world. Rapid growth, it is argued, can put at risk precisely the qualities that make places attractive.

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Places are at risk of losing their distinctive traits and in turn becoming less vibrant and livable. This is not merely a concern for culture-loving intellectuals: all income groups of local communities may regret the loss of a sense of place, which makes them feel part of their society.

World Bank, 2012

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Data generated by an online survey of BIDs demonstrates that BIDs are actively involved in place-making – 83 per cent of BIDs state place-making is one of their key activities (TBR et al., 2016).

BIDs objectives fit neatly into a place-making agenda which are to increase visits from a wider catchment in the first place but also visits from local residents. Promoting their area is also a high priority for BIDs.

Note that developing the identity of the BID area scores relatively low amongst surveyed BIDs. This is a point we discuss towards the end of this report but is related to the maturity of the BID – the research shows that the more mature the BID, the more likely they are to engage with more complex activities such as actively developing the identity of place.

### 3.1 Place branding

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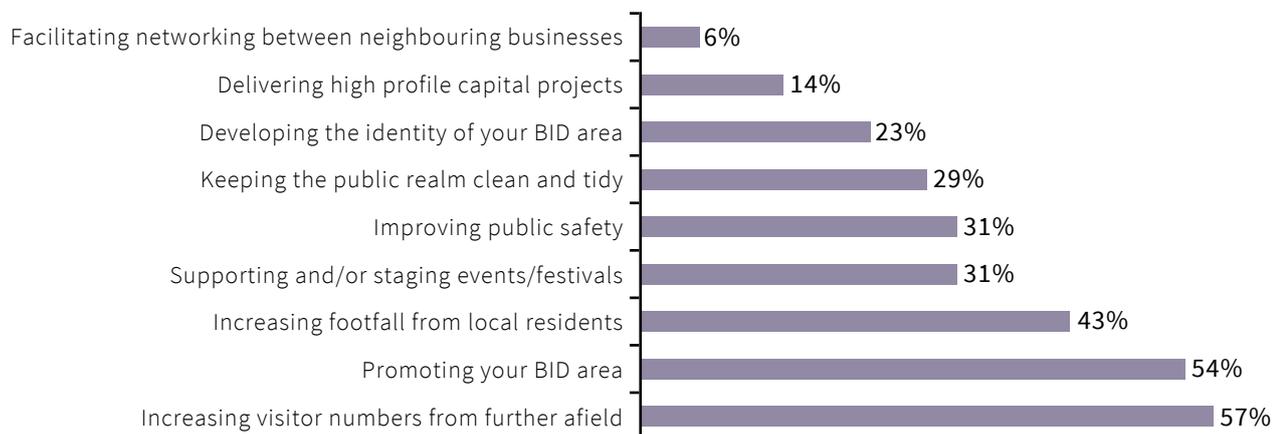
Economic development is about creating places where people want to invest, work and live. It's about making connections between people, companies, institutions, and communities... Place management and place branding are an essential part of that...

Jeff Finkle, The Place Brand Observer,  
3 December 2015

”

- Place branding is a holistic and strategic concept that focuses on developing, communicating and managing the perception of a place. Place branding targets the perception of place in the eyes of residents, businesses, investors, workers, visitors and the wider public. Organisations use brands to help consumers identify their products and services and to differentiate them from competitors (TBR et al., 2016). Equally place brands target the identity and reputation of a place as a place to visit, study in, invest in or trade with.
- The terms ‘place branding’ and ‘place marketing’ are often used interchangeably, however the branding of a place is more inclusive than destination marketing as the main focus is not only the attraction of visitors. Place branding is also about the attraction of inward investment, businesses, people and talent (TBR et al., 2016).
- Place brands exist at national and city level with schemes such as the Academy of Urbanism’s ‘Great Place and Town’ awards, which attempt to measure the best places to live, visit, do business and invest in ([www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/tag/great-town-award/](http://www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/tag/great-town-award/)). Creative cities have also been ranked since the early 1990s as part of World City positioning (Comedia, 1991).
- The existing place branding evidence and literature is often based on international, national and city region place branding experiences and activities, suggesting that place branding is not commonplace at local level.

## BIDs’ objectives and priorities



## Durham: Place of Light

Supported by Durham County Council, Visit Durham and Business Durham, the Durham “Place of Light” brand promotes Durham as a culturally rich county, where “the possibilities shine bright”.

The aim of the project was to provide a consistent, clear and coherent identity for Durham, differentiating it from the rest of the country, with the aim of changing the perception of the county with the main audiences for economic success.

