



Big Lottery Fund

Sustaining the benefits of capital funding

Final report

March 2011

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*Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research
Sheffield Hallam University*

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Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This report presents key findings from research on Big Lottery Fund (hereafter BIG) capital funding. The aim of the research is:

To assess the longer term effects of BIG's capital funding and identify the key factors that facilitate sustainable change.

2. The research is not limited to BIG's programmes since 2005, but also includes programmes funded under its predecessor bodies, the New Opportunities Fund, Millennium Commission and Community Fund. This scope is important: it allows the research to consider the impacts of capital funding over a long time period. The research involved three main methods: a survey of grant recipients; case studies; and an analysis of the financial accounts of recipients and rejected organisations.
3. **The focus of the research is on capital funding, and this primarily includes grants made to support the construction and refurbishment of buildings, and the purchase, reclamation and development of land.** BIG's central focus for sustainability is around the lasting impact of projects on communities. In BIG's Intelligent Funding Framework the focus for grant making is around outcomes and lasting impact (on communities). BIG has also commissioned previous research on sustainability, notably the 2007 report *Early Indications of Sustainability at the Big Lottery Fund*. This identified three broad factors which can influence the sustainability of grants: in the planning of grants, in delivery, and through interaction with the external environment.

About Lottery Funded Capital Projects

4. The research focussed on eight different Lottery programmes that included funding for capital projects as a key feature: Millennium Commission; Community Buildings and Assets; Healthy Living Centres; Living Landmarks; New Opportunities for PE and Sport; Medium/Large Projects; and the Scottish Land Fund. Other BIG programmes have made capital grants and these include programmes such as Community Libraries and Reaching Communities.
5. **These programmes often reflect very particular policy and social circumstances in their design.** The following broad types of schemes appear to have been funded: **Iconic and Landmark Projects** for example the Eden Project; **Environmental Reclamation and Regeneration Projects** for example the Heart of the City in Sheffield or the Llanelli Millennium Coastal Park; **Community Buildings** for example the Community Buildings and Assets programmes and support for village halls; **Public Service Facilities** such as Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) and New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES); **Community Ownership** distinct from the Community Buildings type, the Scottish Land Fund provides an example specifically focused on acquisition, development and management of capital assets.

Developing and Managing Capital Grants

6. **Most organisations in receipt of BIG funding for capital projects have given consideration at the planning stage to how the project would be sustainable in the longer term. Similarly, most expect the funding to lead to greater sustainability for their organisation.** A large proportion of survey respondents - 94 per cent - agreed that they had planned for the sustainability of their BIG funded project once the BIG funding period was complete. **Matching funding** may have helped here - 87 per cent of respondents used other sources of funding to support their capital project.
7. The **technical expertise** required to realise capital grants was not a significant issue in terms of support needs. The survey findings show that 88 per cent of respondents agreed that they were able to access the technical expertise necessary to deliver their particular capital project.
8. Findings from the case studies suggest the following:
 - the contribution of BIG support, for instance through Support and Development contracts, was limited relative to the capacity and resources required to realise the overall project
 - the timing of BIG capital grants was often either serendipitous or fortuitous: organisations had identified a need for a project or facility and would have sought funding from other sources if unsuccessful
 - where relevant, case study organisations reflected that the capital grant had supported the construction of a building which was appropriate to its context. A common reflection was that BIG funding had probably increased the (design and construction) quality of the building and that this had contributed to its sustainability (and the local community had a sense of pride in the building).
9. **Stakeholder interviews with BIG stressed the importance of business plans;** and by this not plans simply to secure funding but also those which informed and guided the operation of organisations and the use of buildings. This tended to be reflected in practice in the case studies. However, **case study respondents also reflected on unpredictability: they took the necessary steps to secure the use of the building and this required adapting to changing circumstances.**

Organisational Development

10. The survey suggests that capital grants required or led the majority of organisations increase staffing, volunteers and trustees. More generally, a large proportion of capital projects developed with the support of BIG funding appear to have been sustainable and **led to more sustainable voluntary and community organisations.**
11. **Sustainability for projects and organisations is associated with a range of other project and organisational factors:** funding value, staffing level and income generation. There are three distinct groups that may require more support to make projects sustainable: those applying for larger projects; those organisations which are unstaffed, and those who do not have plans for income generation.
12. The comparative financial account analysis examined the financial performance of funded and rejected organisations under the Community Buildings programme (typically involving community centre or village hall type assets). **The findings highlight the important relationship between sustainability and the ability to generate sufficient revenue to cover costs.** Compared to rejected applicants, funding recipients were less likely to have experienced increased income and expenditure; however they were also more likely to have recorded a surplus. A working hypothesis may be that

successful applicants over extend themselves to secure and deliver funding; and perhaps also that capital grants act (at least of the short period considered) as a far greater drain on resources than they anticipate.

13. **The case study findings point to a range of drivers to sustainability:**

- importance of **revenue** funding to enable the development of capital projects
- understanding that the requirements for **skills** may change over time
- the role of **individuals** was also found to be important.

14. **The research also highlights the importance of organisational development in determining the sustainability of capital projects.** Capital grants have led in many cases to the development of organisational capacity - often as a need to realise the aims of the original project.

Stakeholder Involvement

15. **BIG's previous research on sustainability pointed to the importance of the external environment and engagement with stakeholders.** The survey explored the significance of partnership working to the sustainability of capital projects: the majority of grant holders were planning greater involvement with a local authority and closer working with other voluntary and community sector organisations.

16. The survey did not explore the material significance of these partnerships, for instance the proportion of funding which had been secured from partnership working. Nonetheless the findings reveal quite strongly that the **recipient organisations of capital grants are connected to an array of stakeholder and funder organisations.**

17. These findings were reflected in the case study research. All case study respondents reported on the importance of partnership working and suggested that this had grown since the funding had been secured from BIG. In particular, **partnership with the public sector was most frequently cited as being absolutely crucial to long term sustainability.**

18. There were also some cautionary remarks made in the course of the case study research. Respondents highlighted that **capital projects had been delivered under largely favourable conditions:** a supportive policy stance regarding community facilities and support from public sector bodies to work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector.

Community Participation and Beneficiaries

19. The survey explored respondents' views about the impact of capital projects on local people and areas. It covered the impact of projects on communities and neighbourhoods; local services; and buildings and the environment. The findings show that a majority of organisations reported that their impact had been positive in all three aspects:
 - **communities and neighbourhoods:** 93 per cent of respondents said there were higher levels of community involvement and participation
 - **local services:** 75 per cent of respondents said there were more accessible local services
 - **buildings and the environment:** 89 per cent of respondents said there was a modern and fit for purpose local facility.
20. The case study findings support the survey findings. **Capital grants which were found to be having a greater lasting impact tended to have higher levels of community involvement.** In practice, this was reflected in both the planning and operational stages of projects. However, community involvement was not a simple driver of sustainability on its own.
21. A tension in community involvement was around the commercial stance or otherwise of the capital projects. **Requirements to seek greater commercial revenue were not always seen as necessary by communities.** These tensions, generally, were recognised and needed to be managed.
22. There were both **positive and negative environmental impacts** associated with capital grants made to case study organisations. Positive impacts included improved environment and green space and the replacement of (often old) facilities with high specification new builds with superior environmental credentials. However there were also environmental 'costs' associated with travel to iconic and visitor attractions, energy consumption for new buildings, and the ongoing maintenance of existing sites.

Conclusions

23. The research found that the sustainability and lasting impact of capital grants required a range of factors: organisational development; the availability of external support; supportive local funding institutions; high quality and robust business planning; and the skills required to realise capital projects. **However, there is no ideal mix of these factors, and to go further, there may be risks in being overly prescriptive in defining a fixed set of requirements.** There is merit therefore in considering how **BIG** can fund capital projects which have a level of adaptability or resilience to future challenges.
24. **The nature of impacts from capital projects varied enormously from 'harder' economic impacts around additional jobs and income through to 'softer' impacts around quality of life, environmental quality and community cohesion.** Measurement of outcomes and impacts by the organisations was not undertaken consistently, nor was it an expectation of funders which primarily focused on shorter term project specific outputs.
25. **The impact of capital grants needs to be understood in context and at an appropriate geographic scale.** For example, we found some evidence that new community buildings may have displaced activities previously being undertaken in other buildings.

26. **The survey findings highlight some clear lessons about the ingredients that are likely to lead to sustainable projects and organisations.** In particular they highlight the importance of two factors:

- **income generation and the ability to cover running costs are an important feature of sustainability:** projects that generate income, particularly those where income covers running costs, are more likely to be sustainable and lead to a more sustainable voluntary and community organisation
- **there is a (perhaps obvious) positive relationship between organisational sustainability and impact:** sustainable projects, and organisations that have become more sustainable, are more likely to feel that they have had an impact on local people and local communities.

27. However, **some projects do not of themselves generate income.** The following **lessons** can be drawn from the research.

- **supporting organisational sustainability:** there is a continued need to promote the importance of good business planning and identification of risks in applicant organisations
- **adaptability and resilience:** however, a joint emphasis on sustainability as well as adaptability and resilience may suggest a different emphasis in the design of programmes and in application processes
- **localism and local context:** BIG is a national funder of programmes and this obviously makes it difficult to have an understanding of all local contexts and forms of stakeholder support. There is a limit to how much BIG can or should do to overcome this problem, and the Intelligent Funding Framework provides a basis and balanced approach for appraising stakeholder commitment and local need
- **public funding cuts:** the research did not directly explore the likely implications of public funding cuts on capital projects. Many organisations reflected on this and the pressures it would place organisations under and the longer term use and viability of the capital asset. It is recommended that this issue is monitored by BIG
- **outcomes:** BIG is an outcomes funder and applicant organisations were found to give this sufficient importance at bidding stage (for example in demonstrating need). However, there was little evidence that organisations were routinely collecting, or using, outcomes data to contribute to ongoing project management. As capital grants are typically large and form a significant proportion of funding to organisations, this would appear an appropriate starting point for BIG to work with grant recipients to explore ways in which improved outcomes measurement can contribute to the sustainability of projects.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report presents key findings from research on the sustainability of Big Lottery Fund (hereafter BIG) capital funding. This chapter outlines briefly the focus, scope and conduct of the research into the sustainability of capital grants, and sets out the structure for the remainder of the report.

About the Research

- 1.2. The research was carried out by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University between July and December 2010.
- 1.3. The focus of the research is on capital funding, and this primarily includes grants made to support the construction and refurbishment of buildings; and the purchase, reclamation and development of land. As discussed in this report capital grants are made through a wide range of programmes, for different purposes and for projects of different scales. The research also considered grants which contain capital and revenue elements, for instance where a development post has been supported to help realise the wider aims of a project.
- 1.4. The research is not limited to BIG's programmes since 2005, but also includes programmes funded under its predecessor bodies, the New Opportunities Fund, Millennium Commission and Community Fund. This scope is important: it allows the research to consider the impacts of capital funding over a long time period.

Aims and Research Questions

- 1.5. The aim of the research is:

To assess the longer term effects of BIG's capital funding and identify the key factors that facilitate sustainable change.

- 1.6. The research addresses the following research questions:

- what are the longer term effects of BIG's capital funding, in terms of different types of sustainability?
- were the changes envisaged at the outset of capital projects sustained?
- how did projects develop and evolve over time?
- what unintended outcomes occurred as a result of the capital investment?
- what strategies did organisations use to promote sustainability within projects?
- how has organisational and individual capacity been strengthened as a result of the capital funding?
- what wider factors are necessary for capital facilities projects to become sustainable?
- what are the implications for BIG in developing capital programmes which will lead to longer term impact?

- did the capital projects serve as catalysts for longer term change in communities? (i.e. better community involvement etc)
 - how effective is BIG's current support for sustainability?
- 1.7. Building on previous research we sought to address the research brief by examining the importance of the following four sets of factors:
- **developing and managing capital grants:** the degree to which sustainability was considered at the developmental phases of projects and funding applications; aspects of sustainability; support needs; meeting project objectives
 - **organisational development:** relationships between sustainability and key aspects of organisational development including staffing, governance and financial health
 - **stakeholder involvement:** the role of partnerships in ensuring sustainability; the relative importance of different groups of stakeholders
 - **communities and beneficiaries:** the engagement of users and beneficiaries and the impact this has on longer term sustainability; wider economic, social and environmental impacts of capital grants.
- 1.8. This final set of factors is ultimately the most important and the main indicator of the lasting impact of capital grants.

Rationale

- 1.9. BIG's central focus for sustainability is around the lasting impact of projects on communities. In BIG's Intelligent Funding Framework (IFF) the focus for grant making is around outcomes and lasting impact (on communities). The IFF sees that a range of factors may drive and influence outcomes and lasting impact: capacity building of organisations and individuals; collective working with partners and communities; innovation in terms of meeting an unmet need; and engagement with communities.

Summary of the Methodology

- 1.10. The research considered grants funded by National Lottery programmes from 1994, covering eight programmes with very different objectives. The following methods were used:
- survey of 1600 capital grant recipients sampled from across programmes
 - case studies of 13 capital grants, again from across programmes
 - a comparative financial analysis of capital grant recipients and rejected organisations, to understand whether BIG funding had impacted upon relative financial performance
 - visual methods using photo novella techniques to provide qualitative evidence around the impact of capital grants on the users of projects
 - stakeholder interviews.

- 1.11. Each method is discussed briefly, below.

Survey of capital grants

- 1.12. A postal survey of BIG capital funding recipients was a major feature of the research. The survey was primarily designed to address issues of organisational sustainability and the role of BIG funding in supporting organisations and projects to sustain and improve the activities they deliver to their beneficiaries. Through the survey findings we explored a number of aspects of sustainability:
- how do funding recipients plan for the sustainability of their capital projects?
 - how sustainable are capital projects once they are complete? In particular, do recipient organisations have sufficient income, staff, volunteers and partnerships to sustain the project?
 - how do capital projects affect the sustainability of voluntary sector organisations?
 - what are the impacts of capital projects on people and communities?
- 1.13. From a population of 4,669 unique grants drawn from eleven programmes we generated a sampling frame of 1,585 individual grants (comprising 1264 grants to third sector organisations and 321 grants to public sector bodies). From this a total of 411 responses were received. Following removal of incomplete questionnaires, questionnaires returned as undeliverable and those from organisations which claimed that they had not received capital funding our adjusted sample of 1,266 grants provided 270 valid responses, a response rate of 21.3 percent.
- 1.14. A full technical report for the survey is attached at Annex 1.

