

High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) Evaluation

Case Study Appendix: Leeds




Historic England

HSHAZ Evaluation

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June 2025

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Reviewed and approved by:	
Signature:	_____
Name:	<u>Graham Russell</u>
Job Title:	<u>Chief Executive</u>
Date:	<u>June 2025</u>

Purpose of the case study

This case study is not an evaluation of the Leeds HSHAZ scheme. The purpose of the case studies as a whole is to provide insights to inform the overall HSHAZ programme evaluation.

This case study appendix reviews the outputs achieved through the HSHAZ scheme against its stated targets and assesses likely value for money using government compliant methodologies. The review is based on:

- the monitoring data collected by project teams within submitted scheme plans;
- a facilitated discussion with the local project team and HSHAZ Project Officers using an agreed Consultation guide to review successes, challenges and lessons learned;
- a site visit; and
- the expression of interest submission.

1 Strategic context

1.1 Context and need for investment

The Leeds HSHAZ scheme was allocated £1,300,000 funding from Historic England for the capital strand and £120,000 funding from Historic England for the cultural strand. The capital strand was expected to generate £1,500,000 match funding from Leeds City Council¹.

The HSHAZ is located in New Briggate, historically the entrance to Leeds city centre and some of Leeds' major cultural venues. The historical origins of Leeds span back to medieval times, with New Briggate the earliest expansion of Leeds beyond these boundaries. The subsequent vibrant Victorian cultural and commercial importance of the areas is captured architecturally, but the significance is not matched by the performance of the area.

Streets like New Briggate face similar challenges to many other urban areas. National trends, such as competition from online shopping and retail parks, rising vacancy rates, and the negative consequences of deprivation—such as homelessness and crime are widely recognised as contributing factors to the difficulties experienced by high street communities and businesses. These macro trends are complemented by local trends. New Briggate has a contrasting urban offer with fast food and small-scale retail adjacent to nationally important cultural assets². Furthermore, although the concentration of heritage is high in New Briggate (with seven listed buildings in the area), the extent of disrepair, inappropriate signage or external works, vacant buildings and loss of historical architectural detail has had a negative impact on the area.

1.2 HSHAZ scheme objectives

The vision for the Leeds HSHAZ aimed to uncover and celebrate the hidden and marginalized heritage of New Briggate. It was envisaged that New Briggate would be transformed into a revitalized historic and cultural high street and complement nearby development. Capital works were designed to enhance the attractiveness and productivity of the high street and to ensure the area was better placed to benefit from the high-quality cultural programmes that take place around the city.

The improvements were expected to foster a strong sense of place and promote key cultural and heritage sites in the area, such as the Grand Theatre and St John's Church. Integrating culture and heritage into New Briggate's regeneration was a central theme of the Leeds HSHAZ. The HSHAZ initiative focussed on placing heritage at the heart of social cohesion and enhancing opportunities for community wellbeing.

Pedestrianisation of New Briggate was also a priority for Leeds City Council. It was hoped that Mark Lane would act as a link to Briggate, which is already pedestrianised, to help draw footfall from this popular part of the retail centre.

¹ These allocation for the capital scheme is from the first available scheme plan (Y1Q4). The first available scheme plan (Y2Q2) suggested only one project was being delivered with a cost of £3,000 therefore, a more recent scheme plan has been used to provide a more accurate allocation of funding.

