

February 2025

Evaluation of the Heritage Action Zones programme

Final Evaluation

Final report

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Executive summary

The Heritage Action Zones programme

1. Historic England's Heritage Action Zones ('HAZ') programme was a nationwide programme which supported local authorities in unlocking the *'untapped potential in places that are rich in history and historic fabric to help them thrive and improve quality of life for communities and businesses'*. Its five main outcomes were to:
 - reduce or avoid risks to historic environment
 - increase understanding of heritage and enhance the National Heritage List
 - engage the local community and local authority
 - build local and regional capacity
 - develop best practice for managing heritage assets.
2. The programme drew on a total funding commitment of £15.7m from Historic England and its sponsor department, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The seven-year programme comprised 20 area-based HAZs in England, delivered across three funding rounds: ten HAZs in Round 1 (2017/18 – 2021/22), eight HAZs in Round 2 (2018/19 – 2022/23), and two HAZs in Round 3 (2019/20 – 2023/24). Each scheme was delivered over three and five years, with an additional six month closedown period.
3. Each HAZ was delivered in partnership with the local authority and other relevant organisations (e.g. local community groups). Activity in each HAZ was designed to respond to local needs and circumstances, and therefore ranged in scale and form. Activity included research projects (e.g. strategy development and feasibility research), capital works to repair and restore key heritage buildings, and community engagement activities.
4. Round 1 HAZs were selected on the criterion that they should contribute to addressing high levels of local deprivation through working towards the five programme outcomes cited above. This emphasis shifted somewhat in Round 2 and HAZs were prioritised based on their potential to deliver economic growth, with a particular focus on housing. In Round 3, contributing to addressing high levels of local deprivation was again, a key focus.

The evaluation

5. In January 2023 Historic England commissioned SQW to undertake an evaluation of the HAZ programme. The evaluation was delivered over two years (2023-2024), in line with the timeframe for the latter stages of programme delivery. This report is the fourth and final output, which sets out the findings and implications from the evaluation of HAZ Round 3 and the programme overall.
6. The evaluation was ex-post with a focus on process, outcomes and impacts achieved, and the value for money realised by the programme. Additionality and the contribution of the programme to benefits observed were important considerations, and the factors that have helped or hindered programme. The evaluation also sought to identify lessons learned to inform the design and delivery of future place-based programmes.

7. This Final Report has drawn on both primary and secondary research. Primary research included engagement with Historic England HAZ leads, interviews with stakeholders, an e-survey of organisations/businesses which supported the delivery of a HAZ, and in-depth case studies of six HAZs. This was supported by analysis of closedown reports and funding and output data for all HAZs, and analysis of contextual secondary data. Value for money modelling was also completed, drawing on programme monitoring data, as well as government guidelines and benchmarks. This report includes the evidence collated and presented in the Interim Report which focused on the 18 HAZs from Rounds 1 and 2.

Summary of final evaluation findings

8. In the paragraphs that follow, we summarise the key findings from this final evaluation against the original research questions.

Has the HAZ programme been implemented as intended?

9. The nature of activities delivered aligned fully with the overall aim of the programme and the five main anticipated outcomes around reducing/avoiding risk to the historic environment, enhancing the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), increasing understanding of heritage, local community and local authority engagement, building local/regional capacity and developing best practice for managing heritage assets. The programme was expected at the outset to be responsive to a changing context and new opportunities: we found this to have been the case in practice.
10. HAZs faced a range of challenges during delivery, most of which were external to programme, notably the COVID-19 pandemic and inflationary pressures. These led to some changes to planned activities (for example, pivoting engagement activities to be delivered online rather than in-person), but we found that overall, activities were delivered well despite the challenging socio-economic context.
11. On the whole, the programme performed strongly against output targets, with performance generally stronger against outputs related to capacity building compared to capital works. While overall performance was strong, there was considerable variation at the level of individual HAZs reflecting in part their different starting point capacities and emerging opportunities.

To what extent can any changes in intervention areas be attributed by activities connected to the HAZ programme? Has the HAZ programme produced the short- and mid-term outcomes as intended?

12. The primary and secondary data indicate strong or moderate progress towards the following outcomes:
 - Outcomes associated with the research conducted in the HAZs: enhanced understanding of heritage assets and their potential reuse, a more comprehensive record of the area's historic environment, and updated/enhanced NHLE.
 - Outcomes from the capital works: reduction/avoidance of risk to the historic environment, improved leisure and visitor offer locally, increased commercial space, and enhanced public realm.

- Outcomes associated with the community and engagement activities: increased local participation in the historic environment, improved partnership working between local stakeholders, enhanced local/regional capacity, increased use of best practice for managing heritage assets and increased understanding of heritage.
13. Evidence of progress towards some outcomes is more limited: improved access, and use of, the historic environment, increased local housing, reduced vacancy rates, and increased footfall. In part, this reflects time lags to impacts and a lack of data, notably footfall / usage data. Where data are available, notably in the case of vacancy rates, considerable fluctuations were likely to be influenced by other market factors and there were differences in geographical scales, as commercial property market geography data availability does not match HAZ geographies. This makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions.
 14. The evidence on outcome additionality (collected mainly through the case study research) varied by outcome and local context. However, overall, consultation feedback suggests full or partial additionality in most cases. That is, some outcomes would not have been delivered in the absence of the programme, whilst others would have been delivered over a longer time period, on a smaller scale, or at a reduced quality. Outcomes associated with capital works, such as reduced risk to the historic environment, were often assessed as having greater additionality than outcomes associated with community engagement such as increased understanding of heritage. The extent to which additional public and/or private funding would have been secured without the programme is more complex: the interventions took place against different levels of earlier commitment from partners and consultees often found it difficult to provide a definitive answer on the counterfactual.
 15. Attribution of outcomes/impacts to HAZ is inherently challenging given the nature of the programme and the evolving context – different of course in each area – in which the programme was delivered. The contribution of the HAZ programme in generating these outcomes varied across the HAZs and by outcome type, but, across the programme as a whole, it played an important role with different mixes of other contributions in different places. The most commonly cited factors that have influenced effects include other complementary regeneration initiatives, other sources of public / private funding, the knowledge and commitment of local organisations / individuals, the strategic importance of heritage in an area, and previous investment and / or intervention locally.

Has the HAZ programme produced any positive or negative unintended outcomes? Can systems be put in place to monitor these in subsequent rounds of the programme?

16. There is some positive evidence that the programme has resulted in unforeseen benefits for Historic England around improved multidisciplinary working and increased awareness of the importance of project/programme management within the organisation. In some cases at least, there is evidence that similar positive outcomes were also realised at the HAZ level.
17. The programme has now ended, and so the question around implementing systems to monitor unintended outcomes in subsequent rounds should be thought of in terms of learning for future place-based interventions delivered by Historic England. It is important that monitoring processes/systems consider how to capture unintended outcomes from the outset. This could be including a field in monitoring returns to record any (positive/negative) unintended outcomes, and a question in the final report template to capture any reflections or evidence of unintended outcomes. Given unintended outcomes

are, in their very nature, unexpected, any monitoring mechanism should be flexible, rather than prescriptive.

The HAZ programme was partially delivered in the unprecedented socio-economic climate of the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy crisis, and high inflation – how did the HAZs respond? What direct and indirect effects did this have on delivery and outcomes?

18. The COVID-19 pandemic was the predominant external factor that affected the delivery of all three rounds of the programme. This impacted all aspects of delivery, but particularly community engagement activities and capital works. High inflation also impacted the viability of some capital projects, causing them to be cancelled or put on hold.
19. HAZs sought to respond flexibly and innovatively, adapting delivery plans where possible. For example, some community engagement events were shifted to online delivery. However, some activities could not be adapted, for example, capital works were put on hold during lockdowns, and were subsequently impacted by supplier backlogs, resulting in some incomplete projects at HAZ completion.

What can we learn from the HAZ in terms of ‘what works’ and ‘what doesn’t’?

20. The evaluation has identified a range of lessons in terms of what does and doesn’t work well in the delivery of programmes like HAZ. The factors that worked well in design and delivery included:
 - at a programme level the support from the central programme team and use of expert support from within Historic England, the flexibility of the programme to respond to local contextual changes, and the six-month close-down period.
 - at a HAZ level the capacity, knowledge and commitment of project officers, collaborative working, strong community engagement, and being flexible in a changing context.
21. The factors that worked less well in design and delivery included:
 - at a programme level the lack of a lead-in or development period to the delivery of HAZs, the administrative burden associated with using existing grant schemes, limited dedicated programme management resources, and challenges retrofitting administrative/monitoring tools and processes during delivery.
 - at a HAZ level the lack of staff continuity and capacity challenges within both Historic England and partner organisations, challenges with stakeholder engagement, and contextual challenges both nationally (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic and inflationary pressures) and locally (e.g. low property values, local authority priorities).

What is the overall impact of the programme including social, economic, and environmental impacts?

22. Robust evidence of impacts is limited. Therefore, our assessment of impacts relies heavily on anecdotal evidence. As the evaluation was completed in parallel with the completion of Round 3, little time has elapsed for impacts to be fully realised.

23. Taking these caveats into account, the evidence is strongest in relation to further public and private investment leveraged following HAZ completion, although evidence on the contribution of the programme to securing this investment is – perhaps inevitably – often subjective and incomplete. There is also some (mainly anecdotal) evidence of increased local employment opportunities and enhanced pride in place. Evidence of other anticipated impacts is more limited to date.
24. It is difficult to comment on environmental impacts, as no data was collected at a programme or HAZ level. From the evidence available, we can only infer that the programme has led to minor environmental impacts by retrofitting heritage buildings with energy-efficiency measures. Without evidence on context, it is not possible to conduct a fuller life-cycle assessment on the buildings themselves (i.e. to understand the carbon abated by forestalling rebuilds). Further, as no specific measures were included in the retrofits, the impact estimates were calibrated to cover a broad range. Further research would benefit from contextual understanding to supplement the quantitative data in the indicators. For example, in Appleby a key outcome was improved understanding of how to improve the flood resilience of historic properties in the area.
25. Achieving impacts in future is dependent on a range of factors including the ability to identify, understand, and leverage additional funding, capacity and priorities in the local authority, private sector capacity, and wider economic / political conditions.
26. The overarching programme vision was to ‘transform’ places: achieving this directly through and within the timeframe of the interventions was always unrealistic given delivery timescales and available financial resources; also, in many cases, the legacy of decades of economic and commercial decline. However, activities delivered through the programme have supported areas on their trajectory of change by helping to build the foundations for future activities which are in a better position to engage partners in actions to restore and conserve historic assets, realise commercial / leisure re-use, and promote social and economic renewal.

Does the HAZ programme offer value-for-money from a public value perspective?

27. A value for money model was developed to monetise (where possible) the impacts of the programme. The model elements are illustrative and non-exhaustive, intended to provide a broad perspective on the (potential) impacts of the programme.
28. The net estimated impact of the HAZ programme is estimated to be in the region of £88.2m-£99.6m. Financial benefits generated through commercial floorspace brought back into use account for some £65m of the overall impact.
29. Overall, our assessment is that the programme has delivered a strong level of value for money. When comparing the net impacts above to the Historic England costs (c.£16-18m), the programme has a BCR between 4.79 and 5.41. This means for every pound of public investment the programme will generate approximately £5 in value that would not have happened otherwise. However, when comparing the net impacts to total programme costs (i.e. public and private), the BCR is considerably lower at between 0.73 and 0.84, which at least in part reflects uncertainties around identifying as well as realising the intended additional impacts in the longer-term.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** In January 2023 Historic England commissioned SQW to undertake an evaluation of the Heritage Action Zones ('HAZ') programme. The evaluation was delivered over two years (2023-2024), in line with the timeframe for the latter stages of programme delivery, which commenced in 2017 and was completed in September 2024. The seven-year programme drew on a total funding commitment of £15.7m, delivered to 20 area-based HAZs in England across three funding rounds.
- 1.2** This is the fourth and final output of the evaluation, which sets out the findings and implications from the Round 3 HAZs and the overall programme. It follows a Scoping Report (June 2023), an Evaluation Method Report (November 2023), and Interim Evaluation Report (March 2024).

Evaluation aims

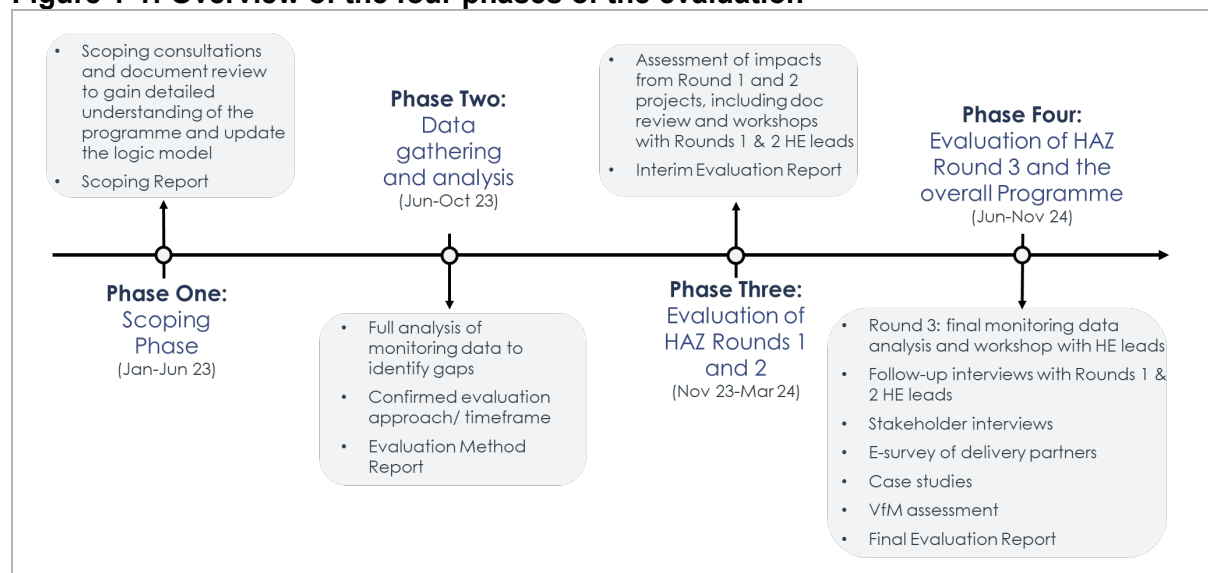
- 1.3** The overall aim was to deliver an ex-post evaluation of the HAZ programme with a focus on process, outcomes and impacts achieved, and the value for money realised by the programme. Within this, it was important to consider additionality and the contribution of the programme to benefits observed, and the factors that have helped or hindered programme. The evaluation also sought to identify lessons learned, in order to inform the design and delivery of future place-based programmes. The key research questions for the evaluation are listed below.

1. Has the HAZ programme been implemented as intended?
2. To what extent can any changes in intervention areas be attributed by activities connected to the HAZ programme? Has the HAZ programme produced the short and mid-term outcomes as intended?
3. Has the HAZ programme produced any positive or negative unintended outcomes? Can systems be put in place to monitor these in subsequent rounds of the programme?
4. The HAZ programme was partially delivered in the unprecedented socio-economic climate of the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy crisis, and high inflation addition to costs – how did the HAZs respond? What direct and indirect effects did this have on delivery and outcomes?
5. What can we learn from the HAZ in terms of 'what works' and 'what doesn't'?
6. What is the overall impact of the programme including social, economic and environmental impacts?
7. Does the HAZ programme offer value-for-money from a public value perspective? Include monetised social, economic and environmental benefits.

Approach

- 1.4** The evaluation adopted a theory-based approach, grounded in the use of logic models and theories of change, underpinned by a set of assumptions and understanding of key drivers and potential alternative explanations of change.¹
- 1.5** Using this theory-based framework, the evaluation adopted two key analytical approaches:
- **Contribution analysis** to assess the plausible contribution of the HAZ programme to achieving outcomes relative to other factors that may influence change (e.g. other interventions or external drivers such as economic or political factors) and provide insight into what might have happened in the absence of the HAZ programme. This drew particularly on in-depth qualitative case studies with six HAZs.
 - **Value for money modelling** drew on programme monitoring data and government guidelines and benchmarks. This analysis provided estimates of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the HAZ programme, to compare against estimates of the costs of programme delivery.
- 1.6** As set out below, the evaluation has involved four phases. The first phase involved a review of programme documentation and seven scoping consultations with programme and evaluation representatives from Historic England, and was completed in June 2023. The second phase included a detailed review of programme monitoring data, analysis of contextual secondary data, and confirmation of the evaluation approach. The main output was an Evaluation Method Report completed in November 2023. The third phase focused on evaluating Rounds 1 and 2 of the programme. It included two 'Insight Gathering Events' with Historic England HAZ leads for Rounds 1 and 2 respectively, analysis of closedown reports for all Rounds 1 and 2 HAZs, and updated analysis of monitoring data.

Figure 1-1: Overview of the four phases of the evaluation



Source: SQW

- 1.7** The main output of the final phase of the evaluation is this report. The fourth phase of the evaluation involved the following tasks:

¹ See the [Magenta Book](#) for further information on theory-based methods

- **An online workshop with the Historic England HAZ leads for Round 3.** This included the leads for both Round 3 HAZs (i.e. Gosport and Swindon). The workshop focused on the context for programme delivery, what worked well and why, the benefits realised, including the contribution of the HAZ compared to other factors, and the legacy of the programme.
- **Follow-up interviews with the Historic England leads for Rounds 1 and 2.** Interviews were completed with **13 leads** (or equivalent, where leads had left Historic England), covering **six out of ten** Round 1 HAZs and **seven out of eight** Round 2 HAZs. Note: **six** of the leads were interviewed as part of the case studies (see below).
- **Interviews with eight stakeholders**, including five representatives from Historic England involved in programme design and delivering, and three external stakeholders who were not directly involved in programme delivery, but had knowledge/understanding of the HAZ programme and are involved in the historic environment.
- **An e-survey of organisations/businesses who supported the delivery of a HAZ.** The survey received 35 responses², from partners of 13 HAZs. The survey approach and findings are set out in detail in Annex D.
- **In-depth case studies of six HAZs**, including two Round 1 HAZs, three Round 2 HAZs, and one Round 3 HAZ. Case studies were sampled to cover a range of geographies, scales of activities, socio-economic contexts, and programme rounds. Case study selection was agreed with Historic England. Each case study involved a review of data and documentation, bilateral (or group) interviews with the HAZ lead, delivery partners, and stakeholders either online or in-person, and drafting a case study report. The full case study reports can be found in Annex E.
- **Analysis of closedown reports for the two Round 3 HAZs.** These provided information from the HAZ leads and project officers on context and aims, activities delivered, outputs and outcomes, challenges in delivery, and lessons learned and next steps.
- **Analysis of monitoring data for Round 3**, including the final output and funding data for the two Round 3 HAZs.
- **Updated analysis of contextual secondary data** (including Office for National Statistics, Heritage Counts³, and CoStar data⁴) to contextualise the performance and impact of the programme, including analysis of socio-economic datasets, heritage assets and commercial property. The overall approach and secondary datasets analysed were consistent with phase two.
- **Value for money modelling** which, as set out above, drew on the final programme monitoring data for all three Rounds, as well as government guidelines and benchmarks.

1.8 This report also draws on the evidence collated and presented in the Interim Evaluation Report which focused on the 18 HAZs from Rounds 1 and 2. This included two workshops with

² Note, complete responses only were analysed. There were also 20 partial responses which were not included in the analysis.

³ Within Historic England's Heritage Counts series is Heritage Indicator Data. These datasets collate a range of indicators that provide useful trends and statistics into the state of the historic environment around eight themes.

⁴ CoStar is a proprietary database of commercial property information. The database is populated with transaction level details provided by property agents and provides current and historic information.

Rounds 1 and 2 HAZ leads, and analysis of final monitoring data and closedown reports from all Rounds 1 and 2.

- 1.9** The evaluation has involved close working with representatives from Historic England's evaluation and HAZ programme teams. Regular client meetings have been held to discuss study progress and available data (and any gaps), also to take note of information on updated programme delivery and any other contextual changes.

Study limitations

- 1.10** The final evaluation faced several challenges and limitations which should be considered when interpreting the evidence:

- There were challenges in distributing the e-survey to organisations/businesses who supported the delivery of a HAZ. There is no comprehensive database of delivery partners, so HAZ leads were asked to distribute the survey to partners. However, in some cases, this was not easily achieved because of limited capacity and/or where leads had left Historic England. The numbers of partners differed substantially across the HAZs, and where these interventions had completed several years ago, and partners were no longer involved in any related activity, the likelihood of completing a survey was much reduced. Overall, the response rate was relatively modest and not all HAZs were included in the e-survey. Therefore, the sample is not representative of the total population, and the findings should be interpreted with caution.
- Concerns over the robustness of the programme monitoring data, including a lack of clarity over the definition of some indicators, lack of continuity in personnel completing monitoring returns, and varying levels of explanatory information provided about outputs. Monitoring processes evolved over time which led to a reduction in indicators and an increase in the frequency of data collection (from biannual to quarterly). Furthermore, data on quantitative outcomes such as vacancy rates and footfall were not consistently collected. It proved difficult for the evaluation to robustly assess progress towards these outcomes.
- The format of the closedown reports, which were produced by all HAZs, varied by round because the programme team sought to apply lessons learned during delivery. The content and the level of detail provided in each report also varied, as did their usefulness. It was therefore not possible to analyse the reports using a consistent framework.
- The value for money analysis is not an exhaustive account of the expected benefits of the programme, but seeks to understand value for money in broad terms. Specific challenges with the analysis included the lack of some quantified output indicators (e.g. number of additional/amended nationally listed heritage assets) and difficulties in quantifying others due to a lack of explanatory information about the output (e.g. detailed information on the type of capital works completed and training provided to staff/volunteers). Furthermore, data on programme costs was partial, with no comprehensive record of Historic England staff time spent on programme design and delivery.
- There were inevitably challenges in evidencing outcomes and impacts, given the varied content at local level and the time-lags associated with the delivery of this complex, multi-stage programme. Particularly in demonstrating how far the substantial, but indirect, enabling effects were generated in the form of other downstream involvements and activities.

