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YOUTH AND HERITAGE

A feasibility study and options report into building capacity
between the Youth and Heritage Sectors



Youth Potential

Building Capacity within the Youth and Heritage Sector

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Executive Summary

Youth Potential

Building Capacity within the Youth and Heritage Sector

March 2023

- 1.1 This project was funded by [Historic England](#) and managed by the [Youth United Foundation](#). The project team would like to thank Mark Harrison BSc (Hons) FSA (Head of Heritage Crime Strategy at Historic England) for his support throughout.
- 1.2 The aims of this study were:
 - a) To share and build on the learning from a previous Historic England funded pilot, the *Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC) 'Heritage Challenge - Solve It' social action project*.
 - b) To scope the willingness and ability of others in the youth and heritage sectors to develop mutually beneficial opportunities which support Historic England's vision and objectives.
- 1.3 Throughout this project a 'young person reference group' and a total of 50 people from 30 organisations were involved in the consultation process. It explored and began to shape a common framework in which partnerships could provide opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds to not only have their voices heard within the heritage sector, but support them to take action. A significant amount of existing good practice, relating to working with young people in the co-design and delivery of engaging heritage/historic projects, was identified and shared. These were recorded by the project team and could form the basis of future activity.
- 1.4 Following a cross sector workshop held in December 2022, a shared vision of a framework evolved. This framework would support 'partnership development', 'sharing learning and resources', and co-designed youth-led 'social action' proposals for grant funding. The early input of young people should also be a priority, where they have space to shape and undertake social action projects which celebrate and care for our heritage. The participants highlighted that because organisations were busy with existing programmes additional support would be needed to make this framework a reality.
- 1.5 Many of the participants who took part in this consultation highlighted the lack of follow-up opportunities for the young people who feel engaged in their projects. They felt that there should be more follow-on activities for young people who may have an interest in future job opportunities within the heritage sector.

Recommendations

A total of 16 detailed recommendations are made based on the feedback of participants and a review of existing good practice and learning from both the heritage and youth sectors.

These can be summarised in the following seven high level recommendations:

1. Infrastructure: A new cross-sector network or initiative is established to continue dialogue and operationalise these recommendations
2. Framework: The theory of change, principles and framework set out in this report are further developed and adopted
3. Partnership development: The network, or initiative, facilitates co-designed proposals between the youth sector, heritage sector and young people
4. Shared Learning: A space or centre is established to deposit, access and share good practice
5. Engaging young people: by viewing them as equal stakeholders in partnership development and developing programmes and projects
6. Engaging young people: by inviting them to explore their definition of heritage
7. Progression opportunities are included in programmes

Suggested Next Steps

The enthusiasm and cooperation demonstrated by all the participants during this study represents an exciting opportunity to build a new network for collaboration. However, this would require fresh support and investment to maintain momentum, taking stakeholders from “scoping” through a development phase, to the delivery of funded opportunities.

To facilitate this, the project team recommends that a small steering group be resourced to allow willing parties to explore and take forward this agenda and coordinate funding proposals.

Project Team

James Cathcart and Ed Sherry

Note: In addition to this report, a number of resources and case studies have been collated and can be found in a Supplementary Report which it is hoped could assist further development of a network or funding proposal.

Youth Potential

Building Capacity within the Youth and Heritage Sector

March 2023

1. Background

1.1 This project was funded by a [Historic England](#) capacity building grant and was managed by The [Youth United Foundation](#) (YUF). Its purpose is to share the learning from a previous Historic England funded Volunteer Police Cadet (VPC) project and scope the potential for developing future partnerships between the youth and heritage sector.

Historic England's vision is for *'heritage that is valued, celebrated and shared by everyone'*. The Youth United Foundation's network of eleven uniformed youth organisations in the UK *'works to support young people, their leaders and volunteers by sharing best practice, strengthening the sector, and enabling each organisation to grow'*.

This report sets out the approach taken by the project team, describe the common themes identified by participants, and make a number of recommendations, including a suggested operating framework, to take the study's findings forward. A significant amount of desk research into existing collaboration and youth engagement with 'heritage' was undertaken and reference is made to a wide range of sources and resources. These are listed in the appendices and includes the input from participants through stakeholder meetings, workshops, and surveys.

1.2 'Young people' are not a new target audience for heritage and historic organisations and 'heritage' and 'history' are not new themes for youth projects. However, in either context it is important for new partnerships to be clear with each other and with young people about their definition of 'age range' and 'heritage' from the start. Children are defined as those aged up to 18. Still, the term 'young people' is frequently used to include both children and young adults. The [Value and Meaning of Young People's Engagement with Heritage](#), University Wolverhampton, June 2022 literature review defines young people as aged up to 25; the #iwill Movement, 10-25; The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Kick the Dust programme, 11-25; and the National Youth Agency 8-25. Each of the uniformed organisations has different membership categories, which can start at aged 4 and generally go up to 18, but with clear pathways into adult volunteering roles.

1.3 For the purposes of this study the terms ‘heritage’ and ‘historic’ “*can be anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations*”¹ including ‘historic’ sites, places and objects, as well as the people, stories and histories associated with them. It can include cultural practices, songs, food, and traditions that have been passed on or inherited, and help to shape our individual and collective identity. For many of the uniformed organisations this would include the heritage and history of their own organisations; both the national organisation or the local unit or group.

2. Project objectives and methodology

2.1 The full project title was ‘Youth Potential, Building Heritage Capacity within the Youth Sector to better protect and value our heritage’.

The **objectives** can be summarised as:

1. Share the learning and research from the Volunteer Police Cadet pilot
2. Understand the willingness and ability of others in the youth and heritage sectors to work together to realise mutually beneficial opportunities which directly support the objectives within the Historic England corporate plan

Objective 1 was achieved by sharing two reports, ‘Heritage Challenge - Good Practice and Case Studies’ and the independent evaluation [‘Heritage Challenge evaluation’](#) by the Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Safety at the University of Northampton (Appendix 1)). The relevant and transferable learning points, particularly for other similarly organised uniformed youth organisations is explored in more detail below and a summary and links to the full version of the evaluation reports can be found in the Supplementary Report.

Objective 2 was achieved through a stakeholder engagement and scoping programme detailed in the methodology section.

3.2 Methodology

Between April and December 2022, over 50 representatives from 30 organisations in both the youth and heritage sectors engaged with the project with thirty-six young people taking part in focus groups and a survey. The team undertook desk research into other organisations, their projects, reports, and research. The project team specifically engaged

¹ National Lottery Heritage Fund

the uniformed youth groups who make up the membership of Youth United but noted that the next steps could be applicable to other youth groups within the youth sector.

The study concluded with a cross-sector workshop in December 2022 to reflect on the year's work and discuss next steps and options.

As this was a scoping project, it was important that the views of those currently delivering or supporting activity programmes for young people, organisations operating in the heritage sector, as well as young people themselves, shaped the study findings and recommendations. In support of this, a *staged approach* was taken where initial views were gathered, common themes identified and shared, and participants were brought together to discuss the findings and options for future collaboration. Desk research complemented this process and all the input reviewed to produce a final report with recommendations. Evidence sources, resources and case studies were collated into a Supplementary Report to assist next steps.

Stage one- Initial scoping

3.3 Starting in April 2022, the project team held discussions with individual stakeholders (Fig 2) and shared the methodology, feedback, and evaluation of the *VPC Heritage Challenge project* while exploring both the potential and capabilities of the partners to work in a collaborative manner. A full list of all organisations that were consulted can be found at Appendix 3.