To produce the place brand, a comprehensive consultative process was undertaken with product testing with across both public and private sectors.

As part of the brand project, a “**Brand Toolkit**” was produced, providing tips and examples of how place branding was used in the project.

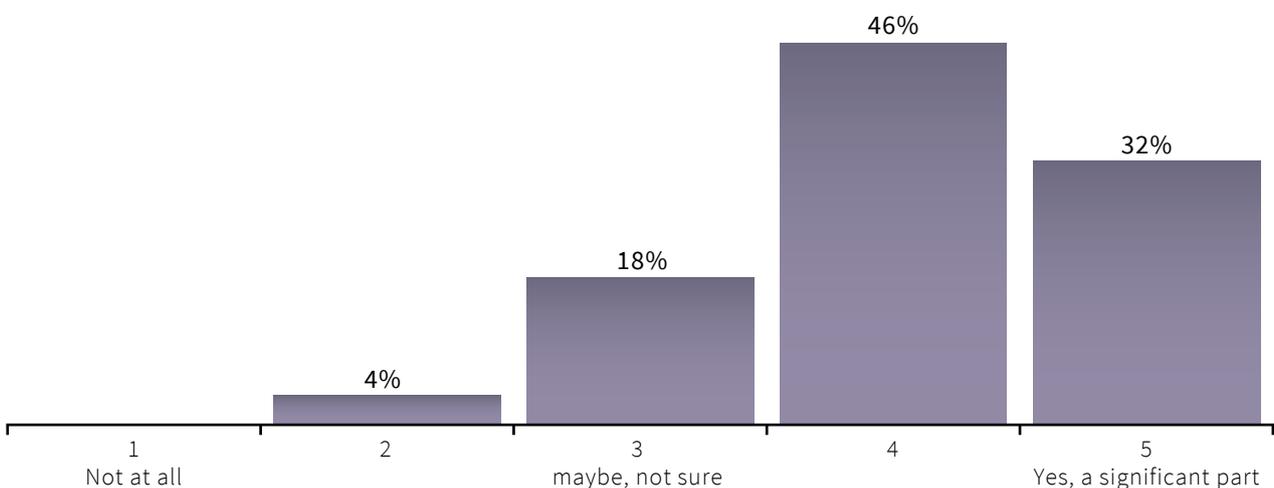
Durham’s historic environment is promoted as providing inspiring places to live, work and visit. Visit Durham figures suggest that Durham attracted 18.67m visitors last year and that the value of the visitor economy grew by £17m to £777.5m.



Source: TBR et al., 2016

- The research commissioned for *Heritage Counts 2016* shows that BIDs working at the very local level are actively engaged in place branding and place branding activities. Almost four fifths (78%) see place branding as part of their responsibilities and almost three quarters (71%) of BIDs surveyed report that they are currently engaged in place branding.
- Case study evidence of BIDs shows that there is variation in BIDs’ target audiences. Some BIDs felt that the primary objective of their place branding activities is to develop a sense of pride amongst local residents, so that they eventually become advocates for the area. Others felt that it is to capture a greater proportion of visitors within a one-hour drive time, while others focused further afield; to gather traction in national and international visitor markets.

## Do you consider place branding to be part of the BID’s responsibilities?



Source: TBR et al., 2016



## Background

Blackburn BID was established on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 with a remit to deliver against four key objectives:

- To market and promote Blackburn as a vibrant town centre;
- To create a safer, more secure town centre;
- To create a sustainable, cleaner and more attractive environment;
- To attract and support businesses.

## Blackburn BID's role in place branding

Blackburn with Darwen Council has taken the lead in a recent place branding exercise. This activity is led by Blackburn and Darwen Business Leaders' Network, *The Hive*, which includes local employers, colleges and the BID. The BID manages the budget and leads on marketing and events in the town centre. In agreement with the Council, and in partnership with key partners like The Mall, King Georges Hall, Visit Blackburn, and Blackburn Market the aim is to raise the profile of the newly regenerated town centre and so drive footfall.

Through the recent place branding work led by the Blackburn with Darwen Hive, the BID has a commitment to working together with all interested parties (from public agencies to individual businesses) to utilise common visuals and adopt a positive common narrative as a means of generating a unified message.

## Blackburn BID's use of heritage in place branding

From the outset, the BID has used heritage as part of a calendar of vibrant events, including the development of the Blackburn Heritage Festival as a grass roots celebration linking to the national Heritage Open Days annual activities.