² Leeds HSHAZ Expression of Interest 2019

1.3 Strategic alignment

Table 1-1: Leeds HSHAZ – Alignment with strategic priorities		
Policy/Strategy	Objective/Description	Alignment
Core Strategy Leeds Local Plan, Amendments Adopted 2019. Leeds City Council	<p>Strategic themes and policies are set out to direct and guide development in Leeds city centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leeds city centre performs a key economic, strategic and cultural role at the heart of the region. A key strength of the city centre is the distinctive historic core, high quality public realm and delivery of iconic architecture and urban design solutions. Housing and support of employment opportunities ensure the fundamental needs of all residents are met. Maintain and enhance the sustainable pattern of development across the district, ensuring the town and local centres remain the focus for shopping, intensive/built leisure, employment and services. A well connected district is essential for travel provision in line with increased economic prosperity and population growth. Managing environmental resources and green infrastructure is supported by the key distinguishing features of the Leeds District 	Utilising the culture and history of Leeds to deliver regeneration is an objective of both the Core Strategy Leeds Local Plan and the HSHAZ programme. Connecting communities to their space and history is important for sustainable development of both places and people, fuelling the economy and wellbeing throughout the city.
Best City Ambition	<p>Tackling poverty and inequality is at the heart of the Best City Ambition. Three pillars bring together the key priorities to provide a coherent vision for the future of Leeds – a city where people work collectively and collaboratively to achieve these ambitions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health and Wellbeing 2. Inclusive Growth 3. Zero Carbon <p>Of importance in Leeds is collaboration with and among communities to ensure that growth is driven by the people of Leeds.</p>	The HSHAZ programme is rooted in collaboration between local authorities, local community groups, cultural organisations, charities and more to inform successful and targeted delivery.
Leeds City Council Culture Strategy for Leeds 2017- 2030	<p>The Cultural Strategy for Leeds has identified five initial areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City of Creators – create conditions for people to have the capacity to create and play an active role in the cultural life of Leeds. A Place of Many Destinations – plan for the public realm of Leeds to be its greatest cultural asset by 2030 and build on the legacy of parks and waterways to create a new international standard which beds culture in streets, shopping centres, parks and urban spaces. A Connected City with a ‘Yes’ Mentality – promote collaboration to ensure the distinctiveness of Leeds cultural life is in the collision of its diverse cultures. A Leading International Capital of Culture – adapt, challenge and adopt principles debated and developed by a global community, supporting and nurturing new communities to share their cultures. 	The HSHAZ programme is aligned with three of the Cultural Strategy’s strands – capital, culture and community.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Fast-Paced City of Cultural Innovation – create new opportunities for culture and art to collaborate with technology and the digital world and bring together creators, artists and makers to create new immersive experiences for a range of audiences. 	
Complementary funding	<p><u>Leeds City Council Funding</u> Leeds City Council is a significant source of funding for cultural and heritage projects across the city, through various grant programmes such as: Leeds Inspired Grants; Leeds Cultural Investment Programme; and a Community Committee Wellbeing Fund. More specifically, the Leeds City Region Revolving Investment Fund (RIF) has provided financial support to refurbish commercial properties along New Briggate, creating an attractive business, shopping and cultural tourism destination.</p> <p><u>Arts Council England</u> Key cultural venues in New Briggate include the Leeds Grand Theatre and the Howard Assembly Room and both have had investment from Arts Council England. In particular, Opera North (based in the Grand Theatre) received Arts Council funding to enhance its spaces and create a new cultural hub in New Briggate. Funding supports both the physical improvements and the cultural programming of the venue.</p> <p><u>National Lottery Heritage Fund</u> Leeds Culture Trust was awarded one of seven national grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund's £13,700,000 to support nature, communities and culture recovery post-pandemic. These activities will see culture dispersed throughout communities and groups across the city of Leeds.</p>	Complementary funding in Leeds provides an ecosystem of cultural and heritage funding. The Historic England funding has complemented city wide funding and development of cultural assets.

1.4 Activities

1.4.1 Capital strand

One of the main projects for the Leeds New Briggate HSHAZ aimed to deliver 6,230 square metres of improved public realm, pedestrianising the high street to increase the hospitality offer and encourage dwell time of visitors and residents. Façade improvements along the New Briggate high street were planned across several buildings to improve the streetscape and improve the offer of the street and its businesses. A series of works were prioritised at St John's Church (which were complemented by planned works delivered through the cultural strand), with heritage trails and wayfinding at the church engaging the community to this space.

- Project 1 47-51 Shopfronts.**
- Project 2 33-45 New Briggate** – repair of building fabric, shopfront reinstatement, internal repairs and alterations to enable conservation to residential of upper floors at 33-45 New Briggate.
- Project 3 47-51 New Briggate** – repair of building fabric and internal repairs/alterations to enable residential conversion to upper floors. Installation of traditional timber and Oriel windows.

- **Project 4 23-27 New Briggate**– external repairs and shopfront reinstatement.
- **Project 5 29-31 New Briggate.**
- **Project 6 St John’s Church** – improvements and feasibility reports. Additional activities including student research and activity sheets, painted railings and lampposts, replace notice board and picnic table seating introduced.
- **Project 7 Public Realm Improvements** – public realm area improvements including reinstatement of traditional materials, partial pedestrianisation, laying of cycle lanes widening pavements and removal of bus stops.
- **Project 8 Community Engagement** – engagement and promotion of HSHAZ delivered works. Skills building exercises, walking tours, pop-up exhibitions, heritage skills festival, open days and design guides produced.
- **Project 9 Energy Efficiency Study** – study of the thermal performance of 33-51 New Briggate and reviewing possibilities for improvements within bounds of traditional foundations.
- **Project 10 HAZ Officer Costs.**
- **Project 12 Terrazzo Pavement Replacement** – replacement of heavily damaged Terrazzo Pavement.
- **Project 13 Listing and Listing Enhancement** – including heritage and archaeological research studies and amended list entries at five locations.