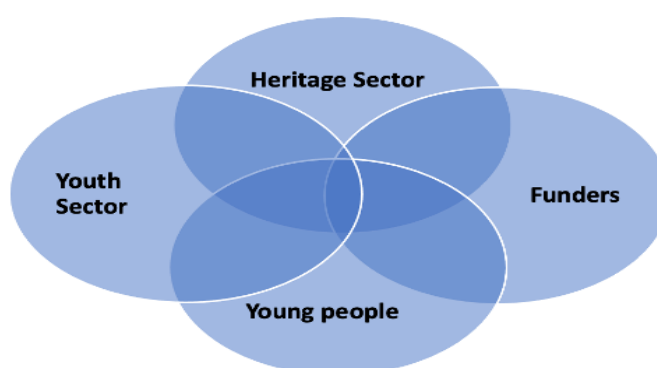


Fig 2. Stakeholder groups engaged

3.4 Youth Sector/Heritage Sector: After consulting with Youth United members, the project team met with other youth organisations such as the National Citizen Service, the

#iwillMovement, The Prince's Trust, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Heritage organisations were recommended by Historic England or the Heritage Lottery Fund, particularly some of those who were already working in partnership with the youth sector. Individual organisations were then invited to recommend others to the project team, or to signpost relevant reports or research.

3.5 Young People: Initially a workshop was held with the Youth United youth panel to explore their perspective on project design and how best to consult young people as the study progressed. This led to the formation of a young person heritage reference group, made up of representatives of the uniformed youth groups in a variety of roles and with an interest in the heritage theme. Their focus group discussions identified key issues and shaped a short survey, which the focus groups then completed (see Supplementary Report for full findings). Desk research also explored the views of young people successfully engaged in existing heritage themed projects and their recommendations considered (See Supplementary Report for summary and sources).

3.6 Funders: Exploratory meetings were held with two national funders; Historic England and the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Representatives from both organisations provided an insightful input at the stakeholder workshop in December 2022. The Dulverton Trust was identified as another grant provider that targeted funding for youth social action projects via the #iwillfund. The #iwillfund has the potential to match fund youth-led social action projects around specific themes, such as heritage.

3.7 Desk Research: A significant number of reports and evaluations were reviewed which highlighted good practice and learning such as the [Value and Meaning of Young People's Engagement with Heritage](#), University Wolverhampton, June 2022. Other reports that were reviewed were *Kick the Dust programme* (both national and local) and the most recent *Heritage Schools initiatives*. Many of the findings contained in these reports are directly relevant to the issues raised in this report. See Appendix 1.

Stage two: Feedback and confirmation of what was heard

3.8 In September 2022 a virtual workshop was held with the uniformed youth groups (see appendix 3 for full list of attendees) in which the findings from the youth focus groups were shared. The uniformed youth groups were subsequently asked to complete a survey on the findings to date, their position with regards to emerging key principles for future collaboration with the heritage sector, and to identify what resources they already had or would need to develop to take a funding proposal forward (see Supplementary Report).

3.9 A total of 9 of the 11 uniformed youth organisations completed the survey with feedback from this survey and the virtual workshop being fed into the next stage of the project. During October and November 2022, follow up meetings were held with other partners where the views of the uniformed youth groups and young people were shared and potential collaborative working ideas were explored. The feedback from all the interviews, workshops and surveys were collated and the findings distilled into common themes and issues which were shared with all partners during stage 3 of the project.

Stage 3: Bringing the sectors together to explore areas of consensus and next steps

3.10 A cross sector workshop, based on the findings of stages 1 and 2 of this study was held in December 2022. At this workshop the project team shared their findings and members of the young persons' reference group updated the participants on the results of their survey along with their personal experiences of projects they had been involved with. This was followed by a briefing from representatives of Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund regarding high level strategic issues within the sector before we broke into small groups to discuss next steps.

Stage 4: Analysis

3.11 The recordings of the final workshop, together with previous interview notes, desk research and surveys, were reviewed for the drafting of a final report. The aims were to record and report areas of consensus, a potential framework for partnership development, and an exploration of options and recommendations. The report would be an available resource for those taking the next steps or exploring the options. It would also contain sources and examples of good practice.

3.12 This staged approach has allowed the team to gain an insight into the issues affecting both sectors, learn from previous good practice and ensure the views of those who took part shaped this report and the recommendations contained within it.

Summary of Recommendations

(Part Two of the report details each recommendation)

1/ Learning from the VPC pilot and a theory of change

1.1 That the lessons learnt from the Volunteer Police Cadet pilot and evaluation are considered when developing social action projects that are accessible and deliverable at a local level.

2/ Whose Heritage?

2.1 Any strand of future development work should include an early exploration and clarification of what heritage means, especially to young people, to ensure that it's relevant and engaging.

2.2 Provide training and support to raise the skills of local youth leaders to frame discussions regarding historical context of potentially challenging or forgotten heritage issues and then explore and discover potential activities based on those themes.

2.3 Project design, whilst supported nationally, should leave space for local development and design, particularly by or with young people themselves.

3/ Partnership Development – Infrastructure

3.1 Theory of Change: That this model undergoes further development to include a wider range of activities that will allow young people to discover and celebrate their heritage.

3.2 Shared principles: That the four principles are adopted as a draft of underpinning principles for any future partnership development work.

3.3 Undertake a follow up exercise to understand common areas of mutual benefit to willing partners.

3.4 Facilitate: Incentivise organisations to deal with internal issues which will support the longer-term development of meaningful partnership models.

3.5 Network: Stakeholder organisations from the youth and heritage sectors to establish a network to continue partnership development and shared learning.

4/ Shared Learning, building on good practice

4.1 Develop a national resource to support shared learning.

4.2 Any future funding should have a robust evidenced based evaluation framework.

4.3 Identify products that could be developed and utilised by willing partners in support of developing 'youth voice' and social action activity.

5/ Engaging young people:

5.1 Develop expertise and materials to assist in implementing a staged approach.

5.2 Programme and Project development: Work with young people (panel) to identify and agree a set of good practice standards for youth participation as equal stakeholders.

5.3 That organisations share good practice and training resources around working safely with young people.

5.4 Future funding includes input from young people in the early stages and provides opportunity for young people to agree their own outcomes of a project.

6/ Progression opportunities

6.1 To explore traditional skills partnerships between youth organisations and heritage organisations and signpost progression opportunities.

PART TWO - FINDINGS

1. The Volunteer Police Cadet (VPC) Pilot - 'Heritage Crime Challenge'

1.1 Background

In 2019, Historic England funded the VPC to develop products, processes and training that could assist young people and their leaders in the VPC to be introduced to the issue of crime in the historic environment and support them to undertake social action relating to the issues that they explored.

During the VPC *'Heritage Crime Challenge (Solve It)'* project several themes emerged regarding how to engage young people and build a learning journey that would inspire them to undertake mutually beneficial social action for them and their community. The concept of a challenge was well received by the young people who were introduced to an issue, provided with a safe space in which they could explore the issue, before providing them with support as they developed and undertook the 'challenge' project relating to the subject that was relevant to them.

It is of note that many of the projects developed by the young people had only a loose connection to the original issues they explored, but this was encouraged as it was important that the young people 'owned' the project.

This project was evaluated by the Institute of Public Safety, Crime and Justice at Northampton University (Appendix 4.2). As well as evaluating the pilot they made several recommendations for future projects development (within VPC).

1.2 The learning from the Volunteer Police Cadet Project

The potential benefits of the approach taken in the VPC project to support Historic England's strategic aim of *'a heritage that is valued, celebrated and shared by everyone'* was developed into a basic 'theory of change' cycle, Fig 1 below. The cycle aims to demonstrate the interconnections between the various drivers that engage more young people in 'heritage' and how, wherever one begins the cycle, it can drive benefits for both the youth and heritage sectors as well.



Fig 1. Theory of change developed following the original VPC project

1.3 This project also made several recommendations for future projects for other youth groups (Case Studies and Good Practice 2022) further detailed in the Supplementary Report.

1. Provide training materials on both heritage and project delivery, that had been tested by leaders and young people.
2. Use the idea of a 'challenge' to prompt action.
3. Offer an 'award' for achievement (certificate).
4. Suggest interesting and relatable topics and themes e.g, War Memorials.
5. Offer introductions to potential partner organisations.
6. Provide easy to access online training and personal advice to leaders.
7. Cover expenses/project costs with small grants.