A place branding tool kit has been developed by Thinking Place, who worked with focus groups in the development phase. Attendees all had different stories to tell, but most could engage with and comment upon heritage. These individual contributions have been used to inform the development of the place brand.

Discussions which led to the development of the place brand focussed on Blackburn's incredible past and local residents' fierce pride in the town and its history. The new place branding which has been launched has a nod towards the town's manufacturing success and continuing expansion, specifically the town's cotton and

textiles industries and global industries now based in the borough. Making and manufacturing came out of the consultations as being a key part of Blackburn's heritage that the BID would like to develop into a narrative for the place brand.

## Benefits of heritage/place branding activities

The BID's Blackburn Heritage festivals have attracted large numbers of people into the town centre and led to further spin off events, such as Steam Sundays and vintage bus rallies. The impact has also helped to lever in additional funding (e.g. HLF grants). Further economic benefit has accrued through sponsorship.

In addition to the economic impact, the Blackburn BID has reported further benefits, such as positive engagement with heritage on social media. Heritage events have been staged at a time when intense redevelopment, demolition, and physical change had created some local concern. The heritage events provided a welcome complement to this and helped to develop a sense of civic pride.

## Challenges to heritage/place branding activities

The BID seeks to continue to develop the success of initiatives which celebrate local heritage and cultural assets. The 'Walk the Walk' guided walks for staff and visitors in the town centre are an example of this. However, Blackburn's cultural attractions such as the museum and art gallery, library and theatre and concert hall are financially-squeezed and currently lack the resources to open for as long as they would like to. Further cuts to funding for marketing, culture and leisure make this difficult. However, recent successful Heritage Lottery applications, such as the 'Gladstone's View' multi-million pound transformation of Northgate and the newly invigorated Cathedral Quarter, continue to breathe new life into old spaces and create new opportunities to showcase heritage and reflect both the aspirational messages of the place branding tool kit.



- BIDs recognise the need for coordinated branding across multiple media, and have embraced a range of approaches to achieve this; from reinvigorating retro slogans (for example, I [heart] sunny Worthing) to more contemporary examples which embrace a wider narrative or ‘story’. BIDs recognise that place branding cannot be limited to logos and slogans, however, and heritage was often cited as a means through which a place brand could achieve greater authenticity as it sought to achieve differentiation.

“

The historic city is a fundamental part of the city identity and a huge asset ... It gives uniqueness to the place particularly when the retail centres we are competing with all have the same brands. We look different; offer a better quality visitor experience, plus the heritage tourism potential of the assets. This cannot be created without the heritage assets, which bring differentiation to the place brand.

Lincoln Business Improvement Group

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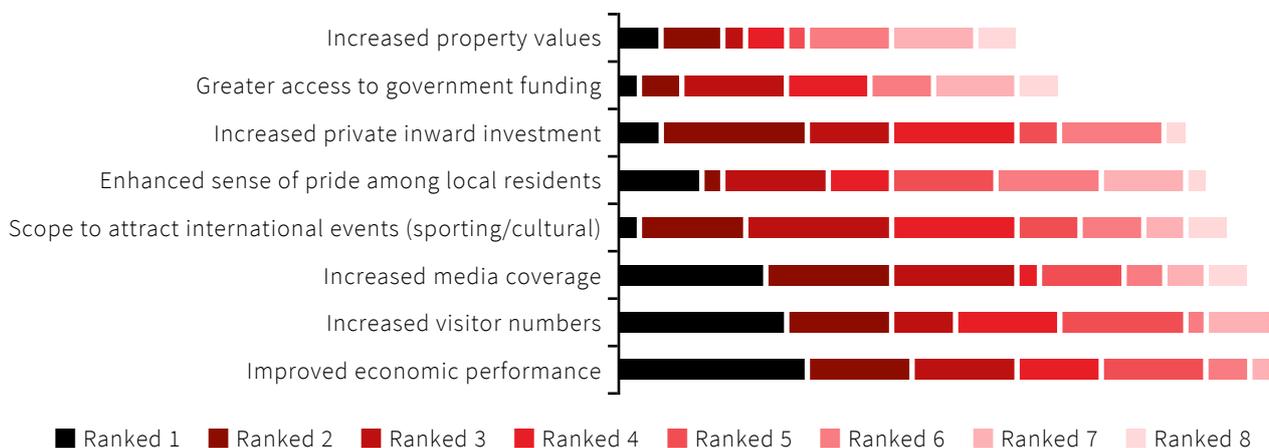
### 3.2 The added value of place branding.