Report structure

1.11 Following this introduction, the report includes:

- Section 2: Programme overview and context
- Section 3: Programme inputs, activities and outputs
- Section 4: Reflections on design and delivery
- Section 5: Outcomes and impacts
- Section 6: Outcome additionality and contribution
- Section 7: Value for money analysis
- Section 8: Conclusions

1.12 The following annexes are provided in a separate document:

- Annex A: Further contextual information
- Annex B: Overview of the HAZs
- Annex C: Detailed monitoring data
- Annex D: Detailed survey approach and findings
- Annex E: Case studies
- Annex F: Additional detail on VfM analysis

1.13 The following naming convention is applied in this report:

- the 'programme' refers to the HAZ programme
- 'HAZs' are the individual Heritage Action Zones within the programme – locally specific interventions delivered by Historic England and its partners
- 'projects' are discrete work packages within the HAZs.

2. Programme overview and context

Key messages

- Across the districts covered by the programme there was mixed performance on the five socio-economic indicators between the baseline year and the most recent data. However, data on commercial property markets is more encouraging.
- The seven-year HAZ programme comprised 20 area-based HAZs in England, delivered across three funding rounds. Each HAZ was planned to be delivered between three and five years, but an additional six months was allowed for the closing-down of each round.
- HAZs were spread across England, in a variety of settlement types. They were delivered by local authorities in partnership with Historic England and local stakeholder organisations.
- HAZ activities varied significantly in scale and content, including research projects, capital works, and the repair and restoration of heritage assets.

2.1 This section provides a brief overview of the context, objectives and implementation of the programme. The original programme logic model is also presented.

Background and context

2.2 Historic England was created in 2015 as an independent non-departmental public body with responsibility for statutory planning and heritage protection functions. ‘English Heritage’ which earlier included this role, was re-constituted as a trust with charitable status, responsible for managing a national portfolio of historic properties.

2.3 Historic England has sought to support local areas in a more joined-up way, providing a more coherent service offer, looking to achieve its objectives through more of a focus on identifying opportunities for sustainable intervention and working with local partners. The concept of HAZs, a place-based approach to the delivery of Historic England’s services, emerged from initial assessment of places’ needs and opportunities, informed by Historic England’s ‘menu of heritage-related services’, which might be drawn on to help meet these needs and realise opportunities. These services include technical expertise and Heritage at Risk (HAR) project development, research, and grant funding. Historic England offered a range of grant funding programmes, from repair grants and acquisition grants, to Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCA).

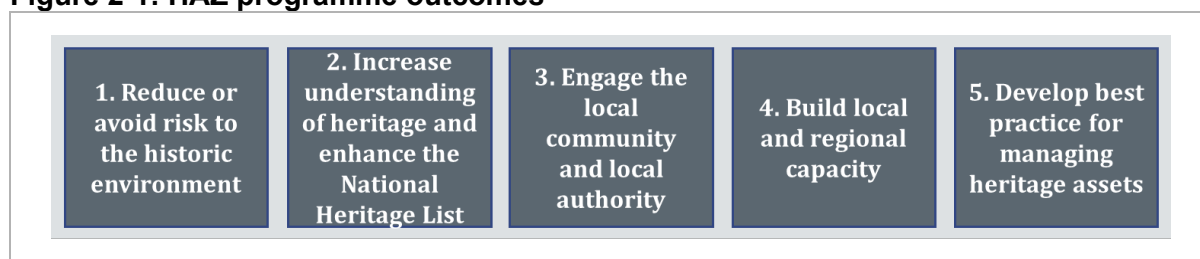
2.4 Growing interest in, and recognition of, how heritage could be used to leverage the engagement of other stakeholders, provide sustainable property outcomes and help to drive local economic growth, was stimulated by a demonstration project in Derby. Between 2008 and 2016, a partnership scheme with the City Council helped to transform the city’s historic centre. Both Historic England and Derby Council, as well as the owners and occupiers, saw the outcome as highly successful. It also attracted wider interest in the potential that could be realised by using the restoration of historic buildings as a key element in area regeneration.

- 2.5** The HAZ programme was developed to provide dedicated, targeted support to places where both need and potential were identified, using heritage as a positive driver for regeneration, growth, and the sustaining of high-quality places. The programme was launched in 2017, and areas were encouraged to submit a bid to become a HAZ. If successful, those areas would work closely with the Historic England regional teams, receive initial support and be able to bid for and access grants and Historic England services more easily. Historic England's existing activities and grant funding programmes continued to be delivered alongside the HAZ programme.
- 2.6** In 2018, HM Government announced plans to establish a £675 million 'Future High Streets Fund'.⁵ The purpose of the fund was to 'help local leaders implement bold new visions to transform their town centres and make them fit for the future'. A proportion of the fund was targeted at historic high streets, with Historic England receiving £95m⁶ to launch the High Street HAZ programme – building on the existing HAZ programme and branding. In 2019, Historic England launched the High Streets HAZ programme ('HSHAZ'), which aimed to facilitate economic growth through the restoration of heritage assets in and around local high street areas. While the HSHAZ programme incorporated key learning from HAZ delivery, the programmes were distinct: HAZs were typically more complex, with more variety in geographical scale and activities. The much more numerous HSHAZ schemes followed a more structured process, focused on the regeneration of local high streets. In some instances, both HAZ and HSHAZ schemes were delivered in the same location. We found from the scoping consultations that where this is the case, the programmes were distinct and ran in parallel but were designed to complement one another.
- 2.7** The HAZ and HSHAZ evaluations have been undertaken over the same timescale. Taken together, the evaluations will provide Historic England with different, yet complementary perspectives on the impacts of its place-based interventions, and will facilitate subsequent assessment of the future of place-based interventions.

Programme overview

- 2.8** The HAZ programme aimed to support local authorities in unlocking the 'untapped potential in places that are rich in history and historic fabric to help them thrive and improve quality of life for communities and businesses'⁷. The overarching goal was to achieve local economic growth by using the historic environment as a catalyst. As such, its five main outcomes were to:

Figure 2-1: HAZ programme outcomes



⁵ [£675 million fund to transform high streets and town centres opens to communities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/675-million-fund-to-transform-high-streets-and-town-centres-opens-to-communities)

⁶ £40m was awarded through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (former DCMS) Heritage High Street Fund, and £52 million was awarded from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Future High Streets Fund. A further £3 million was provided by the [National Lottery Heritage Fund to support a cultural programme](#).

⁷ Source: Invitation to Tender for: Evaluation of Heritage Action Zones (Rounds 1-3)

Source: HAZ programme documentation

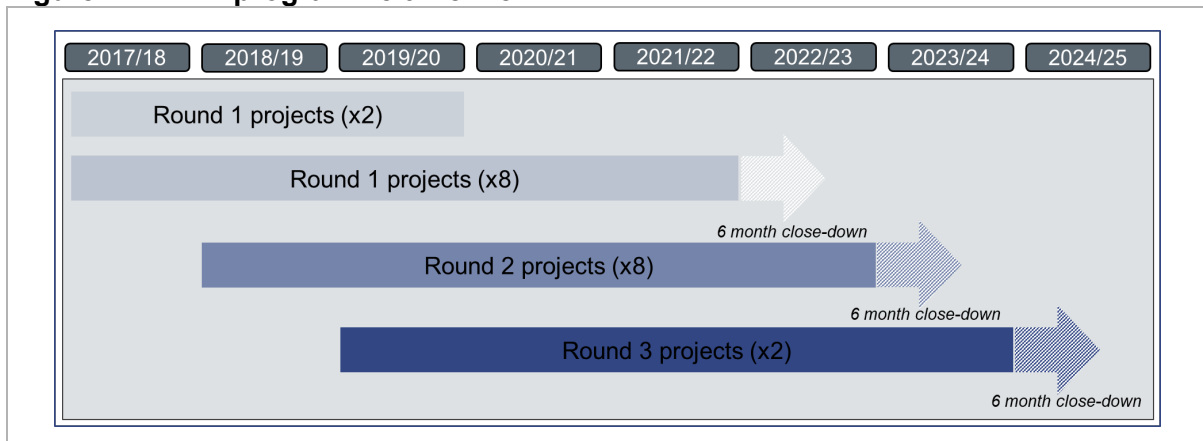
2.9 The programme had a total funding commitment of £15.7m from Historic England and its sponsor department, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The seven-year programme comprised **20 area-based HAZs in England, delivered across three funding rounds:**

- **Round 1 – ten HAZs** (2017/18 – 2022/23)
- **Round 2 – eight HAZs** (2018/19 – 2023/24)
- **Round 3 – two HAZs** (2019/20 – 2024/25)

2.10 The primary reason for delivering the programme over three rounds was capacity. HAZs were funded and delivered through Historic England's regional teams, so delivery was principally informed by the scale of financial resource and staffing capacity at a regional level.

2.11 Each HAZ was **planned to be delivered between three and five years**: of the ten Round 1 HAZs which began in 2017/2018, two were scheduled to complete by March 2020⁸ and eight in March 2022. An additional six months was allowed for the closing-down of Round 1 HAZs; also for the eight Round 2 HAZs which began in 2018/19 and completed in September 2023. The two HAZs in Round 3 completed in March 2024, with a six-month close-down period ending in September 2024.

Figure 2-2: HAZ programme timeline



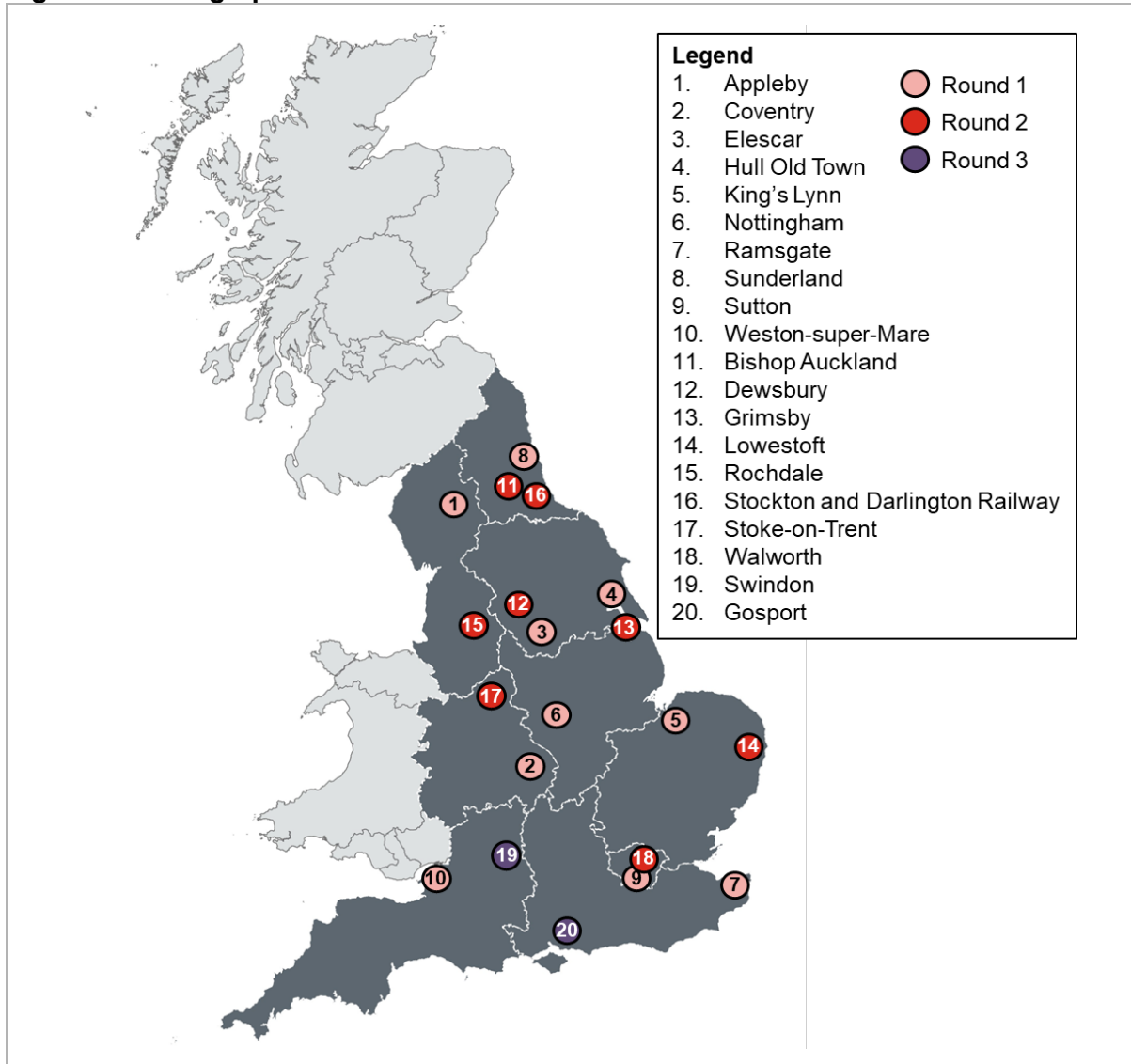
Source: SQW, based on Historic England documentation

2.12 Each HAZ was delivered in partnership with its local authority and other relevant organisations (e.g. local community groups). Each HAZ appointed a project officer to lead the day-to-day delivery of the HAZ. The HAZs were designed to **respond to local needs and circumstances, and therefore ranged in scale and form**. Round 1 HAZs were selected on the criterion that they should contribute to **addressing high levels of local deprivation** through working towards the five programme outcomes cited above (see Annex A for deprivation data). This emphasis shifted somewhat in Round 2 and HAZs were prioritised based on their potential to deliver economic growth, with a **particular focus on housing**. In Round 3, contributing to addressing high levels of local deprivation was again, a key focus.

⁸ The two three-year HAZs were Elsecar and Sutton

2.13 HAZs were located across a variety of settlement types, including city-centres, market towns, industrial villages and corridors, with half concentrated in the north of the country.⁹ Figure 2-3 shows the distribution of the 20 HAZs across England.

Figure 2-3: Geographical distribution of the HAZs



Source: Produced by SQW 2023. Licence 100030994. Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] [2023]

2.14 Each HAZ sought to address a set of specific challenges. However, for the most part, these challenges stemmed from a shared experience of broader socio-economic conditions. These included: the decline of local industry and disposable incomes; changes in shopping habits and increased competition from out-of-town retail sites; reduced numbers of out-of-town visitors, particularly for HAZs located in coastal areas; and underappreciation of the historic environment exacerbated by pressure for redevelopment. The background and context of the HAZs at the outset are summarised in Annex B.

2.15 HAZ activities varied significantly in scale and content, including **research projects** (including both strategy development and feasibility research / planning related to specific historic buildings), **capital works focused on the repair and conservation of heritage**

⁹ This in part reflects the consolidation of Historic England Regions (from nine to six) part way through programme delivery.

assets. Many of the HAZs had a strong focus on **wider community engagement**, with the aim of increasing local participation in the historic environment, widening communities' understanding of heritage, and enhancing local 'pride in place'. Activities are discussed in more detail in Section 3.

- 2.16** Most HAZ delivery plans evolved over the course of the programme in response to unforeseen conditions, including the COVID-19 pandemic and changes to the economic environment. There were also instances of unsuccessful bids for additional funding or a lack of available funding, around which some projects had been formulated. In several cases, planned activities were postponed or cancelled (e.g. capital projects).

Events in the past five years, such as Brexit and the pandemic, have had a profound effect on daily life in the UK and projects of all scales and size in many different fields have been influenced by this. The Council rightly gave priority to its work in supporting its communities through the pandemic and officers were redeployed to different departments to cover essential areas of work.

King's Lynn closedown report

- 2.17** Whilst changes in the operating context often presented challenges for HAZs, there were some also examples of delivery plans being updated in response to new, hitherto unforeseen, opportunities. HAZs frequently transitioned to delivering community engagement activity virtually, which presented opportunities for different types of activities (for example, the creation of videos).
- 2.18** Annex B provides an overview of the 20 HAZs, including their location, the lead delivery organisation, total funding from Historic England as well as other sources (e.g. Future High Streets Fund and Levelling Up Fund), and the key outcomes realised.
- 2.19** The delivery and governance structure for the HAZ programme is set out in Figure 2-4. The local HAZ teams – led by a lead partner (often a local authority) – had overall responsibility for the delivery of the programme. Each HAZ had a dedicated lead within Historic England regional teams who oversaw delivery and was the main point of contact between Historic England and the local delivery team. The HAZs reported directly to the Historic England HAZ lead and provided quarterly reports on progress, including financial expenditure and progress against monitoring indicators. The HAZ leads reported to the Local Leadership Team (LLT), and the Regional Director (the Senior Responsible Officer for the programme) reported on programme delivery to the Regions Leadership Team (RLT). Above this, was the HAZ Programme Board covering both the HAZ and HSHAZ programmes. The programme also reported to Historic England's Executive Team twice a year, which in turn reported to the Commission.

Figure 2-4: Overview of HAZ programme delivery and governance structure



Source: SQW based on interviews with Historic England

Contextual evidence

- 2.20** A range of secondary datasets – typically at the level of the local authority district – were analysed early in the evaluation providing a baseline and subsequent update to contextualise

the performance and impact of the programme. This included the analysis of socio-economic heritage assets and commercial property datasets. Detailed data tables are presented in Annex A, with the key trends and messages summarised below.

Table 2-1: Summary of socio-economic contextual evidence

Indicator	Change between relative baseline year ¹⁰ and latest data (n=number of HAZ districts) (↑ increase, ↔ static, ↓ decrease)	National trend between 2016 and latest data
Socio-economic indicators		
Population (latest data=2023)	↑ n=17 ↔ n=1 ↓ n=2	↑
Employment rate (latest data=2023-24)	↑ n=17 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=3	↑
Business birth rate (latest data=2021)	↑ n=9 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=11	↓
Productivity (latest data=2022)	↑ n=12 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=8	↑
Dwelling stock (latest data=2023)	↑ n=20 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=0	↑
Commercial property market indicators		
Total commercial space (sq. ft.) (latest data=2023)	↑ n=16 ↔ n=2 ↓ n=2	↑
Vacancy rates (%) (latest data=2023) ¹¹	↑ n=10 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=10	↑
Rental figures (sq. ft.) (latest data=2023)	↑ n=15 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=5	↑
Historic environment indicators¹²		
Total listed buildings (latest data=2023)	↑ n=18 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=1	↑
Total HAR sites (latest data=2023)	↑ n=9 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=10	↓
Planning applications decisions (latest data=2021/22)	↑ n=6 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=13	↓
Listed building consent decisions (latest data=2021/22)	↑ n=7 ↔ n=0 ↓ n=12	↓

¹⁰ The baseline year is 2016 for Round 1 HAZs, 2017 for Round 2 HAZs, and 2018 for Round 3 HAZs.

¹¹ Note, for Weston-super-Mare the latest data available is 2022, and the baseline year is 2017.

¹² Note, there is no historic data for Westmorland and Furness because the unitary authority area was formed on the 1st April 2023. Eden is now part of the new district. Therefore, this district is not included in the change figures.

Indicator	Change between relative baseline year ¹⁰ and latest data (n=number of HAZ districts) (↑ increase, ↔ static, ↓ decrease)	National trend between 2016 and latest data
Local authority conservation staff (latest data=2023) ¹³	↑ n=5 ↔ n=4 ↓ n=8	↑

Source: SQW analysis of ONS data, CoStar data, and Heritage Counts data.

2.21 The key messages are as follows:

- Across the districts covered by the programme there was **mixed performance on the five socio-economic indicators** between the baseline year and the most recent data. In particular, the business birth rate was a challenge over the period, with over half of districts (11) experiencing lower business birth rates between the baseline year and 2021. Furthermore, eight HAZ districts experienced a widening productivity gap versus the UK between the baseline year and 2022. However, the districts performed more strongly on other metrics such as employment rate and dwelling stock, with housing quantity increasing across all districts over the period.
- **Data on commercial property markets is more encouraging.** Between the baseline year and 2023, most markets experienced an increase or no change in commercial property supply (and where there was a decrease this was marginal), and the majority of markets saw an increase in rental figures.¹⁴ However, the data on vacancy rates is more mixed: half of markets experienced an increase in vacancy rates over the period, with markets such as Ramsgate and Coventry city centre performing particularly poor on this metric between 2016 and 2023.
- Between the baseline year and 2023, **the number of HAR sites decreased in half of HAZ districts (ten)**, whilst the number of listed buildings increased in all but one of the HAZ districts. There was a general decline in the number of planning applications and listed buildings consents, albeit trends varied across the districts.