Case Studies

- 1.15. Looking across BIG funding programmes it is possible to identify a number of broad categories of schemes which have been funded through capital grants:
- **Iconic and Landmark Projects:** for example the Living Landmarks programme, but also projects within programmes such as the Millennium Commission grant to the Eden Project and generally involving grant commitments of over £10 million
 - **Environmental Reclamation and Regeneration Projects:** typically working in very specific social and economic contexts to support transformative activities. Examples here included the Heart of the City Project in Sheffield, Eden Project, and the Millennium Coastal Path in Llannelli
 - **Community Buildings:** for example the Community Buildings and Assets programmes and the support of village halls
 - **Public Service Facilities:** often managed by a public sector partner but working in close partnership with community groups and individuals. Examples here include Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) and New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES)
 - **Community Ownership:** distinct from the Community Buildings type, the Scottish Land Fund provides an example specifically focused on acquisition, development and management of capital assets.
- 1.16. These broad categories provided a framework for sampling the case studies. Other criteria for selection included geography (case studies in all four countries); size of

grant; and type of organisation (voluntary/ community or public sector). Case studies were also 'clustered' in order to maximise the impact of resources available for fieldwork.

- 1.17. Thirteen case studies were carried out across five different Lottery programmes, as outlined in Table 1.1, below.

Table 1.1: Case Studies

Lottery Programme	Grant	Value £ (approx)	Recipient Organisation	Project
Community Buildings Stage 2 (CB)	Trelander and St Clements Community Hall	0.3m	Trelander and St Clements Community Association	Phase 2 development of Trelander and St Clements Community Buildings, Cornwall
Healthy Living Centres (HLCs)	Co-Operating for Health	1.1m total - 40k capital of which £30k was spent on the Winning Post	Doncaster Primary Care Trust	Development of a network of healthy living projects across Doncaster including the Wining Post Healthy Living Centre in Moorends and Thorne
	Upperthorpe and Netherthorpe Healthy Living Centre	1m	Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe HLC Trust	Redevelopment of three existing buildings to develop a HLC in Sheffield
New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES)	Brannel School Sports Hall	1.2m	Cornwall Council	New build four court sports hall with cricket nets and changing facilities
Millennium Commission (MC)	The Spectrum Centre	2.3m	Greater Shankill Property Development Co	New build sports and entertainments venue in Shankill area of Belfast
	Belfast 2000 - A city with a landscape	2.6m	Belfast City Council	Redevelopment of six urban parks in Belfast
	Millennium Coastal Park	13.75m	Carmarthenshire County Council	Site reclamation and construction of Millennium Coastal Park on former industrial land surrounding LLanelli in Wales
	The Eden Project	46m	Trustees of the Eden Trust	Site reclamation and construction of Eden Project on former industrial land in Cornwall

	Pensilva Century Square Project	Total project cost 1.4m - value of MC grant unknown	St Ive Parish Council	Millennium House - new build multi purpose community facility in Cornwall
	Heart of the City	23m	Sheffield City Council	Redevelopment of Sheffield city centre including public realm works and creation of new office and retail units
	21 st Century Halls for Wales	0.2m*	Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)	Princess Gwenllian Centre: New Build community hall in the town of Kidwelly, in Carmarthenshire, Wales
Scottish Land Fund (SLF)	Community Facilities	0.4m	Dalmally Community Company	Purchase of land on which to develop a sports field and build a new community and sports facility in the village of Dalmally in Argyll and Bute, Scotland
	Gigha Land Steering Community Group	3.6m	Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust	Community buy-out of the Isle of Gigha, in the Scottish Hebrides

*NB this is the amount allocated to the building of the Princess Gwenllian Centre. The Millennium Commission grant to Wales Council for Voluntary Organisations (WCVA) funded the building or refurbishment of 47 village halls in Wales; eight of these were identified in collaboration with WCVA as potential case studies and were contacted with an invitation to participate in the research. In the end only one was able to participate within the timescales of the project. The grant to WCVA was £5.8m.

1.18. The research encompasses a wide range of grants programmes across an extended time period. As such, the case studies are, by their very nature, varied in terms of their scope, activities and outcomes. They are also at different stages in relation to Lottery funding: some case studies relate to Millennium Commission grants awarded over ten years ago and for which work is complete; others are for more recent grants programmes and relate to projects that are work in progress. Thus the nature of fieldwork varied in each case study: according to the nature of the project, and also determined by more pragmatic issues such as the availability of evidence and interview participants. In each case study, a number of core data gathering exercises were carried out:

- analysis of relevant documentation including grants documentation, business plans, annual accounts and project and organisational monitoring and evaluation evidence

- interviews (face-to-face or by telephone) with key stakeholders including those responsible for developing grant applications; those involved in project delivery and management; representatives of partner organisations; and (where possible) project beneficiaries or users
 - collation of visual evidence: most case studies were visited (the exceptions being the Scottish Land Fund case studies and Princess Gwenllian Centre); some provided photographic evidence or brochures and other documentation; and in some visual evidence was gathered using photo novella techniques, discussed at 1.25, below.
- 1.19. Data was gathered and analysed using a common template, an example of which is attached at Annex 3. The template addressed the key research questions identified at 1.6, above.

Analysis of Financial Accounts

- 1.20. The research involved a comparative analysis of the financial accounts of a sample of two different types of organisation:
- those that had received capital funding from BIG
 - those that had applied to BIG for capital funding but been unsuccessful.
- 1.21. The aim of the analysis was to explore a counterfactual scenario in relation to the impact of BIG capital funding on the financial performance/sustainability of recipient organisations. In particular, the analysis addressed the following question:
- Did capital funding result in organisations that demonstrated improved financial performance/sustainability in the five years following receipt of the grant when compared to organisations that did not receive funding despite exhibiting the same motivation?*
- 1.22. To ensure comparability the analysis required the organisations in each sample to share a series of common characteristics. After exploring a range of BIG monitoring data, and following discussions with BIG, a range of criteria from which to select the sample were identified. Organisations were selected on the basis that they:
- were a registered charity
 - had applied to either the Medium or Large Grants programme in 2004 or 2005
 - required funding to construct or refurbish a village hall or community centre.
- 1.23. This process produced a sample of 72 organisations that had received BIG capital funding and 243 organisations that had applied for funding but been unsuccessful.
- 1.24. The analysis of the financial performance of these charities focused on income, expenditure and operating margins, over the period from 2003/2004 through until 2008/09. This is allowed sufficient time after grants were awarded in 2004 and 2005 to observe some change in financial performance.

Photo Novella

- 1.25. Photo elicitation methods were used to complement the insights from the one to one interviews and focus groups with stakeholders and beneficiaries. A 'photo novella' or 'photo story' is a research technique used to document the impressions, opinions and perspectives of diverse groups. One of the key benefits of the technique is that

it addresses a fundamental problem in qualitative research: what researchers or professionals perceive is important may fail to match what the special population thinks is important. Rather than merely capturing other people's views and opinions, as in qualitative interviewing, this technique involves beneficiaries becoming involved in a creative engagement, recording their own perspective and eliciting purer and deeper insights into the beneficiary experience of the product of the investment. Thus it is possible to glean new insights into the impact of the investment and the sustainability of that impact.

- 1.26. The photo novella process involved the issuing of disposable cameras, accompanied by some concise guidance, to a sample of beneficiaries within each relevant case study. The guidance was carefully worded to ensure that beneficiaries were afforded as much flexibility as possible but at the same time ensured that their efforts were focused on their experience of the project and its impact on their lives. Completed cameras were returned to the study team in pre paid envelopes. The developed photos then formed the basis of an interview where participants explored their motivations for taking each photograph with a researcher. Incentive payments (in the form of high street shopping vouchers) were offered to participants over the age of 18.
- 1.27. It was not appropriate to use photo novella techniques in all case studies. There were three groups of case studies where it was not possible to implement this technique:
 - venues where those responsible for running the facilities did not feel that technique was appropriate
 - those where users were mainly 'visitors' and where it was not practical to arrange follow-up interviews (Eden project, parks and open spaces)
 - those which were not visited by the research team (SLF projects, Princess Gwenllian Hall).
- 1.28. Photo Novella was therefore used in five case studies: Trelander Community Buildings, Pensilva Village Hall, Winning Post HLC, Zest HLC, Sheffield 'Heart of the City' project. Evidence arising from use of the Photo Novella technique is interwoven throughout the report. A full report on the findings from Photo Novella is attached at Annex 4.

Programme Manager Interviews

- 1.29. Eight interviews were carried out with programme managers at BIG involved in the management and delivery of Lottery programmes covered by the research. These interviews addressed the rationale and delivery of funding programmes, as well as issues in defining and measuring sustainability. The interviews discussed how sustainability was addressed in different programmes; how approaches evolved over time and from programme to programme; programme specific requirements; and reflections as to whether particular approaches had been more or less successful.

Structure of the Report

- 1.30. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:
 - Chapter 2 outlines the scope and nature of Lottery funding for capital projects
 - Chapter 3 outlines the research findings in relation to developing and managing capital grants
 - Chapter 4 contains findings about relationships between capital grants and organisational development

- Chapter 5 reviews research findings in relation to stakeholder involvement in capital projects
- Chapter 6 discusses the impact of capital projects on communities and beneficiaries
- Chapter 7 outlines the research conclusions and contains recommendations for BIG to consider in ensuring sustainability in future funding programmes
- Annexes 1 - 4 contain a Technical Report for the Survey; case study topic guide; reports on the 13 case studies conducted for the research; and a report on the photo novella evidence.

2. About Lottery Funded Capital Projects

- 2.1. This chapter reviews Lottery funding for capital projects made by BIG and predecessor bodies. It provides an overview of the programmes included in the research, along with a discussion around the Lottery's approach to managing and delivering capital grants programmes. It also reviews existing evidence on the impact and sustainability of Lottery capital programmes, derived through previous research and programme evaluations.

Scope of Programmes and Projects Funded

- 2.2. The research focussed on eight different Lottery programmes that included funding for capital projects as a key feature:
- **Millennium Commission:** funding was provided for a large number of buildings, environmental projects, celebrations and community schemes to mark the millennium
 - **Community Buildings and Assets:** funding was provided through a range of programmes for local community and neighbourhood groups to acquire, build or refurbish buildings for local use
 - **Healthy Living Centres:** funding was provided for 350 Healthy Living Centres across the UK. The aim was to promote good health in its broadest sense, to reduce health inequalities and to improve the health of the most disadvantaged sections of the population
 - **Living Landmarks:** funding was provided for four major projects designed to enhance living and built environments and have a lasting impact on communities
 - **New Opportunities for PE and Sport:** funding was provided for 2,980 PE and sport facilities, ranging from outdoor activity centres to new or refurbished school sports halls
 - **Medium/Large Projects:** voluntary and community organisations were provided with funding for a range of capital projects
 - **Scottish Land Fund:** funding was provided to assist communities to acquire, develop and manage local land or land assets.
- 2.3. Other BIG programmes have made capital grants and these include programmes such as Community Libraries, and Reaching Communities. Information about the timescale, number of projects funded, and total funding allocated is provided in Table 2.1. Where possible a capital-revenue breakdown is provided, where this information was not available a figure for then total funding allocated is provided.

Table 2.1: Overview of funding programmes

Funding Programme	Timescale	Number of Projects	Total Capital Funding	Total Revenue Funding
Millennium Commission	1995-2000	1,679	£2.2 billion ¹	
Community Buildings/Assets²	2003-2010	470	£121 million	£9 million
Healthy Living Centres	1999-2005	252	£200 million	
Living Landmarks	2007	4	£110 million	£11 million
New Opportunities for PE and Sport	2002-2007	1,611	£502 million	
Medium Grants	2004-2005	769	£3.9 million	£27.4 million
Large Grants	2004-2005	2,346	£55 million	£301 million
Scottish Land Fund	2001-2006	262	£12.7 million	£1.6 million

Notes:

¹ This includes a number of very large projects, such as the New Millennium Experience which received £600 million

² This category captures a range of programmes including Community Buildings (Trial, Stage 1 and 2), Community Asset Transfer, and Growing Community Assets

- 2.4. These programmes often reflected very particular policy and social circumstances in their design. Prime examples include the Scottish Land Fund (which sought to contribute to the sustainable development of rural Scotland through enabling communities to acquire, develop and manage local land assets) and Healthy Living Centres (which sought to enhance the health outcomes of residents in deprived communities).

Lottery Approach to Managing Capital Grants Programmes

- 2.5. The approach to the distribution of Lottery Funds and the distribution of funds on behalf of third parties, notably Government departments, has evolved considerably. Since the inception of the Big Lottery Fund a key focus has been on outcomes funding. More recently BIG has developed an Intelligent Funding Framework (IFF) which sets out the importance of the following in its approach to funding:

- outcomes
- lasting impact
- capacity building
- collective working
- innovation
- engagement.

- 2.6. Of these, outcomes and lasting impact are central to the design of programmes.

- 2.7. The distribution of grants for capital funding raises specific technical issues and differences in approaches to managing programmes. For instance aspects specified at the outset of programmes include the application and appraisal process, provision of support and development, the use of revenue development grants and the need for technical appraisal.