- Amongst BIDs, strong place brands are associated with a range of desirable outcomes including increased visitor numbers, improved economic performance, and increased media profile.

- Measuring the value of place branding is difficult. There is some quantitative evidence of the value of place brands from national branding campaigns. The GREAT campaign is the UKs national place branding campaign, and reports the following benefits (NAO, 2016):
  - As of March 2015, the GREAT campaign had 202 private sector partners and 164 high-profile individuals endorsing the brand. It had attracted £68 million in sponsorship including both cash and benefits in kind;
  - In 2015/16 it is estimated that for every £1 spent overseas, overseas visitors spend £23 in Britain;
  - The Cabinet Office has confirmed a return of £1.2 billion against a target to bring £1.7 to £1.9 billion to the UK economy by 2019-20;
  - The GREAT campaign has provided the strategic coherence and practical support necessary to support the adoption of consistent and effective brand management by partners across government.
- The National Audit Office has commended the government’s GREAT campaign promoting the UK overseas as meeting good practice and impact (NAO, 2016).

- Evidence from Anholt GfK Nations Brand Index shows that the UK has a very rounded nation brand, ranking in the top six on all of the six dimensions that make up the nation brand rank. In 2015 the UK retained 3rd place as a nation brand, behind the USA and Germany (<http://nation-brands.gfk.com/>).

## Which benefits do you expect to accrue to places with strong brands?



## The GREAT campaign

The GREAT campaign aims to generate economic returns by exploiting the UK's nation brand through commercial branding and marketing techniques to differentiate the UK as a destination for tourism, education, inward investment and to support British companies exporting overseas. The campaign was formally launched in February 2012. Its aim is to exploit the attention generated by the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics to secure long-term improvement in how people overseas perceive the UK.

The GREAT campaign has identified the UK's 'unique selling points' which include: innovation, creativity, technology, entrepreneurs, **heritage**, culture, countryside, shopping, luxury, food, music and knowledge.

The GREAT campaign has allocated £113.5 million funding to five organisations for the 2012–2015 period.

The campaign has created strong marketing and communication tools and materials. It has created a logo, design, guidelines and images and developing the overall strategy and allocating funding. This provides an important element of consistency in the use of these materials which helps to embed the brand by creating familiarity among target audiences and markets.

Partners and other organisations who do not receive GREAT campaign funding can access high quality GREAT campaign materials, including standard images, creating efficiencies.

GREAT delivery partners use the materials developed as the basis for marketing campaigns overseas and online to reach target audiences to try to change their perceptions. Most of its activity is overseas although there has been a small UK element focusing on tourism and export promotion.



- The 2014 Visit Britain *Holidays at Home are GREAT* campaign, is estimated to have had significant impacts (Visit Britain, 2015):

- The campaign generated £138 million in additional tourism spend in 2014;

- Since 2012 over £520m in incremental spend has been generated by investment;
- Based on average spending of £66 per night on UK holidays, this equates to over 7.87 million nights away to date.

### 3.3 Heritage and place branding

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In order to be competitive, places are advised to build a brand that is befitting to the sense of place [and] to engage and develop meaningful initiatives that reflect identity. The essential role of heritage is obvious.

Robert Govers, 2014

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- **The use of heritage in place branding activities is evident.** In the *GREAT* Britain Campaign, heritage is identified as one of 12 ‘unique selling points’ of the UK and the campaign.
- In the Futurebrand Country brand index, the strength of a country’s brand is determined by the perception of the country’s value system, quality of life, business potential, **heritage and culture**, tourism and the quality of products made in that country (<http://www.futurebrand.com/country-branding>). Indeed 30 per cent of overseas visitors cite heritage as the biggest single motivation for their visit to the UK – the largest single factor for non-business visitors (Oxford Economics, 2010).
- Examples of regional branding based on heritage include Northumberland/North East region and Essen-Ruhr in Germany, both using industrial heritage to develop heritage and creative clusters through place (re)branding (TBR et al., 2016).

- **The use of heritage in place branding is not isolated to national and regional campaigns.**

Evidence gathered from BIDs indicates that heritage is used extensively in local place branding activities (TBR et al., 2016). The primary use of heritage is to provide images for corporate materials. BIDs also see heritage as an important visitor attractor, important for marketing campaigns and as a canvas for events and festivals.

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Place branding is a whole series of events how you work together as an organisation... [It is ] not so much ‘image’ but the ‘look and feel’ of the place...