Logic model

2.22 The programme logic model is presented in Figure 2-5 which sets out what the programmes intended to deliver and achieve in terms of outputs, outcomes and impacts. The Theory of Change at the point the programme commenced (i.e. 2017) can be summarised as follows:

Public investment to support the conservation and reuse of heritage assets in defined areas, can, in partnership with other stakeholders and with increased social engagement, enable new/additional activity which will accelerate improvements to, and the quality of, important buildings. This will result in additional, sustainable, economic benefit to the local area.¹⁵

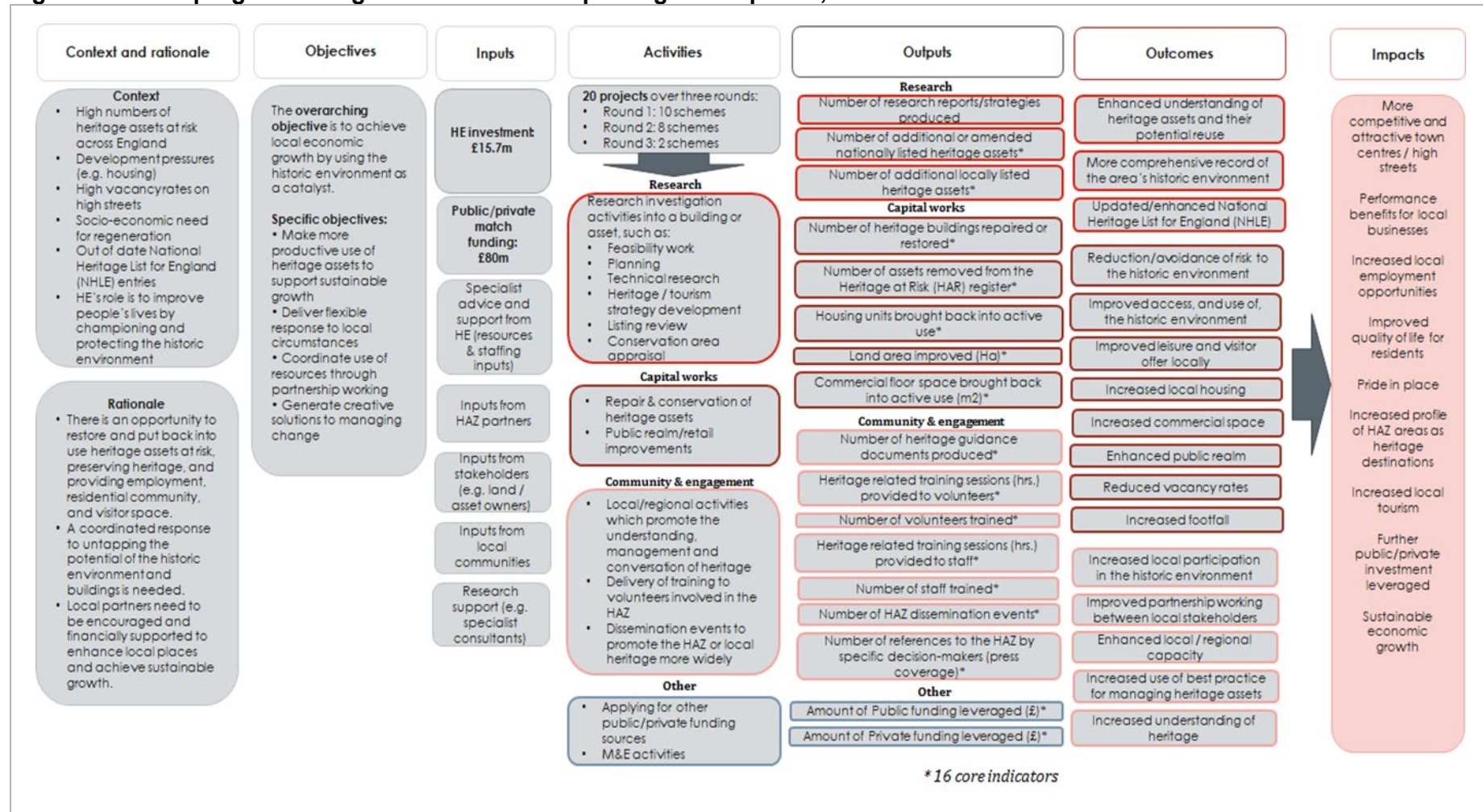
¹³ Note, change data was not provided for three districts: Westmorland and Furness, City of Kingston upon Hull and Gosport.

¹⁴ It should be noted that smaller CoStar markets are likely to see greater fluctuations in rental figures, because there are fewer transactions, so the influence of each transaction on average rental figures is greater.

¹⁵ Further detail is included in the HAZ Evaluation Method Report.

2.23 The logic model is based on the original programme logic model, but was refined and developed further as part of the scoping phase. An assessment of the performance of the programme against this logic model is presented in Section 8.

Figure 2-5: HAZ programme logic model and underpinning assumptions, enablers and barriers



	Inputs, activities & outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE has sufficient time and resources to support HAZs • There are other public/private funds available that can be leveraged by the HE funding • Appropriate research support is available • The legal owners of the heritage assets agree to undertaking research and/or repair/restoration works • There is a robust rationale for public intervention, and activity would not have progressed without HAZ(or not at the same speed/scale/type) • Projects are able to form and sustain effective consortia (where relevant) • There are local volunteers available and willing to participate • Individuals attend engagement and training events • The local community has an interest in heritage assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional housing is affordable and meets the needs of the local community • Additional employment space is affordable and meets the needs of the local businesses • Risk to heritage assets(e.g. poor condition) was limiting access/use • There is demand/need within the local community for additional housing, employment and/or leisure space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment opportunities created are available in the long term • Tourists are aware of the improvements to the heritage environment and are interested in visiting the area • The economic, social and environmental impacts benefit local residents
Factors that could enable progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective management/governance by HE • Strong partnership working between delivery partners • Strong engagement from stakeholders and the local community • National and local government support for historic led regeneration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective knowledge exchange between project partners, relevant stakeholders and the community • The HAZ leverages sufficient additional public/private funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained partnership working to support further growth • Wider regeneration / redevelopment activities in the area complement the HAZ
Factors that could hinder progress / cause ToC to break down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic assets require more work than anticipated leading to longer delivery periods and additional costs • Co-investment does not materialise or is delayed • Planned outputs are not achievable during the lifetime of HAZs • Lack of cooperation from asset/landowners • Tension between partners in terms of the best approach to preserving historic assets and bringing them back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to adopt best practice for the management of historic assets • Failure to secure additional follow-on funding to further support the historic environment • Repaired/conserved assets remain vacant due to a lack of demand for housing, employment and/or leisure space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to secure additional follow-on funding to further support growth • Heritage assets are not maintained over the longer-term and fall into disrepair
Wider external drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The influence of economic conditions on the ability to invest in the historic environment • Implications of external shocks (e.g. Covid-19, inflation) for delivery • General labour and materials availability, as well as prices, for capital works • Wider political, regulatory, economic drivers across the sectors 		

Source: SQW based on programme documentation and consultations

3. Programme inputs, activities and outputs

Key messages

- Across the programme as a whole, Historic England contributed £13.6m in grant funding to the HAZ programme, which was 12% below the original forecast (£15.5m). In some cases, this shortfall was explained by delays in delivery which resulted in Historic England grants being extended beyond the programme lifetime. The total contribution from other public and private sources was £102.8m which was 14% below forecast (£120.1m). Taken together, total funding amounted to £116.5m, against a forecast £135.5m (i.e. 14% below forecast).
- The three main types of activities were:
 - research investigations into a building or asset such as feasibility work, planning, technical research, listing review, and strategy development
 - capital works focused on restoration and conservation, or conversion of heritage assets, alongside public realm improvements
 - community and engagement activities to promote understanding, management, and conservation or conversion of heritage, delivery of training, and promotion of the HAZ.
- Overall, the programme performed well against the 'core' indicators: four of the fifteen targets were exceeded and at least 95% of forecast was achieved for a further four indicators. Performance against the 'discretionary' indicators was stronger: nine of the nineteen targets were exceeded and at least 95% of forecast was achieved for a further three indicators.

3.1 This section summarises the inputs, activities, and outputs of all three rounds, drawing primarily on analysis of programme monitoring data.

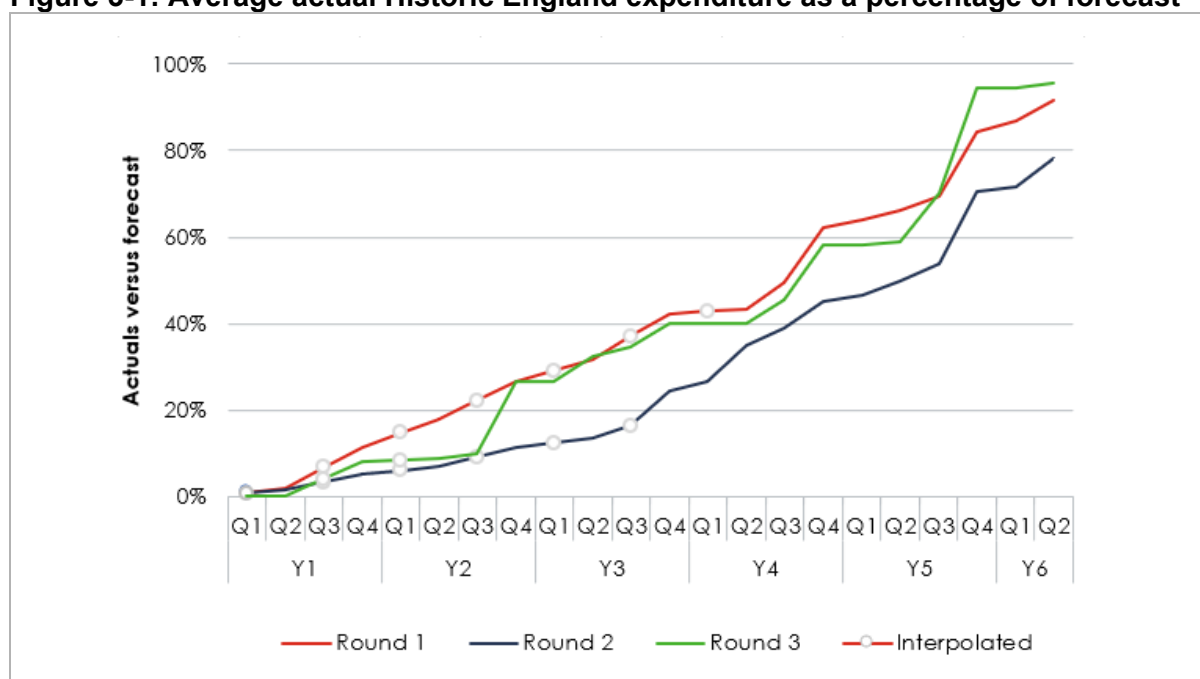
Programme inputs

3.2 Figure 3-1 below, shows average funding awarded as a proportion of total forecast funding overtime, by round. **Across the programme as a whole, 88% of forecast Historic England grant funding was secured and spent during the programme lifetime.** However, there was greater variation by round and HAZ:

- On average Round 1 HAZs had spent 92% of their forecast Historic England funding by September 2022. The proportion of Historic England funding spent by each HAZ ranged from 78% in King's Lynn, to 104% in Ramsgate.
- Round 2 HAZs had on average spent 78% of their forecast Historic England funding by September 2023, ranging from 43% in the case of Walworth, to 101% for Dewsbury.
- Round 3 HAZs had spent 96% of their forecast Historic England funding by September 2024, with little variation across the two HAZs.

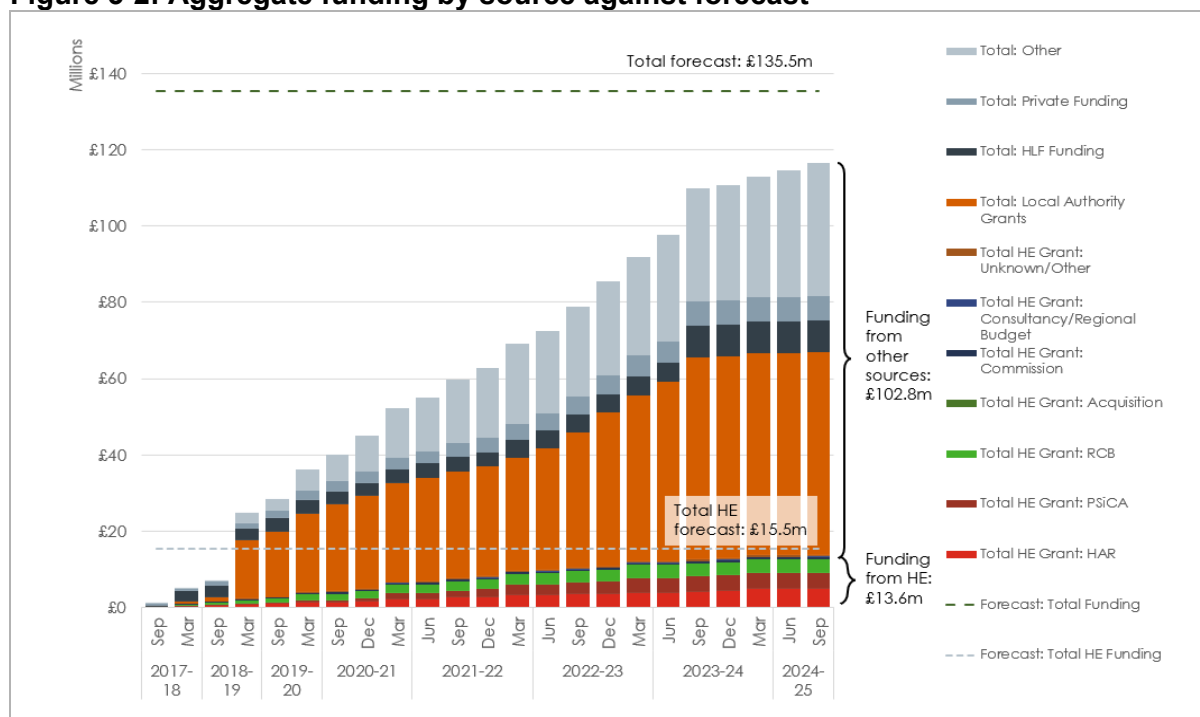
- 3.3 The figure above shows comparable trends for all three rounds over time, however, the rate of actual Historic England expenditure was consistently lower – albeit not greatly – for Round 2 throughout.

Figure 3-1: Average actual Historic England expenditure as a percentage of forecast



Source: SQW analysis of HAZ Monitoring Data

- 3.4 The more detailed breakdown in **Figure 3-2** shows aggregate funding across the programme, split by source. In total, **Historic England contributed £13.6m in grant funding to the HAZ programme**, which was 12% below the total forecast. In some cases, this shortfall was explained by delays in delivery (see reasons below) which meant Historic England grants – notably Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCA) grants - were extended beyond the programme lifetime. Across the **other sources of funding, the total contribution was £102.8m** which was 14% below forecast. Taken together, total funding amounted to £116.5m, against a forecast £135.5m, meaning actuals were 14% below forecast.

Figure 3-2: Aggregate funding by source against forecast

Source: SQW analysis of HAZ Monitoring Data

Activities

3.5 As noted in Section 2, the range and scale of activities varied substantially across the programme. For the purpose of the evaluation, activities are categorised in three main groups:

- **Research investigations** into a building or asset such as feasibility work, planning, technical research, listing review, and strategy development. For example:
 - Weston-super-Mare HAZ carried out research which fed into public celebrations, exhibitions, and activities such as guided walks, as well as a book entitled 'Weston-super-Mare: The town and its seaside heritage'.
 - Sunderland HAZ undertook research projects including a Historic Area Assessment and individual Historic Building Assessments.
 - Ramsgate published an Informed Conservation Series Publication: 'Ramsgate: The Town and its Seaside Heritage'.
 - Gosport HAZ produced Conservation Area Appraisals (e.g. for Royal Clarence Yard and Priddy's Hard) and feasibility studies (e.g. for Fort Rowner) which will inform future planning of heritage site improvements.
- **Capital works** focused on restoration and conservation or conversion of heritage assets, alongside public realm improvements. For example:
 - In Coventry, the Grade II* listed Drapers Hall, a major cultural asset to the city of Coventry, was restored as a concert venue, with office space for Historic Coventry Trust and office and teaching space for Coventry Music Services. The project was supported by Historic England but funded by a range of public and third sector organisations.

- In North Lowestoft, small grants of up to £5,000 were available to undertake improvements to commercial buildings, particularly to redress unauthorised and inappropriate shop signage.
- In Swindon, Historic England funded exterior repairs on several buildings, including the Health Hydro, Carriage Works and the Cricketers.
- **Community and engagement activities** to promote understanding, management and conservation or conversion of heritage, delivery of training, and promotion of the HAZ. One common means of engagement was the involvement of HAZs in Historic England's Heritage Schools programme (see text box below). Examples of other activities included:
 - Appleby HAZ held two public talks on the HAZ research project organised by the Appleby-in-Westmorland Society, entitled 'Appleby from the Air'.
 - In Rochdale, an exhibition of Manchester School of Architecture students was held at the Council's offices, providing over 50 ideas for the re-imaging of the townscape across five key sites. The HAZ also held a final celebration event, with 100 attendees, including heritage professionals, developers, stakeholders, council staff and partner organisations, who gathered to celebrate the work of the HAZ and network.

3.6 Reflections on the delivery of activities, including how HAZs sought to adapt in response to the unprecedented socio-economic climate, are set out later in this section.

Heritage Schools

The Heritage Schools programme was developed by Historic England in response to the UK Government Report on cultural education in England and is funded by the Department for Education. The programme is designed to train teachers to be heritage leads in their schools, equipping them with the skills to embed heritage in their school's curriculum. The programme also produces and shares resources and conducts events with schools, aiming to help children develop and understanding of their local heritage and its significance.

The Heritage Schools programme has successfully complemented HAZ community engagement activities in many areas. For example, in King's Lynn, the HAZ worked with Historic England and Stories of Lynn, a local museum, to create the Heritage Education Network (HEN). The Network provided free CPD sessions to teachers from local schools, which helped them to embed local historic context in the school's curriculum and trained them to become more confident in making use of local heritage resources. The programme has allowed the King's Lynn HAZ to engage with over 10,000 school children.

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/heritage-schools/>

Outputs

- 3.7** A set of 34 national output/outcome indicators¹⁶ were originally included in the Monitoring Framework. This was seen as over-long and insufficiently focused: following a review of the HAZ programme undertaken by Risk & Policy Analysts (RPA) in 2019, the original list was reduced to 16 'core' indicators, with the other 18 indicators labelled 'discretionary', that is, they could be included if considered relevant by an individual HAZ. The revisions to the Monitoring

¹⁶ Outputs are the immediate (often quantifiable) results from an intervention and outcomes are the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention.

Framework provide an example of Historic England taking learning into account during programme delivery. In addition to the national indicators, HAZs also report on local indicators (where applicable) based on HAZ Delivery Plans.

- 3.8** Many of the numeric forecast outputs at HAZ level changed during the delivery period. We understand that this was accepted by Historic England if the reason for revising the forecast was clearly articulated and documented, and the changed outputs continued to align with the overall Delivery Plan for the HAZ. This means that the parameters have changed throughout delivery and the assessment of performance against targets does not reflect intended outputs/outcomes at the outset (i.e. current forecasts are used rather than initial forecasts).

‘Core’ indicators

- 3.9 Overall, the programme performed well against the ‘core’ indicators.** Four of the fifteen targets were exceeded and at least 95% of forecast was achieved for a further four indicators. Performance was weakest against the indicator ‘Housing units brought back into active use’ (71% of forecast), mainly as a result of weaker performance by Round 1 HAZs (57% of forecast). In part, this likely reflects housing not being a core focus for Round 1 HAZs (see Section 2).

Table 3-1: Performance against ‘core’ indicators by round and overall¹⁷

Indicator	R1	R2	R3	Total Actual, % of target
Number of heritage buildings repaired or restored	80%	86%	91%	157, 83%
Land area improved (Ha)	69%	98%	101%	131, 97%
Number of assets removed from the Heritage at Risk (HAR) register	89%	100%	100%	27, 93%
Commercial floor space brought back into active use	92%	95%	100%	17,996, 93%
Housing units brought back into active use	57%	91%	-	55, 71%
Number of additional or amended nationally listed heritage assets	135%	90%	100%	215, 108%
Number of additional locally listed heritage assets	103%	74%	-	463, 87%
Heritage related training sessions (hrs.) provided to volunteers	92%	101%	50%	888, 98%
Number of volunteers trained	118%	111%	68%	964, 112%
Heritage related training sessions (hrs.) provided to staff	87%	101%	90%	687, 91%

¹⁷ Note, the indicator ‘Number of references to the HAZ by specific decision-makers (press coverage)’ is not included in the table; there is no coverage of this indicator across the programme as data was not collected for this output. When the indicator was proposed, Historic England had access to a tool to monitor regular downloads in press / media hits etc. but latterly there was no access to the tool. This said, some analysis was conducted latterly using data collected by Vuelio between April 2021 and March 2024, which found that HAZ schemes were mentioned by news outlets on a monthly basis.