- 2.8. BIG has operated both one and two stage application processes across its programmes; but typically two stage processes are used for capital programmes to ensure applicants do not incur disproportionately high costs in applying for capital funding on a competitive basis. Therefore, stage one of a two stage application process may require applicants to provide an outline of a project including cost information, the strategic alignment of the project to the programme's objectives, evidence of delivery capacity and consultation and evidence of likely project beneficiaries. If the applicant is successful at this stage, a more detailed (stage 2) proposal would be requested, including for example a full business plan, a capital project delivery plan and architectural plans. This information could then be subject to full scrutiny including assessment by BIG's in-house Capital Support Unit. Applicants for larger projects are also likely to be visited as part of the appraisal process. The time for developing applications and two rounds of appraisal processes may take up to two years from initial application to award letter for some of the most complex capital projects.
- 2.9. Larger and more complex capital projects are also more likely to involve other funders, and in some programmes this is a requirement: for instance in the Community Buildings programme there was a matching funding requirement of 50 per cent for amounts of over £250 thousand. So for instance, a project costing £350 thousand would require matching funding of £50 thousand. Current programmes are also less likely to fund the very initial feasibility stages of capital projects. In both these examples, the rationale for the requirement for additional funding is that this encourages partner commitment or local fund raising, which may be longer term indicators of sustainability.
- 2.10. The focus of this research is around sustainability in terms of *lasting impact*; although sustainability clearly also has environmental and financial aspects. In terms of environmental sustainability, this has been a key outcome area for capital across BIG programmes. Most applicants address this directly, for example through energy saving or waste-reducing measures. Related to this, BIG, as with the previous Lottery distributors, has given a strong emphasis to design quality in capital projects, with a rationale partly based on better designed buildings being more likely to be sustainable (in all ways). Financial sustainability is explored extensively in application procedures with increasing attention given to the long term business plan for the use of buildings. Together with organisational development, financial sustainability is seen as a key factor behind securing lasting impact.

Findings from Previous Research (including Programme Evaluations)

- 2.11. BIG has commissioned previous research on sustainability, notably the 2007 report *Early Indications of Sustainability at the Big Lottery Fund*. This identified three broad factors which can influence the sustainability of grants:
- planning stage: that early consideration is given to sustainability, the determination of end of grant strategies and planning for mainstreaming
 - delivery stage: the importance of capturing and using knowledge, capacity building, good management and business planning, and performance management
 - interaction with the external environment: notably the fit of a project with local and national strategies, and the importance of partnerships.
- 2.12. Specific programme evaluations have also considered aspects of sustainability. Evaluations highlight the availability of future resources to support both revenue projects and the maintenance of capital projects as a critical issue. This is most often discussed as a potential threat to sustainability, i.e. the potential impacts of a

reduction or loss of (often public sector) funding streams and mainstreaming opportunities on the future ability of projects to provide services.

- 2.13. The linked issue of the availability of staffing is also considered, particularly in the context of service delivery. For instance, the evaluations of the Children's Play Programme (ECOTEC, 2009) and Integrated Children's Centres in Wales (2008) highlight the potential impacts of funding shortages on the level and turnover of staff.
- 2.14. Some evaluations also offer pointers to sustainability. The BIG Report 40, 'Learning from Healthy Living Centres' suggests that the availability of funding (particularly for core functions) is crucial to the sustainability of Healthy Living Centres (HLCs). But other factors are also identified, including
- being designed for sustainability
 - owning a building
 - delivering a mixed portfolio of services
 - close alignment to a statutory agency
 - partnership working
 - skills and capacity for fundraising
 - a supportive policy context and the flexibility to respond to changing policy priorities.
- 2.15. There are clear parallels here with the experiences of HLCs, and indeed other capital grant recipients, studied for this research. The next chapter begins to explore the experiences of capital grant holders by looking at evidence in relation to their approaches to developing and managing capital grants.

3. Developing and Managing Capital Grants

- 3.1. This chapter explores the research findings in relation to the first dimension of sustainability: **developing and managing capital grants**. In this chapter we discuss whether organisations considered sustainability issues at the early stages of projects and funding applications; which factors were considered to be important at this developmental stage; whether organisations had unmet support needs in developing and managing capital grants; and the degree to which the objectives of capital projects have been met. The analysis draws on evidence from three different elements of the research: survey, case studies, and stakeholder interviews.

Early planning for sustainability

- 3.2. As might be anticipated, most organisations which are in receipt of funding from BIG for capital projects have given **early consideration** to how the project would be sustainable in the longer term. A large proportion of survey respondents - 94 per cent - agreed that they had planned for the sustainability of their BIG funded project once the BIG funding period was complete.
- 3.3. A majority of respondents also expected the funding to lead to **greater sustainability** for the organisation. As such they planned to pursue a range of strategies to cover income generation, workforce (paid staff and volunteers) issues, governance and partnership working to ensure that sustainability for the project and the organisation could be achieved.
- 3.4. Sustainability issues have thus formed a key part of preparations and consultations carried out in the **feasibility and development stages** of projects and funding applications. On the Isle of Gigha, for instance, where an SLF grant supported the community buy-out of the island, a feasibility study and business plan were developed with the help of Highlands and Islands Enterprise and there was considerable community debate about the options, mainly through community meetings. The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust (the applicants) wrote a development plan for the area and undertook a master planning exercise for housing. The plan and supporting information were available at an open day, when residents were asked for their views. The strategy received unanimous approval, as did a proposal to consult all residents on all the sites to establish preferences. Each person was asked to vote on those sites they considered most suited, and those least suited, to development. Over half those eligible voted. The final allocation was approved by a clear majority vote at a subsequent meeting of members of the Trust.
- 3.5. This is an example of the significance of consultation for a major development scheme. However, stakeholder interviews with BIG stressed the importance of **business plans**; and by this not plans simply to secure funding but plans which also informed and guided the operation of organisations and the use of buildings and facilities. This tended to be reflected in practice in the case studies. But case study respondents also reflected on unpredictability, and therefore on risk. In some cases organisations had needed to adapt to changing circumstances which had not been anticipated in business plans in order to secure the sustainability of buildings and assets. For example in one case study the original business plan had, for a range of reasons, proved unviable. Steps taken to ensure the sustainability of the facility had included reassessing the market for services and subsequently refocusing activities

(away from sport and youth facilities towards an arts and cultural venue) and expanding the reach of the facility from a very local to city-wide base.

- 3.6. Similarly, in another case study, the Eden project, initial tranches of capital funding for site reclamation and building the attraction were based on projected visitor numbers of 750,000 per year. The actual number of visitors in the first year was 1.7 million. This generated significant strain on site infrastructure, and also on local road networks and as such presented an immediate concern regarding ongoing sustainability. Third and fourth phases of the capital programme have aimed to address long-term sustainability in two ways: first, to develop infrastructure to cope with the excess demand (visitor numbers have continued to exceed 1 million per year) and second, to develop infrastructure to generate income beyond the primary tourism market. This has been aimed particularly at increasing off-peak income and has included the development of an education centre, offices with conference facilities, and a (winter) ice rink.
- 3.7. And a key lesson to emerge from the Heart of the City case study, in Sheffield, is the need for an implementation plan as well as an initial business plan or Masterplan. This is particularly important for complex and transformative capital projects.

Aspects of sustainability

- 3.8. Because of the very different nature of projects funded through capital grants, organisations have taken different approaches to sustainability. Common to all however, are issues of **financial sustainability** and the **use of the buildings or facilities** supported through the capital grant.
- 3.9. In terms of **financial sustainability** it has been important for grant recipients to consider options for ongoing funding. In Doncaster, the PCT devised a sustainability Action Plan for a capital grant which funded the development of a Healthy Living Centre. The plan recommended consideration of:
- support through new external money
 - support from mainstream funding
 - linkages to other new service provision in the area.
- 3.10. The availability of **matching funding** has been crucial. Eighty seven per cent of survey respondents had used other sources of funding to support their capital project. Sources of matching funding varied and included the following:
- 72 per cent had grants from public sector bodies
 - 55 per cent undertook fundraising activities
 - 53 per cent had grants from charitable trusts and foundations
 - 36 per cent drew on their own reserves
 - 18 per cent took out a loan.
- 3.11. There is an issue for the future around the availability of **public sector grant funding**. Survey respondents had typically accessed funding from regeneration programmes such as those provided through EU Structural Funds and Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund. The Structural Funds, for most areas have greatly diminished in scale since 2000-2006, and SRB and subsequent sources of regeneration funding have been phased out. It is unlikely that there will, in the short term at least, be new sources of targeted resources through which organisations will

be able to access match funding and there are indications that public sector revenue funding for capital projects is at risk. There are implications here for BIG, and other funders, in considering the sustainability of capital grants in the future.

- 3.12. In terms of the **sustainable use of buildings and facilities**, grant recipients had taken steps at the planning stages to ensure that capital projects met the needs of potential users. There has been extensive consultation with communities and beneficiaries. In addition, organisations have considered the potential for generating future income. For instance, the Dalmally Community Company, which received an SLF grant to develop sports and community facilities, explicitly considered the potential for income generation in the design of the new community hall. The hall has a large stage, and sophisticated lighting and sound equipment and there is potential to bring visiting theatre companies and orchestras to the facility. The hall also has big commercial kitchens so that it can be used for functions and weddings (which are popularly held at the picturesque local church).
- 3.13. For new buildings and facilities, **environmental sustainability** has also been a consideration. According to the Manager of the Millennium Coastal Park (which received capital funding through the Millennium Commission) sustainability has always been a key consideration. From the beginning very simple things were done to reflect the sustainable ethos. For instance, hardly anything was thrown off site: *"every building demolished on the site was re-used...stone was reused for the roads...industrial ash etc was used to landscape the park"*. Part of the old dock wall was also used to produce seating at various points along the coastal path. At the design stage the team also avoided developments that could cause issues further down the line. For example, formal gardens were included in the initial design for the park but these were subsequently scrapped as the maintenance costs were deemed to be too large and it would have been impossible to maintain them to the same standard. The plans for the project were scaled back from a £45 million development to a £27.5 million one, with sustainability a key factor in this. However, coastal erosion presents a current and ongoing threat to the sustainability of this facility.
- 3.14. **Legal tools** have also been used to help ensure sustainability. In Belfast, deeds of dedication have been put in place to ensure that community parks financed through a Millennium Commission grant remain in community use for at least one hundred years. Other legal tools have provided for public sector resources to assist in the sustainability of capital programmes. In Wales, a legal agreement has been put in place to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the Millennium Coastal Park by Carmarthenshire County Council; and in Sheffield, a clause added to the legal transfer of the building funded through the HLC programme ensures that the building will revert to council ownership if it is no longer used as a Healthy Living Centre.

Support Needs

- 3.15. The research also explored whether organisations required support in planning for the sustainability of capital projects, either from BIG or through other organisations/individuals with professional and/or technical expertise. It appears that, overall, **there has not been an unmet need for support**.
- 3.16. The **technical expertise** required to realise capital grants was not a significant issue for research participants. For larger projects in particular, technical support has been accessed through the engagement of professional planners and developers. For the Millennium Coastal Park, for instance, an environmental impact study was undertaken as the estuary is a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). The study was conducted by consultants, stretched to 1,000 pages and had to prove that the development was beneficial. There was also an extensive public consultation period: the grant was awarded in 1995 but the work did not commence until 1997 due to the

level of consultation that was carried out. A forum group of 100 members was also established for the development stage and this acted as a sounding board for ideas and concerns.

- 3.17. Across all organisations, the survey findings show that 88 per cent of respondents **agreed that they were able to access the technical expertise necessary to deliver their particular capital project**. This is a very positive finding, although there are organisations which still find support invaluable: typically those without experience of capital projects and with limited access to specialist support. One issue that was highlighted in some of the smaller case study organisations was a need for support with business planning, particularly in relation to the pricing of goods and services.
- 3.18. Similarly, we did not in general uncover an unmet demand for additional **support from BIG**. The contribution of BIG support, for instance through Support and Development contracts, was for most organisations limited relative to the capacity and resources required to realise the overall project. However it is important to note that the research is retrospective, and many of the case studies in particular relate to Millennium Commission grants. BIG support processes may have been more significant in later grants programmes. Furthermore, support needs at the time may have been perceived to be (and actually been) very great (for instance the technical demands placed on management committees of voluntary organisations), but with hindsight may have seem more surmountable.

Meeting project objectives

- 3.19. For the majority of organisations, the capital grant provided money for the development of a new or improved building or facilities. Often these were the result of long term planning. Research participants suggested that **the timing of BIG capital grants was often either serendipitous or fortuitous**: organisations had identified a need for a project or facility and would have sought funding from other sources if unsuccessful. Nonetheless, organisations reflected that without BIG capital funding they would not have realised their project aims within the same timescale as had been facilitated by the BIG grant. The Head of Brannel School, a recipient of funding under the NOPES programme commented:

"There's no way the authority (LEA) would have had the amount of money to do it. To find £1.2m for just one single sports facility when they've got primary schools with leaky roofs - they would never have justified it. We've gone on for years with the poor facilities we had so we wouldn't have even dared to dream up the idea if the BIG funding hadn't turned up".

- 3.20. Where relevant, case study organisations reflected that the capital grant had supported the **construction or refurbishment of a building which was appropriate to its context**. In Doncaster, for instance, capital funding under the HLC programme has been used to bring a redundant building back into use. The building is being used by different groups and is now much more accessible than it had previously been. It has a disabled ramp (paid for by a BIG capital grant). Other improvements have also been made using other funds including improvements to the car park, lighting and security. New services have been established and many activities run from the building, including a Memory Group which now uses the building three times a week. This Group would not have come to the building if the front rooms had not been refurbished using the capital grant. There is no other suitable venue for this group in the locality.
- 3.21. A common reflection was that BIG funding had probably increased the (design and construction) quality of the building and that this had contributed to its sustainability.

There was also commonly a sense of pride in the building amongst users and local community members.

Figure 3.1: Brannel Sports Centre



"This is our sports centre. It's a really nice sports hall. It's warmer and it's got a sprung floor and some of the other schools in the area have concrete floors, there's no give and it's not good for your legs. It's good for netball, good for basketball, good for anything really where you're jumping and moving around." (Pupil and sports centre user, Brannel Sports Centre).

