The Benefits of Heritage-led Regeneration

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The Social Benefits of our Historic Environment

“Historic Buildings provide a foundation for the regeneration of many of our towns and cities. Regenerating these buildings can reinforce a sense of community, make an important contribution to the local economy and act as a catalyst for improvements to the wider area. They should not be retained as artefacts, relics of a bygone age. New uses should be allowed in the buildings and sensitive adaptations facilitated, when the reuse of an historic building is no longer relevant or viable.”

2004 report on the Role of Historic Buildings in Urban Regeneration
(House of Commons Select Committee)
The Prince’s Regeneration Trust

- Founded by HRH The Prince of Wales, to help ensure that important buildings at risk of demolition or decay are preserved, regenerated and re-used
- The Prince’s Regeneration Trust has dual charitable objects covering heritage and regeneration
- Established in 1996 (originally as The Phoenix Trust and Regeneration Through Heritage)
- Our work focuses on places that will benefit most from the regeneration of the wider community.
Our philosophy

• Buildings, like people and places, have to change and adapt to survive

• Understand what is important about the building or site before you make any decisions

• Long-term viability is crucial

• Opportunity not problem
Heritage-Led Regeneration

- Empower Communities
- Delivering Heritage-Led Regeneration across the UK
- Focus on Areas of Social & Economic Deprivation
- Find Sustainable and Commercially Viable new uses
- Disseminate Our Experience through Research and Education
- Catalyse Wider Regeneration
- Support Traditional Skills

Supporting traditional skills, empowering communities, and focusing on areas of social and economic deprivation are key goals in heritage-led regeneration. Sustainable and viable new uses are found through dissemination of experience in research and education, catalyzing wider regeneration efforts.
The Trust’s Role in projects

- Community Adviser
- Social Enterprise
- Owner/Partner
Evaluating Our Projects

Project Checklist

Establish Baseline

Parameters

Reports

Usage

Heritage

Updated at regular intervals by project advisers

Economic, Social, Environmental Impact Analysis
Evaluating Our Projects

To demonstrate the effectiveness of Heritage-led Regeneration across a broad spectrum

Economic

Social

Environmental

The information gathered by the framework will be useful:

To monitor the progress and success of individual projects

To understand the wider impact of Heritage-led Regeneration

To demonstrate the value of Heritage-led Regeneration to others

To inform future project management decisions
The Social Benefits of Heritage-led Regeneration

- Improves community pride and identity
- Tackles derelict buildings which can improve feelings of safety
- Stimulates discussion and communication between diverse community groups, providing opportunities for people to ‘come together’
- Active participation through volunteering or consultation is key to increased community cohesion and a feeling of belonging
- Creates jobs and offers apprenticeship opportunities
- Creates community facilities
- Kick-starts regeneration of wider area
Sustainable Asset Transfer

- Most unwanted heritage buildings owned by local and central government.
- A quick sale or best price shouldn’t be the only priority.
- Consider other options e.g. transfer to a local trust BUT only when the funding has been committed and a viable end-use established.
- Cost of getting it wrong.
Key Steps to Sustainable Asset Transfer

• Process can be confusing

• Need for a guide

• Sustainable e-toolkit

• http://www.princes-regeneration.org/sustainableheritage/
Example Projects
Conway Mill, Belfast - Before

Community-led project

• Category B2 building, built in 1842 as a Linen Mill but closed down in 1972
• The unoccupied buildings suffered from neglect and vandalism
• At heart of West Belfast, at a ‘Peace Line’ dividing Conway Street in two
Conway Mill, Belfast – Process

Community-led project

• In 1982, members of the community stepped in to save the building, but progress was hindered by lack of funding
• PRT (RTH) became involved in 1996. We advised the community group through the process of forming ‘The Conway Mill Preservation Trust’ which was established in 1999
• Together we sought listed status for the Mill, which was obtained in 2000, meaning the Mill was eligible for more funding
• PRT wrote the Conservation Plan, helped produce briefs for technical work and assisted with the Options Appraisals
• Over £5m in funding was successfully raised
Conway Mill, Belfast – Outcomes

Community-led project

- Complete refurbishment and creation of a central atrium
- Re-opened in November 2010
- The Mill houses 63 business units (majority of which are occupied), community and educational facilities - 40,000 sq ft of refurbished space in total.
- Over 100 people currently work at Conway Mill
- Community given back a historical landmark
- Strengthened role as a local centre for community-orientated and social services, contributing to the well-being of residents
- Around 450 people a year receive training or use education services at Conway Mill
- Promotes a positive image of the Falls area and kick-started regeneration of wider area including new housing
Conway Mill, Belfast - After
Community-led project
Templemore Avenue, Belfast – Background

Community-led project

- Listed Grade B1, built in 1924.
- One of the few buildings of distinction in area
- Closed in 2003, fell into disrepair and suffered from significant vandalism
- Templemore Avenue ranked fifth most deprived ward in Northern Ireland
- PRT asked to help following on from our involvement at Conway Mill
East Belfast Community Development Agency (EBCDA) has taken on the project to turn the school into a ground-breaking community ‘Network Centre’

PRT has worked alongside EBCDA to highlight the need for the project and raise capital funding

The building has been refurbished and re-opened in February 2014

The project aspires to:

- transform the building into a focus for the community
- provide space for start-up businesses and a meeting place for groups and organisations, providing a long-term income to EBCDA
- act as a catalyst to bring life back into the area and help raise civic pride

Templemore Avenue, Belfast – Outcomes

Community-led project
Templemore Avenue School, Belfast - After
Community-led project
Middleport Pottery, Burslem – Background

*PRT project*

- Situated in Burslem, Stoke on Trent
- Built in 1888 to manufacture Burleigh
- Purpose built model industrial pottery
- Grade II* listed
- In very poor repair and too large for pottery production alone (80,000 sq ft)
- Unique collection of moulds, artefacts & archives
Middleport Pottery, Burslem - The Project

**PRT project**

- Partnership between The Prince’s Regeneration Trust and Denby Pottery
- Retain Burleigh Pottery but rationalise space
- Create new jobs and growth
- Establish visitor centre, shop & cafe
- Run visitor tours & educational activities
- Create new workspace for artisan businesses
- Microbrewery
- Establish Middleport as part of the visitor trail to the area
Middleport Pottery, Burslem – Outcomes

PRT project

• Safeguarded 50 existing skilled manufacturing jobs & unique craft skills
• Creates another 50+ jobs
• Strengthens Stoke-on-Trent’s tourism offer
• Visitors to site to increase from 8k to 30k per year in 5 years
• Catalyst for a broader regeneration of Burslem & Stoke-on-Trent (a struggling area) including neighboring empty housing
• Extensive community consultation and enormous community support
• Local volunteers involved in Oral History Project, Local History Walks, competitions and Planting Projects, building a sense of community
• Partnerships with local schools and universities
• Outreach work with hard to reach groups
• Apprenticeship programmes, NVQ Qualifications and extensive learning and training opportunities.
Conclusions

• Empowering local communities to take on heritage-led regeneration projects and create a sense of pride in place
• Long-term sustainability is key to the success of a project, capital funding is generally easier to secure than revenue funding
• Asset transfer can be hugely beneficial but must be carefully thought through
• Control through ownership enables local communities to deliver the services they need in their area
• Evaluation is important to be able to demonstrate the impact the project has actually delivered