The forecast expenditure of the capital strand over the four-year programme is set out below. As the HSHAZ scheme attracted further match-funding, the total cost of the HSHAZ scheme increased to match these ambitions. Analysis on the cost outlay against outputs is presented in Section 3.

Table 1-2: Capital Strand Forecast Expenditure					
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Historic England grant	£14,474	£622,404	£598,879	£64,242	£1,300,000
Local authority funding	£0	£800,000	£500,000	£200,000	£1,500,000
Other matched funding	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£14,474	£1,422,404	£1,098,800	£264,242	£2,800,000

Note: Forecast expenditure is from the Y1Q4 scheme plan, which is the first record of the forecasted costs. The evaluation of the programme would be enhanced by accurate forecasts from the start of the programme.

1.4.2 Cultural strand

The cultural strand was managed by the Leeds Cultural Consortium, a group comprising seven cultural organisations throughout Leeds and led by East Street Arts. The focus for this strand was showcasing New Briggate’s rich and diverse story through a wide range of community engagement and activities emphasising individual involvement. In particular, the strand targeted those who are typically less engaged with their city and its cultural activity. The cultural strand consisted of the following activities:

- **Project 1 Hidden Histories of New Briggate** – a research phase including the launch of the HSHAZ Cultural Programme including recruitment of artists in residents.
- **Project 2 Commissioned Artists** – Yaku Stapleton and Harry Clayton-Wright with complementary works by photographer Stuart Linden Rhodes.
- **Project 3 Drawing Time Commissions** – a further artist call out resulting in the delivery of nine small commissions with works to be integrated into project six and as a tool to promote community engagement.
- **Project 4 Additional Activities** – walking tours, community workshops, heritage open days, a pop up carnival, a drop in workshop at the Heritage Skills Festival and a cinema screening.
- **Project 5 Sounds of New Briggate** – a series of themed podcasts.
- **Project 6 Take Away Artworks** – project three artworks produced into post cards, beer mats, temporary tattoos, reusable glasses, pizza boxes, bookmarks, paper bags, flags, whistle lanyards, pop cans and clothing using images and short text generated by artists, through community engagement activities and partner projects.
- **Project 7 Highstreet Publication** – celebration of the New Briggate HSHAZ, an evaluation and legacy resource exploring the use of art and artists.
- **Project 8 Promotion and Coordination.**

There was no forecast expenditure for the cultural strand at the early stages of the programme, prior to actual delivery. The first scheme plan made available was in the second quarter of 2021/22. The forecast expenditure in the first scheme plan was minimal, only covering the first project above. The availability of a complete scheme plan at an early stage of the programme would enhance the evaluation of the strand against its stated target costs and outputs. This forecast expenditure is presented in the below table.

Table 1-3: Cultural Strand Forecast Expenditure					
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Historic England grant	£0	£3,544	£0	£0	£3,544
Local authority funding	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other matched funding	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£0	£3,544	£0	£0	£3,544

Note: Forecast expenditure is from the Y2Q2 scheme plan, which is the first record of the forecasted costs. The evaluation of the programme would be enhanced by accurate forecasts from the start of the programme.

2 Project delivery and management

The HSHAZ was delivered by Leeds City Council which included a project manager and support from staff across the council.

The cultural strand of works was led and delivered by East Street Arts who worked with the council and the New Briggate Cultural Consortium, which was made up of East Street Arts, Leeds Heritage Theatres, Opera North, Age UK, North Bar & Brewery, Leeds Civic Trust and the Churches Conservation Trust.

There was a high rate of personnel change within the Leeds City Council team and East Street Arts, the delivery partner for the cultural strand. This staff turnover had an impact on deliverability of key projects, which lost momentum and were subsequently delayed.

The Historic England team supporting the delivery of Leeds HSHAZ included a HSHAZ project officer, a project lead and a senior responsible officer. The Leeds City Council Project Officer was unfortunately ill with a long-term sickness, which meant that she was still in post but unable to work. Although Leeds City Council did provide cover to the project, the inconsistency did affect the delivery of the project.