This is Liverpool BID company, 2016

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- A systematic review of BIDs strategic documents indicates that the majority of BIDs seldom integrate heritage and the historic environment into their strategic planning. Heritage is used implicitly often in an ad hoc manner. Nevertheless 89% of surveyed BIDs felt that heritage played an important role in the image and identity of a place and 80% felt that heritage was important to visitors’ perceptions of their BID area.

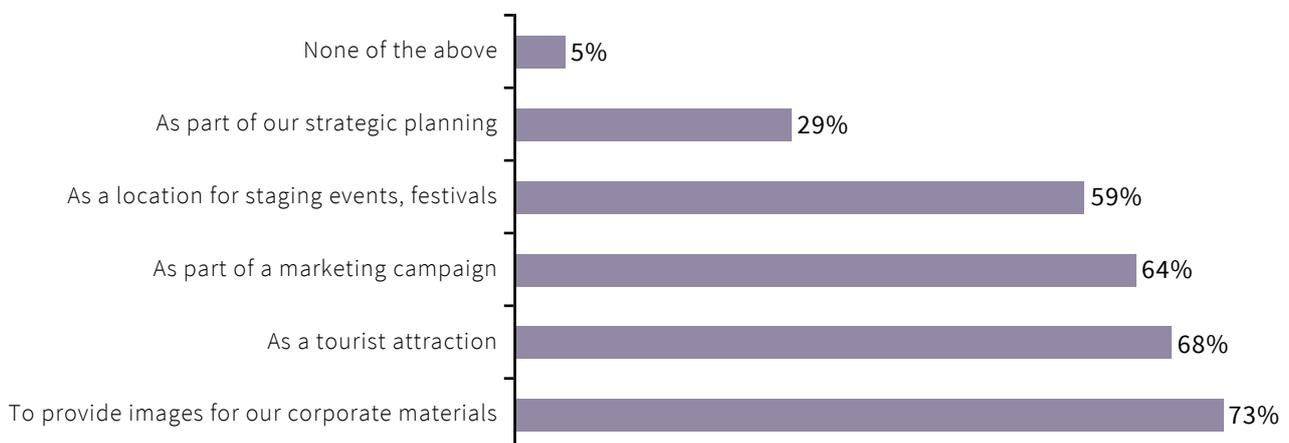
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Place branding with heritage is about telling the story of the city, not just in traditional heritage places like museums but knitted across the whole city.

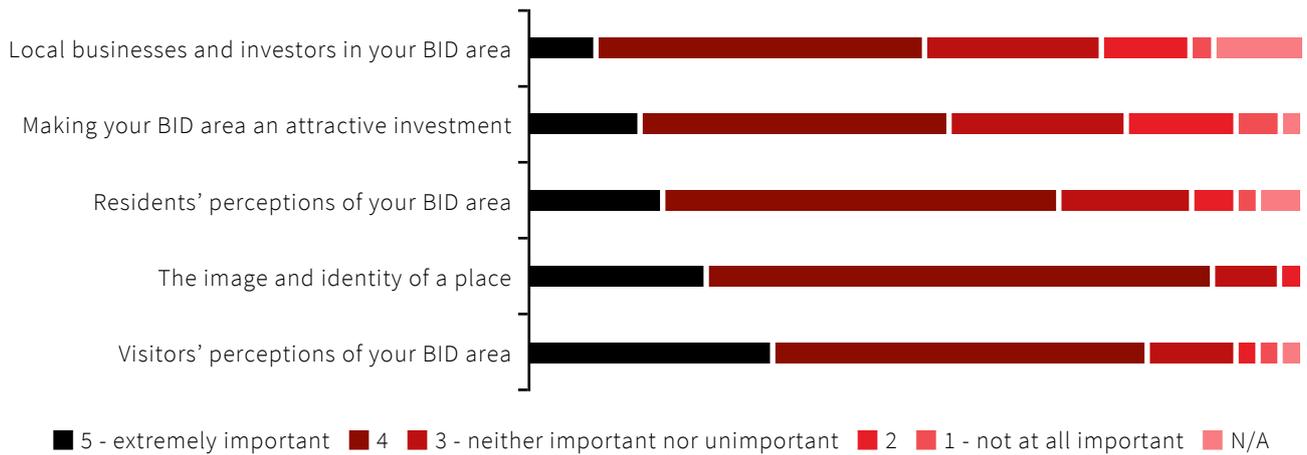
Leeds BID, 2016

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## How local heritage is used by BIDs



# The importance of heritage in BIDs



Source: TBR et al., 2016

- BIDs generally display a high level of awareness of local heritage assets.** Individual examples of heritage being used by BIDs to assist place branding include offering local heritage tours to recently-arrived businesses, developing smartphone applications (apps) that update with thematic heritage trails that include GPS directions, and leading larger, externally funded projects to restore and maintain heritage buildings (TBR et al., 2016).