Recommendation 1.1 That the lessons learnt from Volunteer Police Cadet pilot and evaluation are considered in developing social action projects that are accessible and deliverable at a local level.

2. “Heritage”

2.1 Definitions and language

‘What do you mean by heritage?’ was a frequent question during this study. There is a wide range of answers depending on the individual’s perspective and starting point, which for many young people might be through history lessons at school, educational programmes on TV or social media. It was found that there is a wide range of formal definitions for the term ‘Heritage’.

The World Heritage Convention UNESCO use the following definition:

“Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.”

To avoid confusion during this project, the Heritage Lottery Fund approach was used when answering the question ‘What is Heritage?’ by inviting participants to expand on what it meant and was important to them.

“We don’t define heritage. We ask you to tell us what you think is important and should be protected and preserved. From historic buildings, our industrial legacy and the natural environment, to collections, traditions, stories and more – heritage can be anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations”.
<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/what-we-fund>

Members of the young person reference group along with several partners from the heritage sector highlighted that the term ‘heritage’ can cause confusion when starting projects. Some heritage partners cited examples of projects where the term heritage was deliberately left out of the title (*Ignite, Shout Out Loud, Hope Streets, Norfolk Journeys, Kick The Dust*) or themed (*Heritage Challenge/Solve It, Y-Heritage*) and some of the young people suggesting that their peers may prefer the term ‘history/historic’ which they are more accustomed to using in the school settings, or popular TV programmes. The Volunteer Police Cadet pilot project introduced a “what is heritage?” module to cover the basics so that young people could explore it and choose their preferred pathway or interest. Similarly, many uniformed organisations have the history and heritage of their own organisations as a starting point.

As the study project progressed, the very process of exploration and discovery which lit the spark to engagement and where it would lead, became part of the framework for engaging young people in any subsequent action.

Recommendation 2.1 Any strand of future development work should include an early exploration and clarification of what 'heritage' means, especially to young people, to ensure it is relevant and engaging.

2.2 Alternative views of heritage

In giving young people the space to explore their definition of heritage, participants highlighted that this would enable young people to learn about the context and history behind some historical sites and monuments, as well as highlight unrecorded or restore forgotten heritage stories and places.

“England has a very rich but complex history. Our buildings, monuments and places sometimes bring us face to face with parts of our history that are painful, or shameful by today's standards. We recognise that there are historic statues and sites which have become symbols of injustice and a source of great pain for many people”.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/statements/contested-heritage/>

“We also understand heritage to be something that is contested and, as a result, is personal, partial, and political (see also Common Ground, 2020a). Indeed, we have encountered a wide range of interpretations of 'heritage' during our scoping review.” (University of Wolverhampton study, Page 1)

Many participants mentioned the importance of developing a safe space where heritage in all its forms can be explored. It was noted by the youth sector that this would require a level of skill that may not currently be available to local youth leaders. The Volunteer Police Cadet pilot and members of the youth focus groups also proposed ideas to explore and celebrate overlooked, unrecorded examples of heritage and historic sites, to ensure their place was secured within our historical legacy.

Recommendation 2.2 Provide training and support to raise the skills of local youth leaders to frame discussions regarding the historical context of potentially challenging or forgotten heritage issues and then explore and discover potential activities based on the theme.

2.3 Local and personal heritage

Many partners discussed the importance of a local and personalised approach in developing projects with young people and this would seem to mirror the findings of the University of Wolverhampton.

“Research demonstrates that many young people have a very individualised and personalised view of heritage” (page 8).

This was reinforced by members of the young person's reference group who highlighted that they enjoyed projects that were personal to them in terms of their local area or their membership organisation e.g., 'pride in my unit'.

[Recommendation 2.3](#) Project design, whilst supported nationally, should leave space for local development and design, particularly by or with young people themselves.

3. Partnership Development

3.1 The theory of change

The original theory of change cycle from the VPC 'Heritage Crime Solve It Challenge' was discussed with the partners. Following a workshop with the uniformed youth groups, it was developed to include a more specific reference to social action and participation and includes an emphasis on 'their' (the young peoples') heritage rather than fitting to an established narrative.

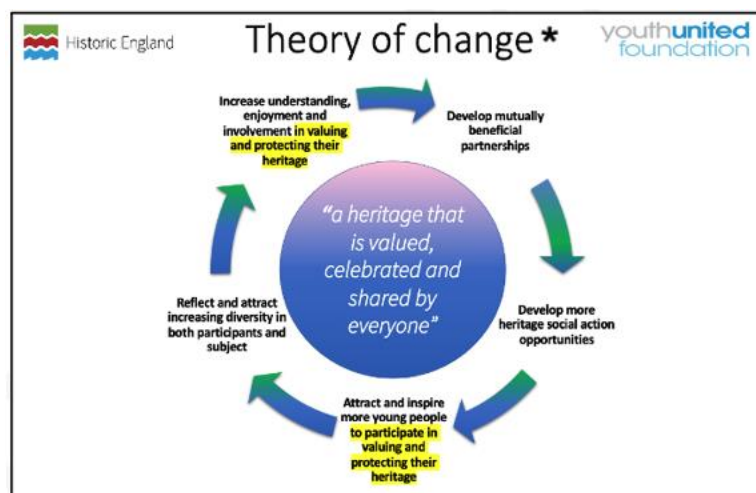


Fig 2 Updated theory of change cycle following discussion with youth groups during 2022*.

*During follow up conversations with heritage sector partners in Autumn 2022, it was highlighted that to increase the diversity of participants and projects, there would be scope to expand the 'value and protect' theme to include discover, celebrate, champion, protect, connect and learn from their heritage in line with the Historic England strategic aims.

Recommendation 3.1 That this model undergoes further development to include a wider range of activities that will allow young people to discover and celebrate their heritage.

3.2 Shared Principles

As the project progressed, a series of common themes emerged that would support future collaboration. These four principles, along with an overarching vision were tested with the youth groups during an online workshop in the summer of 2022 and shared with other partners in the December workshop and are set out in Fig 3 below:



Fig 3. Underpinning principles of a common framework of activity

I. Anything that is developed must complement rather than compete with the youth groups’ current programmes

Heritage is a potential vehicle to support existing aims and objectives for many youth organisations, complementing a holistic approach to personal, social and skills development. However, some organisations highlighted that they receive a significant number of offers of support from third parties, with many of these failing to consider how they would fit with the youth groups' well-developed programmes that are based on the holistic development of their young people. It was therefore important that anything that is developed must complement their programmes rather than compete with their current offer. This could be done by highlighting how engagement with heritage could support the delivery of their current programme.

II. There is a need to inspire and be inspired by young people, to undertake activities that will assist them in valuing and protecting their heritage.

Throughout the project, partners were clear that young people needed to feel an emotional connection to projects they were involved with. Therefore, there was a need to inspire them to want to take part and that this enthusiasm is recognised by those they are interacting with. It was felt that this approach would assist in building mutual respect across all those involved in a project. Again, it should be noted that there is significant scope to develop this

approach far beyond the narrow 'valuing and protecting' theme that this project was commissioned to investigate.

III. Young people must be viewed as equal stakeholders in shaping and delivering projects.

Building on the previous point, mutual respect was seen as an important aspect of developing projects. Members of the youth reference group highlighted that the term 'youth led' could be misleading for some partners, with adults having unrealistic expectations of the skills of the young people. The young people were keen on co-producing projects where everyone's skills and experiences were recognised and accommodated.

IV. Building and supporting local partnerships is key to ensuring activity is sustainable.

Although it was acknowledged that national, strategic partnerships were important, it was recognised that the real drive to activity is led by local operational managers or committed volunteers. If these local partnerships are to become established and flourish, there is a need to provide support to the local operators who, although enthusiastic about their own area of interest, may not currently possess the skills or expertise required to undertake this type of activity.