3 Project progress

3.1 Overview

This section assesses the Leeds HSHAZ against its stated costs, outputs, and objectives.

As set out in Section 1, the earliest capital scheme plan was in Y1Q4, and the earliest cultural scheme plan was in Y2Q2. The target costs and outputs have changed over time due to change requests. The final scheme plans typically suggest that the programme is delivered exactly on budget for every project with the exact level of outputs delivered.

To allow a comparison against the envisaged targets at the start of the HSHAZ programme, our assessment focusses on the delivered outputs and outturn costs against the targets from the earliest available information. Therefore, the original target figures for the capital strand are from Y1Q4 and cultural strand are from Y2Q2.

3.2 Capital strand

The Leeds New Briggate HSHAZ capital strand invested £2,316,000 in the various projects which is 17 per cent lower than the forecast spend of £2,800,000. The scheme underspent its HSHAZ allocation by £129,000, whilst the local authority match-funding was £437,000 lower than forecast.

As shown below, in total, the HSHAZ team managed to secure £83,000 of other match funding across 2022/23 which was not forecast at the beginning of the project.

Table 3-1: Leeds HSHAZ Capital Strand – annual spend performance					
	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Total
Forecasted expenditure					
Historic England grant	£14,474	£622,405	£598,879	£64,242	£1,300,000
Local authority funding	£0	£800,000	£500,000	£200,000	£1,500,000
Other matched funding	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total forecast spend	£14,474	£1,422,405	£1,098,879	£264,242	£2,800,000
Outturn expenditure					
Historic England grant	£14,474	£622,404	£430,936	£102,813	£1,170,627
Local authority funding	£0	£727,410	£5,945	£329,316	£1,062,670
Other matched funding	£0	£0	£83,131	£0	£83,131
Total forecast spend	£14,747	£1,349,814	£520,012	£432,129	£2,316,429

Project 1 (shopfront works at 47-51 New Briggate) was dropped from the project as shopfronts were in different ownerships and on a long-term lease which were separate to the larger ownership in the block. Project 4 (23-27 New Briggate external repairs and shopfront reinstatement) was also removed from the scheme as the property owner did not take up the opportunity to pursue the grant scheme.

The funds for these projects were removed and largely reallocated across other capital projects. For example, within the first scheme plan, it was expected that Project 7 Public Realm Improvements would be funded by local authority investment. As this scheme was a high priority for the HSHAZ, the above funds were reallocated to the public realm works to ensure this main focus for the scheme was delivered.

Table 3-2: Leeds HSHAZ Capital Strand – spend performance by project				
	Outturn expenditure	Forecast as of Y1Q4	% of forecast target (RAG)	% of new target
Project 1 47-51 Shopfronts	£0	£37,243	0	-
Project 2 33-45 New Briggate	£300,210	£333,100	92	100
Project 3 47-51 New Briggate	£103,061	£270,000	38	100
Project 4 23-27 New Briggate	£0	£110,581	0	-
Project 5 29-31 New Briggate	£0	£91,350	0	-
Project 6 St. Johns Churchyard	£44,136	£200,000	22	100
Project 7 Public Realm Improvements	£572,590	£0	-	100
Project 8 Community Engagement	£13,851	£100,000	13	100
Project 9 Energy Efficiency Study	£5,928	£10,000	59	100
Project 10 HAZ Officer Costs	£101,294	£147,726	69	100
Project 12 Terrazzo Pavement Replacement	£29,559	£0	-	100
Project 13 Listing and Listing Enhancement	£0	£0	0	0
HE Grant (sub-total)	£1,170,628	£1,300,000	90	100
<i>LA Funding</i>	£1,062,670	£1,500,000	71	100
<i>Other match funding</i>	£83,131	-		100
Total	£2,316,429	£2,800,000	83	100

Note: Assessment status is green for <=100%, 100%<amber>=110% and red for >110%

Note: The latest scheme plan has a number of outputs linked to Project 13 but no costs. It is assumed that these costs have been incorporated into other cost lines such as Project 10.

Leeds HSHAZ underwent significant change over its duration, with many outputs both introduced and removed from the scheme.