- 3.22. However, **the research also found instances where a community had constructed a building which was probably over specified and too big for its setting**. This was reflected in under utilisation of capacity. Thresholds for grant sizes in past programmes may have created a perverse incentive which contributed to this. For example, in one case study there was evidence that the long term financial, management and maintenance implications of a large, and high specification, local facility had not been adequately considered at the outset. The facility is currently operating at 35 per cent capacity, corroborating the views of some local stakeholders that a centre 1/3 of the size could have fulfilled the requirements of the local community. The facility was intended as an asset for the local community but its failure to generate a surplus and the requirement to make up any shortfall through the parish precept (paid by all eligible parishioners whether they use the facility or not) led some stakeholders to comment that the building was more of a liability than an asset. Furthermore, as the building ages, and costs of repairs increase, the burden on the local community is likely to increase.

Summary

- 3.23. This chapter has reviewed the ways in which organisations have addressed sustainability in developing and managing capital grants. Some common issues emerged from the research:
- **consultation and community engagement are important** and across projects were found to be given appropriate significance. Capital projects also leaned themselves in many ways to effective consultation - projects by their nature are visual
 - **the capacity of organisations to realise projects was not found to be a significant issue**; although at the time of development technical issues may seem complex and challenging this is part and parcel of delivering capital projects. BIG support was found to be appropriate
 - **the timing and context of projects are relevant**: capital projects are of course of their time - they are shaped by prevailing funding opportunities and policy contexts. This raises two issues: firstly, the challenge for applicants and BIG is to be able to design projects and programmes, respectively, which look beyond

current agendas; but also the success of some projects may well be difficult to replicate in different funding climates and under different policy agendas.

- 3.24. The next chapter addresses relationships between capital grants and organisational development and the degree to which sustainability of capital projects is linked to sustainability of organisations.

4. Organisational Development

- 4.1. This chapter reflects on relationships between the sustainability of capital projects and organisational development. Three issues are considered: organisational development as an outcome of capital funding; the financial sustainability of organisations; and drivers and barriers to organisational development. The chapter draws on data from the survey, comparative financial analysis and case studies.

Organisational Development as an Outcome of the Funding

- 4.2. The survey data suggest that capital grants led organisations to the following developments:
- **staffing:** 67 per cent of survey respondents planned to increase the total number of employees; 68 per cent planned to recruit new employees with specific skills linked to the project; and 67 per cent planned to train existing employees in skills specific to the project
 - **volunteers:** 81 per cent of survey respondents planned to increase the total number of volunteers; 68 per cent planned to recruit new volunteers with specific skills linked to the project; and 65 per cent planned to train existing volunteers in skills specific to the project
 - **trustees/committee members:** 54 per cent of survey respondents planned to increase the total number of trustees/committee members; 59 per cent planned to recruit new trustees/committee members with specific skills linked to the project; 60 per cent planned to train existing trustees/committee members in skills specific to the project; and 76 per cent planned to recruit more trustees/committee members from the local community and/or service user groups.
- 4.3. The majority of capital projects developed with the support of BIG funding appear to **have been sustainable and have led to more sustainable voluntary and community organisations**. Most survey respondents suggested that their project generates income through activities such as room hire and sales but only half generate sufficient income to cover the costs of running the project. The remainder predominantly rely on donations, fundraising, volunteers and other in-kind support to keep the project on a stable footing financially.
- 4.4. There is some evidence from the survey that **sustainability for projects and organisations is associated with a range of other project and organisational factors**. Project sustainability appears to be associated with funding value, staffing level and income generation:
- **funding value:** the largest value (over £500 thousand) projects were less likely to be sustainable according to respondents than small and medium sized projects (under £500 thousand)
 - **staffing:** projects delivered by organisations that did not employ any paid staff were less likely to be sustainable according to respondents than those delivered by organisations with paid employees

- **income generation:** projects that had generated their own income were more likely to be sustainable than projects that had not. Furthermore, projects where the income generated covered the project's running costs were more likely to be sustainable than projects that did not cover their costs.
- 4.5. These findings suggest that **three quite distinct groups may require more support to make projects sustainable:** those applying for larger projects; those organisations which are unstaffed; and those that do not have plans for income generation.
- 4.6. In terms of the impact of capital funding on organisational development analysis of survey data revealed the following associations:
 - **income size:** capital funding was more likely to have an impact on the sustainability of small (annual income below £100 thousand) and medium (annual income £100 thousand to £500 thousand) organisations than on organisations with larger incomes
 - **funding value:** organisations that delivered medium sized capital projects (value £100 thousand to £500 thousand) were more likely to be more sustainable than those that delivered small (value less than £100 thousand) and large (value more than £500 thousand) projects
 - **staffing:** organisations that did not employ paid staff were more likely to be more sustainable than organisations that did have paid employees
 - **income generation:** organisations with projects that had generated income from independent sources were more likely to be more sustainable than organisations with projects that had not generated any income. Furthermore, organisations with capital projects that had generated sufficient income to cover running costs were more likely to be more sustainable than organisations with projects that had not.
- 4.7. In addition to the above, the data also suggest that organisations that planned for the sustainability of the capital project were more likely to say that the project and the organisation were sustainable. Furthermore, respondents who said their capital project had been sustainable were more likely to say that their organisation was more sustainable as well.

Financial Performance

- 4.8. An analysis of financial accounts was conducted to examine the comparative financial performance of funded and rejected organisations that applied for grants to build or renovate a community centre or village hall type asset in 2004 and 2005. The analysis focussed on income, expenditure and operating margins over the period from 2003/2004 through until 2008/09. This timeframe allowed sufficient time following the award of grants and completion of capital projects to observe any changes in financial performance.
- 4.9. This approach tests the hypothesis that grant funding for capital projects (in this case new or renovated community buildings) creates organisations which demonstrate improved financial performance/sustainability when compared to organisations that did not receive funding despite exhibiting the same motivation. The findings are significant because they assess the financial performance of BIG grant recipients relative to other organisations not in receipt of BIG funding during the period immediately following receipt of grant or rejected application.

Income

4.10. The findings reveal that **organisations that had received capital funding from BIG were less likely to have experienced an increase in income than rejected funding applicants:**

- 57 per cent of funding recipients experienced an increase in income compared to 71 per cent of rejected applicants
- 32 per cent of funding recipients experienced an increase in income of more than 50 per cent compared to 40 per cent of rejected applicants.

Expenditure

4.11. The analysis also shows that **organisations that had received capital funding from BIG were less likely to have experienced an increase in expenditure than rejected funding applicants:**

- 68 per cent of funding recipients experienced an increase in expenditure compared to 80 per cent of rejected applicants
- there were fewer funding recipients with an expenditure of more than £50,000 in 2008/09 compared to 2003/04 (-5 percentage points) but more rejected applicants of that size (+10 percentage points).

Profitability and operating margins

4.12. Both types of organisation (funded and rejected) recorded surpluses in 2003/04 and 2008/09 but that the size of surplus recorded decreased significantly between 2003/04 and 2008/09:

- 81 per cent of funding recipients and 82 per cent of rejected applicants recorded a surplus in 2003/04 but only 68 per cent of funding recipients and 64 per cent of rejected applicants recorded a surplus in 2008/09.

4.13. **A large proportion of both types of organisations experienced a decrease in their operating margin between 2003/04 and 2008/09:** 60 per cent of funding recipients and 59 per cent of rejected applicants recording a decrease in their operating margin between 2003/04 and 2008/09.

4.14. An interesting issue around operating margins is the impact this may have on funding decisions. **Funded recipients were more likely to have recorded an overall surplus** for the 2003/04-2008/09 period than rejected applicants. Furthermore, it shows that funding recipients were more likely have recorded a larger surplus of more than 50 per cent:

- 79 per cent of funding recipients recorded a surplus for the period compared to 71 per cent of rejected applicants
- 25 per cent of funding recipients recorded a surplus for the period of more than 50 per cent compared to 13 per cent of rejected applicants.

The findings highlight **the important relationship between sustainability and the ability to generate sufficient revenue to cover costs:** the data presented here show that although funding recipients were more likely to have recorded a surplus

than rejected applicants, two fifths of this group of funding recipients were unable to generate greater revenues once their project was complete and three-fifths were unable to improve their operating margin. These issues are worthy of further investigation. A working hypothesis may be that successful applicants over extend themselves to secure and deliver funding; and perhaps also that capital grants (at least within the short period considered for this analysis) are a far greater drain on resources than organisations anticipate.

Organisational Development Drivers and Barriers

- 4.15. The case study findings point to a range of drivers and barriers to sustainability. In assessing the significance of different organisational factors, case study respondents reflected on the significance of finance and governance issues, over for example planning.
- 4.16. As outlined above, the **availability of revenue funding** was confirmed by the case studies as crucial to the sustainability of capital projects. An example given was of a NOPES project which was assisted by a Sports and Community Development Co-ordinator to promote a new sports building to potential users, appointed on BIG's recommendation. The role was initially funded by BIG for two years and subsequently extended by the school until 2011. The Co-ordinator has a specific remit around maximising community use of the centre. The post-holder has also worked in close partnership with the NHS Area Health Trainer to encourage local people to engage in sport and exercise. Another key facet of the role is to build the capacity of local teams and groups operating around the centre to become self sustaining. Testimony to both the need and demand for this facility and the effectiveness of the Co-ordinator role is the fact that the centre is fully booked for the majority of the year and could reportedly be filled twice over.
- 4.17. The case studies also highlighted the need for organisations and funders to recognise that **requirements for skills may change over time**, especially from the planning and construction phases to the delivery and operation phases. For a village hall or community facility, this may mean co-opting specialist expertise on to a management committee (perhaps to enhance commercial capacity). In one case study, for example, a local community organisation had been brought in as management agent for a Healthy Living Centre, to strengthen the Centre's capacity for earned income and to support the trustees in effectively running the facility.
- 4.18. For a large iconic or regeneration project it might involve the establishment of quite substantial **cross-agency teams**, and the engagement of different funders, often in creative ways, whilst also engaging users and communities. At the Eden project, for instance, the initial capital funding acted as the base for a range of services to be delivered on site. According to the project manager the site's primary use as a tourist attraction *"is now the tip of the Eden iceberg"* and the facilities have since been used for a range of 'outreach' programmes which have aimed to develop skills across the Cornwall, including the 'Green Foundation' which aims to 'equip Cornish businesses for the low carbon economy' (Green Foundation, 2010).
- 4.19. A number of case studies highlighted the need for **revenue support for skills development**. For instance, in one case study, there was seen to be a lack of local capacity to run a large community facility on a commercial basis. The building was running at less than full capacity and observers remarked that more intensive business support and/or revenue funding towards greater managerial support may have helped the centre get closer to reaching its full potential. This raises issues about **the role of funders in assessing local capacity to sustain capital projects**. One interviewee remarked:

"The fund providers have a responsibility to ensure that the community is not overreaching itself. In the case of a few thousand pounds this is no problem but £1.4m is in a different league altogether! In our case it could be said that we have a monster on our hands and that will be a problem for the foreseeable future both financially and managerially for such a small parish of only 1803 electors".

- 4.20. The **role of human capital was also found to be important**, and again differed for different scales of projects. Several case studies highlighted the significance of individuals at various stages in the process. In several case studies key individuals had been the driving force behind the development of schemes, from the original idea to application for funding and overseeing the building of the facility. In Sheffield, for instance, strong local leadership along with access to funding streams and favourable economic and property markets, was seen to be central to the successful development and implementation of the Heart of the City project.
- 4.21. Other case studies suggested that the existence of a pool of committed volunteers was an important factor in sustainability. In Bidwell, interviewees remarked that having a group of volunteers supported succession when key individuals leave. One interviewee commented *"it's easy to replace them with other people bristling with energy"*. All respondents felt that the extent of local volunteering was key in moving the village hall towards sustainability. Related to this was the importance of enthusiastic individuals to champion causes and interests and to gather support from the wider community. It was noted that all trustees *"muck in"* and help and there was a feeling that the hall had brought the community together. Whilst the hall had provided the catalyst for community action, interviewees were also clear that the actions of individuals was also crucial in setting up activities, clubs and groups and capitalising on the facilities on offer.

Summary

- 4.22. This chapter has looked at the impacts of capital grants on the development of organisations in receipt of funding. It raises a series of issues for BIG:
- **BIG capital grants appear to have played an important part in making organisations more sustainable.** They have served to catalyse engagement in organisations and where appropriate draw in greater volunteer participation
 - **organisational development is complex and appears to vary considerably across three principal groups:** those applying for larger projects; those organisations which are unstaffed, and those who do not have plans for income generation
 - **there is also evidence that realising capital grants places considerable medium term (three-five years) financial pressures on organisations as margins (income less expenditure) often fall**
 - **there were found to be issues of scale with some evidence that capital projects were either too large or too small.** In the first case, this may result in a community managing an asset which cannot be fully utilised; and in the latter case, further funding may be required to achieve the appropriate scale.
- 4.23. The next chapter reviews the involvement of stakeholders in capital projects.

5. Stakeholder Involvement

- 5.1. This chapter looks at how stakeholders have been engaged in capital projects and the impact that this has had on sustainability. It draws on findings from the survey and case studies.

The extent of stakeholder engagement

- 5.2. BIG's previous research on sustainability has pointed to the importance of the external environment and engagement with stakeholders¹. Achieving a good fit with national and local strategies and developing relationships with partners have been identified as important early indicators of sustainability across all BIG grants. These findings were confirmed in this research in relation to capital programmes. Relationships with stakeholders, and ensuring that capital projects were planned and delivered in the context of wider strategies, have contributed to the sustainability of capital grants.
- 5.3. The survey explored the significance of partnership working to the sustainability of capital projects. The main findings are:
- 65 per cent planned to work more closely with the local authority
 - 49 per cent planned to work more closely with local public sector health bodies
 - 81 per cent planned to work more closely with local schools and youth groups
 - 92 per cent planned to work more closely with local neighbourhood and community groups
 - 85 per cent planned to work more closely with local voluntary sector organisations.
- 5.4. The survey did not explore the material significance of these partnerships, for instance the proportion of funding which had been secured from partnership working. Nonetheless the findings reveal quite strongly that the **recipient organisations of capital grants are connected to an array of stakeholder and funder organisations**.