[Recommendation 3.2 The four principles are adopted as a draft of underpinning principles for any future partnership development work.](#)

3.3 Utilising heritage to achieve organisational aims

At the workshop held in December 2022, the issue of the disparate nature of organisational strategic aims and priorities was discussed. Several organisations highlighted that although an organisation may support a coordinated approach, there was a need to ensure any activity could clearly demonstrate a link to the strategy and operational delivery plans of that organisation. The idea of scoping organisational strategies and seeking common ground where heritage activity could support the delivery of existing programmes for young people was supported. Examples of where this could prove useful were linking activity to the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, or existing internal 'community' style awards.

[Recommendation 3.3 Undertake a follow up exercise to understand areas of mutual benefit to willing partners.](#)

3.4 Readiness of organisations to participate

It was clear from discussions that there was a variance in the readiness of organisations to engage in a structured and coordinated manner. This was identified at both the strategic and the operational level. Several heritage organisations highlighted the need to spend time with their local volunteers and staff to begin a cultural shift towards engaging with young people as equal stakeholders.

Youth organisations were at differing starting points of readiness and had different priority needs to take project development and partnership working forward (Appendix 2). Several within the youth sector highlighted that they had well defined programme development processes, with new programme themes requiring a development and testing phase prior to any roll out of supporting products. Some sought acknowledgement that it would take some time and support to get new activities onto their planning cycle due to the processes involved and the continuing pandemic legacy issues.

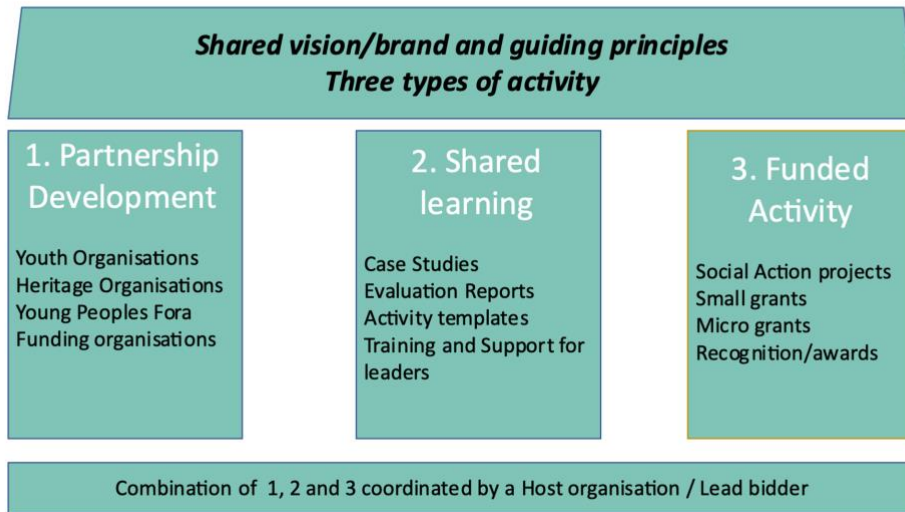
[Recommendation 3.4 Facilitate/Incentivise organisations to deal with internal issues which will support the longer-term development of meaningful partnership models.](#)

3.5 A potential Partnership Model

The study also scoped the options for organisations to come together to make a funding proposal, for example, to the existing rolling grant programme of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, based on examples of similar organisations who had formed consortia structures to submit large scale proposals. *The Generation Green Project* was the first project to be delivered by the Access Unlimited coalition. This coalition comprises YHA (England & Wales) – who hosted the project on behalf of the partners – The Outward-Bound Trust, Scouts, Girlguiding, Field Studies Council and the 10 English National Parks (see Supplementary Report).

The 11 members of the Youth United Foundation have the potential to make a proposal in partnership with heritage organisations. Options include smaller clusters of organisations, not necessarily all 11 at the same time. However, it could be possible for the Youth United Foundation to align a common approach to partnership development and include other youth organisations outside of the study.

partnership operating model



Recommendation 3.5 Stakeholder organisations from the youth and heritage sectors to establish a “Network” for continued partnership development and shared learning.

4. Shared Learning

4.1 Building on good practice.

It was apparent that a large library of good quality learning and project material is in existence, both within the heritage and youth sector. Examples include the Kick the Dust national reports, local partnership reports and evaluation, and The Volunteer Police Cadets project and its resources. Some heritage-based organisations provided resources designed for organised youth groups, notably the War Memorial Trust and Kids in Museums. Other material and opportunities could be adapted to a heritage theme - such as participation on the Duke of Edinburgh's awards scheme, or to achieve badges, internal awards, or skills qualifications.

It was important that all the learning from previous projects was captured to ensure the identifying and recycling of best practice. It was also highlighted that although there are a number of heritage organisation networks, the study was unable to identify a *joint* heritage and youth sector forum or resource centre, that is coordinating strategic advice, shared learning, and partnership development and highlighting the views of young people and delivering co-created social action opportunities.

[Recommendation 4.1 Develop a national resource to support shared learning.](#)

4.2 Building an evidence base

The lack of a strong evidence base in understanding the benefits of engaging young people to undertake social action in the heritage sector was highlighted in the report by Wolverhampton University

“There is a lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of programmes which aim to engage young people with heritage....., The task, then, is to construct a single, authoritative body of evidence which brings together the learning in a coherent and actionable way.” (Page ii)

Some partners felt that this lack of a strong evidence base may hinder their ability to engage their organisation at a strategic level as there were so many other strategic issues already on the agenda of their organisations e.g., environmental issues, post pandemic recovery and the cost-of-living crisis.

[Recommendation 4.2 Any future funding should include a robust evidence-based evaluation framework.](#)

4.3 Potential to adapt educational materials

Much of this material relates to the educational setting and does not necessarily have a 'youth voice' or 'social action' focus. Nearly all the youth organisations were clear that they would not use generic products, however they could support the use of these as the starting point on which they can develop organisational specific products which they could then share with the sector.

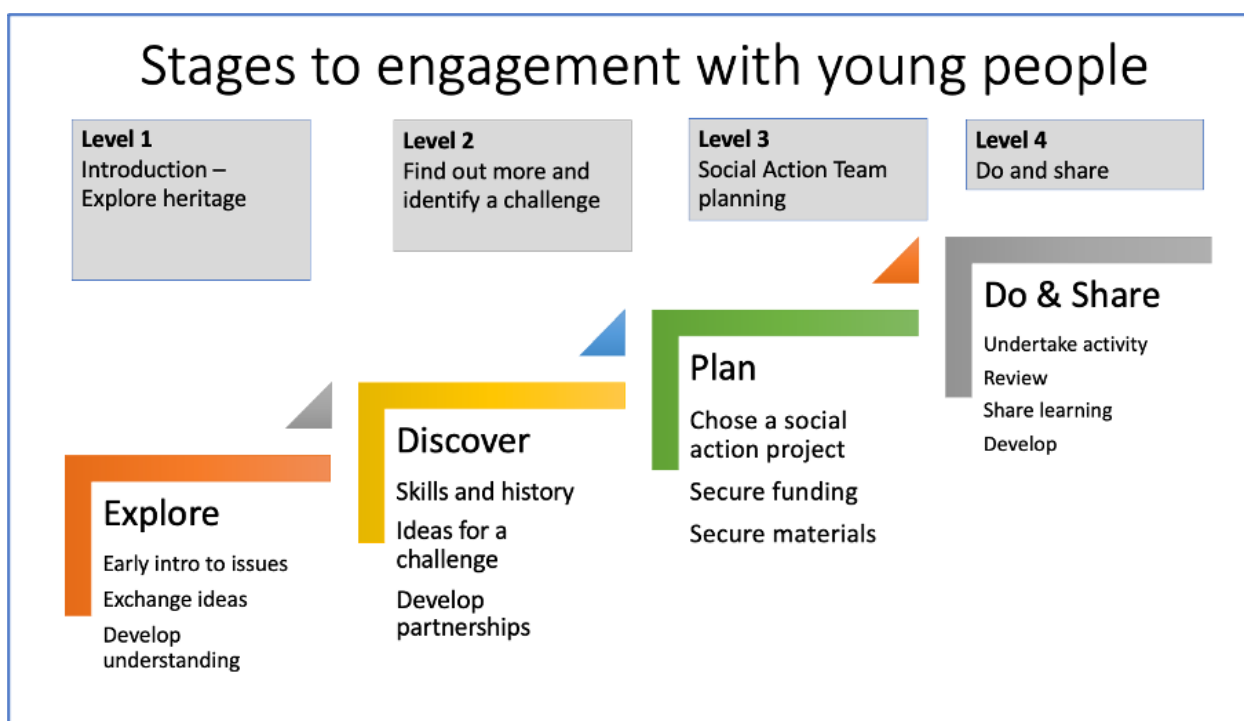
Many participants felt that a properly resourced, time limited, concerted effort could align a significant amount of this good practice with generic 'youth voice' and 'social action' resources. These resources could then be shared with willing partners, who could adjust them to fit their own needs.