The public realm improvements saw a total of 6,230 square metres of restoration along the Terrazzo Pavement outside the Grand Arcade. This space encourages people to spend longer in New Briggate and provides businesses with opportunity to spill out onto the high street. At the completion of the Leeds HSHAZ, the public realm works were the largest project delivered and arguably the flagship project for the scheme.

The number of historic buildings repaired came in below the targeted figure, with only half these works delivered. No shopfronts were restored or reinstated. However, the shopfront works at 33-45 New Briggate (Project 2) and 47-51 New Bridggate (Project 3) were completed in May 2024 with the remaining grant funding provided by Leeds City Council. These works enhanced two

shopfronts, although the outputs are not counted for within the scheme plan as it finished outside the HSHAZ timeline.

While consultation events were not held as expected in New Briggate (actual performance of 0 compared to the targeted 4 events), the engagement events and public events exceeded the original targeted number. There were seven engagement events or activities held with the local community compared to the original target of just one and 28 public events were held, compared to 25. These events included the Heritage Skills Fair, which also included a designated HSHAZ stall, for the local community to further understand the works delivered through the HSHAZ programme and to encourage an increased interest in traditional skills, securing the longevity of these restoration methods.

A variety of outputs were introduced to the scheme over the four years, including five amended list entries, 12 boards/displays, three research studies and a feasibility study.

Table 3-3: Leeds HSHAZ Capital Strand – output performance				
	Achieved outputs	Forecast as of Y1Q4	% of forecast target (RAG)	% of new target
Number of historic building or heritage asset repaired/conserved	2	3	68	50
Number of historic shopfronts restored or reinstated	0	4	0	0
Public realm area improved (sqm)	6230	1	6230	96
Number of amended list entries	5	-		100
Number of guides/heritage trails	3	-		100
Number of boards/displays	12	-		100
Number or heritage/archaeological research studies	3	-		100
Number of artworks/installations	0	1	0	0
Number of feasibility studies	1	-		100
Number of supplementary planning or design guidance	0	1	0	0
Number of engagement events/activities (including online)	7	-		88
Number of public events/activities (e.g. open day)	28	-		97

Note: Assessment status is green for <=100%, amber for 65-100%, and red for <65%

3.3 Cultural strand

As stated above, the evaluation of the cultural strand performance is made difficult by a lack of information in terms of original targets and expected spend.

The overall spend for the cultural strand was over and above that of the forecast expenditure, with an additional seven projects introduced to the cultural strand from the first available cultural scheme plan.

Table 3-4: Leeds HSHAZ Cultural Strand – spend performance			
	Outturn expenditure	Forecast as of Y2Q2	% of forecast target (RAG)
Cultural strand			
Project 1 Hidden History of New Briggate	£3,453	£3,544	97
Project 2 Commissioned Artists	£52,068	£0	
Project 3 Drawing Time Commissions	£5,115	£0	
Project 4 Additional Activities	£17,725	£0	
Project 5 Sounds of New Briggate	£6,891	£0	
Project 6 Take Away Art	£8,090	£0	
Project 7 Highstreet Publication	£4,850	£0	
Project 8 Promotion and Coordination	£21,583	£0	
HE Grant	£119,775	£3,544	3,380
<i>LA Funding</i>	£0	£0	
<i>Other match funding</i>	£0	£0	
Total	£119,775	£3,544	3,380

Note: Assessment status is green for <=100%, 100%<amber>=110% and red for >110%

Many of the output targets for the cultural strand were met, including exhibition open days, training sessions to volunteers and other professional training activities.

Several of the outputs fell slightly short of their intended event targets, some of which were ambitious. However, it should be noted that attendance at these events was particularly high with a total audience of around 70,000 to the artworks, engagement events and public events. This level of attendance was above a number of other HSHAZ schemes assessed as part of this case study review. Locally, the cultural strand has been seen as a success due to the participant and attendance figures to these events.

Table 3-5: Leeds HSHAZ Cultural Strand – Output performance			
	Achieved outputs	Forecast as of Y2Q2	% of forecast target (RAG)
Cultural Strand			
Number of artworks / installations	14	15	93
Number of artists in residence	118	138	86
Number of exhibition open days	1	1	100
Number of town guides/heritage trails	20	25	80
Number of engagement events/activities	54	72	75
Number of public events/activities	7	9	75
Number of school educational event/activities	3	5	60
Number of training sessions provided to volunteers	3	3	100
Number of other professional training activities	7	7	100

Note: Assessment status is green for <=100%, amber for 65-100%, and red for <65%

Note: There was an error in the final scheme plan therefore, AMION have manually added the outputs from each project.