Stakeholder involvement and sustainability

- 5.5. These findings are reflected in the case study research. All case study respondents reported on the importance of partnership working and that this had increased since the funding had been secured from BIG. Case studies suggest that these **relationships have provided resources to ensure ongoing sustainability of projects**. In particular, the role of these partnerships was seen to be of political, strategic and financial significance.
- 5.6. In Trelander and St Clements, for instance, widespread consultation with local communities and beneficiaries was undertaken in the planning stages of a capital project to provide sports facilities at a local community centre. But one of the most important facets of the consultation programme was a survey of 89 agencies working

¹ Big Lottery Fund Research Issue 35 'Early indications of sustainability at the Big Lottery Fund'

in and around Truro to assess wider support and demand for these facilities. The survey obtained a 56 per cent response rate, and 46 per cent of respondents expressed an interest in using such a facility. The survey also sought to assess what potential users might expect from such a facility. The findings from this survey directly informed the decision to bid for funding to extend the community hall and subsequent decisions to opt for a flexible space with a high quality floor (as a direct response to the high levels of demand for such a space from dance and performing arts groups locally). The sports hall has significantly increased opportunities for the local uptake of indoor sports and exercise classes.

Figure 5.1: Yoga Class at Trelander and St Clements



I love the space it is perfect for yoga.

- 5.7. An important aspect of the Trelander and St Clements Community Hall is its links to local statutory services. The majority of the funding for the building came from Cornwall County Council's Children, Young People and Family Services (CYPFS) which contributed £250,000 to deliver a Sure Start Children's Centre with ancillary community space. This funding was supplemented by further contributions from a local Housing Association and the District Council. CYPFS run several sessions in the community centre and cover 60 per cent of its running costs. The anchoring of the community facilities to a Children's Centre run by a statutory service provider has ensured its fit with local strategies and priorities and provided financial and administrative resources to help sustainability. The partnerships established with Carrick Housing, Carrick Council, and CYPFS remain strong and provide the Residents Association which manages the centre with a strong support network of local agencies to draw upon. However, ongoing sustainability may be dependent on the continued availability of these resources.
- 5.8. At the Eden project, a lot of initial work was put into linking with, and helping to develop, local and regional partnerships and strategies, and as a result the project gained strong support from local authorities, the Regional Development Agency (which contributed significant funding) and other county and regional-level organisations, such as VisitCornwall and South West Tourism. As the largest visitor attraction in Cornwall it was also important for local and regional governance organisations to incorporate the project within their strategies.
- 5.9. Case studies also provided examples of the development of **commercial relationships** with a view to increasing sources of earned income. One illustration is that of the Spectrum Centre in Belfast, which had developed relationships with promoters and artists with a view to attracting a regular programme of events to the facility, thus helping to sustain a building which needed a greater income than that which was available solely through local community use.
- 5.10. They also highlighted the **importance of revenue funding in enabling partnerships to develop**. Good examples were found with respect to NOPES and HLCs (and the role of development work), in the large landmark and iconic projects

(in building project delivery capacity and bringing together public-private partnerships) and in the smaller community based projects (in assisting operations and supporting local community working).

- 5.11. However, there were also some cautionary remarks made in the course of the case study research. Respondents highlighted that **capital projects had been delivered under largely favourable conditions**: a supportive policy stance regarding community facilities and support from public sector bodies to work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector. Respondents suggested that the prospect of cuts, albeit unclear in scale and scope at a local level, called into question many operations and activities. This may not threaten the viability of the capital asset but would call for a change in direction. Similarly, the NOPES and HLC projects had flourished in a climate of mainstreaming and support to community-based delivery. Funding cuts were now likely to jeopardise opportunities for mainstreaming, and there were concerns that facilities would not be sustainable without local authority and PCT contracts.

Summary

- 5.12. This chapter has assessed the importance of stakeholder relationships to the sustainability of capital grants. It has revealed that
- partnerships with other organisations and funders, particularly those in the public sector, have been revealed to be **critical sources of financial support** and other resources which have helped to ensure the sustainability of capital programmes
 - however, the **range and extent of stakeholder engagement varies** according to the nature of the capital project and organisation; there is no 'set' list of required partners
 - but most capital projects had been developed in a context which was supportive to engagement with (particularly statutory sector) partners; **restrictions on the availability of revenue funding to support stakeholder engagement** may re-shape stakeholder relations in the future.
- 5.13. The next chapter looks at the role of communities and beneficiaries in the sustainability of capital projects, and reviews evidence on the ways in which capital projects have impacted on wider social, economic and environmental outcomes.

6. Communities and Beneficiaries

- 6.1. This chapter explores relationships between capital projects and their communities and beneficiaries. Two aspects are reviewed: first the impact of capital projects on local residents and beneficiaries; and second relationships between the involvement of local people and sustainability. The chapter draws on evidence from the survey and case studies.

Impact on local people and areas

- 6.2. The survey explored respondents' views about the impact of capital projects on local people and areas. It covered the impact of projects on communities and neighbourhoods, local services, and buildings and the environment. The findings show that a majority of organisations reported that their impact had been positive in all three aspects.
- 6.3. In relation to **communities and neighbourhoods**: 93 per cent of respondents said there were higher levels of community involvement and participation, 79 per cent said the area was a better place to live, and 61 per cent said local people get on better together.
- 6.4. In Kidwelly, several interviewees remarked that the hall had brought people together and into contact with each other when previously they would not have known each other. The hall was considered a good place for meeting new people and increasing social interaction. It was very much seen by respondents as an intergenerational space which brings elderly and younger generations into contact with each other. For instance, one respondent, a local resident, noted how elderly users would participate in indoor bowls or the luncheon club and bring their grandchildren along to partake in other activities at the same time. The easy access and multi-purpose facilities were seen to have helped facilitate this.

"Without the hall we wouldn't have anywhere all the organisations and clubs would have to operate outside the town. It's made such a difference and to be honest I never thought it would. It's been worth every penny" (Community Hall user).

- 6.5. There were similarly positive responses in relation to the impact of capital grants on **local services**: 75 per cent of respondents said there were more accessible local services and 78 per cent said there were better quality local services available than had been the case prior to the capital project.

Figure 6.1: Doncaster Winning Post Health Living Centre



- 6.6. The daughter of one of the members of the Doncaster Winning Post Memory Group discussed the facilities provided by the Lottery capital grant (pictured in the Figure 6.1, above): *"Its cosy and the room is ideal for people with memory problems as access is direct into the room and it is self contained. This reduces the risk of people wandering around the building"*. She commented in particular that the environment was safe. She also appreciated the fact that the facility was within easy access of her home and reflected that without the facility her mother would have to travel further afield to enjoy the support and social benefits offered by the group. These views were echoed by other interviewees.
- 6.7. And in relation to **buildings and the environment**: 89 per cent of respondents said there was a modern and fit for purpose local facility and 73 per cent said the local environment had improved.
- 6.8. The grant for the Millennium Coastal Park in Carmarthenshire was used for a plethora of activities associated with the creation of extensive parkland but was essentially about the creation of an attractive landscape. The project's strapline 'giving the coast back to the people' reflects the ambition to transform an area of industrial wasteland into a facility for the local community. The land reclamation was primarily intended to be an economic driver for a very deprived area (south Llanelli and Bury Port). Secondary aims for the project included improving the health and well-being of the population and providing opportunities for physical activities alternative to formal sport.
- 6.9. The findings outlined above provide an insight into the overall purported impact of projects supported with capital funding from BIG. The survey also allowed **respondents' views about the impact of the their project to be explored in more detail**, particularly in relation the following two questions:
- are different types of project or organisation more likely to be sustainable?
 - is there a relationship between planning for and achieving sustainability?
- 6.10. The analysis identified a number of project and organisational factors for which there were notable variations in the types of impact reported:
- **staffing (1)**: organisations without paid staff were more likely to report positive impacts on communities and neighbourhoods compared to organisations with paid employees

- **staffing (2):** organisations with paid employees were more likely to report positive impacts on local services compared to organisations with no paid staff
 - **income generation:** organisations that had been able to generate income through their capital project were more likely to report positive impacts on communities and neighbourhoods, local services, and buildings and the environment compared to organisations whose projects did not generate any income.
- 6.11. The survey data also suggest that there is a positive relationship between planning for and achieving sustainability, and the purported impact of projects on local people and local areas:
- **planning for sustainability:** organisations that had planned for the sustainability of their capital project were more likely to report positive impacts on communities and neighbourhoods, local services, and buildings and the environment compared to organisations that did not plan for sustainability
 - **achieving sustainability (projects):** organisations that said the capital project had been sustainable were more likely to report positive impacts on communities and neighbourhoods, local services, and buildings and the environment compared to organisations whose project had not been sustainable
 - **achieving sustainability (organisations):** organisations that said they had become more sustainable as a result of their capital project were more likely to report positive impacts on communities and neighbourhoods, local services, and buildings and the environment compared to organisations that said they were not more sustainable.
- 6.12. Case studies explored the impact of capital grants on wider social, economic and environmental outcomes. Much of this evidence is subjective. However, respondents were keen to highlight the positive impacts of projects on local social, economic and environmental development. Often, impacts related to the provision of improved local facilities, and the opportunities they offered for bringing people together, and engaging people in activities which contributed to healthier lifestyles and community cohesion. One interviewee commented on the impact of a NOPES grant
- "the grant has enabled the school to better understand the needs of the wider community in relation to sports and exercise in particular. It has certainly helped them to identify what works in terms of engaging hard to reach families and other members of the community in not just sport and exercise but in community activities more widely".
- 6.13. In other case study (a HLC) interviewees commented that the biggest impact of the project had been in providing opportunities for social interaction for people from different cultures. The social side of the Centre was seen as very important and 90 per cent of users were reported to have said that they have made friends at the centre. A mix of people use the centre and it is well used by the different ethnic groups in the community. Sessions such as women only swimming have also been used to attract people into the centre that may not use it otherwise. .

Figure 6.2: Bingo at Trelander and St Clements



The community hall
is great!
Bingo is fun, meeting
all different ages from
the estate.

- 6.14. These social impacts were also seen to contribute to improved economic outcomes. In Doncaster, for instance, a refurbished HLC now brings people into the area that did not come before and this brings some economic benefits. For instance, the Memory Group which uses the HLC three times a week has lunches delivered from the local fish and chip shop.
- 6.15. Capital projects have also created training, employment and volunteering opportunities for local people. One community centre had reportedly provided 18 opportunities for local employment.
- 6.16. For larger and iconic projects, the social and economic impacts can be considerable. An external evaluation of the Eden project (Amion 2009) highlights the value of the project's engagement with local schools. The evaluation reports that 1,935 people had been 'assisted with skills development', with 255 people achieving a Level 2 or equivalent qualification. 33,408 school children visited the site with their school in the 2005/6 academic year. A respondent participating in this research from a school in the region had taken Year 8 students to the project six times since it opened and it had become integral to the school's Geography curriculum. The project also collaborates with universities in Cornwall and Devon, including providing work experience opportunities for students, engaging in research projects and developing an MSc course with the University of Plymouth.
- 6.17. The Eden project has also benefited the local economy through its impact on tourism. Around 40 per cent of visitors claim that the project was either very or quite influential in their decision to visit Cornwall and it has had an immediate impact on the local, Cornish and regional tourist industry. The project gets over 50 per cent of its supplies (and 84 per cent of all catering supplies) from within Cornwall and carries out initiatives with local business to help the 'green' supply chain. Amion (2009) calculate the net economic impact of the project to be £805 million in the six and a half years between the project opening and 2007.
- 6.18. Similarly, the social and economic impacts of the Millennium Coastal Park have been significant. Burry Port now has a thriving boating community which did not exist previously and the site has provided a focal point for a range of cultural events such as crafts fairs, festivals, an Eisteddfod, a vintage car race and pop concerts. Some community groups have also been set up since the Park was completed: Pwll Park recreational community and the North Dock residents association. Interviewees commented that local people now believe the Park is theirs and there is a real sense of ownership evidenced by the lack of vandalism and graffiti, which had been expected to be much more of a problem than has been the case.

- 6.19. The Manager of the Wetlands Centre was also keen to emphasise the importance of the Park to local people in the south Llanelli area and the impact that this has had on social well-being. Although this was difficult to quantify the vast array of uses that the park is put was said to bear testament to this.
- 6.20. There was a strong belief amongst all interviewees that the knock-on effects of the Park, in terms of the wider economic impact in attracting inward investment, have been 'enormous'. The development of the Park served as a trigger for the development of new housing and a brand new golf course which have brought people into the area. This has precipitated a change in the housing stock of Llanelli which has always been dominated by two-bedroomed terraces. One respondent even went as far as to say that the park *"has helped facilitate a housing market that was previously non-existent ... there wasn't a market"*. New housing on the seafront near the golf club is much larger, with properties selling for as much as £600 thousand. Since the Park was developed a rundown retail park in nearby Trostre has undergone redevelopment with the range of retail outlets on offer transformed from the 'bargain variety' to top end high street stores. This was seen as evidence of attracting inward investment.
- 6.21. Many of the projects developed through BIG capital grants have considered environmental impact as a key aspect of sustainability. As a result, the environmental legacies of capital projects are substantial. For community halls and buildings, this might involve a high specification new build, with impeccable environmental credentials. This may be particularly true for later funding programmes through which BIG has encouraged applicants to consider the environmental impact of their proposals. In one case study, for instance, a new community hall exhibits exemplary environmental performance credentials and has acted as a flag ship, raising awareness of environmental sustainability locally. The environmental credentials of the facility have also served to reduce day to day running costs, although maintenance has proved expensive due to the unconventional technology incorporated into the building (photovoltaic panels in particular, which incorporate rare minerals and are costly to replace).
- 6.22. For some projects, transformation of the environment was integral to the capital grant. For the Millennium Coastal Park, for instance, the environmental legacy is clear: the conversion of a stretch of industrial coastline into a thriving wildlife reserve and conservation area, with a Wetlands Centre attracting many kinds of different birds. The visible transformation in terms of the coastline, the water and the proliferation of green spaces is considerable. The Wetlands Centre existed prior to the Park but has benefited from its development through the acquisition of 200 acres of disused farmland. This created a new wetland area, a wildlife reserve and a popular site for bird watchers. The Centre is one of only 14 in the UK involved in vole conservation.
- 6.23. On the Isle of Gigha, where an SLF grant supported the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust to buy the land, renewable energy is now playing a leading role in the regeneration of the island. The Gigha Renewable Energy Company (a subsidiary of the Heritage Trust) owns and operates three wind turbines, capable of generating up to 675 kW of power. Revenue is produced by selling the electricity to the grid via an intermediary called Green Energy UK. Gigha residents control the whole project and profits are reinvested in the community. The Trust is now looking at expanding production with a fourth wind turbine.
- 6.24. But it is important to note also that there can be also be **environmental costs** arising from capital programmes. These maybe associated with road travel to iconic projects and visitor attractions; the energy consumption of new buildings; or the ongoing maintenance of existing sites.