- Where heritage is not immediately apparent or accessible (often non-physical assets), some BIDs are able to seek out heritage and recognise the value of it. The imprisonment of Oscar Wilde in Reading Prison is an example that has captured international media coverage for a place that is typically known as a commercial centre (TBR et al., 2016).

- Local place branding using heritage extends beyond the most significant heritage.** Where BIDs do engage with heritage, this invariably extends beyond the built environment and beyond the most obvious heritage assets in their area to include less prominent, intangible heritage. This is vital as the identity, uniqueness and character of places is not limited by the number or significance of heritage assets present.

- Indeed case study evidence of BIDs indicates that ‘household name’ heritage assets may have a brand of their own with sufficient market reach to not need to work collaboratively. Some lesser known heritage assets and historic associations are more inclined to contribute to the development of a more collaborative place brand.

## 3.4 The added value of heritage in place branding

- There has been surprisingly little statistical analysis of place brands in relation to factors such as cultural or heritage assets.** In perhaps one of the highest profile examples of culture-led regeneration and place branding, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao estimated that for a 10 per cent increase in news articles on the museum, visitor numbers increased by 1.7 per cent and the place brand value of the Guggenheim Bilbao Museum was worth over €2m per year (Plaza, 2012).

- The UNESCO World Heritage evaluation also evidences quantifiable economic value to the UK due to association with the UNESCO Brand (UNESCO, 2015):**
  - World Heritage sites generated an estimated £85 million through their association with the UNESCO Brand in 2014/15.
  - UNESCO designation is a recognised mark of quality which symbolises the designated body’s universal value, promoting professional and civic pride as well as investor confidence
  - UNESCO designation can also be a mechanism to enhance quality and create value



## SHREWSBURY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

### Background

Shrewsbury BID was established in 2014 - the first BID to be established in Shropshire - and is in the third year of its first 5 year term. The BID strategy is to 'Mix the Old with the New', e.g. Tudor architecture, based on a strong and independent place identity.

Key priorities include: Business cost savings & support; Marketing impact; Access and car parking; Strategic direction & drive. Shrewsbury's distinctive history and heritage, its cultural and leisure offer make it a unique and appealing location to visit and stay, as well as a vibrant place in which to invest and work in.

### Shrewsbury BID's approach to place branding

The BID organisation has a key role in raising the appreciation and profile of the town, interfacing with the social and 'community-ness' of the place. The BID seeks to provide and promote confidence in the town, including its history and heritage. It also has a key role in maintaining and improving the physical infrastructure, access and safety, and as a credible voice for business on strategic town centre issues.

The BID's approach to place branding and place-making is not spatial/territorial, or simply based on logos/straplines - the BID leads on Destination Marketing, PR & Promotion and provides a media coverage platform to better promote the town/BID area through its activities, e.g. website, newsletters, videos, promoting a strong sense of pride of place and collaborating with stakeholders and partners.

Activities include events/festivals (e.g. a high profile arts event planned for 2017), promoting and managing the night-time/evening economy, and gaining recognition for example in the ATCM Purple Flag award and British BID accreditation for quality management, governance and operations.

### BID's use of heritage in place branding

Heritage is intrinsic, although not explicit, in the town's place brand. Heritage is, however, central to the character, history and environment of the town's offer and profile, as highlighted in its Business Plan. The BID uses local knowledge and area specific assets, such as listed buildings (660), museums, historic parks & gardens.

At Christmas, projections are made onto the museum & gallery at night, whilst the new town map and wayfinding incorporates key landmarks. £10m capital

funding for public spaces via the local council is being invested in cycling, wayfinding and on-street mapping. Notable heritage includes the Darwin legacy (an 'independent thinker') which is part of a strong historical legacy.

An exhibition is planned: 'Evolution' with public/street activities and engagement. Art is also used to promote the town centre, e.g. weekend art festival, art trails and art works.

### Benefits of Shrewsbury BID's heritage/place branding

The town's heritage distinction is similar to comparators such as Bath or Chester. There is a clear value to authenticity, and buy-in by the public and journalists (e.g. tours of museums) through articles/reviews.