Number of staff trained	121%	104%	102%	923, 119%
Amount of public funding leveraged	106%	96%	97%	205.5m, 99%
Amount of private funding leveraged	88%	85%	100%	12.7m, 86%
Number of heritage guidance documents produced	99%	94%	100%	175, 97%
Number of HAZ dissemination events	129%	100%	90%	543, 106%

Source: SQW analysis of Historic England HAZ programme monitoring data

- 3.10** Performance was strongest against the indicator 'Number of staff trained', followed by 'Number of volunteers trained', indicating substantial delivery in capacity building - albeit the data do not provide any indication of the quality/impact of the training delivered. The 'Number of HAZ dissemination events' delivered was also high, also indicating evidence for capacity building, with knowledge delivered through wider engagement.
- 3.11** As noted above, performance was weakest against the 'Housing units brought back into active use', followed by 'Number of heritage buildings repaired or restored' (83% of forecast). Both these indicators relate to capital works for improving land and assets. These physical works-based activities are more complex to organise and take longer to achieve; the reasons why performance against these indicators was relatively low are explored in more detail later in the report. Performance was, however, stronger against 'Commercial floor space brought back into active use' (93% of forecast) which also falls under the property theme.
- 3.12** The indicators around additional/amended nationally listings and assets removed from the HAR register saw strong performance. However, there was weaker performance against additional locally listed heritage assets (87% of forecast), which was driven by the performance of Round 2 HAZs (74% of forecast). Performance on the extent of public funding leveraged was substantially better than that for private funding.
- 3.13** The data summarised in Table 3-1, above shows a notable level of variation in outputs between rounds; for example, Rounds 1 and 2 performed strongly against 'Heritage related training sessions (hrs.) provided to staff', whereas Round 3 delivered half of its total forecast. There was also considerable variation between the HAZs in each round. Further details are provided in Annex C. One observation is that the pattern appears to be that a few HAZs in each round achieved 100% across most of their targets while performance for the majority varied widely. For those indicators where overall performance was low, such as 'Housing units brought back into active use', it tended to be low across all the HAZs.

'Discretionary' indicators

- 3.14 Overall performance against the 'discretionary' indicators was stronger.** Nine of the nineteen targets were exceeded and at least 95% of forecast was achieved for a further three indicators. As with the 'core' indicators, performance was strongest against indicators associated with capacity building (see Table 3-2).

Table 3-2: Performance against 'discretionary' indicators by round and overall¹⁸

Indicator	R1	R2	R3	Total Actual, % of target
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¹⁸ Note, the indicator 'Energy savings achieved (requires a baseline)' is not included in the table because no HAZs forecast or delivered outputs against this indicator.

Number of projects/interventions designed to support the removal of an asset from the Heritage at Risk Register	143%	89%	100%	155, 114%
Number of heritage items repaired or restored	73%	111%	100%	55, 90%
Number of lost features being reconstructed	95%	100%	64%	87, 92%
Total land area protected	100%	100%	100%	880, 703, 100%
Number of updated list descriptions	83%	71%	100%	114, 82%
Number of Historic Environment Records updated	101%	98%	89%	12,217, 101%
Number of community events held per year	174%	155%	370%	760, 184%
Number of attendees to HAZ related events	9%	113%	135%	141,004, 29%
Number of volunteers involved in the HAZ	176%	119%	211%	3,379, 163%
Number of young people volunteering as part of the HAZ	86%	100%	336%	576, 99%
Number of heritage-related educational events	131%	99%	118%	360, 117%
Number of beneficiaries to heritage related educational event	236%	100%	260%	68,057, 147%
Number of apprenticeships provided	100%	100%	100%	50, 100%
Number of funding sources leveraged	111%	97%	117%	179, 102%
Donations received	97%	-	-	614,848, 97%
Formal engagement with heritage organisations	114%	115%	102%	323, 113%
Informal engagement with heritage organisations	82%	102%	102%	2019, 84%
Number of projects improving public access of heritage (including digital access)	93%	105%	107%	223, 98%

Source: SQW analysis of Historic England HAZ programme monitoring data

3.15 In terms of indicators related to capital works, Rounds 1 and 3 collectively performed strongly against the 'Number of projects/interventions designed to support the removal of an asset from the Heritage at Risk Register', whereas Round 2 delivered stronger performance against the indicators 'Number of heritage items repaired or restored' and 'Number of lost features being reconstructed'. Compared to Round 3, Rounds 1 and 2 performed poorly on updating list descriptions but were stronger at updating Historic Environment Records.

3.16 Overall, the highest achievement was against the indicator 'Number of community events held per year', whereas the 'Number of attendees to HAZ related events' indicator saw the weakest performance. Possible causes for these apparently conflicting output performances are that the events were difficult to attend due to COVID-19 restrictions, a mismatch between type of event and target group, poor marketing, a lack of interest and/or difficulties capturing accurate data on attendees. Whilst the HAZs had the opportunity to reprofile their forecasts it appears that Round 1 projects, (specifically Hull Old Town) did not use reprofiling to adjust their targets. Excluding Hull Old Town from the analysis, the performance for Round 1 and the programme overall would be 115%. More broadly, other indicators related to events (for heritage education, and the number of beneficiaries to these events) saw strong performance.

‘Local’ indicators

- 3.17** In addition to the national ‘local and ‘discretionary’ indicators, HAZs also reported on other local indicators (where applicable) based on HAZ Delivery Plans and coined by each HAZ. As the focus and activities for each HAZ varied, the local indicators were wide ranging, making it difficult to identify any common themes and/or groupings relevant at programme level. Although several common indicators could be identified, we found, unsurprisingly, that each HAZ had defined and interpreted this in its own context, making comparison difficult.
- 3.18** While it is not possible to aggregate targets/actuals for each of these common indicators as metrics, Table C-7 in Annex C provides some indication of performance for six common indicators. Where HAZs have more than one relevant indicator (for example, Rochdale has two linked indicators under ‘New housing units granted planning permission / delivered’), targets and performance to date have been aggregated for the purpose of reporting.
- 3.19** Performance was most consistent across ‘Number of website visits / hits’ and ‘Social media reach / engagement’, with all HAZs having nearly met or exceeded their targets. In contrast, delivery against ‘Number of new housing units granted planning permission / delivered’ varied considerably: Sutton delivered five-fold on the forecast for this indicator, while Dewsbury was not able to complete delivery during the lifetime of the HAZ (this is discussed further in Sections 4 and 5).

4. Reflections on design and delivery

Key messages

- The section summarises reflections on programme and HAZ level design and delivery, highlighting both the strengths and challenges encountered.
- In terms of programme design and delivery, Historic England regional teams effectively identified HAZ areas and partnered with local delivery teams, ensuring targeted funding. Central programme support and standardised resources were well-received, albeit there was limited central resource for programme management. Access to expert support from Historic England staff enabled high-quality and ambitious project outputs, while flexible responses allowed for adaptive local delivery. However, shifts in UK Government priorities, such as the focus on regeneration and housing, posed challenges, and the lack of a development period before HAZ delivery hindered planning and partnership testing.
- Key enablers in HAZ level design and delivery included the commitment and knowledge of project officers, strong local stakeholder relationships, effective community engagement, prioritising 'quick wins', and adaptability to changing contexts like the COVID-19 pandemic and inflationary pressures. However, challenges included insufficient early stakeholder engagement in delivery planning, the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, local contextual challenges, ineffective stakeholder communication, and high staff turnover within both HAZ teams and Historic England, which affected project continuity.

- 4.1** This section focuses on what worked well and less well in design and delivery for individual HAZs and the programme overall. This draws on the feedback from project leads, stakeholders, and case studies, and analysis of the e-survey responses and closedown reports.
- 4.2** To summarise the evidence a 'SWOT' analysis is presented below; this was initially developed at the Interim Evaluation stage and has been refined at this Final Evaluation stage. The main changes are including a lack of a development / lead in period and shifts in local and national priorities under weaknesses and under opportunities amending the UK Government priorities following the general election in July 2024 (e.g. the shift from 'levelling up' to 'regional growth').

Figure 4-1: ‘SWOT’ analysis: programme design and delivery

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity, knowledge and commitment of project officers Specialist expertise and focus on historic environment gave distinctive perspective, potential to add value to other agencies Strong collaborative working, and stakeholder buy-in at a local level Engaged community organisations enabled the delivery of activities Flexibility and adaptability in a changing context (at a HAZ and programme level) The six-month close down period maximised the delivery period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of development / lead in period prior to delivery Shifts in local and UK Government priorities were challenging (at a programme and HAZ level) Some issues with stakeholder engagement and communication Lack of staff continuity and capacity challenges (at a HAZ and programme level) Administrative and financial challenges (e.g. applying separately for each HE grant) Highly ambitious programme scope given the delivery timescales Challenges with retrofitting administrative tools/processes
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong alignment with current UK Government strategic priorities (e.g. regional growth and resilience) Availability of funding at a local level to support ongoing activity (e.g. National Lottery Heritage Fund, Community Ownership Fund, UKSPF) Ongoing need for intervention to preserve the historic environment and reverse decades of economic and commercial decline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of local capacity / buy-in / resources to continue, and build on, activity post-HAZ National and local government budgetary pressures and implications on the availability of funding for localities and Historic England Local contextual challenges (e.g. viability of local residential and commercial property markets) Wider social, economic, political factors (e.g. inflationary pressures, change in strategic priorities)

Source: SQW. Note opportunities and threats relate to the external environment.

Programme design and delivery

4.3 Six key factors that worked well in programme design and delivery have been identified from the evidence:

1. **Historic England regional teams** led on the process of identifying HAZ areas and worked in partnership with areas to develop their delivery plans. This helped to ensure that Historic England funding was targeted effectively at areas that would benefit from support.
2. The **support from the central programme team and use of standardised resources** was well-received by HAZ leads and local delivery partners. The practical support from the central programme team and Historic England regional business support teams was considered instrumental enabling effective delivery. The development of standard templates such as the closedown reports and monitoring framework was deemed to be more efficient than each HAZ developing such resources.

3. Linked to the above, the programme offered HAZs access to the **expert support and guidance of Historic England research staff** which was effective in delivering high-quality outputs and allowing projects to be more ambitious.
4. The **programme facilitated flexible local responses and changes to activity** throughout delivery. This flexibly allowed HAZs (within reason) to adapt to changes, whether that be at a local level such as changes in local authority commitment to a project, or at broader level, such as shifts in the macro-environment. It also meant that some HAZs were able to extend the delivery of grant schemes (e.g. PSiCA) beyond the lifetime of the HAZ.
5. **The design was crucial in encouraging partnership working.** Programme design necessitated that HAZs were delivered by a local authority in partnership with Historic England and other relevant organisations locally, which often led to enhanced partnership working in HAZ areas.
6. The **six-month close-down period enabled more activities to be completed.** It also afforded HAZs additional time to collate information on outputs and outcomes to inform final closedown reports. The addition of close-down period was a key learning applied within the programme's lifetime.

4.4 Eight key factors that worked less well in programme design and delivery have been identified from the evidence:

1. The **need for Historic England to respond to shifts in UK Government priorities** was challenging for both programme design and delivery. For example, the shift in focus to regeneration, and specifically housing, in Round 2, resulted in a broadening of the programme remit and less focus on the original programme objectives. In practice, it was challenging for HAZs to deliver housing outcomes within the timescales and parameters of the programme.
2. There was **no lead in / development period prior to delivery of the HAZs.** A development period (for example, of six months) would allow for greater planning time, earlier activities such as listing (which cannot take place simultaneously to capital works), and momentum building in advance of the formal start date. It would also provide an opportunity to develop and test partnership working, and areas could drop out of the programme if partnership arrangements were deemed ineffective.
3. **The aim of the programme** to use the historic environment as a catalyst for local economic growth **was deemed to be highly ambitious** given delivery timescales and the scale of change required in some areas. A particular challenge on timing was this misalignment between programme and grant timescales, with some HAZs having ongoing Historic England grants (e.g. PSiCA grants) at the point of HAZ closure.
4. The programme **used existing grant schemes** delivered by the regional teams which was considered a **resource intensive** approach by both internal and external consultees. There was some misunderstanding that becoming a HAZ would provide the area with access to a guaranteed, single pot of grant funding for project delivery, but in practice, each HAZ had to apply separately for each grant. This was administratively demanding (for both HAZs and Historic England) and sometimes delayed project delivery. Monitoring processes were also complicated by this approach as Historic England had to undertake additional financial checks for each HAZ.

5. Linked to the above, having **multiple grants resulted in some inflexibility**, as money could not easily be transferred between projects. Any changes required a formal process where the funding offer was decreased under one grant in order to increase the offer under another grant. Having a single grant offer, similar to the HSHAZ programme, was considered a more flexible and efficient approach.
6. **Capacity challenges within Historic England's research team** resulted in some HAZs using external consultants for some research projects. It was reported that the work delivered was of poor quality and, in some cases, the work had to be repeated by Historic England which caused delays.
7. There was **limited central resource for programme management**. At the start of delivery, the central programme management team comprised of a programme manager only. At the same time, programme delivery/governance processes were being developed in real time. Over time capacity increased (at one point there were two additional posts), but scope remained for greater resource.
8. **Monitoring and reporting processes were, at times considered resource intensive**. The programme was new and experimental for Historic England, and as expected management mechanisms and processes evolved over time. However, this led to challenges with retrofitting administrative tools/processes while delivery was ongoing. Specifically in relation to monitoring, there could have been greater clarity over the definition of some indicators and the quarterly monitoring spreadsheet was large and could have been improved by greater automation (e.g. use of formulae and drop-down lists).

HAZ level design and delivery

- 4.5 Analysis of primary and secondary data identified factors in the design and delivery of individual HAZs that worked well, and also some challenges. These are discussed in turn below.
- 4.6 The following factors in HAZ level design and delivery have been identified as key enablers:
 - **The capacity, knowledge and commitment of project officers.** It was frequently reported by HAZ leads, and in the case study research, that project officers were instrumental in the delivery of HAZs. Where they were most effective, project officers were able to ensure buy-in and build relationships with key stakeholders, ensure clarity around HAZ activities and aims, and drive activity forward.
 - **Collaborative working and stakeholder buy-in.** Developing strong working relationships with key local stakeholders (including community groups and property owners) was a significant enabler for many HAZs given activities often relied upon funding and/or input from stakeholders. Pre-existing relationships provided a strong foundation for delivery, whereas significant time and resources were required in HAZs involving new partnerships. Either way it was considered important that the project officer engaged local stakeholders from the outset to ensure buy-in from the early stages of delivery.
 - **Community engagement.** Community engagement, as well as being a project deliverable, acted as a significant enabler of other activities. Community groups were able to provide specific subject matter insight and local context, provide a gateway for engagement with the wider community, and support in the delivery of research and community engagement activities.

- **Prioritising ‘quick wins’ or profile building activity.** Where HAZs prioritised projects which offered some ‘quick wins’ and opportunities for publicity, this helped to build momentum. These raised the profile of HAZs, demonstrating their value to local communities and stakeholders, and helped bring about – or intensify – community engagement and buy-in from local stakeholders. In Sutton, for example, revised listings early in delivery publicised the role of the HAZ, and helped secure engagement from wider stakeholders in subsequent activities (see quote below).
- **Flexibility and adaptability in a changing context.** The ability of HAZs to adapt their projects and activities in response to local and wider contextual changes – particularly the COVID-19 pandemic and inflationary pressures - was critical for maintaining delivery.
 - **Both projects and activities had to be changed substantially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Many community engagement activities had to be adapted to take account of restrictions on inter-person interaction, usually through substituting virtual delivery. This was more likely to be successful where the key players were already known to one another, and there were also some really creative responses: for example, North Lowestoft HAZ oversaw the creation of a video poem with the community, featuring local people and local independent businesses.
 - **Inflationary pressures also required HAZs to adapt:** the detrimental impact of high inflation on the costs of building and physical renovation, made some projects financially unviable. In response, some HAZs redeployed resources committed to capital projects across other activities such as research and community engagement. However, other HAZs delayed or deferred capital projects meaning that delivery was ongoing at the end of the programme and/or delivery was expected in future providing planning consent was secured and the necessary funding was available.

4.7 A range of quotes from consultations and closedown reports are presented below to illustrate some of the key enablers.

The importance of a dedicated and experienced project officer at the lead partner has again been highlighted the enormous benefit not just in running a scheme but in their ability to reach out within the organization and secure unexpected benefits and to liaise between various departments and parties.

Walworth closedown report

“Another major success is the constant engagement by the council HAZ project officer about the value of the docks, heritage events, meetings with tenants etc... five years ago often the view that is should be knocked down, but perceptions have since changed”.

Grimsby case study consultee

The revisions to the listings helped raise the profile of the scheme and the importance of Sutton’s heritage at an early stage of HAZ activity. The upgraded Baptist Church and St Nicholas churches became very engaged as part of the history festival. Also the highlighting of the Cockerel Signpost listing and its subsequent restoration were emblematic of Sutton’s significance as a historic crossroads and as a statement of local pride.

Sutton closedown report

Throughout the programme, whilst some projects were stood down, many others merged, evolved and grew to ensure maximum transformational benefit and value for money. One key example of the above is the evolution of the Developer Toolkit into an emerging series of repair maintenance guides and a

forthcoming revised supplementary Planning Document for shopfronts. This demonstrates the benefits of the flexibility of the HAZ programme in delivery, whilst being representative of the support of Historic England in accommodating changes to the Delivery Plan throughout to take account of significant events, sectoral funding challenges and local needs/circumstances to achieve the best outcomes.

Rochdale closedown report

4.8 The following factors in HAZ level design and delivery have been identified as key challenges:

- **Delivery plans had to be developed prior to relationships being established and/or strengthened between partners.** In most cases, delivery plans were designed without extensive stakeholder engagement which meant that when it came to delivery, some projects were not viable (within the parameters of the programme). It was suggested by several HAZ leads, that a scoping phase would have facilitated earlier relationship building and better understanding of the local context.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic.** The COVID-19 pandemic was the predominant external factor that affected the delivery of HAZs, with most HAZs reporting that the pandemic had impacted delivery to some extent. For many, this meant community engagement activities were more difficult and could not be completed in-person as originally planned. Engagement activities were often adapted to online delivery, but some feedback suggests this mode of delivery might not have been as impactful as in-person sessions and certain groups (e.g. those without the internet or are digitally illiterate) may have been excluded from engaging. Other aspects of were also affected by COVID-19, including capital works and research. Lockdown measures limited on-site access and led to large backlogs and delays. This delayed the completion of this activity, and in some cases limited the amount of capital work and research that could be completed overall. Furthermore, the economic instability caused by the pandemic meant that some property owners could no longer commit the required match funding to capital projects, meaning they did not progress as planned (for example, see the Weston-super-Mare case study). Understandably, COVID-19 also changed the priorities of key stakeholders, notably local authorities, thereby reducing their capacity to engage with, and complete, projects.
- **Local contextual challenges.** A range of local challenges were often encountered during the delivery of HAZs. Challenges included the **availability of local authority resources and capacity**: in several areas, this was lower than anticipated, limiting their ability to engage effectively with the HAZ. Understanding, awareness and skills relating to the historic environment were often lacking or at a low level, both in local authorities and other local stakeholders. Other challenges included **low property values** which caused some reluctance amongst property owners to invest in repairs, particularly when using traditional materials and techniques which are often more costly. In some cases, HAZ leads also reported **difficulties in finding adequately skilled contractors** to complete capital works using sympathetic materials and techniques; this was a particular issue in rural areas where the pool of contractors was more limited.
- **Stakeholder engagement and communication.** Ineffective stakeholder engagement / partnership working was a key challenge for some HAZs. Factors that created barriers to stakeholder engagement included differing priorities among stakeholders: for example, some local authorities did not see the value in, or in some cases actively opposed, listing as an activity. They saw this as a constraint on achieving property re-use, despite Historic England emphasising the importance of protecting buildings, and of encouraging new, sustainable, uses. In another example, delivery plans for the PSiCA were impacted because two key property owners in the village did not engage with the scheme, and it was reported that the HAZ was unable to deliver all the planned projects. Furthermore,

HAZs were sometimes considered a lesser priority when local authorities were successful in bidding for other, often more sizeable, funding streams (e.g. Towns Fund, Levelling Up Fund, Future High Streets Fund). In some cases, the availability of other funding also constrained the extent to which Historic England could influence activity in the area.

- **Lack of staff continuity and capacity.** Internal and external changes in staff affected project continuity and progress:
 - The **turnover of project officers** was especially disruptive for HAZs given their crucial role in delivery (see above). Many HAZs had several project officers, and some reported ineffective handovers between officers, leading to a loss of momentum.
 - Similarly, **staff turnover within Historic England** meant that some leads inherited HAZs without an effective handover. There was also a high turnover of Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) during delivery which feedback suggests had a detrimental impact on local relationships.
 - **Local authorities also experienced turnover of other key staff members and were often capacity constrained** (juggling HAZ with multiple other programmes). A lack of heritage knowledge and skills within local authorities was also a challenge. The lack of capacity, expertise and/or buy in at a local level often resulted in extra demands on Historic England to support with delivery. In some instances, HAZ leads lacked the additional time and/or resources resulting in pressures on their workloads.