Community Involvement and Sustainability

- 6.25. These findings point to a link between sustainability and impact, across different dimensions of community involvement and work with beneficiaries.
- 6.26. **Capital grants which were found to be having a greater lasting impact tended to have higher levels of community involvement.** In practice, this was reflected in both the planning and operational stages of projects. Community involvement took different forms depending on the scale of projects: it ranged from extensive consultations through to more intensive and ongoing participation in project activities.
- 6.27. In Belfast 'a community planning' approach was developed by the local authority (in partnership with CABE) as part of the Millennium Parks project, which provided resources for the development of six community parks in areas of the city. A version of the approach is still used by the local authority. In particular there is ongoing emphasis on a visual/ pictorial planning approach and lots of presentations are held to get people involved and understand what is going on. Some residents are still involved in the ongoing running and governance of parks, although this was not one of the original objectives of the proposal. There is evidence too that residents involved in the running of parks have also become involved in other aspects of regeneration and in working to bring in additional resources for, for example, sporting facilities, new changing rooms and upgrading facilities. This was seen by interviewees to be one of the most important aspects of the sustainability of the project.
- 6.28. Extensive consultation and marketing informed the development of the Eden project, much of which involved engagement with local residents. Special attention was paid to visiting 23 village halls within the „china clay’ area where the project is based: the project team did not want to seek planning permission if local residents were not supportive of the idea, and engaged in the project. A small-scale model of the attraction was taken to events to show what the project would look like. Respondents felt that „selling’ the project extensively around the region was very successful in bringing local communities on board with the development. They felt that having the senior management team involved in this process contributed significantly to this.
- 6.29. However, **community involvement was not a simple panacea nor was it a driver of sustainability on its own.** We found examples of good community involvement but also examples where capital projects had been divisive, for instance where buildings were reported to be used by only certain groups within communities.
- 6.30. Another tension in community involvement was around the commercial stance or otherwise of the capital projects. This ranged from substantial urban regeneration commercial activities (for instance residential developments) through to community buildings letting rooms for commercial use (albeit often with a wider community benefit). **Requirements to seek greater commercial revenue did not always sit easily with communities.** For instance, in one case study where it had become clear that the long term sustainability of a community facility would depend on its ability to generate commercial income, a volunteer remarked that she would find it difficult to continue volunteering if the centre operated as a business. In another case study, managers of a community facility were balancing the original objectives of the building - to serve as a resource for the local community - with the need to generate income to keep the facility viable. These tensions, generally, were well recognised and needed to be managed.

"We are very aware of the potential for a clash between the requirement for a typical community centre and a commercial business centre focussed on outside users" (Parish Councillor)

Summary

- 6.31. This chapter has looked at the impact of capital grants on beneficiaries and wider community outcomes. Key findings include
- organisations identify **a range of social, economic and environmental impacts** arising from capital grants. However, there is **little evidence of the systematic monitoring of outcomes** amongst grant recipients
 - organisations had made extensive efforts to engage communities in capital projects and there is clear evidence of **positive relationships between community involvement and sustainability**
 - however, there were also **tensions between community priorities and the commercial realities** of capital projects, although these were well managed by recipient organisations.
- 6.32. The next chapter pulls together the findings from the research and considers the sustainability and lasting impact of capital projects.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1. This chapter presents the conclusions of the research. First, it summarises the key findings presented in previous chapters; second it considers the need to understand the context for the sustainability of capital projects; and finally it outlines some lessons for future funding.

Key Findings

- 7.2. The aim of this research was

To assess the longer term effects of BIG's capital funding and identify the key factors that facilitate sustainable change.

- 7.3. Key factors which facilitate sustainable change were grouped around four headings in the report: the development and management of capital grants; organisational development; stakeholder involvement; and the involvement of communities and beneficiaries.
- 7.4. The research found that the sustainability and lasting impact of capital grants required a range of factors including organisational development; external support; supportive local funding institutions; high quality and robust business planning; and the skills required to realise capital projects. However, there is no ideal mix of these factors, and to go further, there may be risks in being overly prescriptive in defining a fixed set of requirements. **There is merit therefore in considering how BIG can fund capital projects which have a level of adaptability or resilience to future challenges.**
- 7.5. A headline finding from the survey of grant recipients is that **91 per cent of respondents expected that their organisation would be more sustainable as a result of the capital funding they received from BIG.** It may be assumed that a more sustainable organisation leads to the wider lasting impact of the activities delivered through the capital project. However, the comparative financial analysis also raised a note of caution: operating margins (of community buildings projects) had fallen since the funding award and income growth in funded organisations was less than that in organisations that had not received BIG funding for their capital project. However, this does not necessarily mean that these organisations were less sustainable in the long term and, as discussed above, sustainable projects are likely to be those which can adapt. For capital projects, that is likely to mean adapting to new uses.
- 7.6. **The nature of impacts from capital projects varied enormously** from 'harder' economic impacts around additional jobs and income through to 'softer' impacts around quality of life, environmental quality and community cohesion. Measurement of outcomes and impacts by the organisations was not undertaken consistently, nor was it an expectation of funders which primarily focused on shorter term project specific outputs. These two sets of issues, the variation in impacts and the lack of local data, make it impossible to form a comprehensive assessment of the impact of BIG capital projects.

- 7.7. **The impact of capital grants also needs to be understood in context and at an appropriate geographic scale.** Two examples illustrate this point. On the one hand, projects such as the Millennium Coastal Path in Llannelli, Eden Project in Cornwall or the Heart of the City in Sheffield have served both to draw in substantial match funding for their projects (typically from regeneration funds) and also to lever in subsequent private sector investment. In contrast, we found some evidence that new community buildings may have displaced activities previously being undertaken in other buildings.
- 7.8. In contrast to revenue projects, **capital projects were more likely to have transformative or catalytic effects on local economic and social development.** Many of the projects provided good examples of how this might be achieved.
- 7.9. An interesting issue was around the role of BIG: it was typically awarding grants alongside other funders or against local fund raising. In none of the case studies would it have been possible to secure the same level of funding, at the time in question, to realise the project. This suggests that **levels of additionality were reasonably high.** Similarly, although projects pointed to new income generation following the capital project, in the overwhelming majority of cases this would not have been sufficient to meet loan repayments if the funding had instead been made as a loan.
- 7.10. The research considered projects over a relatively long time period and **many of the projects reflected approaches of their time.** For instance, the group of regeneration and iconic projects considered were excellent examples of high quality regeneration projects: they often used masterplans and placed a strong emphasis on complex site assembly, they required cross-agency working, joint working with developers, and innovations in grant finance (especially around matching funding). This was especially the in case of Heart of the City case study in which a clear implementation plan and economic development rationale were crucial to securing investments from an (at the time) supportive market.
- 7.11. Similarly, the NOPES and HLC projects strongly reflected approaches of the time for community sport and addressing health inequalities, respectively. They also required particular institutional support, for instance from PCTs. It would be unlikely that such projects would be undertaken now.

Understanding Sustainability in Context

- 7.12. The research highlights the **positive sustainability outcomes experienced by most BIG capital funding recipients:** a majority of projects have been sustainable and these have, in turn, led to increased sustainability for the voluntary and community organisations that developed them and a range of impacts for local people and communities.
- 7.13. The research also highlights some clear lessons about the **ingredients that are likely to lead to sustainable projects and organisations.** In particular they highlight the importance of two factors:
- **income generation and the ability to cover running costs are an important feature of sustainability:** projects that generate income, particularly those where income covers running costs, are more likely to be sustainable and lead to a more sustainable voluntary and community organisation
 - **there is a (perhaps obvious) positive relationship between sustainability and impact:** sustainable projects, and organisations that have become more sustainable, are more likely to feel that they have had an impact on local people and local communities.

- 7.14. However, **some projects do not of themselves generate income**. This is the case for the environmental regeneration and public realm grants to Belfast 2000, Heart of the City in Sheffield and the Millennium Coastal Park in Llannelli.
- 7.15. The comparative financial analysis of Community Buildings grant recipients and rejected applicants provided interesting results in terms of financial sustainability. **It highlighted the importance of income generation; however, it also showed that operating margins for funded organisations fell in the years following the grant.** There are some competing explanations of why this may be, and they require further exploration.
- 7.16. We should also raise some final **cautionary research notes**.
- whilst we have found evidence around some consistent messages around what drives sustainable capital grants, we also found noticeable variations: for instance between the size and type of projects
 - our research did not seek to explore 'unsustainable' capital projects. In particular, there may have been a response bias in our survey with 'sustainable' organisations more likely to respond. Interestingly, approximately 200 questionnaires were returned as undeliverable (12.5 per cent of our sample): some of this may be due to legitimate changes in address and staff change, but it may also highlight that grant recipients have become defunct. This issue is worthy of further exploration
 - further economic evaluation is required to estimate the impacts of capital grants over their lifetime. This also needs to consider issues around additionality and displacement at a local level.

Lessons for Future Funding

- 7.17. This final section outlines lessons for future BIG funding.
- **supporting sustainability:** there is a continued need to promote the importance of good business planning and identification of risks in applicant organisations. BIG's role in promoting good practice and signposting organisations to guidance and expert help is important here. The key features of sustainability are given appropriate weight
 - **adaptability and resilience:** however, a joint emphasis on sustainability as well as adaptability and resilience may suggest a different emphasis in the design of programmes (for instance encouraging capital projects which can change) and in application processes requiring applicants to consider how a capital project could adapt in the future and how the applicant itself may respond in the future
 - **localism and local context:** BIG is a national funder of programmes and this obviously makes it difficult to have an understanding of all local contexts and forms of stakeholder support. For instance, we found limited evidence provided in applications of issues such as displacement, with the study highlighting that this may be quite significant for some projects. There is a limit to how much BIG should do to overcome this problem, and the Intelligent Funding Framework provides a basis and balanced approach for appraising stakeholder commitment and local need. This approach should be continued and developed by BIG. An alternative approach may be to work in conjunction with other funders with greater local knowledge and to co-fund programmes. The importance of clear communication of BIG's approach to funding remains
 - **public funding cuts:** the research did not explore directly the likely implications for capital projects of cuts in public funding and expenditure. Organisations

reflected on actual or anticipated cuts in public expenditure and the pressures this would place on them. They also anticipated that public sector cuts might adversely affect the longer term use and viability of capital assets. However, it was unclear what the scope and magnitude of the full impact of cuts would be. It is recommended that this issue is monitored by BIG

- **outcomes:** BIG is an outcomes funder and applicant organisations were found to give this sufficient importance at the bidding stage (for example in demonstrating need). However, the case study findings did show that grant recipients rarely monitor or measure outcomes in routine ways or use this information systematically. Whilst there is some qualitative evidence of impact, we could not find any robust data collected by organisations which could demonstrate their outcomes. This was for organisations of all sizes. Clearly outcomes measurement can place burdens on organisations but it is likely that there will only be increasing pressure for the demonstration of outcomes in the future. As capital grants are typically large and form a significant proportion of funding to organisations, this would appear to be an appropriate starting point for BIG to work with grant recipients to explore ways in which the routine collection, and utilisation, of outcomes data can contribute to the delivery of sustainable projects.

Annex 1: Technical Report on Survey

AX.1 Survey of Capital Funding Recipients

The research team undertook a postal survey of a stratified random sample of capital grant recipients funded through the following programmes administered by BIG and its predecessors (including the Community Fund and the Millennium Commission):

- Community Assets (including Community Asset Transfer, and Growing Community Assets)
- Community Buildings (including Community Buildings Trial Programme and Community Buildings Stage 2)
- Healthy Living Centres (HLCs)
- Millennium Commission
- Scottish Land Fund
- Large Projects
- Medium Sized Projects
- New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES).

The survey methodology, sampling strategy and response rate are outlined below.

AX.1.i Survey sampling strategy

Two versions of the questionnaire were used. The first was sent to funding recipients identified by BIG as third sector organisations; the second was sent to those identified as public sector bodies. This required two separate but linked sampling strategies.

BIG provided a database of all capital grant recipients from each of the funding programmes covered by the study, giving a total of 4669 unique grants from which the survey sample was drawn. Sampling was guided by the following requirements:

- sufficient response numbers to enable bivariate analysis
- relatively even distribution between funding programmes
- mix of third/public sector organisations.

Sampling therefore involved a number of stages:

1. Filter out non-unique addresses: where duplicate addresses exist, choose one random case per address (order by randomly generated number, then pick first case)
2. Identify third/public sector organisations (using BIG's 'organisation type' variable)
3. For each organisation type in each funding programme: if 200 or fewer grant recipients use all in sampling frame; if more than 200 grant recipients, draw a stratified random sample of 200 (based on size and region)

4. Random sample drawn by:

- Assigning a random number to all cases (using '=RAND()' function in Excel); then copy & paste values to fix them
- Sorting data in ascending order according to random number
- Keeping first X cases in new ordering and discarding the rest (where X reflects the proportion of that subgroup in the overall population)

This provided a final sampling frame of 1585 individual grants (1264 third sector, 321 public sector). The make-up of the final sampling frame is set-out in table A1.

Table A1: Survey sampling frame

Programme	No. of investments	No. in sampling frame	Percentage in sampling frame
Third sector:			
Community Asset Transfer	5	5	100
Community Assets	13	13	100
Growing Community Assets	114	114	100
<i>("Community Assets" combined)</i>	132	132	100
Community Buildings	77	77	100
Community Buildings Stage 2	102	102	100
Community Buildings Trial Programme	27	27	100
<i>("Community Buildings" combined)</i>	206	206	100
Healthy Living Centres	127	127	100
Millennium Commission	477	200	42.9
Scottish Land Fund	199	199	100
Large Projects	2346	200	8.5
Medium Sized Projects	769	200	26.0
Third sector sub-total:	4256	1264	29.7
Public sector:			
Healthy Living Centres	121	121	100
New Opportunities for PE and Sport	292	200	68.5
Public sector sub-total:	413	321	77.7
Overall Total:	4669	1585	33.9

AX.1.ii Survey mail out and data collection

Each organisation in the sampling frame received a copy of a postal question sent to a named individual. The questionnaire was accompanied by a covering note from the research team, a supporting letter from BIG, and a postage paid response envelope. Respondents were also provided with the opportunity to complete the questionnaire online. After five weeks non-respondents were sent a reminder letter to boost the response rate.

AX.1.iii Survey response rate

A total of 411 responses to the survey were received: a headline response rate of 25.9 per cent. However, the number of valid responses and the response rate has been adjusted to take account of a number of factors:

- respondents who did not complete the questionnaire: **23 respondents**
- questionnaires that were returned undelivered due to inaccurate or out of date addresses: **199 responses**
- addressees who responded (either through their questionnaire response, or by post, telephone or email) claiming that they had received little or no capital funding from BIG or its predecessors: **120 responses**.

This results in an adjusted population of **1,266 grant recipients** and an overall adjusted valid response rate of **21.3 per cent**. The process of calculating the adjusted response rate is outlined in table A2.

Table A2: Survey response rate

	Third Sector	Public Sector	Total
Overall:			
Total number of questionnaires sent	1264	321	1585
Postal responses received	229	32	261
Web responses received	51	3	54
Addressee contacted research team to report no/little capital funding	72	1	73
Questionnaire returned undelivered by Royal Mail	162	37	199
Addressees who contacted research team to say that they wouldn't be completing the survey (for a range of reasons)	16	7	23
Total respondents	368	43	411
Overall response rate	29.11%	13.40%	25.93%
Adjusted:			
Total no of valid responses (after cleaning)	240	30	270
Adjusted sample = total number of questionnaires sent less:			
a) Number returned by Royal Mail	162	37	199
b) Number that reported no/little capital funding (inc those identified during cleaning)	112	8	120
Adjusted sample population	990	276	1266
Adjusted valid response rate	24.24%	10.87%	21.33%

Analysis strategy

In addition to headline percentages, we also undertook analysis which explored variations in responses according to a range of different organisational and project criteria:

- **income size of funding recipient** - each respondent's annual income (2009/10) was banded in into four categories:
 - small: less than £100k
 - medium: £100k-£500k
 - large: £500k-£1m
 - very large: more than £1m

- **financial vulnerability** - the mean level of reserves held by recipients between 2007/08 and 2009/10 was divided by annual expenditure (2009/10) to create a percentage and banded into five categories:
 - less than 10 per cent (i.e. most vulnerable)
 - 10-25 per cent
 - 25-50 per cent
 - 50-100 per cent
 - more than 100 per cent (i.e. least vulnerable)
- **value of funding received from BIG** - the value of each respondent's BIG grant was banded into four categories:
 - small: less than £100k
 - medium: £100k-£250k
 - large: £250k-£500k
 - very large: more than £500k
- **funding purpose** - the purpose of each respondent's BIG grant was banded into seven categories:
 - construction of a new building
 - purchase of a new building
 - refurbishment of an existing (already owned) building
 - purchase of land
 - purchase of equipment
 - development of new facilities
 - redevelopment of existing facilities
- **other sources of funding** - survey respondent's were separated according to whether or not they had used funds in addition those provided by BIG to develop their capital project
- **staffing** - survey respondents were separated according to whether or not they employed paid staff.

In addition to these categories, the analysis also explored the relationship between planning for sustainability, achieving sustainability, and impact. For example:

- What proportion of organisations that planned for the sustainability of their project said that
 - their project had actually been sustainable?
 - their organisation was now more sustainable?
 - their project had achieved different types of impact?
- What proportion of sustainable projects and organisations said that they had achieved different types of impact

Annex 2: Case Study Topic Guide

1. Project Details

- describe the project for which the BIG grant was used
- what is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?
- what percentage (approximately) of the overall costs of the project was covered by the BIG grant?
- what are the other key funding sources for the project? For the organisation?
- who are the key beneficiaries of the project?
- how is the project managed?

2. What strategies did organisations use to promote sustainability within projects?

- how did the idea or concept of this project come about? [Prompts e.g. community need; group/ organisational priority; response to legislation - H&S, DDA; etc]
- was a feasibility study undertaken?
 - if yes, probe details - in-house or external org? Was it useful? What did it say?
 - if No, why not?
- how were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development? [Probe methods (surveys; questionnaires; focus groups; community planning/PFR; events/ public meetings; video diaries; graffiti walls; etc)] How successful was this? Did it make a difference to project development?
- was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?
 - if yes, what form did this take? Was the advice useful? Was the organisation confident/ competent to work with professionals? Was the advice acted upon?
 - if No, why not?
- was the sustainability of the project considered at the development stage?
 - if yes, what were considered to be the key factors affecting sustainability? [Probe - users, funding/ income generation; stakeholder engagement/ support; organisational sustainability; etc]
- what strategies has the organisation used employed to promote sustainability? *Explore:*
 - planning (early consideration, exit strategies, mainstreaming)
 - delivery (capturing and using knowledge, capacity building, management and business planning, performance management)
 - interacting with the external environment (fit with local and national strategies, improving partnerships)
- how effective have these strategies been?

3. How did projects develop and evolve over time?

- what progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?
- has the project changed or developed over time? *If yes, What has changed and why?*
- what factors prompted the change?
- how have these factors impacted on the sustainability of the project?
- is the project complete? *If No - what is left to do? When will the project be finished?*

4. Were the changes envisaged at the outset of capital projects sustained?

- are the outcomes for the project the ones that were anticipated at the outset of the project? *If No: What is different? Why?*
- what factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment? *[Prompts: think about beneficiary, organisational and local/national stakeholder level factors]*

5. What are the longer-term effects of BIG's capital funding in terms of different types of sustainability?

- ask participants to reflect on the effects of BIG investment in terms of:
 - the continued **use of facilities** provided as part of the capital investment projects: Has the investment maintained a facility that would previously have gone out of use? Has it resulted in more frequent use and/or use by more or different groups of people?]
 - **new services** developed and delivered as a result of BIG funding: What changes, if any, have occurred to the portfolio of services/products offered by the organisation since the BIG investment?) Have new services been developed? What are these?
 - the establishment of new or strengthening of existing **partnerships** and other collaborative arrangements: Have new partnerships/collaborations been developed as a result of the BIG investment? What are these? Has the investment allowed the organisation to strengthen existing partnerships? In what ways?
 - contributing to the body of **knowledge** of effective approaches to meeting a range of needs: Has the BIG grant enabled the organisation to better understand the needs of beneficiaries? How? How has/ can this knowledge be applied to service delivery (even if the knowledge has not been put to immediate use)

6. How has organisational and individual capacity been strengthened as a result of the capital funding?

- ask interviewees to consider the **nature** and **longevity** of changes (if any occurred) relating to:
 - **finance** (e.g. both strategy [will/has the BIG investment made a difference to the range of income for your organisation – i.e. will/has it enabled you to go after new sources of income? Discuss answer - types, sources, scale?] and financial management [the way services are priced? Approach to budgeting? Full cost recovery or accounting for overheads?])
 - **governance** (e.g. Leadership [how it is understood, who provides it]; mission/goals/strategy [who defines/which documents define]; board [composition,

skills, role/function, frequency of meetings, level of commitment, recruitment and retention, level of involvement])

- **human resources** (e.g. Diversity and equality [policies and practices, composition of staff]; Recruitment and retention (levels); Communication to/involvement of staff (level, methods); HR planning, development and remuneration)
- **management practices** (e.g. Organisational structure [including roles, functions, responsibilities]; Management practices/policies; Planning/strategy development /decision- making processes; Risk Management [including procedures, processes, purpose, use of information]; Monitoring and evaluation [person(s) responsible, nature of responsibilities, use of information])
- **service delivery and user engagement** (involvement of users in service planning, delivery and evaluation of services/products; demand for services/product (level, source); Was this a deliberate intent at the point of BIG investment? How do they differ from engagement methods prior to investment? With what effect? What facilitated or hindered development of new models of engagement?)
- **individuals (staff and volunteers)**. e.g. skills developed (project planning and management); distance travelled of individuals; confidence; participation; new ways of working
- what evidence is there to support these assessments?

7. Did the capital projects serve as catalysts for longer term change in communities?

- ask participants to reflect on the effects of BIG investment in terms of changes to **economic, social and environmental outcomes** for individuals, groups and areas: *Probe e.g.*
 - economic: new or sustained employment opportunities; catalyst for investment/ other funding; income generation through visitor revenue; support for local business, etc
 - social: increased social capital; community cohesion; increased use of facilities - health/ social benefits; quality of life; satisfaction
 - environmental: improved environment/ greenspace; better public transport; more efficient/ lower impact buildings or resources; changes to environmental management
- what evidence is there to support these assessments?

8. What unintended outcomes occurred as a result of the capital investment?

- do you think there were any unintended or unforeseen outcomes from the project/investment? [*Prompts: If yes, what were they and what effect did they have?*]

9. What wider factors are necessary for capital projects to become sustainable?

- probe for funding (other funding streams; more/ longer-term funding); technical and managerial support (where from?): fit with local/ national strategies; community/ beneficiary involvement, etc

10. How effective is BIG's current support for sustainability?

- at what stage in the development of the project was BIG funding sought?

- was any advice/ assistance with the BIG funding application sought/ used? *If yes, probe details - pre-application support from BIG; CVS; local authority; other voluntary and community sector organisation? What difference did it make?*
- did BIG provide any support which contributed to the sustainability of the project?
- *if Yes, What support? How was it provided? What difference did it make?*
- *if No, would this have been useful? What sort of support do you think you needed?*

Annex 3: Case Study Reports

Name of project: Belfast 2000: A city with a landscape (Northern Ireland)

Amount of Lottery funding £ 2,640,900

Lottery programme: Millennium Commission

Key Points:

- local communities have been very involved in development of the parks - the project is responding to community need and priorities
- MC grant has provided important green spaces in areas of the city where there is little else in terms of parks and open space
- the bid was part of a much larger scheme originally
- deeds of dedication ensure that the parks are maintained for community use for 100 years - this is important as stops them being developed for other purposes (most are in areas of housing need)
- Belfast City Council is committed to maintaining the parks as part of its ongoing processes of review of parks and play facilities - in recent years this has not presented problems; it will be more difficult to maintain all parks with less resources in coming years
- there have been some problems with vandalism - but overall parks are well maintained and used
- some parks have acted as a focus for community engagement - 'friends' groups have been established and have become involved in other regeneration and community development activities; Belfast City Council sees this as a model for future working.

Project Summary

The Millennium Commission grant provided resources for six community parks in various locations in Belfast. All are in areas which suffered through the Troubles and four of the six are in areas with high levels of deprivation. The sites were chosen in areas where there was a shortage of good quality open space. Three are in west Belfast, and three in the east of the city.

'The aim is to raise the pride and awareness of the beauty and value of open space and landscaping within the urban environment, and to provide valuable assets to communities where they are badly needed'.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The grant was used for landscaping, redevelopment and provision of play facilities.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The beneficiaries are the residents of Belfast, and particularly those living in neighbourhoods in which the parks are located.

How is the project managed?

The parks are managed by Belfast City Council Parks and Leisure Department. The Department works closely with local residents, and Residents Associations and local sports groups are actively engaged in ongoing governance of the parks.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The City Council had a list of parks/ open spaces which required improvement, a number of which were pieces of land which had been taken over by the local authority and subsequently had no investment at all. The Millennium Commission programme offered an opportunity to develop the areas to provide community parks.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

Yes. Sustainability was considered in terms of the choice of materials and equipment in the parks (considering lifespans and replacement costs); environment (wildlife, planting etc); community involvement (through establishment of friends and users groups); and maintenance (longer term maintenance needs).

In addition deeds of dedication were put in place to ensure that the parks were maintained for community use for 100 years.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

Consultation with local communities was a key part of the development of the bid - many of the sites for redevelopment were originally identified for development through community planning processes. There were regular meetings with residents all the way through construction processes and beyond.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

The local authority provided in-house professional expertise and capacity.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

All the parks were developed as planned.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The progress of the parks has been mixed. Some parks have been maintained as originally developed, and the local authority has overseen a programme of routine maintenance. Others have changed because of social problems in communities, resulting in anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Changes to lighting, fencing and planting have been introduced in response to these problems. In some parks much of the original materials and equipment have been removed or destroyed.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

Key factors affecting the sustainability of the parks include social problems within local communities (and the degree to which this has contributed to anti-social behaviour and vandalism); design (although in many cases this was determined by availability of land); and community engagement; there is evidence that those parks with higher levels of involvement from local residents and a sense of community 'ownership' have been more successful in

attracting additional resources for ongoing maintenance and the development of new facilities.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The investment provided new community parks in six areas of the city. The parks are still in place and in ongoing use (although some are in a better state of repair than others). Without the investment it is likely that the sites would have remained derelict or been developed for housing.