As well as measuring footfall, visitor numbers and spend, media coverage was estimated to be worth £387,000 in terms of editorial value in the first 2 years of the BID, including free radio advertising- contributing to a positive, upward trend and feel good factor. Other benefits include visitors/spending, events and investment, increased property values and an enhanced sense of pride amongst local people.

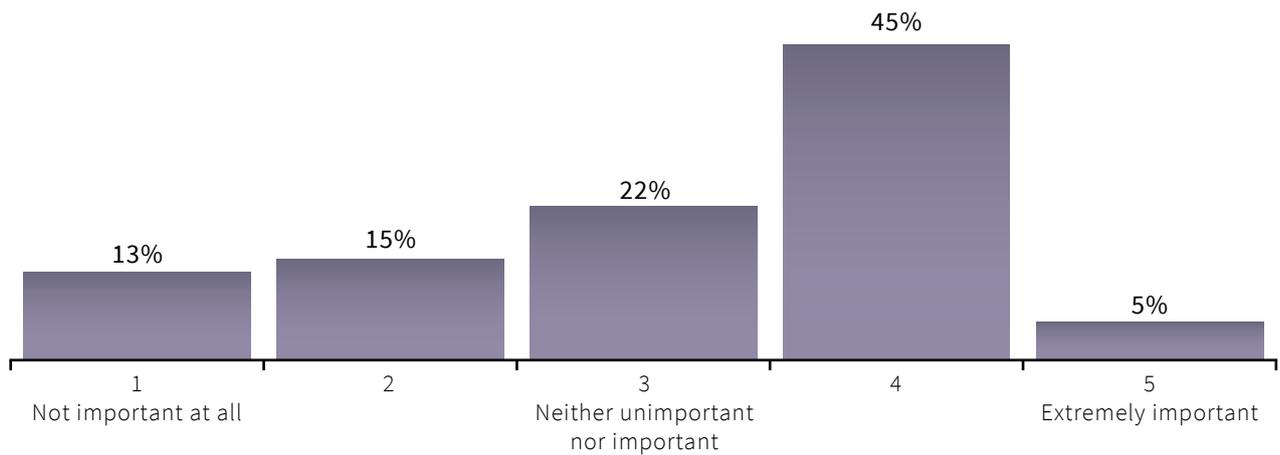
### Challenges and Opportunities of using heritage in place branding

The Abbey, Cathedral and churches are part of the town's heritage assets and mix, but there is little direct involvement in the development of the place brand.

The challenge is to get heritage organisations involved, although they are not levy-payers. There is a need to encourage voluntary contributions from heritage organisations and building owners, e.g. joint promotion, marketing, events.



# The importance of local heritage assets to BIDs achieving their objectives



Source: TBR et al., 2016

- **BIDs recognise the value heritage adds to a place brand as an opportunity to differentiate one place from another (TBR et al., 2016).** This was particularly true of BIDs both in post-industrial cities which have sought for some time to recast perceptions of decline and in ultra-urban areas where scope to develop competitive advantage through other means was restricted (TBR et al., 2016). BIDs in more prosperous areas were unaccustomed to these challenges and found that their inherent offer was sufficient to, for example, consistently attract private investment.
- **Half of BIDs (51%) rated heritage assets as being important (either 4 or 5 out of 5) to achieving their objectives.**

### 3.5 The future for heritage in local place brands.

- **Evidence from BIDs indicates that the extent to which BIDs were able to proactively pursue place branding increased as they matured.** Similarly, the evaluation of the GREAT campaign indicates that partners' delivery of the GREAT brand is improving as the campaign matures (NAO, 2015).
- **BIDs are often first established to address more street level issues, such as litter, crime and a generally untidy public realm.** Perhaps as a consequence of this, BIDs in their first term often report engaging with the delivery of events as being a 'first-step' into place-making (TBR et al., 2016). BIDs are unlikely to engage with place branding

as part of the initial election campaign. In their second or third term they are more likely to engage in more complex projects, such as improving the built environment through infrastructure projects that can enhance place identity, and engaging or initiating cultural programming involving heritage (tangible and intangible). This extended, in one example, to commissioning the development of a place branding toolkit.