4 Value for money

A value for money assessment has been undertaken in line with HM Treasury Green Book, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Appraisal Guide, and relevant departmental guidance such as the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Capital and Heritage Framework. As set out within the MHCLG Appraisal Guide, projects should be appraised based on a **Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)**³.

Monetised costs and benefits from over the HSHAZ programme have been converted to 2024/25 prices using the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflators. As all benefits and costs have been inserted in Year 0 with appropriate 2024/25 values applied, there is no discounting required in the analysis. Zero optimism bias has been applied as the costs are known and have been expended. Additionally, no optimism bias has been applied to the benefits as the analysis is based on actual outputs. However, the uncertainty in any values is explained.

for regeneration through capital projects and image/culture:

- **Amenity (capital strand):** Consistent with the MHCLG Appraisal Guide, new open spaces in an urban environment have an economic benefit of £128,658 per hectare per annum (2024/25 prices). It has been assumed that 10% of the public realm delivered as part of the programme are new open spaces. In line with recent appraisals, 50% of per hectare value (£64,329) has been applied to remainder of the public realm which relates to improvements of existing spaces.
- **Labour supply (capital and cultural strand):** There was no new commercial space delivered as part of the capital strand to generate new employment. The artists into residence in the cultural strand have been converted into Full-Time Equivalent jobs based on the number of days supported. The number of jobs created have been calculated using employment densities and in line with MHCLG guidance, a local GVA per worker figure is applied to the jobs taken up by new entrants. In line with guidance, it is assumed 10% of jobs will be occupied by new entrants and there will be a 40% welfare impact for these jobs with the benefit experienced across five years.
- **Wellbeing benefits from new employment (capital and cultural strand):** Investment is likely to generate permanent employment opportunities onsite, which are known to have a positive impact on individuals' wellbeing when moving from unemployment into employment. Values from Green Book's Supplementary Wellbeing Guidance have been applied to the new entrants.
- **Cultural use (capital and cultural strand):** As set out in the Culture and Heritage Capital Evidence Bank, which is cited in the Green Book Wellbeing Guidance, these benefits relate to the willingness to pay of local residents to attend cultural events and assets. This value has been applied to the attendees to engagement and cultural activities, as well as forecasted attendees to artworks/installations.

³ The BCR can be interpreted as the estimated level of benefit per £1 of cost. It is used as the core element in the measure of Value for Money (VfM) when interventions involve a net cost to the public sector.

- **Heritage use and non-use – historic buildings conserved (capital strand):** Use and non-use benefits from the historic buildings or heritage assets repaired/conserved have been estimated using benefit transfer approaches from the DCMS Cultural and Heritage Capital Evidence Bank. ‘The Economic Value of Heritage: A Benefit Transfer Study’ considered use and non-use values from works to improve the maintenance and conservation of historic buildings in various cities, a similar initiative to the historic building conservation works in the HSHAZ programme. We have applied the use value to the estimated footfall in each HSHAZ from the mobile phone data and the non-use value to residents in the local authority (minus the users).
- **Heritage use and non-use – shopfront improvements (capital strand):** The restoration and improvement of historic high street shopfronts is a key component of the capital element of the HSHAZ programme. This aspect of the programme cannot be accurately valued using a benefits transfer approach in which the use and non-use economic benefit findings of an existing similar study, for example from the DCMS Evidence Bank, would be applied. For this reason, AMION has undertaken a bespoke contingent valuation and benefits transfer study as set out within the next section to assess the use and non-use economic benefits attributed to the restoration and improvement of historic high street shopfronts delivered across England through the HSHAZ programme. However, this benefit was not included for Leeds as the shopfront improvements were not delivered in line with the HSHAZ timescales.
- **Wellbeing benefits from volunteering (capital and cultural strand):** As set out in the Green Book Supplementary Guidance for Wellbeing, volunteering is associated with enhanced wellbeing, with the value estimated using the subjective wellbeing valuation approach cited in this government guidance. The core from the Wellbeing guidance has been applied to the volunteer hours.
- **Wellbeing benefits from education and social programmes (capital and cultural strand):** The Green Book Supplementary Guidance for Wellbeing shows that life satisfaction improves based on participation in education and social development programmes. The core value from the Wellbeing guidance has been applied to attendees at education events and training sessions.
- **Active mode (capital strand)⁴:** The interpretation boards and digital displays will deliver wayfinding benefits for residents and visitors which can be measured using Department for Transport guidance. The benefits arising from these improvements have been measured using the DfT Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit over a 30-year appraisal period. The visitors to the enhanced area have been calculated based on the mobile phone footfall data.
- **Strategy development (capital strand):** There has been substantial resource allocated to the wide range of feasibility, research, heritage and conservation management studies. Our assessment has assumed that future development studies are likely to at least deliver benefits in line with their costs, given that they have been led by local partners in line with need.

⁴ The active mode benefits have been monetised for the capital strand based on the delivery of enhanced public realm and permanent installation boards/digital displays. The interpretation displays from the cultural strand are assumed to be temporary and therefore, has formed part of the non-monetised assessment

- **Distributional benefits (capital and cultural strand):** The approach used to calculate distributional effects is that set out in the HM Treasury Green Book, based on equivalised disposable household income and welfare weights (the estimate of the marginal utility of income). The Green Book distributional weighting framework is constructed using data from the DWP Households Below Average Income (HBAI) dataset. For Leeds, there is a distributional weight of 1.1:1.

The monetised benefits from the capital and cultural strand are shown below. The main capital strand benefits arise from the heritage benefits from historic buildings conserved along with the amenity and active mode benefits from the main public realm scheme. The heritage benefits could have been substantially higher if the scheme delivered the series of historic shopfront improvement works were delivered in line with HSHAZ timescales and could therefore, be counted as an output from the scheme.

The cultural strand benefits arise from strong attendance figures to the various events delivered during the HSHAZ programme.

	Capital strand	Cultural strand	Total Leeds HSHAZ
Amenity	£502	-	£502
Labour supply	-	£3	£3
Wellbeing from employment	-	£1	£1
Heritage Use	£251	-	£251
Heritage Non-Use	£1,413	-	£1,413
Cultural use	£17	£323	£340
Wellbeing from education	£31	£4	£35
Wellbeing from volunteering	£1	£4	£5
Active mode	£450	-	£450
Strategy development	£75	-	£75
Distributional	£474	£59	£533
Total benefits	£3,186	£394	£3,579

The below table demonstrates the results on the cost-benefit analysis. Leeds HSHAZ is assessed to have an **overall BCR of 1.20:1**, considered ‘**acceptable**’ value for money ($1.0:1 < \text{BCR} < 1.5:1$). The cultural strand has a BCR of 2.99:1 and the capital strand has a BCR of 1.12:1.

Table 4-2: Leeds HSHAZ – Evaluation Summary Table

	Capital strand	Cultural strand	Total Leeds HSHAZ
A. Present Value Benefits (£m)	£3.19	£0.39	£3.58
B. Present Value Costs (£m)	£2.83	£0.13	£2.97
C. Net Present Social Value (A-B)	£0.35	£0.26	£0.61
D. BCR (A)/B)	1.12:1	2.99:1	1.20:1
E. VfM category	Acceptable	High	Acceptable

We have also considered the following non-monetisable benefits using a seven-point scale from ‘large adverse to large significant’ within the MHCLG Appraisal Guide. These non-monetised benefits include:

- **Legacy impacts (including delayed shopfront schemes)** – large beneficial (large benefit likely to materially impact on VfM)
- **Image and community perceptions** – moderate beneficial (important benefit but will not on its own significantly impact on VFM)
- **Cultural sector development** – slight beneficial (Small benefit unlikely to have material impact on VFM)

In conclusion, the overall Leeds HSHAZ project is most likely to represent **‘acceptable’ value for money** based on the monetised BCR and the non-monetised benefit assessment. However, the scheme could reach medium value for money if legacy impacts are continued over the long-term by stimulating further shopfront improvement works and a co-created cultural programme with residents and creatives. A review of the cultural programme indicated that the long-term social outcomes, that have been shaped and influenced by culture and creativity, define a legacy much bigger than the project’s aim in the recovery and long-term sustainability of the high street post-COVID-19.

5 Insights, lessons learned, and legacy impacts

As set out in the Purpose of the Case Study section, this document is not an evaluation of the Leeds HSHAZ scheme. Its main purpose is to review achieved outputs, assess likely value for money, and identify successes and challenges arising from a facilitated workshop.

5.1 Key successes

HSHAZ funding was used to improve the public realm along New Briggate including replacement of the existing, heavily damaged, Terrazzo pavement outside the Grand Arcade. The removal of bus stops, widening of pavements, installation of benches and trees, introduction of new cycle lanes and York stone surfacing have significantly **improved the pedestrian experience and have transformed New Briggate from an area that was dominated by traffic, noise and movement to a welcoming pedestrian environment**. In addition, street clutter such as signage and bins have been reduced.

HSHAZ funded works include 33-45 New Briggate, the former Central Hotel, a block of Victorian properties that formed a key priority for improvement. The block occupies a key site opposite the Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera North and is immediately adjacent to a pedestrian entrance leading to St John's Churchyard. 33-45 has previously suffered from poor maintenance, was in deteriorating condition and had suffered unauthorised works including inappropriate and unsympathetic shopfront signage and window details. Although finished just after the HSHAZ programme, the Historic England funding enabled funded repairs to the building fabric and reinstatement of the historic shopfront.

Creative methods were used to successfully deliver the cultural strand of the New Briggate HSHAZ programme. These included walking tours with interactive elements such as quizzes to successfully engage the public and highlight the historic environment in an innovative and accessible way. The **collective and collaborative efforts of the New Briggate Cultural Consortium saw the delivery of an immersive and diverse cultural strand**, with a collection of take-home art available for residents and visitors.

The capital and community engagement strands were well-integrated as a result of being managed by the same officer and whilst the cultural programme was managed by a third party, it was still closely coordinated with the other delivery strands.

5.2 Challenges

A challenge faced by the Leeds HSHAZ was **neighbouring businesses undertaking unauthorised works** such as regulatory shop front signage. A lack of maintenance of funded projects has also had the potential to restrict future grant funding along with wider issues such as anti-social behaviour in the area deterring further investment. These challenges alter the streetscape and perception of New Briggate and deter from the positive works delivered by the HSHAZ scheme.

Personnel change and staff absence due to sickness within the delivery partners (Leeds Council and East Street Arts) and Historic England had a significant effect on the continuation of delivery, and stagnation of works caused delays in the project. This proved a challenge in the consistency of works delivered and created additional issues for delivery. Although contingency plans were

made and put into effect, the cover for staff took time to be put in place and individuals required time to get up to speed with the project as they were unfamiliar with the scheme to date.

The scheme also faced challenges due to **construction cost inflation, supply chain issues, and financial constraints of property owners**, which led to a reduced scope of works and fewer participating properties. It was also difficult to engage with international/corporate owners of properties where buildings are treated as investment assets and owners were less supportive of investment to benefit local people and businesses.

Some elements of the project were architecturally challenging to deliver, for example the windows on one building were of a special type which absorbed a large proportion of cost. These projects also required an increased amount of resource from the delivery team and specialised expertise which extended the project timescales.

5.3 Legacy impacts

The delivery of the New Briggate HSHAZ has led to other activities and events such as those run by the Civic Trust and new projects such as resurfacing a partial pedestrianisation and children's play area of Merrion Street and the Gardens.

In terms of community involvement, St John's Church experienced an **increase in the number of volunteers** over the course of the programme.

Encouragement of future initiatives similar to those of the HSHAZ are also supported by the publishing of the new Design and Maintenance Guide. For example, **shops in and around New Briggate have since invested in their own frontages with designs similar to those delivered by the HSHAZ shop fronts**. The HSHAZ projects have had influence in the surrounding area and have inspired, and will continue to inspire, local business owners as they realise the potential these frontages can bring. For example, work undertaken within the HSHAZ scheme by the owners of 23-27 New Briggate has since led to further restoration work being undertaken on the property.

5.4 Lessons learned

The importance of engaging with **experienced heritage project teams** to ensure a stable foundation of knowledge to carry out proposed works was realised over the course of the programme. This expertise can also support the confidence of stakeholders and business owners to increase their engagement and buy-in of the programme. Contributing to this is the need for early and continuous engagement with property owners. The establishment of stakeholder relationships are vital for a successful and wide-reaching regeneration programme.

Maintaining flexibility was also important so that the scheme could adapt to unexpected changes that may arise. **This flexibility was somewhat limited due to the nature of funding requirements and the annual budget restrictions**. Simplifying the financial reporting processes to Historic England could enable better project management.

Enhanced peer learning and improving community outreach support could have increased the communication of the project to local residents and stakeholders. Efforts to enhance community engagement were limited due to the transient nature of residents, a lack of engagement from some tenants and the area's undefined community identity.