4.9 A range of quotes from the consultations and closedown reports are presented below to illustrate some of the key challenges.

Restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic caused some events to be either postponed or cancelled and, as a result, it is intended for further work to be completed for this project beyond the end of the HAZs lifetime.

Coventry closedown report

There is a perception from property owners that accessing North Lowestoft HAZ funding would be more expensive and time consuming, which has affected the eagerness of some applicants to sign up to the scheme. There is some merit to this perception, with some of the traditional materials having higher costs than their more modern counterparts.

North Lowestoft closedown report

“The HAZ underestimated the sheer amount of poverty and the ability of owners to contribute to grant scheme. It has been difficult to get people to take on the money. We have really had to battle against regional decline”.

Historic England HAZ lead

The difficulties that arose from the disagreements over the Listing Review Project caused problems for the delivery of multiple HAZ projects and delivered lessons learned in terms of resolving conflict and finding different approaches. It was impossible to predict, however, as elected representatives amended their priorities on the city centre in the face of potential investment from a property developer.

Coventry closedown report

“Our experience in the region has always been that your first year/18 months is about engagement, and that’s how delivery happens but they didn’t do that, they were faced with community and stakeholder

scepticism about the value of the HAZ...there was a lot of building of trust and demonstrating through doing before you got the buy in".

Historic England HAZ lead

The HAZ programme was without a project manager for the first 18 months. Existing members of staff did their best to cover the role, but it was not possible to cover it to the equivalent level of a full-time member of staff. This was exacerbated by the first project manager to be recruited leaving after 2 years and there was a further gap of around six months before another project manager was able to start in post...it meant that there were gaps in managing the programme, which necessarily trimmed what it was realistically possible to deliver.

King's Lynn closedown report

Due to restructures at both Historic England and the council many of the initial key players, project sponsors and supporters of the project departed soon after the project began. This impacted on project progress and decision making, but was remedied with the appointment of new Historic England HAZ leads and the return of the TDC Regeneration Director in 2019.

Ramsgate closedown report

5. Outcome and Impacts

Key messages

- Most outcomes expected by this stage have now occurred. The available evidence strongly suggests that outcomes around updated records of the historic environment, enhanced understanding of heritage/heritage assets, improved partnership working, and enhanced local/regional capacity have been realised.
- There is limited or no evidence of some outcomes mainly associated with capital works: improved use of the historic environment, increased local housing, reduced vacancy rates, and increased footfall.
- It is not unexpected that evidence towards intended impacts is more limited. However, there is strong evidence that HAZ areas have leveraged further public and private investment following programme completion (albeit attributing this follow-on investment to the programme is challenging).

5.1 This section presents evidence on the outcomes of the programme (including unexpected outcomes) and consequent impacts, based on the primary research, monitoring data and closedown reports. The evidence is categorised and structured as per the logic model: research, capital works, and community and engagement outcomes.

Outcomes

Research

5.2 Enhanced understanding of heritage assets can be evidenced by the body of research that was produced during the programme. As set out above, 175 heritage guidance documents were produced by the HAZs, such as historic area assessments, conservation area appraisals and management strategies, design briefs and masterplans. This research has helped areas to better understand their local heritage assets, and provides a **crucial evidence base to inform their future reuse**.

5.3 In some cases, there is already evidence that the research is informing local regeneration of the historic environment, notably, where guidance and strategy documents informed by the research have been adopted by local authorities and/or the research has directly informed subsequent funding bids. Evidence of this was explored through the case studies, as illustrated by the case study example below.

Case study example: Weston-super-Mare

Research and strategy work completed both during and after the HAZ will inform the use and management of heritage in future. The Place Making Strategy produced by North Somerset Council was a particularly significant document, setting out a ten-year vision and programme of activity, which includes a strong emphasis on Weston's architectural heritage. Feedback from the consultations suggests that the Strategy played an important role in securing further funding (e.g. HSHAZ, Levelling Up Funding) in part because it provided the policy mandate.

5.4 Further examples from the closedown reports of the research informing funding bids and/or the conservation of the historic environment are presented below.

The Historic Area Assessment has informed the council's work on the Sutton Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide, Conservation Area Appraisal and extension and also the projects for Reopening High Streets Safely Fund. The research has underpinned these documents and secured a 1.8ha extension to the Town Centre conservation area.

Sutton closedown report

Evidence from three HAZ research reports was used to secure £25m of Towns fund money to help with developing new public realm and a creative hub in King's Lynn.

King's Lynn closedown report

5.5 The monitoring data and qualitative feedback provides strong evidence that the **National Heritage List for England (NHLE)**¹⁹ has been updated/enhanced through the programme, thereby leading to a **more comprehensive record of the historic environment** across the HAZ areas. During the lifetime of the programme, the HAZs recorded a total of 215 additional or amended nationally listed heritage assets. An array of different assets were listed, from houses and commercial buildings to tombs/gravestones and bridges. Some assets had their listing status upgraded, for example, Dewsbury Town Hall, and the Baptist Church and St Nicholas Church (both in Sutton) were all upgraded from Grade II to Grade II*.

5.6 The charts below show the aggregate number of new assets listed and listings amended on the NHLE before and during Rounds 1, 2 and 3 of the programme. Across the 18 Round 1 and 2 HAZ geographies, there was a marked increase in the number of listings amended and new assets listed during the programme period²⁰, compared with activity in the years preceding the programme. The trend was less clear during the Round 3 delivery period which is likely to be explained by the small number of HAZs (two) in the round. During the programme's lifetime, a total of 93 additional assets were listed, and 138 listings were updated: Figure 5-1 shows the scale of increased activity graphically.²¹²²

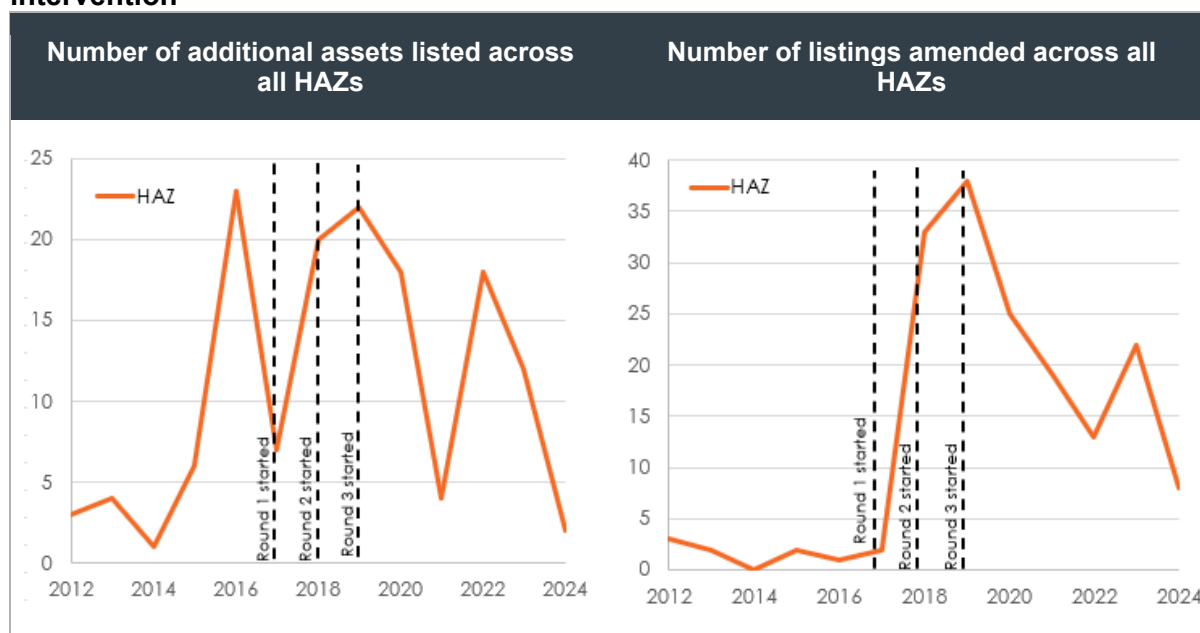
¹⁹ The NHLE is the only official, up to date, register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England - listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields. It is maintained by Historic England.

²⁰ Note, the programme period includes the 6 month closedown period.

²¹ Note it is not clear why these figures differ from those in the monitoring data (i.e. 215), but this may in part be explained by some inaccurate recording of outputs.

²² Note, the reason for the spike in additional listed assets in 2016 is not known. However, the launch of 'Enriching the list' by Historic England in June 2016 may have had an influence.

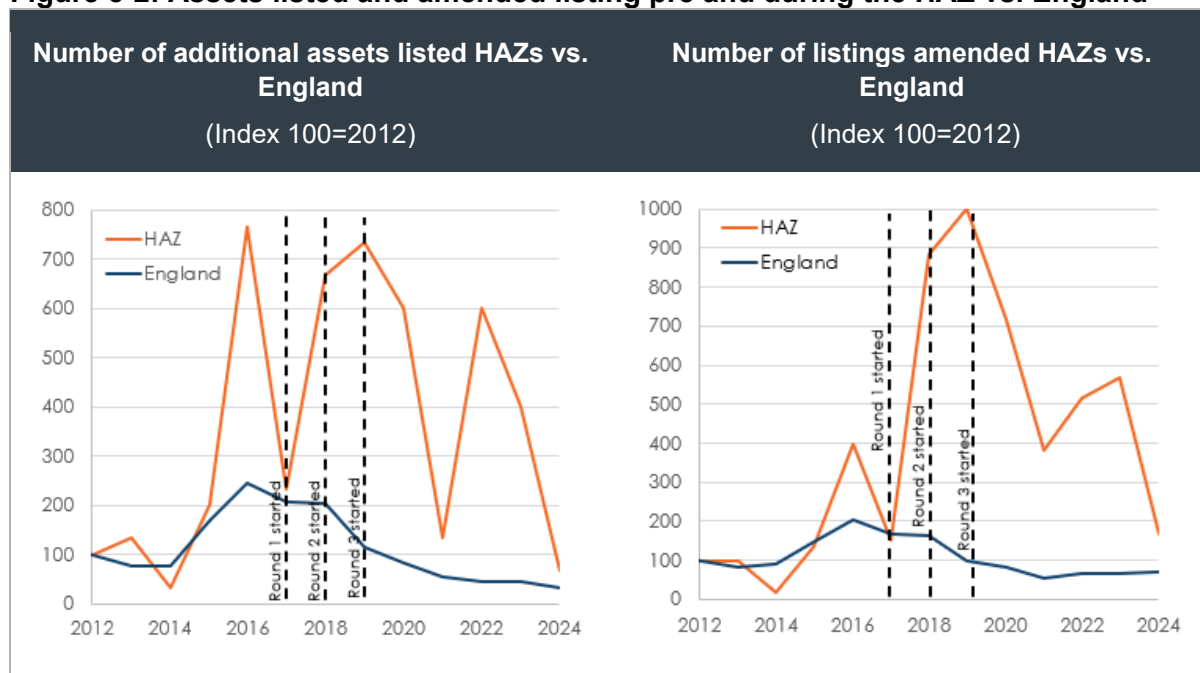
Figure 5-1: Assets in HAZ areas listed and amended listings before and during the intervention



Source: SQW analysis of NHLE data (October 2024) and HAZ GIS shapefiles.

- 5.7** We also explored the extent to which the trends observed across the HAZ areas aligned with national trends. As shown in the charts below, there was a notable difference in trends in the number of new assets listed / listings amended across the HAZs areas and England as whole. The increase in HAZ areas was not matched nationally which would indicate that the outcome around updating / enhancing the NHLE can be attributed, at least in part, to the programme.

Figure 5-2: Assets listed and amended listing pre and during the HAZ vs. England²³



Source: SQW analysis of NHLE data (October 2024) and HAZ GIS shapefiles.

²³ Indexation has been used to allow comparison overtime between the HAZ geographies and England given the difference in scale.

- 5.8** Local lists were also updated during the programme, with 463 additional locally listed heritage assets across Rounds 1 and 2.²⁴ Local lists are one way in which local heritage can be formally identified, as part of the wider range of designation, so that their significance can be taken into account in planning applications affecting the building or site or its setting. They differ from the NHLE which is the official list of all nationally-protected buildings and assets in England. Some HAZs engaged the local community in the listing process, which supports other benefits around enhanced understanding of, and participation in, the historic environment. For example, as explored in the Walworth case study, a total of 64 assets in the HAZ area were listed locally, following a series of consultation workshops with the Walworth Society and local residents.

Capital works

- 5.9** Through capital works to repair, restore, convert, and/or expand buildings the **risk to the historic environment has been reduced**. Across the HAZs a myriad of historic assets were repaired / restored; consequently, 27 assets were removed from the HAR register over the course of the programme.

[The] Grade I listed Holy Trinity church being rescued and removed from the Heritage at Risk Register. Funding has transformed the church into Seventeen Nineteen a new heritage, learning and cultural venue for the city.

Sunderland closedown report

Former Police Barracks, Grade II*, previously derelict and on 'Heritage at Risk' register, renovated to conservation standards and now in use as Army Sailing Association Offshore Centre. Removed from 'Heritage at Risk' Register.

Gosport closedown report

²⁴ Round 3 HAZs did not record any locally listed heritage assets.

Figure 5-3: Grade I listed Holy Trinity church pre- (left) and post-repairs (right) to remove it from the HAR, Sunderland



Source: Sunderland HAZ closedown report

- 5.10** Not all areas saw a reduction in ‘at risk’ buildings, for example, North Lowestoft saw an increase in buildings identified as at risk (from 12 to 21 buildings), although it was noted that many of these could be removed from the register through minor intervention. Swindon expected to remove the Mechanics Institute building from the HAR register, however, this was not realistic within the time period of the HAZ given the complexities of the site; this said, progress has been made towards a solution (see Annex E).
- 5.11** Furthermore, as set out in Section 4, factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, inflationary pressures, and stakeholder engagement meant that capital works were challenging for many HAZs. This caused some projects to be delayed and cancelled, so evidence of reduced risk to the historic environment was limited in some areas. In some cases, capital works were ongoing at the end of the programme – often due to delays and/or funding timescales - thus (further) benefits were expected in future. This was the case for the Stockton and Darlington Railway HAZ where capital works have continued post-HAZ (see case study box below).

Case study example: Stockton and Darlington Railway

Repairs to assets including Shildon Coal Drops and Gaunless Bridge were completed after the HAZ. The restoration of heritage assets around Shildon Coal Drops, included converting a heritage building into a community centre. The reconstruction of the Gaunless Bridge in Durham will become part of the walking and cycling route. Other capital works which have been delivered post-HAZ include increasing the capacity of the Locomotion Museum in Shildon, expanding the walking and cycling route along the railway line, and remodelling the Hope Town museum in Darlington (including restoration of the Goods Shed into a café and gift shop).

5.12 The capital works supported by the programme have led to an **increase in commercial and residential space in the HAZ areas**. In aggregate c. 18k sqm of commercial floor space and 55 residential units were brought back into active use during the programme.

5.13 Examples of **commercial space** created include: in Sunderland the ground floors of several buildings including the Mackie's and Hutchinson's buildings were converted (with the conversion of the upper floors ongoing) and had already attracted new independent businesses to the area; Rochdale brought back into use c.2,900 sqm of floorspace as a result of new business openings, expansion to upper floors and conversion of buildings to new uses; and Swindon redeveloped 1,124 sqm of the Carriage Works which has attracted new organisations to the town (see Annex E). The role of Historic England varied here, but in the case of the Carriage Works in Swindon, Historic England funded external repairs with the internal works funded by Getting Britain Building monies.

5.14 Examples of **residential space** created include: in Grimsby the vacant former 'Cooperage' was converted into 22 apartments (using private investment, but utilising HAZ funded research); in Nottingham c. 6,200 sqm of residential space was brought back into use; and in Coventry the Grade I listed Cook Street and Swanswell Gates were part of an initiative to repair the historic fabric and then retrofit small residential units in each for the purpose of short-stay visitor lets.

Case study example: Hull Old Town

In addition to reducing/avoiding risk to the historic environment, capital works have also led to an increase in the availability of commercial space in Hull Old Town, bringing 3,532 sqm of commercial floorspace back into active use. This includes major sites such as the ex-HSBC building on Whitefriargate, which is now occupied, and the former Marks & Spencer site, which remains vacant.

5.15 However, for some HAZs capital works were not delivered as planned (see Section 4 for further details), and these outcomes (i.e. increased local housing and increased commercial space) did not materialise as anticipated. The delivery of housing units was particularly affected, for example Dewsbury cancelled their housing-led regeneration project after plans were found to be unviable (due to low property prices and low levels of private investment) without significant public subsidy. In Weston-super-Mare, the 'living above the shop' initiative was less successful than hoped due to the impact of COVID-19, the increase in development costs and the reluctance of property owners to invest during a period of instability (see the case study in Annex E).

5.16 In addition to creating new commercial and residential space, many projects also sought explicitly to **improve the leisure and visitor offer locally** through the restoration and redevelopment of heritage assets and the promotion of local heritage. Examples include.

- The transformation of Draper's Hall into an event, concert, and music education space and Lychgate Cottages into boutique holiday lets (now providing income for Historic Coventry Trust) in Coventry.
- In North Lowestoft, Ness Park was completed in 2020 providing a new visitor destination that celebrates the culture and heritage of its location, through landscaping, play area and on-site digital activity. It has transformed a semi-derelict green space and seafront promenade into an events and cultural heritage space.
- Numerous HAZs created heritage trails and/or audio tours including King's Lynn, Grimsby, Bishop Auckland, Rochdale, Walworth, and Swindon to guide visitors around key historic sites.
- In Bishop Auckland, as well as their HAZ webpage, Durham County Council also published a visitor website to support tourism growth, and an [audio tour](#) with [walking Heritage Trail](#).
- A new heritage trail was created by King's Lynn Civic Society and funded by the HAZ, focused on the theme of pilgrimage to guide people around medieval King's Lynn (including three medieval churches, the unique Red Mount Chapel, and the Greyfriars Tower).

5.17 More broadly, the closedown reports highlight that visual improvements to the historic environment are also important for improving perceptions of the local visitor offer. For example, Appleby restored and repaired a key retail site at the town's entrance to improve visitors' initial impressions of the town. In Rochdale, the 'showpiece' HAZ project was the transformation of a block of 14 properties located in a prominent corner location overlooking the official centre marker of the town (see Figure 5-4).

Figure 5-4: Drake Street Property Improvement Scheme, Rochdale HAZ



July 2023



Source: Historic England, Rochdale closedown report

- 5.18** Linked to this, the **public realm has been enhanced in some HAZ areas** primarily through activity to repair (the facades) of historic buildings/assets, but also improvements to public spaces such as parks and pedestrian/cycling routes. Such improvements were seen in Swindon as summarised in the case study box below.

Case study example: Swindon

The Swindon HAZ public realm involved enhancements to two pedestrian / cycling routes including two tunnels under the railway, and improvements to Great Western Railway Park including new street furniture, reinstatement of the flower beds, and a new blossom circle planted on the footprint of the historic bandstand. The blossom circle was funded by the National Trust; this investment was unlocked by the HAZ. Consultation feedback suggests use of the park has increased following the improvements and the investment has also helped to alleviate the park's negative reputation.

"The works that have been carried out have changed the streets from run down in appearance... to somewhere that is considered a great asset to [HAZ area]. The buildings have been restored to their traditional Victorian appearance and now provide a great visual enhancement to the character and appearance of that area."

Survey respondent

- 5.19** Documents such as a town centre public realm guide and shop front design guides were developed to support public realm improvements, and these are expected to guide future redevelopment in their areas. For example, in Stoke-on-Trent, the introduction of a heritage colour scheme for shopfronts and artists' advice on improving signage and shopfronts was used to improve the appearance of buildings in Longton Town Centre.
- 5.20** Restoring heritage assets and bringing them back into productive use has in turn **improved access to the historic environment**. Assessing whether improved access has translated into **improved use** of the historic environment is more challenging due to a lack of quantifiable data on usage across each HAZ. However, the closedown reports do provide some evidence of improved use, for example, where repaired commercial units are now occupied by new tenants or buildings are now being used to host events.
- 5.21** **Evidence to suggest that the programme has reduced vacancy rates in the HAZ areas is more limited.** As mentioned in Section 2, analysis of CoStar data is inconclusive: half of markets experienced an increase in vacancy rates between the baseline year and 2023, whilst half experienced a decrease in vacancy rates. Many markets also experienced considerable

fluctuation in vacancy rates over the period. However, it is important to recognise the limitations of the CoStar data, notably the difference between the HAZ and CoStar geographies (with the former often considerably smaller) and the partial coverage of property transactions. Some closedown reports provided evidence to suggest activities may support a reduction in vacancy rates locally. These include Grimsby HAZ which reported new businesses moving into formerly vacant units within the Kasbah following the repair/renovation of 11 buildings and Sunderland HAZ which saw eight new businesses operating in previously vacant commercial spaces. Bishop Auckland reported the successful reuse of some vacant units, however, overall vacancy rates increased as explained in the excerpt below.