[Recommendation 4.3 Identify products that could be developed and utilised by willing partners in support of developing 'youth voice' and social action activity.](#)

5. Engaging young people

5.1 A staged approach to engaging young people in activities

Picking up on the learning from the VPC project and feedback from the young people, it became apparent that not all young people would have an interest in participating in all stages of activity that was offered. It was therefore felt that a staged approach to activities would be beneficial. This would have the added advantage of allowing more young people to be exposed to potential projects, enabling them to dip in and out as their interest and confidence grows, building on their experience and developing new interests.



Stage 1 – Explore

It was identified that there was a need to inspire the young people to want to take part in any activity. The challenge is to ensure their leaders have access to both resources and people who could assist at this stage. It is envisaged that this would be a universal offer to the whole group of young people, with those that have a keen interest moving onto stage 2, Discover.

Stage 2 – Discover

The discover stage was identified as key to developing a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Again, there is a need to ensure the young people are provided with a safe

space in which to discuss issues that may arise from these discussions such as contested heritage.

Stage 3 -Social action planning

Previous experience and feedback have identified that the actual planning of any activity would probably be undertaken by a coordinating group, with young people and external partners working collaboratively to develop a workable plan with the potential to apply for small grants. This stage could complement the current activity of the youth groups with the young people volunteering and learning a new skill, which are two elements of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and many internal award schemes.

Stage 4 – Do and share

The delivery of the social action project could be a larger group activity depending on how the project develops. A key element of this stage is the reflective learning that will come about as the young people share their experiences with others. This sharing of experiences will also assist in inspiring others to undertake future activity.

[Recommendation 5.1 Develop expertise and materials to assist in implementing the staged approach.](#)

5.2 In partnership as equal stakeholders and leaders.

There was plenty of evidence and support for the idea that community projects would be more engaging when young people were part of their development and led or co-led their delivery rather than merely participating in activities. Several partners highlighted perceived complications of working with young people in the heritage sector. Several organisations reported that uncertainties such as safeguarding, and health and safety can act as a deterrent when developing partnerships with young people or empowering them to take the lead in setting up projects.

However, those whose main role is to work with young people or have been successfully working in collaborative partnerships with young people advocated that the best way to deal with this issue was to ‘allow them (the young people) to get involved’ at an early stage.

This ongoing challenge was addressed in a 2013 report published by the Heritage Lottery Fund ‘How to involve young people in heritage projects – A practical guide’ which contained 6 key principles when involving young people:

1. Let young people take the lead
2. Provide hands-on, creative activities
3. Tell young people what skills they could learn
4. Recognise their achievements
5. Forge a partnership between youth and heritage organisations
6. Involve an experienced youth worker or teaching professional

https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/guidance/young_people_good_practice.pdf

Recommendation 5.2 Engaging Young People - Programme and Project development: Work with young people (panel) to identify and agree a set of good practice standards for youth participation as equal stakeholders.

5.3 Working Safely

Many of these principles have been mainstreamed in the *'Kick the Dust'* programme, however some heritage partners felt it would be useful to explore the potential of developing a set of common standards for working safely with youth organisations which could provide clarity in support of principles 5 and 6 above.

National youth organisations bring a wealth of experience and knowledge around safeguarding and working safely with young people. Organised youth groups not only have processes and procedures, trained staff, and volunteers, but with support, they could add capacity to provide training and support to heritage organisations.

Recommendation 5.3 That organisations share good practice and training resources around working safely with young people.

5.4 With Funders

During the December 2022 workshop, the challenge of balancing the youth voice element of a project to the requirements of the funder was highlighted. Several participants provided examples of where funding has been provided prior to any engagement with young people on what they would like to achieve. As a result, project managers have had to mould the expectations of the young people to ensure it fitted within the funding criteria. Other participants highlighted that some funders had begun to adopt this approach which was well received by those delivering at an operational level.

Many funding bodies recruit youth advisory panels to not only shape but participate in creating awards e.g. Ambassadors and Dust-kickers at the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Those making proposals are sometimes given space and encouraged to recruit a local joint youth leadership group to explore and steer ideas as stakeholders.

The issue of funding was identified in the University of Wolverhampton report who stated:

“There is scope to develop a distinctive grant-making programme that develops heritage work with young people set within this wider policy context”. (P iii)

There was a desire from many workshop participants, that any future funding should provide space for the views of young people to be considered at the criteria setting stage. Again it was desirable that any future funding should provide flexibility of outcomes until the young people taking part in any project have had time to develop these aspects of the project. Such groups could, in the context of this study, include young people from both youth and heritage volunteering backgrounds.

[Recommendation 5.4 Future funding includes input from young people in the early stages and provides opportunity for young people to agree their own outcomes of a project.](#)

5.5 Inclusion

This study initially focused on uniformed organisations whose membership includes a wide range of young people.

The study also heard from other youth organisations who were interested in the potential of the heritage theme to reach young people facing barriers to inclusion. For example: The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, the National Citizen Service and The Prince’s Trust. All of these organisations identified benefits of the suggested approach and felt that the young people they engage with, such as young people facing disadvantage, or in particular target groups, would benefit from a closer relationship with the heritage sector.

The Prince’s Trust targets young people who are disadvantaged and unemployed, and Historic England is piloting a bespoke partnership project aimed at vulnerable young people – Rejuvenate.

6. Progression Opportunities

As well as the direct benefits of 'youth voice' and youth social action for young people (soft and hard skills, making a difference to their communities etc), there are several heritage specific skills and progression opportunities arising from heritage projects e.g. volunteering, apprenticeships, and employment in the heritage sector. These could be the subject of bespoke partnerships and worth further exploration.

Dry stonewalling, stonemasonry, blacksmithing and wood carving were given as examples by young people, who also discussed living history as a way of exploring these skills. English Heritage offer heritage skill apprenticeships and the Prince's Trust has trialled a "Get Into -Tradition Skills" programme, for example Dry Stone Walling. The Prince's Foundation has also pioneered the development of these skills at the [Dumfries House](#).

[Recommendation 6.1 Explore traditional skills partnerships between youth organisations and heritage organisations and signpost progression opportunities.](#)

7. Conclusions

This study brought together a wide range of willing and able stakeholders from the youth, heritage, and funding sectors, to articulate a shared commitment to partnership development and shared learning.

“I detect we are all on the same page, with real potential to make something really powerful happen – missing a trick if we let it go.”

Such a movement, working with young people, could nurture the development of a new wave of co-designed project proposals, similar to the experience of the ‘#iwill Movement’ for youth social action and its associated ‘#iwill Fund’.

“We share a commitment to working together”.

The study’s participants were able to shape a theory of change, a set of common principles and a framework for the engagement of young people. It identified existing examples of good practice and transferable resources to support it.