- **BIDs' early attempts to capture value from place branding may have been through reacting to opportunities presented by external events.** However, as BIDs mature, they tend (at least to try) to adopt a more coordinated approach to their place branding activities and to collaborate with cultural organisations and agencies – in some cases bringing culture organisations and agencies together to work on place (TBR 2016).
- **The corollary is that as the “devolution revolution” continues, and as public sector spending continues to shrink, local agents such as BIDs will continue to engage in place-making activities.** As these organisations mature, the role of heritage will be enhanced as they pursue more complex place-making and place-branding activities to attract residents, businesses and visitors.



## TEAM LONDON BRIDGE

### Background

Businesses in the London Bridge area first voted in favour of a BID in 2005. Since then the BID has successfully sought renewal at five-yearly intervals, most recently securing its third term from 2016-2021. The BID's mission is:

*'to ensure London Bridge excels as a leading place for global commerce and continues to develop as a pioneering local centre for enterprise, culture and entertainment.'*

The prominence of heritage and place branding terms in the BID's 2016-21 Business Plan suggest that it is pursuing heritage-led place branding; it is making full use of its heritage assets within its place brand.

The BID considered *improving public safety, delivering high profile capital projects, and developing the identity of the BID area* as its three most important objectives.

The final two objectives are characteristic of more mature BIDs. These BIDs have often accomplished some more straightforward objectives earlier in their lifecycle and now have the experience and capacity to engage with more ambitious (and sometimes intangible) objectives.

### London Bridge BID's place branding role

The BID identified that London Bridge had a range of associations, such as a structure (the bridge itself) and the railway station. This range of different perceptions has made it difficult to establish a place brand that reflects what the London Bridge area has to offer. Developing an identity that reflects this and is capable of supplanting existing perceptions requires a sophisticated and coordinated approach.

The London Bridge BID plan coordinates place branding activity while recognising that partnership working with other organisations is integral to this. The term place branding is used, but the BID is careful to make sure it is always accompanied by practical activity to avoid it being considered marketing jargon.

The BID works with organisations including Southwark Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, and tourism and Destination Marketing Organisations. The BID also considers that Network Rail, Transport for London and private land owners are really important partners in developing the place brand.

The BID believes that a strong place brand is necessary for the London Bridge area to reach its full commercial

potential.

### London Bridge BID's use of heritage in place branding

Within the BID boundary are notable cultural assets such as HMS Belfast, Tower Bridge, the Fashion & Textile museum, and the Victorian medicine and operating theatre museum. There is also demonstrable railway heritage, including part of the first railway in London. The BID also promotes assets just outside of its formal coverage, such as Southwark Cathedral, Tate Modern, and Borough Market.

Incorporating physical heritage into the physical elements of the place brand can be challenging. Modern developments make an important contribution to the development of London Bridge's place brand. Although reconciling approval for new developments with a desire to preserve physical heritage can present challenges, the BID believes that the area's physical heritage offers a unique edge over homogeneous new developments that appeals to businesses that are considering relocating.

The BID aims to make heritage part of the identity of the area through how it is described. The BID team delivers guided walks of the area for newly locating businesses that draw attention to its heritage.

### The value of place branding activities

The BID considered quantifying the economic value of a place brand to be very difficult to accomplish because of the difficulty in isolating the place brand from the influence of other factors. Nonetheless, this is something that the BID would be interested in pursuing.



## 4. Conclusion

Heritage gives Britain its competitive edge. It is one of the major reasons why people want to live, work and visit here. Heritage is a vital part of our local places it is one of few “unique selling points”. Heritage provides people with a link to the past, a symbol of permanence and stability, a sense of belonging – an identity. As the UK moves towards leaving the EU, our identity and our heritage and the way we present it to the world will become ever more important.

The evidence presented in the *Heritage Indicators; Heritage and the Economy 2016* and the *Heritage Counts 2016 Research* documents indicates that there is a renaissance in heritage – the general public understand the value of heritage and as a result the heritage sector has seen substantial growth in members, and in participation. The private sector also understands the value of heritage as a source of differentiation and competitive advantage. Private actors are taking a bigger role in shaping places as public sector is investing less. The evidence presented in this report shows that private actors value and utilise heritage.

Place branding is about shaping and managing identities as well as communicating and influencing people’s perceptions of a place. Heritage has an important role to play in place brands providing authenticity and distinctiveness. If done well there are significant economic benefits to place branding as witnessed by the UK’s national branding campaign – the GREAT campaign.

It is vital that heritage continues to be a part of national and local place brands and that the value and role of heritage is fully recognised, implicitly and explicitly. To achieve the benefits that heritage can provide it is important that heritage is invested in and that the future of our heritage is secured.

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