

Natural Heritage Grant & Communication Research

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)



Overview

This work was commissioned by the Yorkshire and Humber team at Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to:

- Help develop understanding of where the natural heritage grant making process could improve (from enquiry to award); and
- Identify areas that could potentially be strengthened in relation to communication and promotional activities around natural heritage, including the awareness of [Yorkshire's Back Garden \(YBG\)](#) campaign.

Telephone interviews were conducted in February and March 2017 with a range of HLF customers at different points in the application process.

What we did

Interviews were conducted with HLF customers segmented as follows:

- Fallen out of the process after initial enquiry;
- Still in the system, between enquiry and potential application;
- At application stage;
- Awarded a grant.

Findings were presented in a concise summary report, detailing:

- Experiences of enquiry & application process;
- Awareness of the YBG campaign; and
- Preferences for future communication.

Outcomes & added value

Feedback relating to experiences of the enquiry and application process reveals:

- All but one of the interviewees noted how smooth the initial enquiry process was, and the response they received from the local HLF Team was widely praised.
- Areas for improvement include: the online forms (which people often had to reformat offline, with questions sometimes requiring interpretation by HLF staff); and application guidance which was seen as overly detailed.
- A common theme in feedback was the time-consuming nature of the application process (seen as disproportionate to the level of funding) and the level of detailed information needed 'up front' in the application.



Feedback relating to how people would like HLF to communicate with them in future includes:

- A common message from interviewees was a lack of time that they had to take in news and information – with short emails a preference.
- Whilst just over half remarked that they wouldn't want to be sent visualisations like film links, this was often based on a preconception that these films would be lengthy and time-consuming.
- Just over half would appreciate further opportunities to meet the HLF team, in meetings or events - often as a supplement to digital communications around grant applications.

The reporting is being used to help shape the 2017/18 local strategy for nurturing more grant applications and better targeted support.

More information

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