Young people want to be heard, make a difference, learn new skills, and take pride in their youth organisations contribution to valuing and caring for their heritage, histories, practices, and places. Their participation and agency in shaping both national and local project design increases their ownership and potential to widen engagement of a new generation.

Organised youth groups, particularly uniformed organisations already have a history and a heritage as a starting point for collaborations and heritage organisations are ready and willing to work in partnership building on their progress to date.

There are several issues to overcome to turn this enthusiasm into a mainstreamed programme of activities in a coordinated manner. Some organisations were already stretched and even taking time to inform this project was in addition to the requirement and challenges of day-to-day work. It was also clear that if there was to be any further development of this concept, there would be a need for additional resources, but the potential was clearly inviting interest.

There was an acknowledgement that it was beneficial to have facilitated time-out to consider partnership development. In doing so they had opened a window of opportunity and several next steps have been set out by way of the recommendations.

Appendices: Sources, Resources and Recommended Reading

Appendix 1 References

- A1.1 “The Value and Meaning of Young Peoples Engagement with Heritage”, Literature Review June 2022 (University of Wolverhampton) [Literature-Review_Final-HERITAGE.pdf \(wlv.ac.uk\)](#)
- A1.2 Evaluation of the Young Roots programme [Evaluation of the Young Roots Programme \(2008 – 2011\) \(heritagefund.org.uk\)](#)
- A1.3 The Heritage Lottery Fund Kick The Dust programme 2016-2022 evaluation [Kick The Dust year one evaluation, February 2019 | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)
[Kick the Dust - what we learned in year two | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)
- A1.4 Historic England Heritage Schools model, resources and Evaluation 2022 [How the Heritage Schools Programme Operates | Historic England](#)
- A1.5 Evaluation of the Heritage Crime Challenge (VPC), Institute for Public Safety Crime and Justice 2022:
[cahalin etal 2022 evaluation of the historic england heritage crime challenge solve it.pdf \(vpc.police.uk\)](#)
- A1.6 Summary report:
[callender etal 2022 volunteer police cadets in england evaluating the historic england heritage crime challenge-1.pdf \(vpc.police.uk\)](#)
- A1.7 Ignite Yorkshire: one of the HLF Kick The Dust partnership (13 organisations involved) case study in Yorkshire highlighting the relevance of heritage for young people, opportunities for youth led engagement and leadership, sector learning
<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/stories/revolution-industrial-heritage>
- A1.8 English Heritage/ShoutoutLoud HLF Kick the Dust partnership -ShoutOutLoud [SHOUT OUT LOUD](#): giving young people a voice in heritage, English Heritage
- A1.9 [Don't Settle](#), Beatfreaks Arts Ltd - KickTheDust partner
- A1.10 Input from Scotland: “Evaluation of the 2018 Year of Young People in Scotland”
<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/insight/evaluation/year-young-people-evaluation-young-people-rise-challenge>
- A1.11 John Muir Trust <https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/> , specifically the John Muir Award. They are also working to increase the diversity of young people - including socio economic status involved in the Award scheme <https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award>

A1.12 “How to involve young people in Heritage Projects” 2013.resource and recommendations
“[Young people good practice design](#)”.pdf (heritagefund.org.uk)

A1.13 [Ways to meaningfully involve young people in heritage | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

Recommended resources published for uniformed organisations

A1.14 Kids in Museums – resources and opportunities [Home - Kids in Museums](#)

A1.15 [Uniformed group Archives - Kids in Museums](#)

A1.16 [Home | War Memorials Trust \(learnaboutwarmemorials.org\)](#)

A1.17 [Search - War Memorials Online](#)

Appendix 2 Evidence Sources

A2.1	Stakeholder Interviews/meetings	Participants List, Notes April - Dec 2022
A2.2	Youth United members Workshop	Notes, June 2022
A2.3	Stakeholders Workshop	Notes, December 2022
A2.4	Youth Panel Workshop	Notes, date
A2.5	Youth Focus Groups	Notes, dates
A2.6	Survey: Youth United Members	Presentation
A2.7	Survey Youth Focus Groups	Presentation

Appendix 3 Participants List - organisations who were engaged or researched

Youth and Youth Voice

A3.1	Youth United x 11 members	Interviews x 11, Workshops x 2, Survey
	Army Cadets Force, Boys Brigade, Fire Cadets, Girls Brigade, Girl Guiding UK, Jewish Lads and Girls Brigade, Royal Air Force Cadets, St John Ambulance, Sea Cadets, The Scout Association, Sea Cadets.	
A3.2	The YUF Youth Panel	Workshop, Survey
A3.3	Youth Focus Groups	Workshops x 3, Survey
A3.4	Kick the Dust (TNLHF)	Meetings, Desk Research and workshop
A3.5	Heritage Schools (HE)	Meetings, Desk Research and workshop
A3.6	Youth Hostel Association	Meeting, Desk Research and workshop
A3.7	#iwill movement (partnerships)	Meeting, Desk Research and workshop
A3.8	Duke of Edinburgh Awards	Meeting x 2, Desk Research and workshop
A3.9	The Prince's Trust	Meeting, Desk Research and Workshop
A3.10	NCS Trust	Meeting, Desk Research and Workshop

Heritage

A3.11	Heritage Watch/Rejuvenate	Workshop
A3.12	National Trust	Meeting / Desk Research and Workshop
A3.13	English Heritage (Kick the Dust)	Meeting / Desk Research and Workshop
	Canals and Rivers Trust	Meeting / Desk Research and Workshop
	Church Conservation Trust	Meeting / Desk Research
	Historic Houses	Meeting and Workshop
	Kids in Museums	Meeting / Desk Research and Workshop
	Council for British Archaeology	Meeting / Desk Research and Workshop
	War Memorial Trust	Meeting / Desk Res, VPC Pilot, Workshop

Stow Maries aerodrome museum Meeting / Desk Research

Heritage Alliance Meeting / Desk Research

Funders

Historic England Meetings and Workshop

TNL Heritage Fund Meetings and Workshop

Dulverton Trust Desk Research

#Iwillfund Correspondence

Desk Research

Centre for Youth Impact (Kick the Dust) Desk Research

Inst for Public Safety Crime and Justice Pilot Project Research

Wolverhampton University (Lit Review) Desk Research

Heritage Lottery Fund Evaluation/Reports Desk Research

John Muir Trust (Scotland) Desk Research

Ignite York (Kick the Dust project) Desk Research

Other

Niexo – digital design heritage specialists Meeting/Desk Research

Heritage Youth Potential Workshop 15th December 2022 Attendees:

Project Team: Youth United Foundation (YUF) and Heritage England (HE)

Ed Sherry OBE	YUF Consultant
James Cathcart	YUF Consultant/Young Voices Heard
Sarah Atkins	YUF Project manager
Mark Harrison	Head of Heritage Crime Strategy, Historic England
Amy Pitts	Historic England Dir of Communications and Public Engagement

Youth United Foundation members

Anna Maddox	Youth United, Director
Caroline Pantling	The Scouts Association, Head of Heritage Services
Helen Green	Girl Guiding Norfolk, County Archivist

Gary Williams	Fire Cadets, Fire Officer
Catherine Jardine	Army Cadets, Chief of Staff
Dan Gallacher	Sea Cadets, Head of Learning Development
Isobel Yeung	Sea Cadets, Learning Team Coordinator
Tim Mann	Volunteer Police Cadets, Partnership Lead & Trainer

Youth Focus Group spokespeople

Sophie Mathiole	Girl Guiding UK
Sophie Ridge-Ahmed	Girl Guiding UK

Youth organisations/Networks

Holly Notcutt	Iwill Movement, Head of Partnership and Impact
Georgie Sheward	Duke of Edinburgh, Programme and Quality Support Man
Jade Holland	Duke of Edinburgh
Lauren Ogburu	National Citizen Service, Head of external relations
Lara Thompson	The Prince's Trust, Govt strategy & Partnership Manager
Adila Rose	Youth Hostel Association, Education Project Manager