The HAZ vacancy rate began at 24.4% and the initial ambition was to reduce it to 16%, i.e. closer to the national average at the time. This was based mainly on hope and proved hugely ambitious in the face of strategic factors recognised as causing town centre vacancy: growing online and out-of-town retail, business rates, increased cost of living, Covid, etc. The rate at the end of the HAZ was 27.7%, meaning net vacancy increased by 3.3 percentage points.²⁵

Bishop Auckland closedown report

- 5.22** Further, there is **no evidence at this final evaluation stage to suggest that the programme has increased footfall in the HAZ areas**. This is due to the absence of footfall data. Whilst it is possible that some areas may have sought to collect footfall data post-HAZ, any locally collected data was not shared with the evaluation team.

Community and engagement

- 5.23** A key outcome of the programme has been **improved partnership working between local stakeholders**. HAZs were delivered by local authorities in partnership with a range of stakeholders. Stakeholder involvement varied across the HAZs, but amongst the survey respondents, involvement in the design or delivery of community engagement activities (60%), the planning or design of the HAZ (57%), project management or governance (54%), and stakeholder management and general communications (49%) were most commonly reported. The majority of survey respondents (95%) have already achieved, or expect to achieve in future, improved partnership working with local stakeholders. There was an expectation that this more collaborative approach will support the management of heritage assets in future (see Annex D).

“We have a strong partnership developed for the care, protection and promotion of [HAZ area's] rich and diverse heritage.”

Survey respondent

²⁵ For context, in Q4 2023, the average UK vacancy rate was 2.88% for retail, 7.90% for office space, and 3.98% for industrial space (Costar, 2023).

Case study example: Grimsby

Consultees reported that prior to the HAZ relationships between local partners relating to the conservation and regeneration of heritage assets had been suboptimal. The HAZ significantly improved partnership working between local stakeholders. This includes the relationship between the local authority, Associated British Ports, and local heritage organisations such as the Ice Factory Preservation Trust. The shift in approach towards heritage management which occurred as a result of the HAZ, as well as cooperative working between stakeholders over the duration of the HAZ, has considerably improved relationships between stakeholders, which consultees were confident would be maintained into the future.

5.24 Whilst partnership working was challenging at times (see Section 4), **there have been successes in building relationships between local authorities, stakeholders and/or the wider community.** HAZ boards or advisory groups often played an important role in bringing stakeholders together to collaborate on a common cause. For example, in Appleby, the Historic England lead cited the building of strong relationships between the town council, the district council and residents as a key achievement, whilst Ramsgate reported that a key success was partnership working with the community (e.g. The Ramsgate Society) to secure project funding. The ‘Bottle Oven Owners’ Club’ formed during the Stoke-on-Trent HAZ included members from 24 of the 29 bottle oven sites, creating opportunities to work collaboratively to care for and promote the bottle ovens.

5.25 The programme has also enabled **Historic England to improve its relationships with local authorities and wider stakeholders.** For example, Historic England had not previously collaborated with Rochdale Borough Council, but through the HAZ they have developed a strong relationship and continue to communicate with the conservation team regarding future projects. In Coventry, Historic England nurtured a strong relationship with Coventry Historic Trust to drive the HAZ forward. Stakeholders explained that the HAZ programme provided a new mechanism for Historic England to engage more collaboratively with local authorities which has led to improved partnership working.

5.26 HAZ leads reported that **relationships between Historic England and local authorities have been maintained in most areas:** in 13 HAZ areas (covered by the interviews) relationships have been sustained following the formal completion of the HAZ.²⁶ The only area where there was some uncertainty over relationships being sustained was Kings Lynn.²⁷ Historic England have continued to support research, input into strategy work, and support capital projects. Feedback indicates that enhanced focus on heritage-led regeneration within local authorities (owing to the HAZ programme) has encouraged continued engagement between Historic England and local authorities.

“We still have a steering group covering both of the HAZs comprising us, the local authority planning authority, the town council, and local BID – Lowestoft Vision – and the building preservation trust”.

Historic England HAZ lead

²⁶ These were: Appleby, Bishop Aukland, Grimsby, Hull, Lowestoft, Ramsgate, Rochdale, Stockton and Darlington Railway, Stoke on Trent, Sunderland, Walworth, Weston-super-Mare. Note, at the time of the fieldwork with Round 3 HAZ leads, delivery was ongoing, therefore it was too early to comment on the longevity of relationships.

²⁷ This is because the Historic England interviewee had stopped being the lead during the latter phases of delivery.

5.27 The case studies provide additional insight into the longevity of enhanced partnership working. In some areas, such as Walworth, the ongoing PSiCA (which is due to complete at the end of 2024), has necessitated continued partnership working. In Stockton and Darlington, partners have continued to deliver activity post-HAZ, including numerous capital projects as set out above. In Hull, improved partnership working between the two main property owners and the council has continued, with all three stakeholders working on projects, including a project to brand Whitefriargate to capitalise on the progress made during the HAZ.

5.28 Another anticipated outcome of the programme was increased local participation in the historic environment. Over three quarters (77%) of survey respondents reported increased use of / participation in the historic environment due to their involvement in the HAZ. A further five respondents expected to realise this benefit in future.

5.29 The programme monitoring data also indicates strong participation over the programme lifetime with around 141k people attending HAZ related events.²⁸ Whilst this figure was lower than forecast (as discussed in Section 3), heritage-related events (including open days and festivals) were considered highly successful by Historic England in engaging the local community and raising awareness of “the power of heritage in these places”. Beyond events, a range of other forms of activity also sought to increase local participation in the historic environment: examples are given below.

- Engaging children to develop an understanding of their local heritage and its significance through Heritage Schools (see Section 3). For example, in Dewsbury, Heritage Schools worked with 27 schools to support teachers in learning more about their town’s heritage. It resulted in the creation of high quality learning resources alongside bespoke, localised curriculum, including a new child friendly town trail for both school and general public use.
- Engaging local history groups to produce podcasts on the history of Lowestoft.
- Bishop Auckland HAZ was supported by the local community radio station, Bishop FM 105.9, which aired hours of coverage linked to the Heritage Festivals (Slide 51), including six episodes (two seasons) of a bespoke programme called ‘The Heritage Show’.
- As part of King’s Lynn HAZ, a student youth group used the research undertaken on the Chapel Street area to create a community history video about the site. The group researched, wrote, directed, filmed and edited the film themselves. The video created was shown before films at a local cinema for a dedicated period with the intention of increasing the local community’s understanding of the history of the site and its potential to be a residential site again.
- The creation of heritage trails (mentioned above), which encouraged locals to engage more with the history of their area as well as supporting tourism.

5.30 The programme exceeded its forecast number of volunteers engaged. In aggregate, 3,379 volunteers engaged in the delivery of the HAZs. The roles of volunteers varied, but included participating in boards/advisory boards, supporting with the delivery of events, and contributing to restoration work. Some specific examples are set out below.

- In Sutton, over 20 volunteers from the Carshalton and District History and Archaeological Society (CDHAS), Friends of St Nicholas Church, Baptist Church and Sutton Civic Society actively participated throughout the programme. This included CDHAS volunteers

²⁸ Note this figure is total attendances rather than unique attendances.

assisting Oxford Archaeology in the field work for the Historic Area Assessment and the Archaeology Assessment, giving them access to professional training.

- Elsecar engaged volunteers in community excavations in the summers of 2018 and 2019. The first focused on the site of the former Milton Ironworks and uncovered rare evidence for an early calcining kiln, and the second looked at the site of the Newcomen engine's boilers.
- In Bishop Auckland, the volunteers supported the delivery of the annual Heritage Festival. This included Sixth Form students who were volunteer stewards.

5.31 The survey provides some evidence that participation in the historic environment has persisted post-HAZ. Nearly half (47%) of Rounds 1 and 2 respondents said that, since the formal closure of their HAZ, they have been involved in ongoing activities relating to the HAZ, whilst the remainder said they had not or did not know.²⁹ Most commonly respondents have continued to be involved in community engagement activities. Other examples of activities include legacy capital projects, funding applications to support the continuation of HAZ-related activities, and continued membership of local partnership groups (e.g. advisory groups). This is corroborated by the feedback from HAZ leads which indicates that community engagement activities – such as heritage tours and annual heritage festivals – have continued to be delivered in some areas, alongside capital projects and research.

5.32 The available evidence strongly suggests that the programme has successfully enhanced local / regional capacity which is an important legacy of the programme. For example, two-thirds of survey respondents (66%) reported increased skills/capacity in heritage as result of the programme, whilst a further fifth expect to realise this benefit in future. Capacity building was mainly targeted at two main groups: local authorities and community organisations / local volunteers. Upskilling the local authority in heritage-led regeneration has been an important benefit highlighted in many closedown reports. Linked to this, Historic England leads reported that in many areas there had been a 'culture change' with increased confidence within local authorities in relation to heritage-led regeneration. This in turn had led to new/revived activities in the area which wouldn't otherwise have come about, or not so quickly.

5.33 The case studies provide evidence that local authorities, working in partnership with key stakeholders, have continued to benefit from enhanced capacity and prioritise heritage-led regeneration post-HAZ. For example.

- As a result of the Walworth HAZ, Southwark Council has created additional heritage-based roles within council departments and HAZ related research/activities have informed the development of a heritage Supplementary Planning Document.
- Following the Weston-super-Mare HAZ, North Somerset Council created a heritage team, focused on the management of the town's heritage assets, and the mayor, elected following the HAZ, is the town's former Heritage Champion.
- The Stockton and Darlington Railway HAZ project officer has been permanently employed by the three local authorities (Durham, Darlington and Stockton) to support the continuation of activities related to the Railway.

²⁹ Note, at the time the survey was distributed, Round 3 HAZs were still in delivery. The one respondent involved in a Round 3 HAZ said that they did not know if they expected their involvement to continued following the formal closure of their HAZ in September 2024.

- In Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire Council has retained the HAZ project officer on a permanent contract post-HAZ. NELC also appointed a Strategic Lead for Culture and Heritage and a Skills and Employability Strategic Lead, both of whom have supported additional funding bids.

5.34 The local community has also benefitted from the capacity building related activities, such as research projects, workshops, training courses, and the development of guidance documents. Monitoring data indicates that just less than a third of volunteers (964) involved in the programme received training which has helped equip these individuals with the skills and knowledge to continue heritage related work in future. Examples of capacity building are set out below.

The Walworth Society is now operating on a much larger scale. It has greater capacity, in terms of organisational and research skills, to promote the value of heritage through community engagement activities to continue to undertake meaningful, accessible research. Furthermore, it is expected that the book written by the Walworth Society using HAZ research will give the society the gravitas to secure funding in similar projects in the future.

Walworth case study

Capacity building for the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, including professionalisation and heritage skills training, which has enabled them to secure funding (post-HAZ) to take on the management of sections of the Railway using the Conservation Management Plan. Discussions are ongoing amongst delivery partners to decide what this will look like in practice.

Stockton and Darlington case study

The creation of a series of documents summarising and linking to existing Historic England and other guidance, such as commonly encountered maintenance and repair issues and sources of grant funding. Bottle oven owners are now better informed and have a more easily accessible resource of information relating to the care of their historic buildings.

Stoke-on-Trent Ceramic closedown report

5.35 There is evidence of progress towards **increased use of best practice for managing heritage assets** through a combination of capacity building activity and research activity; this is an important legacy for the programme. Examples from the closedown reports include.

- Sutton HAZ saw its Historic Area Assessment shortlisted for RTPI Awards 2020 under the heritage best practice category.
- Ramsgate delivered an “exemplar” conservation area appraisal, with a dedicated climate change mitigation chapter which could provide a national best practice template.
- The Rochdale HAZ partnership developed a programme of targeted repairs to key buildings and blocks providing a number of “showcase” buildings which has enabled the council to promote good practice and sympathetic conversion to new uses.
- A key success of the Appleby HAZ was the changed perceptions of the Town Council on what was the appropriate palette for the area following the use of a local artist to improve understanding around natural pigments for lime wash.

- 5.36** This is corroborated by the survey evidence: over two-thirds of respondents (69%) reported increased use of best practice for managing heritage assets and a further eight respondents expected to realise this benefit in future.
- 5.37** The case studies provide evidence that best practice has continued to be implemented over time. For example, the Grimsby HAZ resulted in a shift in approach from key stakeholders including the council and Associated British Ports. The latter has now changed its management approach to the Kasbah area, appointing multiple specialists to help manage the site, and is working in partnership with the Historic England and council to restore buildings. In Weston-super-Mare, the Shopfront Design Guide (produced during the HAZ) continues to inform the restoration of shopfronts in the area.
- 5.38** Collectively, the suite of activities delivered by HAZs - including those to increase participation in, and awareness of, the historic environment, train/upskill individuals to build local capacity, and research an area's history / historical assets – has facilitated **increased understanding of heritage** amongst communities and wider stakeholders. Most (31/35) survey respondents have increased their understanding of heritage due to their involvement in the programme. Historic England stakeholders also through the programme had contributed to improving the profile and understanding of heritage locally. This is a crucial outcome in ensuring that local heritage is (better) protected and valued going forwards.

Case study example: Walworth

Walworth HAZ raised awareness and understanding of local heritage through a range of activities:

- The Heritage Schools programme raised local teachers' awareness of local heritage resources, including archives and museums, and how to access them, as well as engaged local school children in the history of their place.
- Engagement events delivered by the Walworth Society, informed by their research, enhanced local residents' knowledge about the history of Walworth. Consultees reported that one of the HAZ's key legacies is the ability to communicate local history in new and exciting ways.
- Consultation workshops, delivered during local listing activities, increased residents' understanding of what it means for a building to have heritage value, as well as the tools to express why they value their local heritage.

Unanticipated outcomes

- 5.39** The evaluation also looked for any unanticipated outcomes of the HAZ programme (i.e. benefits or disbenefits not expected at the outset). Several area-specific outcomes became evident from workshops/interviews with Historic England HAZ leads and the closedown reports: examples are set out below.
- In Bishop Auckland, an amateur football related museum shop was created and run by volunteers (mostly older men). The museum not only offers an exhibition on the history of the famous football club, but has also provided a temporary use for an empty historic shop on the high street.
 - Rochdale's Project Officer left to work at Salford Council, which facilitated increased communication between Historic England and Salford.

- The extension of the Walworth Conservation Area and enhanced policy protection arose from an unexpected opportunity to review the conservation area boundary after planning permission for demolition of East Street Baptist Church prompted a review of both the building and conservation area boundary. The Walworth Society has also used the research completed during the HAZ to write a book which was due to be published by the end of 2024; this was unexpected outcome of the research (see Annex E).
- The Swindon HAZ provided the impetus for Swindon Borough Council (SBC) to undertake/complete other projects around the Railway Village/Works. For example, SBC removed the remaining brick planters from Oxford and Reading Streets and resurfaced Exeter Street and (the northwest corner of) Emlyn Street. The HAZ also influenced the activity of SBC's Highways team by requesting that heritage appropriate streetlights were installed as part of the LED streetlights project (see Annex E).

5.40 In addition, there are two unanticipated outcomes for Historic England.

- First, the **programme encouraged greater internal interdisciplinary working in places**. It played a key role in facilitating a shift away from silo-based working across the organisation by improving cross-departmental knowledge, understanding and collaboration. HAZ leads (based in regional teams) engaged with experts/specialists across Historic England, which they would otherwise not have been able to access. Developing mechanisms to maintain and enhance this interdisciplinary approach to working across the organisation will be important going forward.
- Second, the programme **increased awareness within Historic England of the importance of programme and project management skills**, owing to the way in which it was designed and implemented in line with multi-faceted aims, local variation and complex partnership-based delivery arrangements.

Impacts

5.41 Evidence of impacts is more limited. This is not unexpected given the inevitable time lags associated with the delivery of complex, multi-stage, initiatives which have substantial but indirect, effects in enabling other downstream activities. However, there is some – mainly anecdotal - evidence of progress against anticipated impacts as summarised below.

5.42 The available evidence strongly indicates that **HAZ areas have leveraged further public and private investment following programme completion**. As explained by one stakeholder, the scale of Historic England funding was modest, but HAZ provided the “foundation” for areas to secure other sources of funding. In some cases, further public/private investment has been leveraged, drawing on the new research, profile of heritage and/or capacity gained during the programme. For example.

- Sutton Council secured £11.35m funding from the Future High Streets Fund aiming to bring empty or unused buildings back into active use, and to build new and affordable homes contributing to the physical regeneration of the high street, and provide more flexible commercial workspaces.
- Thanet Council secured £2.7m in funding from the Future High Streets Fund, and £19.8m from the Levelling Up Fund which, amongst other things, will regenerate the Ramsgate's Clock House, Pier Yard, and Green Campus at the Port.

- North Somerset Council secured £10m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the restoration of Birnbeck Pier, a Grade II* listed structure in Weston-Super-Mare, which burnt down in 2007.

“Thanet Council has secured Town Deal and Levelling Up Funding, and we feel locally that’s because Ramsgate was brought into national focus and was able to articulate how important they are”.

Historic England HAZ lead

- 5.43** An example from the Hull case study is set out below. A small number of survey respondents also mentioned leveraging additional funding post HAZ, such as delivering a second PSiCA scheme and additional funding from the local authority.

Case study example: Hull

Increased confidence to invest is evident through continued activity on Whitefriargate, with property company Wykeland purchasing multiple sites, including the ex-Burtons site (Grade II-listed building), which is currently undergoing a £2.6m restoration, part funded by Historic England (£450k) and the Levelling Up Fund (£750k).

- 5.44** Going forward, consultation feedback indicates that some areas have applied, or expect to apply, for other public funding sources to continue to restore/repair the historic environment. Examples are provided in the case studies in Annex E. For example, in Swindon, SBC has applied to the NHLF (£4m grant) to undertake the next phase of works to the Health Hydro. In some places, private funding is expected to be secured. This includes Grimsby which expects to secure some £100m in private sector funding over the coming years, beginning with the redevelopment of the Ice Factory. However, as discussed further in Section 6, attributing funding leveraged to the programme is challenging due to complex routes to impact.

- 5.45** There is modest evidence that the following impacts have been delivered.

- **Increased local employment opportunities:** closedown reports states that the occupant of a restored building in Bishop Auckland created 14 posts³⁰, while in Sunderland, the number of jobs created during the HAZ was almost three times the initial forecast.³¹ (see Annex C, Table C-7). But we are not able to comment on whether these jobs have been maintained. It is possible to infer that when occupied new or redeveloped commercial space should lead to local employment opportunities. For example, as explained in the Hull case study, the redevelopment of the HSBC building has enabled businesses to locate in the Old Town, which should create new employment opportunities (but the extent to which any jobs are additional to the area is not known).

“It’s definitely creating properties that can be occupied again – creating jobs and all of the income that comes with that – tax rates and business income. It deals with the conservation deficit and decaying buildings and sets them up for another 50-100 years”.

Hull case study consultee

- **Enhanced pride in place:** some closedown reports reported enhanced pride in place (including King’s Lynn, Sunderland and North Lowestoft), and as a result, a reduction in vandalism and crime. Evidence from the stakeholder consultations and survey also suggests that some areas have benefitted from improved pride in place. Six survey

³⁰ Seven full-time, five part-time, and two self-employed posts

³¹ 53 jobs were created against an initial forecast of 18 jobs

respondents reported increased civic/pride in place – as illustrated by the quotes below - albeit one respondent felt that this has waned since the completion of the HAZ. The case studies provide further evidence of this impact, including in Weston-super-Mare where feedback indicated that Weston Museum's engagement with schools helped to create a sense of pride in place among both children and adults.

"For (some) older people, living in multi storey blocks in a rundown area in the HAZ, it reawakened a sense of pride in the area and in themselves. Connections to former local industries were particularly strong, evoking many memories and sparking friendships".

Survey respondent

"[The HAZ are] is a former economic power house that lost its identity as such 50 or more years ago so the HAZ both rekindled among local people lost pride in a historic part of the city and highlighted to a wider audience the significant buildings that evidenced this".

Survey respondent

5.46 There is limited or no evidence that the following impacts have been delivered.

- **Performance benefits for local businesses.** Overall, there is limited evidence of performance benefits for local businesses. One survey respondent commented that the restoration of their shopfront has had a positive impact on their business (albeit did not expand on how), whilst another commented that the HAZ investment has improved rents and let-ability which has helped their business to become more sustainable. It should be noted that the district-level data on business start-up rate and employment change over time (discussed in Section 2) is contextual only and is not an indicator of HAZ performance.
- **Improved quality of life for residents.** It is possible that some of the activities delivered during the programme – for example, improvements to the appearance of buildings and the public realm, and volunteering opportunities – may have improved the quality of life of residents. For example, there is research to suggest that improving the public realm through regeneration has a positive effect on the mental health of residents.³² However, the evaluation did not find any primary evidence to support this.
- **Increased profile of HAZ areas as heritage destinations.** Progress towards this impact is difficult to assess without quantitative data (e.g. on visitor numbers) or large-scale perception surveys pre-and post-HAZ. A couple of survey respondents reported that the HAZ has raised the profile of their area as a heritage destination. There was also anecdotal feedback from some stakeholders that the Swindon HAZ has helped to improve the profile and reputation of the Railway Village and Works. More broadly, the 'HAZ' brand has been important for promoting Historic England's work on 'everyday heritage' according to stakeholders, and may have raised the profile of the individual HAZs as heritage destinations too.
- **Increased local tourism.** Similarly, progress towards this impact is difficult to assess without quantifiable evidence (e.g. on visitor numbers). A small number of survey respondents reported increased local tourism due to an enhanced visitor offer, but did not provide any quantifiable evidence. The Weston-super-Mare case study suggests the area has benefited from increased tourism post-HAZ, however, causality cannot be proved here

³² For example see White J et al (2017) [Improving Mental Health Through the Regeneration of Deprived Neighborhoods: A Natural Experiment](#), American Journal of Epidemiology, Volume 186, Issue 4, Pages 473–480

(i.e. it is not possible to conclude that tourism has increased because of the HAZ programme).

