



case study

historic environment



Objective One is
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The Objective One Partnership
for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Objective One, the historic environment
and economic regeneration

the project

Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have a historic environment of exceptional quality and diversity with enormous potential to contribute to the long-term prosperity of the region. The principle of partnership lies at the heart of Objective One. Recognising that the historic environment can be used as a positive driver for economic regeneration, the Programme has developed an innovative partnership with English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund to ensure that the creative synergies between the historic environment and economic regeneration are exploited wherever possible.

The Programme has invested over £16.3 million in heritage-led projects to date, attracting over £28 million of direct funding from the private sector and other public sources, including over £ 2.6 million from English Heritage and £8 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

sustaining the historic environment

The historic environment is a valuable asset and potential resource that can be used to stimulate economic growth and prosperity. It contributes directly to successful regeneration by attracting companies to locate, businesses to invest, and tourists to visit. Indirectly it contributes to economic growth by encouraging a strong sense of confidence based on local identity and pride of place: people prefer to live and work in places with a story to tell. Used in this way a high quality historic environment acts as a catalyst for change and as a springboard for economic regeneration.

The Objective One Programme for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly began in 2000 and over the past six years English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund have both actively engaged with an EU Structural Funds Programme for the first time. Through English Heritage alone over £2.6 million has already been invested in historic environment projects. In addition, financial support is provided for a post in the Objective One Partnership team to ensure that all successful projects are sustainable in historic environment terms.

The innovative partnership that has developed between historic environment organisations and Objective One has helped to change perceptions of heritage in the economic development sector, highlighting its role as a positive asset rather than as a barrier to regeneration and economic development. On another level,



The refurbished White's Warehouse, part of Hayle Townscape Heritage Initiative

working in partnership with Objective One has helped emphasise the role English Heritage can play as a proactive and positive force for change.

For example, the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey project (undertaken by the Historic Environment Service of Cornwall County Council with investment from Objective One, the South West Regional Development Agency and English Heritage) has produced detailed historic character assessments for 19 Cornish towns including the whole of the Camborne-Pool-Redruth Urban Regeneration area. These reports have been warmly welcomed by the economic regeneration and heritage sectors as they provide detailed guidance for sustainable new development whilst ensuring the distinctive character and key historic assets of each town are acknowledged:

"English Heritage is delighted to have been able to work with Objective One and SWRDA on such a successful project. It shows what can be achieved when heritage and regeneration agencies work together to pursue shared aims." - Roger M Thomas, Head of Urban Archaeology, Characterisation Team, English Heritage.

The term heritage-led regeneration has become synonymous with high quality urban and economic regeneration, and the transformation of underperforming areas. Investment in the re-use and repair of neglected buildings not only improves their fabric, it delivers jobs, affordable housing, and new community, leisure and cultural facilities. Historic areas



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cater better for mixed use and provide a variety in accommodation and rental levels that is essential to support local enterprise, new and small businesses, and to cater for innovation and creative industries.

“Conserving our historic environment has a whole range of benefits for local communities. It can provide an excellent catalyst for investment and regeneration, helps to build local pride and sense of place, and brings historic sites back to life for contemporary use.” - Nerys Watts, Heritage Lottery Fund Manager in the South West

Experience in Cornwall has shown that heritage-led regeneration is at its most effective when part of a wider regeneration strategy and package of initiatives which create a critical mass, which in turn builds capacity and momentum for further public and private sector investment. Many of the heritage-led regeneration projects supported by Objective One have focussed on the physical regeneration of towns and the public realm. In Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly four Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THI's) and four Heritage Economic Regeneration schemes (HERS) have received a total of £3.8 million investment from Objective One. This has generated an additional £8.6 million from the public and private sector, including £1.1 million from English Heritage and £3 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. These area schemes have had a huge impact on the social and economic life of the everyday places where people live, work and spend their leisure time - the conservation of buildings and streetscapes has contributed to making sustainable communities and stimulating investor confidence.

Investment in Cornwall's heritage cannot in itself reverse deep rooted economic problems but it can change perceptions and create a positive climate for economic growth. The heritage projects supported by Objective One contribute to an integrated sustainable approach to economic regeneration. Time and again this approach has demonstrated that investment in the historic environment will build a strong sense of confidence based on identity and which in turn attracts external investors as well as sustaining existing businesses. The bid to inscribe Cornish Mining as a World Heritage Site is a prime example of this. Supported by Objective One and English Heritage, the project has highlighted the potential for an increase in community confidence and pride that such a designation might bring to former mining areas.

lessons learnt

As the programme completes its investment cycle it is time to celebrate an extraordinary achievement. The partnership between English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and Objective One has helped to change perceptions of Cornwall's heritage, demonstrating that conservation can positively contribute to economic regeneration. It has also challenged traditional perceptions of the role of English Heritage. The agency has transcended the stereotype of being simply a regulator and has been able to show itself as being a proactive and positive force for change.

Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of English Heritage said: *“In recent years, English Heritage has been trying to show that the historic environment, and the agencies which deal with it, can be a positive force for change. We are delighted that Objective One has recognised our success in this. Traditional perceptions of heritage as being a barrier to regeneration are clearly outmoded. The achievements of Objective One in Cornwall have demonstrated beyond doubt the economic value of heritage, and the positive role of heritage agencies in regeneration.”*

Of the success achieved through partnership working, Paul Brough of Heritage Kernow says: *“The Heritage Sector is pleased to see growing recognition for what it has always believed; that there is an important role for historic assets to play in Cornwall's economic regeneration whilst maintaining its distinctive character.”*

As a consequence of the successful partnership in Cornwall between economic regeneration and the historic environment sector English Heritage has been invited, nationally, to help develop the environmental agenda for post-2006 European Structural Fund programmes.

For more information about how you can help sustain the historic environment in your project please contact the Objective One Partnership Office on 01872 241379 or email objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk.