



London Cultural Improvement Programme

Heritage Change Programme

5. Case studies

5.2 Haringey Museum & Archives

Heritage Change Programme

Pilot Case Study – Haringey Museums and Archives Service

Application of the Key Competencies for the Future self-assessment tool

Background

Bruce Castle Museum and Haringey Archive (Bruce Castle) has like many Heritage Services experienced budget cuts and recent restructuring. There has been a reduction in posts in Archives and Records Management, Front of House, and administration. The Museum and Archive Services will be merged formally to deliver services at Bruce Castle, leaving 5 full-time staff and two part-time.

The London Borough of Haringey is also considering a range of structural changes to its cultural offer and departments, which will impact on Bruce Castle's service delivery. This could potentially result in an alternative governance structure for Bruce Castle such as moving to Trust status.

In addition to these budget cuts and restructuring there has been increased pressure on Bruce Castle to raise commercial income from its existing assets, i.e. the building and venue hire, and to develop existing and identify new income streams. This meant a reassessment of what skills and competencies the staff have and what will be needed from the remaining staff to deliver this.

It also required a review of what assets the Museum and Archive have to offer; a repackaging of services and/ or creation of new fee-paying services. All of this would have to be manageable and achievable through the existing team at Bruce Castle and more than likely, without additional capital investment from the Council.

Why did Bruce Castle turn to the Heritage Change Programme?

Bruce Castle was aware that a review of current income generation practices and the identification of new income streams would be needed. And that to realise these, an independent assessment of current skills and competencies of the service would have to be undertaken that would identify strengths and development areas.

How the HCP tools were applied

The first part of the pilot was a scoping meeting with the Curator, Archivist, and Finance Officer, identifying current areas of best practice in income generations, areas for development, and potential new markets. This formed the basis of a follow up one day workshop with the all key officers with Bruce Castle. This explored current practice, service success, income gaps and new markets, and a facilitated exercise to identify new income streams.

The key areas identified from the workshop where improved revenue could be generated featured:

- room hire
- research fees
- car parking
- commissioning
- education
- special events.

To compliment this, the Heritage Change Programme "Key Competencies for the Future" self-assessment tool was utilised to ascertain individual and service competencies. Five key staff were asked to use the self-assessment tool to rate and explore their overall skills and competencies, not only from their current roles within Bruce Castle, but

also from their previous work and experiences. These were assessed as a whole to provide an overall service competency level in the following five areas:

- business planning
- income development
- partnership working
- technology
- communication.

This resulted in identifying areas of partnership working and communication as being strongest competencies within Bruce Castle. Business planning, income generation, and technology were identified as areas of service and workforce development.

To develop the competency levels in these areas it was recommended that Bruce Castle engage in work shadowing programmes with relevant Heritage Services, i.e Local Authority services that are located in similar socio-economic areas, but have a strong commercial offer. This would provide an opportunity to learn from other organisations successes and to deploy that learning to improve commercial income development opportunities for Bruce Castle.

In addition to work shadowing it was recommended that Bruce Castle seek to widen its relationship base to engage with more third sector organisations and potential new customers. Underpinning this would be formal training in marketing strategies.

Lessons learned from the pilot

This pilot highlighted the challenges faced by a Local Authority Heritage Service in a Grade 1 listed building that is located within an area of comparative socio-economic deprivation.

The staff at Bruce Castle and Haringey Archive are enthusiastic about their service, what they deliver, and are keen to widen their customer base and attract further income into the service. However, the ability to exploit the commercial opportunities of Bruce Castle is challenging due to a number of factors outside the immediate control and influence of the team. The potential market that could be exploited is hindered by socio-economic factors, Bruce Castle being within one of poorest areas within the London Borough of Haringey and Greater London. All things considered, the team have recognised there are a number of areas where they can drive improved revenue and this is now being pursued.

Secondly, the skills and competencies of the team at Bruce Castle could be developed further through work shadowing and increased partnerships. In parallel with this it would be essential that senior management within the wider department would have to provide full support for the team to optimise commercial performance.

To view all the HCP tools

The Heritage Change Programme has a wide range of tools and advice to help you develop your heritage service. For more information and to access the resources go to <http://bit.ly/gcuv6i>.