- **More competitive and attractive town centres / high streets.** Based on the evaluation evidence, it is not possible to assess the programme's impact on the competitiveness and attractiveness of HAZ areas. However, it is possible to assume that the visual improvements to the character and appearance of buildings/assets in an area will help to increase its attractiveness/competitiveness (see quote below). Indeed, one survey respondent commented that new occupiers have been attracted to the area following the HAZ.

"Previously the area was considered to experience high levels of anti social behaviour. The works that have been carried out have changed the streets from run down in appearance, and unloved, to somewhere that is considered a great asset to [HAZ area], the buildings have been restored to their traditional Victorian appearance, and now provide a great visual enhancement to the character and appearance of that area".

Survey respondent

- **Sustainable economic growth.** Considering the limited evidence above – particularly in relation to employment and business performance benefits – it is too early to fairly assess the extent to which the programme has led to sustainable economic growth in HAZ areas.

6. Outcome additionality and contribution

Key messages

- The evidence suggests full or partial outcome additionality. That is, in the absence of the HAZ programme, some outcomes would not have been delivered whilst others would have been delivered over a longer time, on a smaller scale, or at a reduced quality.
- The relative contribution of the HAZ programme in generating outcomes varies across the HAZs and by outcome type, but it was generally seen to have played an important role alongside other factors.
- Most survey respondents reported that the other factors influenced the benefits delivered by the HAZ. However, in general, respondents considered these other factors to be equally or less important than the HAZ itself.
- Similarly, the case study evidence suggests that the HAZ programme was required alongside other factors to generate outcomes. Other factors include complementary regeneration initiatives, other sources of funding, and the knowledge and commitment of local organisations/individuals.

6.1 This section will explore the extent to which outcomes are additional, and the relative contribution of the programme to outcomes observed, drawing primarily on the qualitative evidence from the case studies and consultations. Links are also made to the overall scale of outputs reported in Section 3. The section will also update the contribution story which was presented in the Interim Report.

Outcome additionality

6.2 Outcome additionality was primarily explored through the case study research. Perspectives on additionality varied across the case studies and by outcome type. Overall, **some outcomes would not have been delivered in the absence of the programme, whilst others would have been delivered over a longer time period, on a smaller scale, or at a reduced quality.**

6.3 Feedback suggests that **outcomes associated with capital works** – such as reduced risk to the historic environment and new / redeveloped commercial space – **are fully additional in some areas.** For example:

- in Hull it was reported that the commercial buildings would not have been brought back into use without the HAZ addressing the conservation gap
- in Grimsby, the redevelopment of the Kasbah area required the main property owner to change their perspective/approach, and the realisation of this change was attributed to the HAZ
- in Walworth, the restoration of assets such as Kenndy's Sausage Shop were attributed directly to the HAZ

- in Swindon, the exterior repairs to the Carriage Works would not have been completed without the HAZ.

6.4 Examples of outcomes which were considered to be **partially additional** (i.e. would have occurred by not at the same rate, scale, and/or quality) include the following.

- **Increased understanding of heritage.** In Hull, it was reported that some community engagement activities would have been delivered without the HAZ, but they may have focused less explicitly on heritage. In Stockton and Darlington, consultees reported that some research would have been delivered without the HAZ given the approaching Bicentenary celebrations, but not on the same scale without the resources associated with the HAZ.
- **Enhanced public realm.** It was noted that some improvements to Great Western Railway Park in Swindon might still have been funded by the Parish Council without the HAZ, but due to a lack of funds the changes would have been on a smaller scale and of lower quality.

6.5 The extent to which additional public and/or private funding would have been secured without the programme is more complex and perspectives varied across the case studies. For example, in Stockton and Darlington, consultation feedback suggests that without the research conducted as part of the HAZ and the partnerships formalised and strengthened through HAZ delivery, the additional funding leveraged post-HAZ would not have occurred. In Swindon, the role of the HAZ is less conclusive. Feedback suggests that the HAZ demonstrated commitment to the area and its assets, which is thought to have played a role in securing the Towns Fund monies. However, stakeholders were unable to provide a definitive answer on whether that major funding would have been leveraged without the HAZ programme.

Wider factors and the contribution of HAZ

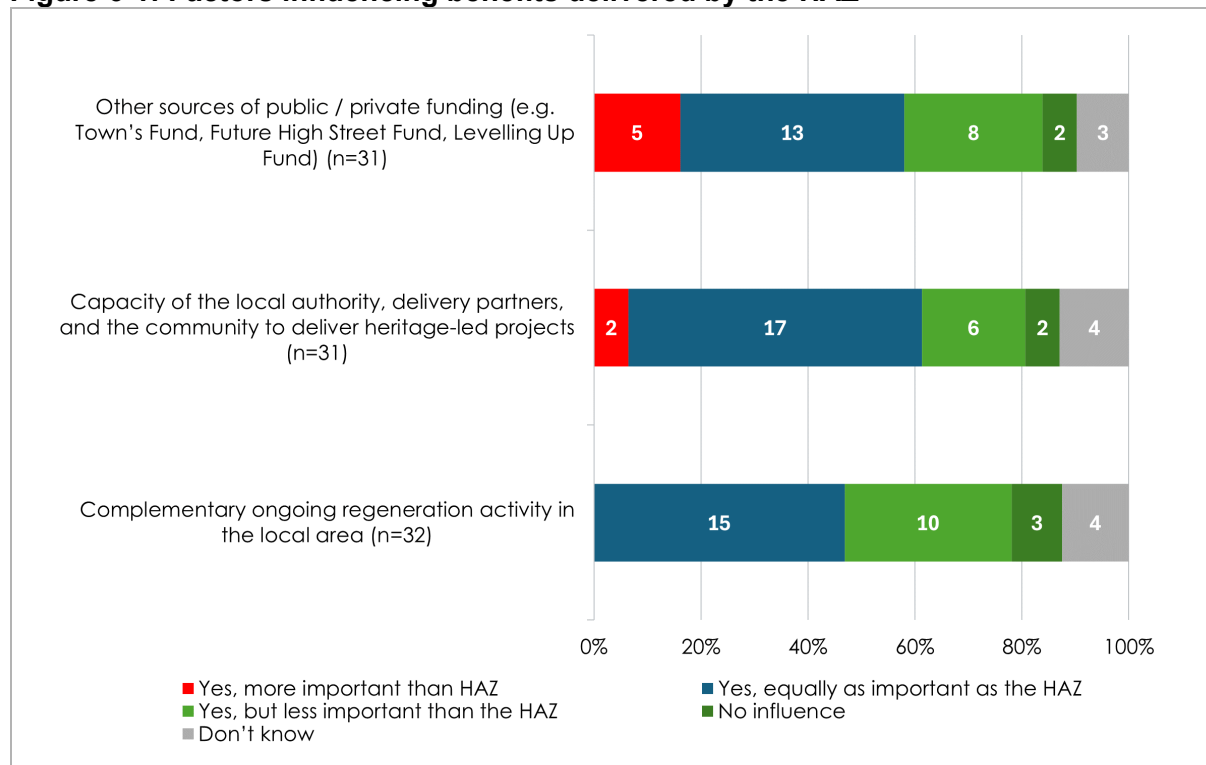
- 6.6** Attribution of outcomes/impacts to HAZ is inherently challenging given the nature of the programme and the evolving context in which the programme was delivered. To test the role of the HAZ programme in generating benefits, survey respondents were asked about other factors that may have contributed to the outcomes discussed in Section 5 and the relative importance of the programme. Respondents were asked to consider whether other sources of public or private funding (e.g. Town's Fund, Future High Street Fund, Levelling Up Fund), complementary ongoing regeneration activity in the local area, and local capacity to deliver heritage-led regeneration were less, equally or more important than the HAZ itself in the delivery of intended benefits for the area.
- 6.7** Most survey respondents reported that the other factors influenced the benefits delivered by the HAZ.³³ However, in general, respondents considered these other factors to be equally or less important than the HAZ itself.
- 6.8** More than half of respondents (55%) reported that the capacity of the local authority, delivery partners and the community to deliver heritage-led regeneration was as equally important as the HAZ in the delivery of intended benefits for the area, whilst 19% said it was less important.

³³ Only two survey respondents reported all three factors had no influence on the benefits delivered by the HAZ.

6.9 Nearly half of respondents (47%) said that complementary ongoing regeneration activity in the local area was equally important to the HAZ in the delivery of intended benefits for the area, whilst 31% said it was less important, and no respondents said it was more important.

6.10 Responses varied slightly more regarding the influence of other sources of public/private funding on the delivery of intended benefits for the area compared to the HAZ itself: around two-fifths (42%) of respondents thought that it was equally as important as the HAZ, a fifth (26%) thought it was less important, and five respondents (16%) thought that it was more important.

Figure 6-1: Factors influencing benefits delivered by the HAZ



Source: SQW analysis of e-survey

6.11 This is corroborated by the case study evidence: all the case studies reported that the HAZ programme was required alongside other factors to generate outcomes. Across the case studies, the other factors which were reported to be important in generating outcomes included.

- **Other complementary regeneration initiatives and funding in the area.** For example, Grimsby Town Deal and Riverhead Square public realm work, and Hull HSHAZ and Levelling Up Fund schemes.
- **The knowledge and commitment of local organisations/individuals.** For example, Walworth Society is highly invested in the heritage and future of Walworth, and the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway is highly invested in the railway's future.
- **Heritage was a strategic priority prior to the HAZ.** For example, heritage-led regeneration was an existing strategic priority for Southwark Council and the Council identified Walworth as a priority area prior to the HAZ.
- **Prior investment and/or intervention by local authorities and/or community organisations.** For example, prior to the programme, Swindon Borough Council had

purchased the Carriage Works and some works had already been completed providing the foundation for further investment.

- 6.12** There were also some factors which were specific to individual HAZs, including the shared ambitions for the Bicentenary celebrations of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and the capacity of wider staff within Swindon Borough Council to support delivery.

Assessment of contribution

- 6.13** Drawing on the evidence throughout this report, this sub-section presents the 'contribution story' for the outcomes/impacts arising from the programme as a whole.

Is there a reasoned theory of change, and have activities been implemented as set out in the theory of change?

- 6.14** We found that a reasoned theory of change was evident, which remained appropriate and relevant throughout delivery.

- 6.15** Historic England contributed £13.6m in grant funding to the programme (12% below forecast) and £102.8m was secured from other sources (14% below forecast). In aggregate, HAZs secured £116.5m versus a forecast of £135.5m (14% below forecast).

- 6.16** The types of activities delivered were as anticipated, although there were considerable challenges/delays in delivery due to the unprecedented conditions in which the programme was partially delivered. For example, COVID-19 led to restrictions on face-to-face stakeholder and community engagement activities, whilst high inflation has impacted the viability of some capital projects causing them to be cancelled or put on hold. However, HAZs adapted where possible, for example, by delivering activity online during the pandemic or reallocating resources to different activities where projects were unviable. Following the end of the programme, the delays meant that the delivery of some specific interventions – notably capital projects – remain(ed) ongoing.

- 6.17** Overall, the programme performed strongly against output targets, with performance generally stronger against outputs related to capacity building compared to capital works. While overall performance was strong, there was considerable variation at the level of individual HAZs. It is important to note that forecast outputs could be amended during delivery which likely skews performance.

- 6.18** The original assumptions underpinning the delivery of inputs, activities and outputs (see Figure 2-5, Section 2) are listed below. The assumptions which the programme was predicated on largely occurred in practice.

- Historic England had sufficient resources, and in the main, sufficient time to support HAZs.
- In most cases, HAZs were able to form and sustain effective consortia.
- Other public/private funds were available to be leveraged by Historic England's funding.
- Appropriate research support was available for HAZs.
- In most cases, the legal owners of the heritage assets agreed to undertaking research and/or repair/restoration works. Where this was not the case, HAZs adapted their delivery plans.

- Where appropriate, local volunteers were available and willing to participate in HAZ activities.
- The local community showed an interest in heritage assets/local history.
- Individuals attended engagement and training events delivered/supported by HAZs.
- There was a robust rationale for public intervention, and, in most cases, activity would not have progressed without HAZ or not at the same speed/scale/quality.

Is there evidence that the expected results have occurred?

6.19 Most outcomes expected by this stage have now occurred. Notably there is strong evidence of outcomes³⁴ related to:

- updated/enhanced records of the historic environment
- enhanced understanding of heritage assets and their potential use
- improved partnership working between local stakeholders
- enhanced local / regional capacity
- increased understanding of heritage.

6.20 There is **limited or no evidence of some outcomes** mainly associated with capital works: improved use of the historic environment, increased local housing, reduced vacancy rates, and increased footfall.

6.21 Each of the original assumptions underpinning the delivery of outcomes (see Figure 2-5, Section 2) are listed below.

- The risk to heritage assets (e.g. poor condition) was strongly associated with limited access and use.
- There was/is need within the local community for additional housing, employment and/or leisure space.
- It is not possible to assess whether any additional housing is affordable and meets the needs of the local community, given housing delivery has been limited and where housing has been delivered, information on tenure/occupation is unknown.
- It is not possible to assess whether additional employment space is affordable and meets the needs of the local businesses, because research was not conducted with businesses/occupiers.

6.22 Evidence that the programme has delivered intended impacts is more limited at this stage. This is not unexpected given the inevitable time lags associated with the delivery of complex, multi-stage, initiatives which have substantial but indirect, effects in enabling other downstream activities. This said, there is strong evidence that HAZ areas have leveraged

³⁴ The phrase 'strong evidence' is used where all the evidence gathered and triangulated through the evaluation (taking into account the limitations of the data) mutually supports the conclusion that an outcome has been realised.

further public and private investment following programme completion (albeit attributing this follow-on investment to the programme is challenging).

Was it the HAZ programme, rather than other influencing factors that made the difference, or the decisive difference?

- 6.23** The HAZ programme appears to have played an **important role in realising the effects observed**, however, **attribution** of outcomes/impacts to HAZ is inherently challenging given the nature of the programme and the evolving context – different of course in each area - in which the programme was delivered.
- 6.24** The relative contribution of the HAZ programme in generating outcomes varies across the HAZs and by outcome type, but it was **generally seen to have played an important role alongside other factors**. In particular, the programme was considered to have an important role in delivery outcomes associated with capital works such as reduced risk to the historic environment and new/redeveloped commercial space owing to Historic England's targeted funding/advice on the historic environment.
- 6.25** The most commonly cited other factors that have influenced effects include other complementary regeneration initiatives, other sources of public/private funding, the knowledge and commitment of local organisations/individuals, the strategic importance of heritage in an area, and previous investment and/or intervention locally.
- 6.26** Achieving future outcomes and impacts is dependent on a range of factors including the ability to leverage additional funding, capacity and priorities in the local authority, private sector capacity, and wider economic / political conditions.

7. Value for money analysis

Key messages

- A VfM model was developed to monetise a broad range of impacts. Ten of the 'core' indicators in the programme Monitoring Framework were monetised. It was not considered appropriate to monetise four of the indicators, and the remaining two indicators (public and private funding leveraged) were discounted from the model due to potential for overlaps with other funding and uncertainties over additionality.
- The impact of the programme is estimated to be in the region of £88.2m-£99.6m, and public sector costs (i.e. Historic England costs) were estimated to be around £16-18m.
- Comparing benefits and Historic England costs related to the programme, the Benefit Cost Ratio is estimated to be between 4.79 to 5.41. That is, for every £1 spent by Historic England, the programme will generate approximately £5 in benefits.

7.1 This section monetises the impact of the HAZ programme and provides a headline assessment of value for money. It primarily draws on evidence from the monitoring data (see Section 3), but also on the findings set out in Sections 5 and 6. Quantification of benefits delivered by the programme is partial due to data availability. Data on programme costs is also partial and does not capture the inputs of all Historic England staff who contributed to programme delivery (see Annex F).

Approach

7.2 The VfM model sought to monetise, where possible, the 'core' indicators in the HAZ Monitoring Framework. Ten of the sixteen indicators were monetised. Note, by design, these are monitoring indicators, and thus aimed at understanding the progress of the HAZ. However, in monetisation, the aim is to reflect the impact that heritage has upon society. Drawing from the Culture and Heritage Capital framework,³⁵ appropriate valuation captures not just flows of goods and services around the tangible assets, but the also the subjective value derived from engagement with culture.

Economic

- **Commercial floor space brought back into active use.** Convert the square metres of floorspace into the potential number of jobs that could operate in that space. Model the number of jobs over ten years, with appropriate productivity³⁶ for the space involved (i.e. retail or office jobs). A high level of non-additionality is assumed (i.e. three-quarters of jobs) because the programme has not increased the supply or demand of jobs, rather it has provided an enabling factor (i.e. commercial floorspace).

³⁵ [Towards better valuation: The Culture and Heritage Capital approach](#)

³⁶ ONS AHSE data for average hours worked and productivity data, available here: [Labour productivity by industry division - Office for National Statistics](#)

Environmental

- **Number of heritage buildings repaired or restored.**³⁷ Review the literature for estimates of energy savings when a suite of retrofits are applied a traditional building.³⁸ Forecast the carbon associated with the energy savings, then monetise it as mitigation, working to a 2050 timeframe.

Property

- **Number of assets removed from the Heritage at Risk (HAR) register.** Adjust an average property price in the area by the 4% benchmark for impact of heritage 'at risk' status.³⁹
- **Housing units brought back into active use.** Assess the land value uplift, assuming inactive land can be classed as low (out-of-town) and that its final state is residential.

Community

- **Heritage related training sessions (hrs.) provided to volunteers** and **Number of volunteers trained.** The total volunteer time is multiplied by the minimum wage. This captures the utility gained from that time investment by volunteers in the community.
- **Number of HAZ dissemination events.** A similar model to the above, with attendees deriving a utility equivalent to the national minimum wage.
- **Land area improved (Ha).** Improvements to the public realm have an effect on people's wellbeing that can be measured in the medium term. Wellbeing effects can be monetised using Green Book methods.

Skills

- **Heritage related training sessions (hrs.) provided to staff.** Training is assumed to improve salaries/productivity by 4%. The quantum for hours' training was used to guide an assumption for the timeline over which the improvement is felt (between 3 and 6 years).
- **Number of staff trained.** For each of the staff trained, the model multiplies the years in the timeline above by the expected productivity for the sector, and again by the 4% productivity improvement.

7.3 Four indicators were not included in the model: Number of additional or amended nationally listed heritage assets, Number of additional locally listed heritage assets, Number of heritage guidance documents produced, and Number of references to the HAZ by specific decision-

³⁷ The term 'repaired or restored' is the consistent with the wording of the indicator as per the Monitoring Framework. However, in practice, some of the capital works completed may be more accurately described as a 'retrofit.'

³⁸ This analysis is based on the work of Wise (2022) and is explored further in the annex. That research assessed 16 case studies of buildings originally constructed between the 1600s and early 1900s. The energy savings are given as an average across these case studies. Available at <https://oro.open.ac.uk/86367/1/F%20Wise%20Thesis%20Reducing%20Carbon%20While%20Retain%20Heritage.pdf>

³⁹ See: Ahlfeldt G., Holman N, and Wendland N (2012) An assessment of the effects of conservation areas on value (2012), available <https://www.lse.ac.uk/geography-and-environment/research/lse-london/documents/Reports/An-assessment-of-the-effects-of-conservation-areas-on-value.pdf>

makers (press coverage). The indicators were deemed to be too abstract to relate to impacts felt locally (and no data were collected against the final indicator i.e. press coverage).

- 7.4** The indicators on public and private funding leveraged are presented separately due in part to potential overlaps with other funding and uncertainties over the extent to which this funding can be considered additional at a programme level owing to the inherent differences across – and within – the HAZ projects.
- 7.5** For each of the monetised indicators, the model produces high and low estimates. This reflects that the indicators are not measurable, practically, and so are better represented as a range.
- 7.6** The model elements are illustrative and non-exhaustive, intended to provide a broad perspective on the (potential) impacts of the programme. There is inherent imprecision in the model, as well as gaps in the harder-to-quantify impact areas. In part, this is because the model draws upon benchmarks that are necessarily from different contexts. Equally, the model is generalised to fit multiple areas, so the unique characteristics cannot be taken into account. Whilst the model generates local and overall BCRs, the overarching point of the analysis is to identify the breadth of impact areas, and understand them in relation to one another, as well as the costs of the intervention. Further details on the approach and calculations – including the sources of programme costs – can be found in Annex F.