Heritage Organisations

Lois Gyves	Heritage Schools Programme Manager
Melissa Strauss	Kick The Dust & Lottery Heritage Fund
Nicola Duncan-Finn	English Heritage, Sen Estate Manager
Katherine Armstrong	English Heritage, Sen Learning Manager
Kirsty McCarrison	English Heritage, Shout Out Loud Project Manager
Katie Chown	English Heritage
Lawrence Roots	National Trust, Sen National Consultant, Partnerships * Programming
Katherine Grayson	National Trust, Children YP Inclusion
Rufus Mitcheson	Historic Houses, Director Finance and Operations
Lucie Unsworth	Canal and Rivers Trust, Acting Head of Community & Participatory Programmes
Jo Kirton	Council British Archaeology, Youth Engagement Manager
Frances Moreton	War Memorial Trust, Director
Alison Bowyer	Kids in Museums, Exec Director

Historic England

Sandra Stancliffe	Head of Ed, Inclusion & Volunteering
Emma Jhita	Head of Philanthropic
Linda Monckton	Head of Wellbeing and Inclusion Strategy
Owain Lloyd-James	HE Rejuvenate
Paul Vitty	Rejuvenate
Ayesha Purcell	Guest (York Archaeology Trust)

Appendix 4 Youth View – Survey Results

The Youth United Advisory Panel and two youth focus groups held workshops exploring the feasibility and what works in developing a youth-friendly programme. We discussed what we believe would make youth heritage partnership project successful.

The results were turned into a survey for a follow up ‘focus group’ survey completed by 37 young people aged 12-25 from our membership, including current and former members, as well as some young leaders and young staff: :Army Cadets x 8 ; TSA x 7, Sea Cadets x 4, Boys Brigade x 3, Girls Brigade x 3, Police Cadets x 3, Fire Cadets x 2, St John Amb. x 1, Girl Guides x 1, Air Cadets x 1, JL&GB x 1 and plus 3 not identified.

The full set of questions with the issues and solutions proposed by young people/ along with their preferences are reproduced below in a Charts 1-5

Key survey findings

Priorities

1. Local Projects set a heritage challenge: “how can we preserve and protect heritage sites, objects and stories”
2. Explore and discover what ‘heritage’ is, and what protecting heritage means, using the history or our own organisations heritage as examples.
3. Reasons for getting involved in a heritage project, 1/ that it makes a difference or has a community impact, 2/ leads to more opportunities (vol/career)
4. Priorities that make a difference: To better protect heritage at risk of: 1/ being forgotten, 2/ damaged, neglected or 3/ deliberately harmed/crime
5. Most important outcome for me, 1/ “I learn a skill”, 2/ “My uniformed organisation is recognised for taking part”

Young people recommendations to December workshop

1. Setting a “Challenge” is a good way to engage a group of young people in a project
2. We already have pride in the history and heritage of our organisations
3. Use living history (clothes, traditions, skills) to bring a topic to life
4. Tell the story, especially of real people, will bring places and things to life
5. Explore - to discover a personal connection through family history
6. We can capture and pass on memories that are at risk of being forgotten

Chart 1 Attraction



What would attract you to a Heritage Project?
- ranked in order of importance by survey

(weighted average)

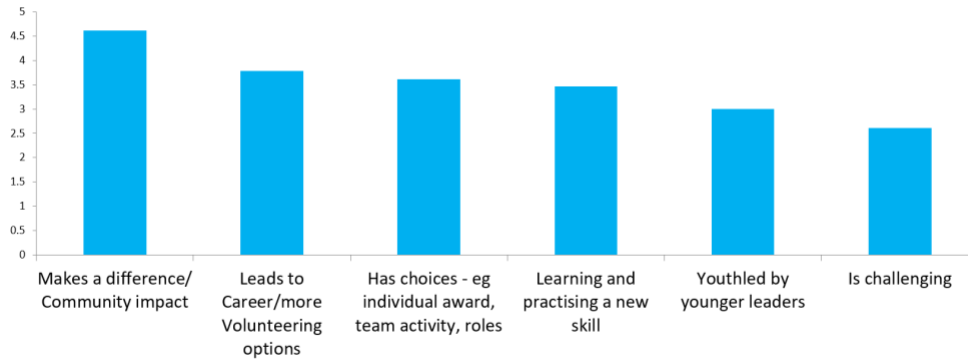
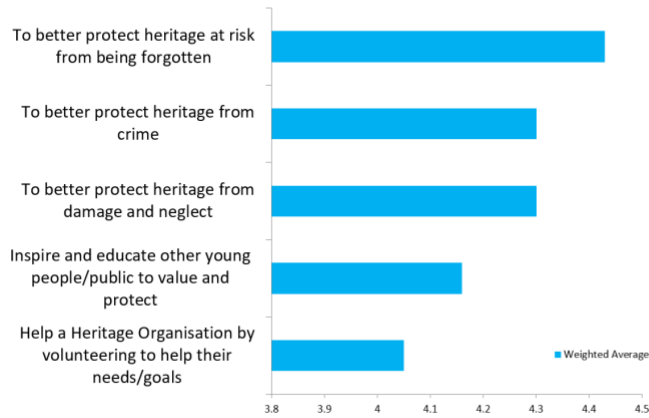


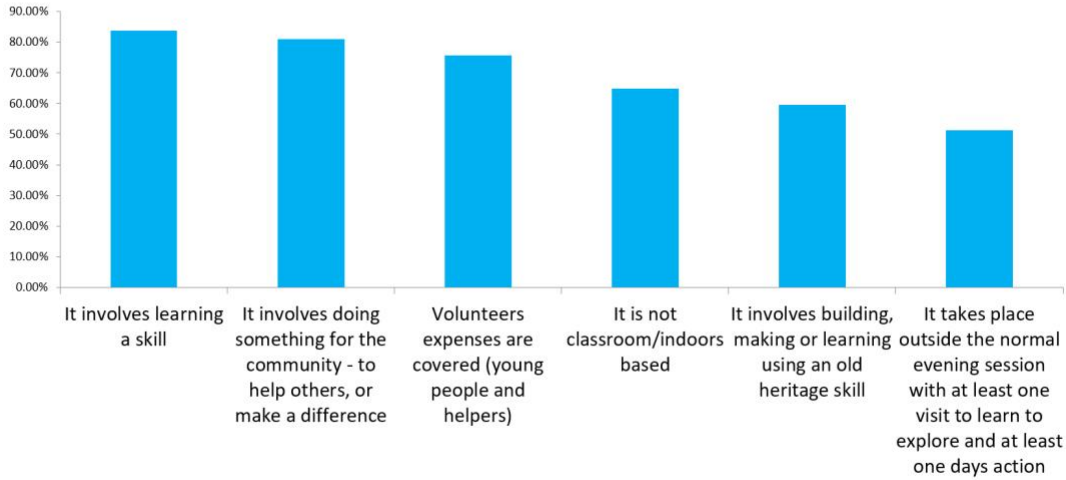
Chart 2 Preparation



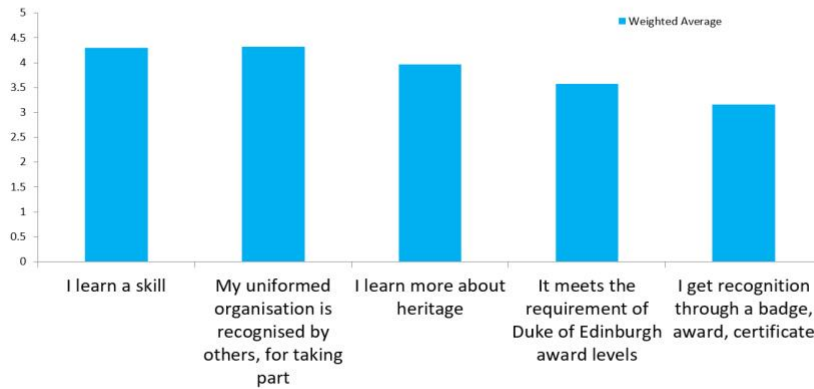
Whats the most important way a Heritage Project can make a difference? - ranked by importance



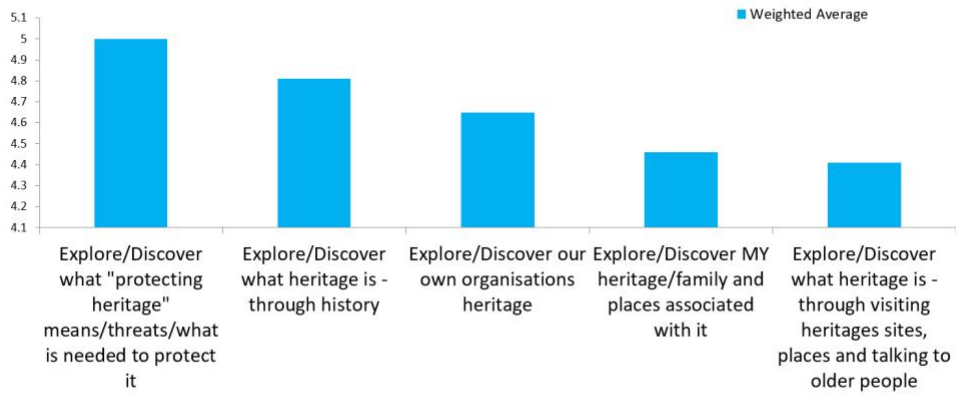
How important are the following features of a Heritage project? % support



Recognition: How important are the following outcomes for you? - ranked by importance



What are the important things for you to know in preparation for a Heritage Project? - ranked by importance



Appendix 5 Youth United Members / Survey

The Youth United Foundation members attended a workshop in September 2022 to explore the theory and practice of collaborating with each other and organisations in the heritage sector. The session was followed up with a survey, which 9 of the 11 completed, to confirm what was agreed and what would be needed to achieve this.

Each organisation had a different starting point so their preferences and priorities varied. (A version of this report showing each organisation by name is available to YUF members). The purpose of this survey was to assess what could be included in a joint funding proposal by YUF members.

Operation priorities were ranked:

1. Staff capacity to develop partnerships with stakeholders and develop new or/and adapt existing resources.
2. Free access to a heritage hub offering advice, materials, training, signposting.
3. Empowering youth-led proposed activities

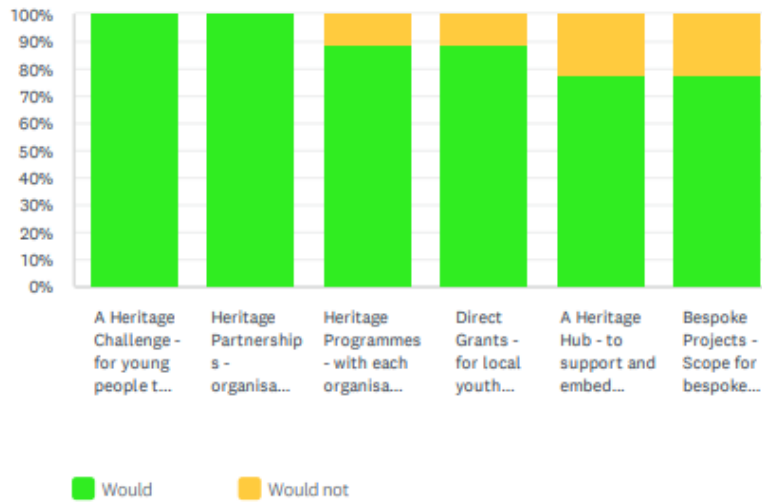
Features to be included as follows (number of orgs agreeing in brackets)

1. A Heritage Challenge – for young people to better value and protect heritage in all its forms. (9/9)
2. Heritage partnerships – organisations working in partnership to support a range of opportunities. (9/9)
3. Heritage programmes – with each organisation working at its own pace, capacity and priority, building on its own heritage with a view to widening to further opportunities. (8/9)
4. Heritage grants to local youth groups in support of young people proposals. [micro grants being distributed by the programme to local units] (8/9)
5. A heritage hub to support and embed partnership development, funded opportunities and shared learning (7/9)
6. Bespoke projects – scope for bilateral partnerships with willing and able heritage organisations. (7/9)

Chart 1 - Question 3 Potential Partnership Framework

Q3 Potential Partnership Framework These next two questions are exploring possible ways forward. Which of the following options would you like to see included in a framework. You can include them all.

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0

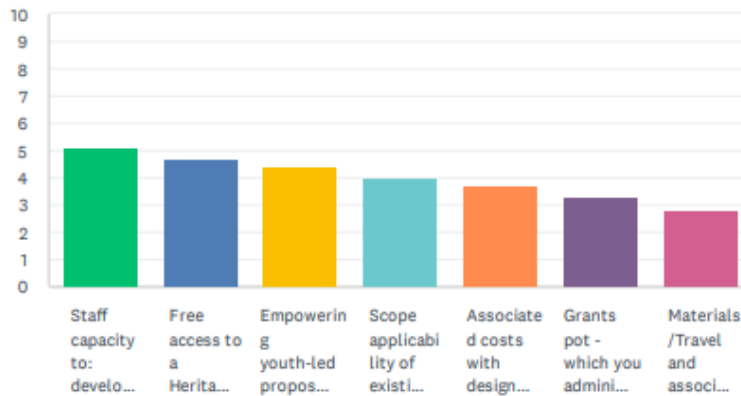


	WOULD	WOULD NOT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
A Heritage Challenge - for young people to better value and protect heritage in all its forms from their point of view	100.00% 9	0.00% 0	9	1.00
Heritage Partnerships - organisations working in partnership to support this through a range of opportunities, existing and newly funded	100.00% 9	0.00% 0	9	1.00
Heritage Programmes - with each organisation working at its own pace, capacity and priority to building on its own heritage with a view to widening opportunities.	88.89% 8	11.11% 1	9	1.11
Direct Grants - for local youth groups to support young people's local proposals	88.89% 8	11.11% 1	9	1.11
A Heritage Hub - to support and embed partnership development, funded opportunities, shared learning – materials, trainers, case studies and signposting other opportunities/resource (e.g Duke of Ed, War Memorial)	77.78% 7	22.22% 2	9	1.22
Bespoke Projects - Scope for bespoke bilateral partnerships with willing and able heritage organisations	77.78% 7	22.22% 2	9	1.22

Chart 2 Operational Needs

Q5 Operational Needs - Which of the following would you like to prioritise for inclusion for development in your organisation to deliver the proposal

Answered: 9 Skipped: 0



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
Staff capacity to: develop partnerships with stakeholder and develop new/ or adapt existing resources	44.44% 4	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	9	5.11
Free access to a Heritage Hub offering advice, materials, training, and signposting	11.11% 1	44.44% 4	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	9	4.67
Empowering youth-led proposed activities	22.22% 2	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	33.33% 3	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	9	4.44
Scope applicability of existing opportunities/activities	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	11.11% 1	22.22% 2	33.33% 3	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	9	4.00
Associated costs with design and development – eg IT/Licences/Web	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	22.22% 2	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	9	3.67
Grants pot - which you administer direct to local units/volunteers	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	22.22% 2	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	22.22% 2	9	3.33
Materials/Travel and associated on-costs	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	55.56% 5	22.22% 2	9	2.78

Appendix 6 Supplementary Report Index

Introduction	The Supplementary report is intended as a resource ...
Sources	Youth Voice Survey results
	Youth United Survey results
	Workshop Notes
	Literature Review
Resources	How to involve Young People in co-design, a practical guide, HF (2013)
	How to involve Young People in Heritage projects, HF (2020)
	Power of Youth Charter
	National Heritage Lottery Fund criteria
Case Studies	VPC Pilot
	John Muir Award
	Generation Green
	Kick the Dust
	Heritage Schools