Table 7-1: Benefits within the value for money assessment

Indicator	Monetisation	Benchmark	Source
Number of heritage buildings repaired or restored	Value of carbon saved through energy efficiency measures	Case studies on retrofits of houses built between 1600s and early 1900s	Consultation on methodology with HE, and reference to Wise (2022) for data
Land area improved	Wellbeing derived through regeneration	Propensity score matching on the mental health effects of a regeneration scheme in Caerphilly, Wales	White et al (2017) for the regeneration impact, and Green Book supplementary guidance for the wellbeing approach
Number of assets removed from the Heritage at Risk (HAR) register	Uplift in house prices due to the removal of the at-risk status	Analysis of housing transaction in conservation areas	Ahlfeldt et al (2012) for the mean house price change
Commercial floor space brought back into active use	GVA generation through new employment	Productivity by sector	ONS 2022
Housing units brought back into active use	Land value uplift	Land value estimates for policy appraisals	MHCLG 2020
Heritage related training sessions provided to volunteers	Approximate the utility of volunteer time through its opportunity cost	The national minimum wage is a low benchmark for the opportunity cost	National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates - GOV.UK

Indicator	Monetisation	Benchmark	Source
Heritage related training provided to staff*	Improved productivity of trained staff	Use salary premium of on-the-job training and equate to productivity	ONS 2019
Amount of funding leveraged	n/a		
Number of HAZ dissemination events	Model attendance at events as volunteer time	Assume attendance at events	SQW assumption

Source: SQW

*note that there were two indicators focused on training provided to staff (number of staff and training hours), both were used in this single monetisation calculation

Results

- 7.7** The average high and low estimates for each impact, for the programme overall, are set out in Table 7-2. Only HAZs which reported a non-zero against the indicator are included. The biggest impact comes from the commercial floorspace brought back into use. This is because in terms of generating GVA, it is difficult to compete with job creation, even with the low level of additionality applied. Further analysis is provided in Annex F.

Table 7-2: Average high and low estimates for each impact

Indicator	Average	Low valuation (£)	High valuation (£)
Economic			
Commercial floor space brought back into active use (m2)	1,384	5,005,200	13,164,926
Property			
Number of assets removed from the Heritage at Risk (HAR) register (count of assets)	2	23,146	88,875
Housing units brought back into active use (count of housing units)	11	61,358	129,285
Environmental			
Number of heritage buildings repaired or restored (count of buildings)	8	3,724	25,079
Community			
Land area improved (Ha)	14	1,347,571	2,156,113
Heritage related training sessions provided to volunteers (hours)	55	652	868

Indicator	Average	Low valuation (£)	High valuation (£)
Number of volunteers trained (headcount)	64	See above	See above
Number of HAZ dissemination events (count of events)	27	2,126	2,829
Skills			
Heritage related training sessions provided to staff (hours)	38	575,896	721,644
Number of staff trained (headcount)	51	See above	See above

Source: SQW

- 7.8** Table 7-3 below sets out the total impact and cost figures. The net impact of the programme is **estimated to be between £88.2m and £99.6m**. Note, the higher impact estimate uses the lower estimate for the economic element (i.e. commercial floorspace brought back into use), to reflect the likelihood that not all the commercial floorspace will accommodate good productivity jobs. The information made available to the evaluators indicated that programme costs were between £16m and £18m.

Table 7-3: Estimated total costs and benefits

	Low estimate (£)	High estimate (£)
<i>Historic England grants</i>	13,647,984	13,647,984
<i>Historic England staff time</i>	2,554,628	4,769,153
Total costs	16,202,612	18,417,137
<i>Economic</i>	65,067,599	[171,144,043]
<i>Environmental</i>	70,754	476,494
<i>Property</i>	523,187	1,583,645
<i>Community</i>	12,181,085	19,475,481
<i>Skills</i>	10,366,135	12,989,592
Total benefits	88,208,761	99,592,810

Source: SQW analysis

- 7.9** The value for money analysis compared the (high and low) net benefits and costs related to the programme to give a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR), as set out in the table below.
- Based only on Historic England expenditure, the BCR is estimated to be between 4.79 and 6:15. However, considering the data quality issues associated with the cost data (see Annex F), the high costs figure is considered to be closer to the true value of programme costs, suggesting a **BCR of between 4.79 and 5.41**.

- Based on total public/private sector expenditure, the BCR is estimated to be between **0.73 and 0.84**. **This lower estimate is a conservative figure, which takes into account** the uncertainties around identifying as well as realising the intended additional impacts in the longer-term.

Table 7-4: Estimated BCRs

	Low benefits (£)	High benefits (£)
Historic England expenditure only		
Low costs (£)	5.44	6.15
High costs (£)	4.79	5.41
All expenditure (public and private)		
Low costs (£)	0.74	0.84
High costs (£)	0.73	0.82

Source: SQW analysis

7.10 On the basis of the evidence available, the programme intervention also leveraged a total of £205.5m in public funding and £12.7m in private funding. As explained above, these figures are not included in the VfM assessment due to the complexities and uncertainties associated with this funding.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1** In this section we summarise the findings against the research questions set for the evaluation. A graphic summarising our overall assessment of the performance of the programme against the logic model is also presented. Finally, we provide some overall reflections on future evaluation activity and/or implications for similar programmes in future.

Summary of findings

Has the HAZ programme been implemented as intended?

- 8.2** The nature of activities delivered aligned fully with the overall aim of the programme and the five main anticipated outcomes around reducing/avoiding risk to the historic environment, enhancing the NHLE and increasing understanding of heritage, local community and local authority engagement, building local/regional capacity, and developing best practice for managing heritage assets.
- 8.3** HAZs faced a range of challenges during delivery, most of which were external to programme, notably the COVID-19 pandemic and inflationary pressures. These led to some changes to planned activities (for example, pivoting engagement activities to be delivered online rather than in-person), but we found that, overall activities were delivered well despite the challenging socio-economic context.
- 8.4** Overall, the programme performed strongly against output targets, with performance generally stronger against outputs related to capacity building compared to capital works. While overall performance was strong, there was considerable variation at the level of individual HAZs.

To what extent can any changes in intervention areas be attributed by activities connected to the HAZ programme? Has the HAZ programme produced the short- and mid-term outcomes as intended?

- 8.5** The primary and secondary data indicate strong or moderate progress towards the following outcomes.
- Outcomes associated with the research conducted in the HAZs: enhanced understanding of heritage assets and their potential reuse, more comprehensive record of the area's historic environment, and updated/enhanced NHLE.
 - Outcomes from the capital works: reduction/avoidance of risk to the historic environment, improved leisure and visitor offer locally, increased commercial space, and enhanced public realm.
 - Outcomes associated with the community and engagement activities: increased local participation in the historic environment, improved partnership working between local stakeholders, enhanced local/regional capacity, increased use of best practice for managing heritage assets, and increased understanding of heritage.
- 8.6** Evidence of progress towards some outcomes is more limited: improved access, and use of, the historic environment, increased local housing, reduced vacancy rates, and increased footfall. In part, this reflects time lags to impacts and a lack of data, notably footfall / usage data. Where data are available, notably, in the case of vacancy rates, considerable fluctuations were likely to be influenced by other market factors and there were differences in geographical

scales, as commercial property market geography data availability does not match HAZ geographies. This makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions.

- 8.7** The evidence on outcome additionality (collected mainly through the case study research) varied by outcome and local context. However, overall, consultation feedback suggests full or partial additionality in most cases. That is, some outcomes would not have been delivered in the absence of the programme, whilst others would have been delivered over a longer time period, on a smaller scale, or at a reduced quality. Outcomes associated with capital works, such as reduced risk to the historic environment, were often assessed as having greater additionality than outcomes associated with community engagement such as increased understanding of heritage. The extent to which additional public and/or private funding would have been secured without the programme is more complex: the interventions took place against different levels of earlier commitment from partners and consultees often found it difficult to provide a definitive answer on the counterfactual.
- 8.8** Attribution of outcomes/impacts to HAZ is inherently challenging given the nature of the programme and the evolving context – different of course in each area - in which the programme was delivered. The relative contribution of the HAZ programme in generating outcomes varies across the HAZs and by outcome type, but across the programme as a whole, it played an important role with different mixes of other contributions in different places. The most commonly cited factors that have influenced effects include other complementary regeneration initiatives, other sources of public / private funding, the knowledge and commitment of local organisations / individuals, the strategic importance of heritage in an area, and previous investment and / or intervention locally.

**Has the HAZ programme produced any positive or negative unintended outcomes?
Can systems be put in place to monitor these in subsequent rounds of the
programme?**

- 8.9** There is some positive evidence that the programme has resulted in unforeseen benefits for Historic England around improved multidisciplinary working and increased awareness of the importance of project/programme management within the organisation. In some cases at least, there is evidence that similar positive outcomes were also realised at the HAZ level.
- 8.10** The programme has now ended, so the question around implementing systems to monitor unintended outcomes in subsequent rounds should be thought of in terms of learning for future place-based interventions delivered by Historic England. It is important that monitoring processes/systems consider how to capture unintended outcomes from the outset. This could include including a field in monitoring returns to record any (positive/negative) unintended outcomes and a question in the final report template to capture any reflections evidence of unintended outcomes. Given unintended outcomes are, in their very nature, unexpected, any monitoring mechanism should be flexible, rather than attempting to be prescriptive.

The HAZ programme was partially delivered in the unprecedented socio-economic climate of the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy crisis, high inflation addition to costs – how did the HAZs respond? What direct and indirect effects did this have on delivery and outcomes?

- 8.11** The COVID-19 pandemic was the predominant external factor that affected the delivery of all three rounds of the programme. This impacted all aspects of delivery, but particularly community engagement activities and capital works. High inflation also impacted the viability of some capital projects causing them to be cancelled or put on hold.

8.12 These challenges were explored in detail through the case study research. For example, in Weston-super-Mare, capital works were affected by both the COVID-19 pandemic and inflationary pressures as businesses were more reluctant to, or could not afford to, to commit to undertaking capital works. Momentum in delivering Walworth's PSiCA scheme was lost due to COVID-19 related restrictions, with businesses difficult to re-engage after restrictions eased. However, Historic England allowed the PSiCA to be extended beyond the lifetime of the HAZ.

8.13 HAZs sought to respond flexibly and innovatively, adapting delivery plans where possible. For example, some community engagement events were shifted to online delivery. However, some activities could not be adapted, for example, capital works were put on hold during lockdowns, and were subsequently impacted by supplier backlogs, resulting in some incomplete projects at HAZ completion.

What can we learn from the HAZ in terms of 'what works' and 'what doesn't'?

8.14 The evaluation has identified a range of lessons in terms of what works well and less well in the delivery of programmes like HAZ. The factors that worked well in design and delivery included:

- at a programme level the support from the central programme team and use of expert support from within Historic England, the flexibility of the programme to respond to local contextual changes, and the six-month close-down period
- at a HAZ level the capacity, knowledge and commitment of project officers, collaborative working, strong community engagement, and being flexible in a changing context.

8.15 The factors that worked less well in design and delivery included:

- at a programme level the lack of a lead in or development period to the delivery of HAZs, the administrative burden associated with using existing grant schemes, limited dedicated programme management resources, and challenges retrofitting administrative/monitoring tools and processes during delivery
- at a HAZ level a lack of staff continuity and capacity challenges within both partner organisations and Historic England, challenges with stakeholder engagement, and contextual challenges both nationally (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic and inflationary pressures) and locally (e.g. low property values, local authority priorities).

What is the overall impact of the programme including social, economic, and environmental impacts?

8.16 Robust evidence of impacts is limited. Therefore, our assessment of impacts relies heavily on anecdotal evidence. As the evaluation was completed in parallel with the completion of Round 3, therefore little time has elapsed for impacts to be fully realised.

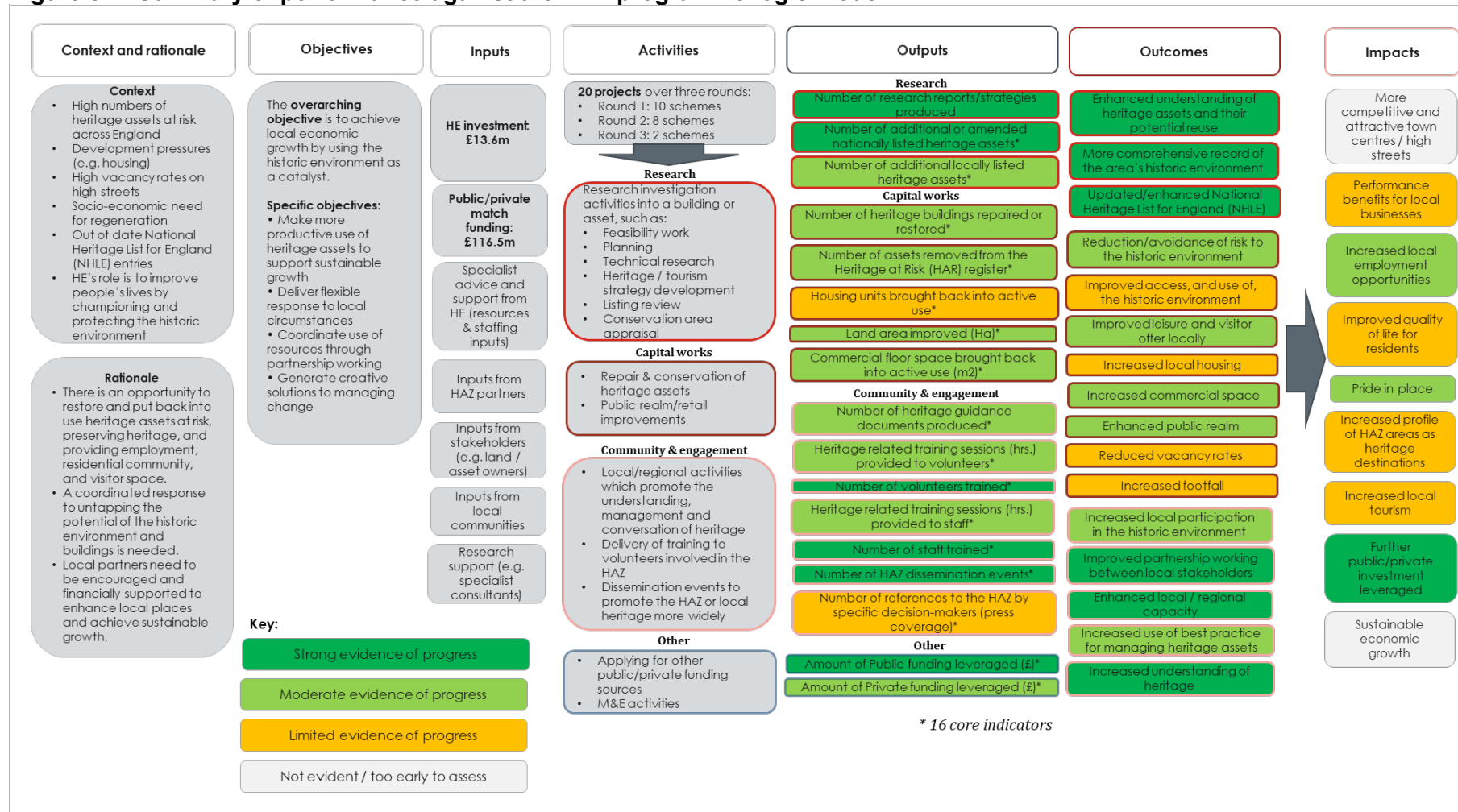
8.17 Taking these caveats into account, the evidence is strongest in relation to further public and private investment leveraged following programme completion, although evidence on the contribution of the programme to securing this investment is – perhaps inevitably – often subjective and incomplete. There is also some (mainly anecdotal) evidence of increased local employment opportunities and enhanced pride in place. Evidence of other anticipated impacts is more limited to date.

- 8.18** It is difficult to comment on environmental impacts, as no data was collected at a programme or HAZ level. From the evidence available, we can only infer that the programme has led to minor environmental impacts by retrofitting heritage buildings with energy-efficiency measures. Without evidence on context, it is not possible to conduct a fuller life-cycle assessment on the buildings themselves (i.e. to understand the carbon abated by forestalling rebuilds). Further, as no specific measures were included in the retrofits, the impact estimates were calibrated to cover a broad range. Future research would benefit from including a better contextual baseline understanding to supplement the quantitative data in the indicators. The exception is Appleby where a key outcome was improved understanding of how to improve the flood resilience of historic properties in the area.
- 8.19** Achieving impacts in future is dependent on a range of factors including the ability to identify, understand, and leverage additional funding, capacity and priorities in the local authority, private sector capacity, and wider economic / political conditions.
- 8.20** The overarching programme vision was to ‘transform’ places: achieving this directly through and within the timeframe of the interventions was always unrealistic given delivery timescales and available financial resources; also, in many cases, the legacy of decades of economic and commercial decline. However, activities delivered through the programme have supported areas on their trajectory of change by helping to build the foundations for future activities which are in a better position to engage partners in actions to restore and conserve historic assets, realise commercial / leisure re-use, and promote social and economic renewal.

Does the HAZ programme offer value-for-money from a public value perspective?

- 8.21** A value for model was developed to monetise (where possible) the impacts of the programme. The model elements are illustrative and non-exhaustive, intended to provide a broad perspective on the (potential) impacts of the programme.
- 8.22** The net estimated impact of the HAZ programme is estimated to be in the region of £88.2m-£99.6m. Financial benefits generated through commercial floorspace brought back into use account for some £65m of the overall impact.
- 8.23** Overall, our assessment is that the programme has delivered a strong level of value for money. When comparing the net impacts above to the Historic England costs (c.£16-18m), the programme has a BCR between 4.79 and 5.41. This means for every pound of public investment the programme will generate approximately £5 in value that would not have happened otherwise. However, when comparing the net impacts to total programme costs (i.e. public and private), the BCR is considerably lower at between 0.73 and 0.84, which at least in part reflects uncertainties around identifying as well as realising the intended additional impacts in the longer-term.
- 8.24** Figure 8-1 sets out our overall assessment of the performance of the programme against the original logic model (outputs, outcomes and impacts). It shows where there is strong, moderate, limited, and no evidence against the anticipated outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Overall, considering anticipated benefits that can be assessed at the point only, the programme has performed strongly.

Figure 8-1: Summary of performance against the HAZ programme logic model



Source: SQW based on evaluation evidence

Other implications for future interventions

8.25 This sub-section sets out some final reflections on future evaluation activity and the implications of the evaluation findings for similar place-based intervention in future.

8.26 First, in relation to future evaluation activity, we recommend that Historic England considers approaches to monitoring and evaluating the long-term impacts of the HAZ programme. This could adopt the logic model above as a framework. It will be important to consider what follow-on evaluation activity is practical and proportionate. However, this could include additional data collection led by regional teams (which is shared centrally) and/or primary research with local delivery teams after three years (probably in the form of an email survey, where contact information is available). More broadly, for any similar interventions in future, the evaluation highlights the importance of designing and implementing a monitoring and evaluation framework which is clear, efficient and well-understood by all parties from the outset.

8.27 Second, the findings from the evaluation indicate a strong ongoing rationale for place-based support. Most survey respondents (97%) thought that this type of programme is worthwhile. Furthermore, stakeholders reported that the rationale for Historic England to continue its place-based work remains strong. It was reported that the organisation is better placed to deliver this type of intervention following HAZ (and HSHAZ) and Historic England's offer – in terms of providing holistic advice and expertise on historic places/assets – is unique. The programme has broadened Historic England's reach; there is now a greater focus on 'everyday heritage' rather than prioritising scheduled monuments and listed (particularly Grade 1*) buildings. Historic England remains committed to place-based working, evidenced for example by the recently formed 'Places Board'. It is also noted that Historic England's strategic shift towards place-based intervention aligns strongly with UK Government's policy, including its focus on regional growth and the newly formed New Towns Taskforce. In this context, it will be important for Historic England to consider how it balances its technical role with its wider socio-economic role: the evaluation found no evidence that this is an issue, but we are aware that shifting towards an increasingly place-based approach will affect organisational priorities and internal resource allocation.

8.28 Third, there are many lessons from the HAZ programme which can inform the delivery of future place-based work. These are set out in detail in the earlier sections of the report, but some key considerations include:

- Including a set-up or scoping phase to facilitate better understanding of the local context and to start to develop/strengthen stakeholder relationships.
- Establishing realistic and achievable aims given key parameters such as timescales and available resources. Linked to this, it is important to recognise that intervention by Historic England may often be one phase in a much longer term and larger scale (heritage-led) regeneration plan, and impacts will take time to come to fruition. In this context, Historic England should consider the mix of place-based interventions to support, for example, interventions which are relatively short and a smaller scale which will deliver benefits over a shorter timeframe versus large-scale, long-term interventions where the benefits may not be realised for many years.
- The importance of a simpler, more flexible, and less resource intensive grant system for place-based interventions. A similar approach to HSHAZ was considered effective.

- The provision of more internal programme management resource from the outset, and linked to this, establishing processes (such as monitoring) prior to delivery. For similar programmes developing a plan at the outset which details expected staff resources (e.g. the proportion of individual staff time to be spent on programme management and delivery) would help provide clarity over expectations and provide a useful benchmark for evaluation purposes. In relation to monitoring, development of a baseline (for each HAZ) at the outset, with clearly defined metrics / indicators, would provide a stronger, more robust, base for later assessing progress and impact.