The parks have raised aspirations for open space within the city. They have provided examples of derelict sites being brought into valuable community use and have influenced the redevelopment of open space elsewhere in the city.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

A community planning approach was developed (in partnership with CABE) as part of the Millennium Parks project, a version of which is still used by the local authority. In particular there is ongoing emphasis on visual/ pictorial approach and lots of presentations to get people involved and understand what is going on in relation to the redevelopment of parks and open space across the city.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

Some communities are still involved in ongoing running and governance of parks - although this was not one of the original objectives of the proposal. Residents have also become involved in other aspects of regeneration and in attracting resources for e.g. sporting facilities, new changing rooms and upgrading facilities.

Different communities are seen to be at different stages of development and some have 'wider ambitions for sites'. There is a sense of local ownership and pride, although this can be problematic - *'some communities feel that this is their own space'*.

The parks can also be useful as focus for coherence within divided communities - they provide opportunities for shared space and engagement.

Name of project: Brannel School Sports Hall, Brannel in St Stephens, Cornwall

Amount of Lottery funding: £1,200,000 (approx)

Lottery programme: New Opportunities for PE and Sport

Key Points:

- the BIG funding has provided a modern and fully equipped sports hall for use by the pupils of Brannel School and members of the local community in the isolated village of St Stephens. Revenue funding was also secured to fund a Sports and Community Development Coordinator (the coordinator) post for three years to manage the facility and encourage community use
- the original sports hall within the school (which was 50 years old) had been in poor condition and oversubscribed for many years and undermined efforts to encourage pupils and local people to participate in sport and exercise
- when the NOPES programme was launched, five local schools in similar situations formed a consortium to bid for funding for new sports hall facilities. Ultimately the funding secured only enabled three basic sports halls to be constructed
- the increase in sport and exercise opportunities locally is considered to have had a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of many local residents and community cohesion locally
- the coordinator and the links she has forged with the NHS Area Health Trainer and local sports teams and exercise groups have been key to ensuring that the sports hall is more than just a school facility.

Project Summary

The funding from BIG was used to construct a four court sports hall with changing facilities within the grounds of Brannel School. The facility is for the use of pupils as well as the wider local community. It opened in May 2006. Revenue funding was also secured to fund a Sports and Community Development Coordinator post for three years to manage the facility and encourage community use.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The purpose of the capital grant was to construct a sports hall in order to replace inadequate provision at Brannel School and also to provide a sport and exercise resource for the isolated rural community of St Stephens.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The beneficiaries are predominantly pupils at Brannel School and the residents of St Stephens village but the hall is also regularly hired by groups and clubs with a much wider catchment.

How is the project managed?

The centre is managed by the school via the Sports and Community Development Coordinator.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The original sports hall within the school (which was 50 years old) had been in poor condition and oversubscribed for many years. It was very small and therefore offered a

limited range of activities. When the NOPEs programme was launched, five local schools in similar situations formed a consortium to bid for funding for new sports hall facilities. Ultimately the funding secured only enabled three basic sports halls to be constructed.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

No.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

The Deputy Head leading the application consulted informally with the clubs, teams and groups that existed locally- many of which already used the school's existing sports hall during evening and weekends. However, the school felt that there was very little to consult on- BIG advised them of the minimum requirements and best practice standards for a modern sports hall and the school felt that, given the available budget, there was little scope to deviate from this standard model.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

A team of architects were appointed to design the facility and project management was provided by the Deputy Head. The primary source of guidance was the minimum requirements and best practice standards supplied by BIG.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

The sports hall opened in May 2006. The project has clearly achieved the key outcomes associated with the grant which were to provide a sport and exercise facility for the pupils of Brannel School and the community of St Stephens. The investment has enabled expansion of the range of sport and exercise activities the school is able to offer its pupils and to deliver them in a better quality environment that is fit for purpose. Community use has also been maximised by the work of the coordinator who has developed a full programme of sport, exercise and social activities aimed at the local community during evenings and weekends. The sports hall is fully booked at all times during the winter months.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

A change in the project is likely to occur after March 2011 when the post of Sports and Community Development Coordinator comes to an end. After this point, the onus will be on groups and teams using the facility to largely support themselves.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

The provision of revenue funding for the coordinator post has been the key facilitator of success, particularly in terms of maximising community use. The post holder has also been supported by senior staff at the school that are committed to promoting community access. The school has also worked in close partnership with the NHS Area Health Trainer since 2006 to encourage members of the local community not previously engaged in sport and exercise to make use of the sports centre and its offer of teams, clubs, classes and events.

The only discernable factor which may have hindered achievement of these outcomes is the capacity of the hall. There is no shortage of demand for the facility locally yet, although the sports hall can be divided with nets, there is little scope to run concurrent activities.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The investment provided a much needed sports hall that is modern and fit for purpose and meets the needs and expectations of pupils at Brannel School. The programme of evening and weekend events, clubs and classes developed by the coordinator has significantly increased the opportunities for sport and exercise available to the local community and participation has been actively encouraged and facilitated. Local clubs and teams that use the facility for training have praised the quality of the accommodation and feel it has enhanced performance and boosted membership. The increase in sport and exercise opportunities locally is considered to have had a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of many local residents and has promoted community cohesion locally. The coordinator is viewed as central to these outcomes.

"We have engaged with so many isolated people locally who are either experiencing poor health or poor well-being or are at risk of it. On my own, I didn't have that resource to reach this many people. So it's not just so much what she (the coordinator) does for the school, it's in the wider community where she really makes the difference."

(NHS Area Health Trainer)

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

As a result of the funding received from BIG, the school has forged closer links with the local community and has recognised the value of this, particularly in terms of improved relationships with parents. There has also been a realisation that the mere existence of a facility *intended* for use by both the school and community is not enough. Experience to date at Brannel School has highlighted the degree of experimentation, capacity building activity and encouragement required to secure sustainable community patronage. Responsibility for establishing and sustaining patronage within the community cannot be absorbed in to the role of an existing member of staff- it requires dedicated provision if the facility is to avoid becoming simply a school sports hall. The school are endeavouring to sustain this provision as far into the future as possible.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

- pupils benefit from a modern sport and exercise facility that is fit for purpose and encourages participation
- the centre has provided a resource and focus for existing efforts to engage this community in sport and exercise yielding considerable gains in terms of health, well-being and community cohesion
- the use of the centre for events with a more social focus has also promoted a more positive relationship between the school and the local community
- working in partnership with the school, the NHS Area Health Trainer has also made significant progress in engaging with some of the most isolated members of the community
- the provision of this facility has signalled to the pupils local community that they are worthy of a high quality facility.

Name of project: Spectrum Centre, Belfast (Northern Ireland)

Amount of Lottery funding £ 2,314,239

Lottery programme: Millennium Commission

Key Points:

- importance of local and national context in influencing the development of bid
- facility intended as part of wider package of developments to contribute to regeneration of Shankill area, but these were not funded
- availability of ongoing revenue support has been crucial to early sustainability
- tensions between community development 'ideals' and commercial prospects: in the bid the former were emphasised, but the latter have been more important to sustainability
- need to develop business capacity/ skills within management team and governing body - particularly in relation to financial management
- facility has evolved: additional finance obtained to refocus services resulting in less emphasis on youth and sports facilities for the local community, and more focus on the space's potential as an arts and performance venue
- a 'difficult' community to engage - legacy of the Troubles and local feuds - although this is starting to change
- importance of partnerships and linking to wider strategies and priorities.

Project Summary

The Millennium Commission grant financed the capital build for a new youth and community facility in the Shankill area of Belfast. The building originally housed sports facilities, and space for performing arts and social activities, and was intended to benefit young people and the community in the surrounding areas. The Centre is intentionally built close to a Peace Line and its original objectives were very much focused around social and community development. Commercial office and retail space was also included to generate income for the Centre. The facility has evolved in order to ensure sustainability. This has resulted in removal of the sports facilities, and concentrating on attracting a wider range of users for the arts and cultural facilities.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The original beneficiaries were intended to be young people and the wider community of the Shankill area. Latterly the project has extended its focus to also attract users from across Belfast.

How is the project managed?

The project is run by a small staff team comprising a Centre Manager, a Programmes Manager and administrative staff. It is owned by the Greater Shankill Property Development Company (GSPDC) which is a Co Ltd by shares, wholly owned by the Board of the Greater Shankill Partnership (GSP), a company limited by guarantee.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The project was part of a wider proposal for the regeneration of the Shankill area prepared in 1995. A community planning exercise highlighted that young people in the area felt they had nothing to do and this informed the idea for the Spectrum centre.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

A business plan for the Centre was submitted with the proposal. The plan assumed that the centre would be self-financing, without ongoing need for revenue support. The failure of the Centre to meet expectations around income generation has driven the refocusing of activities.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

Community beneficiaries were consulted in the early stages of the proposal through the community planning exercise. However, the influence of the community has not necessarily been beneficial in the sense that the wider strategic picture was not sufficiently considered. One interviewee remarked: *'what is heard in consultation is the priorities of a number of people who feel very strongly, but this is not what people necessarily need'*.

This is perhaps also evidenced by the fact that, as originally proposed, there was some duplication with existing local authority facilities for sports and young people in the area.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

Architects and developers have worked to GSP brief.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

The building specification was originally provided as per the MC grant. However, the original facilities proved not to be commercially viable and so redevelopment has taken place.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

Some of the original facilities have been removed (e.g. a high ropes course) and others improved (better decoration, new dance floor, high specification projection and sound equipment, etc) to change the focus from a youth and sports centre to a commercial arts and performance venue. The café was also redeveloped.

Are the outcomes for the project the ones that were anticipated at the outset of the project?

The business plan was re-written in 2003/4 (*'it took us two years to realise that the business plan wasn't working'*). A key development was the change in emphasis from space for 'occasional revenue use' to a commercially run venue.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

There are number of reasons for the failure of the original business plan:

- MC funded one isolated programme intended as part of a wider package, therefore limited regeneration impact and no synergy between projects (some of which are only now coming to fruition). This mattered in terms of sustainability because the Centre was not able to feed off other projects which would have raised greater revenue
- there was a five year gap between the concept and initiation of the project - during this time the political environment changed (nationally and locally) and this in turn affected

the economic context for the project. Also there was no sense of continued ownership amongst young people - as those who had identified the need for the project would no longer benefit.

- as the Centre was opening it was affected catastrophically by a paramilitary feud which erupted in August 2000. The community was divided geographically and people did not come out of their homes to use local facilities. Potential user groups and businesses pulled out of the Centre. This was the first of four feuds which developed locally in the first few years of the Centre, which impacted detrimentally on business and scope for earned income
- gaps in external funding for groups also impacted on rental income. Gaps between availability of funds through the Peace 1 and Peace 2 Programmes badly affected community sector in Northern Ireland, as groups which had relied on these Programmes for revenue funds found themselves temporarily without income
- the proposal was developed on the basis of a youth group forming the anchor tenant for the Centre. This did not happen.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The capital investment provided for the replacement of a run down building formerly used by a youth group. User groups are complimentary about the new facilities, and the centre now attracts a wide range of user groups.

The Centre has led on the development of new arts and cultural activities including shows, exhibitions, and performances which offer opportunities for social activities to the West Belfast community which has been badly affected by the Troubles.

The Centre has begun to establish new commercial relationships, - for example with promoters and artists, with a view to developing a regular programme of events.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

Changes within the organisation have largely been those that have been necessary to shore up a loss making building. A General Manager with a private sector background and commercial skills was employed as part of the process of redevelopment. The organisation has also improved the financial and legal processes necessary for the proper running of the business and there been a decision on the part of the Board not to employ any additional staff until new income streams are in place.

Over time there have been some changes to the governance of the GSPDC, with a view to increasing capacity for commercial skills.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

Because of the difficulties associated with achieving sustainability there is not yet substantive evidence of the Centre's impact on beneficiaries and the wider community. However, the Centre is attracting an increasing number, and range, of users and is developing a reputation as a local centre of excellence for dance. A developing portfolio of arts and entertainment events is providing new cultural opportunities for local residents and, increasingly, bringing visitors from other areas of Belfast into the Shankill area.

Changes in the political and social climate in Belfast may well offer opportunities for the Centre to increase its impact in the longer term, and for it to make a significant contribution to the social capital and quality of life of residents in the area. The feud is starting to fade and the politics of the area have changed, with local politicians beginning to work together better than before. There is a general attitude that the *'place is starting to flourish'*, and

attitudes in the community are also changing. Key future opportunities for the Spectrum Centre are likely to be in two areas:

- i) winning over the local community - encouraging residents to engage in cultural activities and use of a local facility
- ii) attracting a wider Belfast user group, and becoming a regular venue for events which attract a city-wide audience.

Name of project: Century Square and Millennium House, Pensilva, Cornwall

Amount of Lottery funding: £1,426,000 (total funding, exact MC contribution unknown)

Lottery programme: Millennium Commission

Key Points:

- Millennium House is a large (1,400 square meter) multipurpose community facility serving the parish of St Ive on the edge of Bodmin Moor. It is situated in Century Square, a landscaped area which forms part of the same project, in the village of Pensilva. The facility opened in June 1999
- it was funded by a range of public sector funders of which The Millennium Commission (MC) was one
- it comprises: a bar, sports facilities; sports hall, playing fields and changing rooms, a café, catering facilities, gym, space for hire, and an Italian Restaurant (at weekends). It also accommodates a Post Office (since September 2010) and the Parish Clerk
- the Parish Council governed by Local Authority Legislation is responsible for the centre, but the centre represents a significant management burden for them
- proposals for the centre have divided opinion locally since the 1980s and continue to do so. A significant proportion of parishioners refuse to use the facility on the basis that it is a burden to local rate payers
- the centre is very large for a parish the size of St Ive and this is reflected in the fact that it operates at just 35 per cent of its capacity.

Project Summary

Millennium House is a large (1,400 square meter) multipurpose community facility serving the remote parish of St Ive on the edge of Bodmin Moor. It is situated in Century Square, a landscaped area which forms part of the same project, in the centre of the village of Pensilva.

The facility, which opened in June 1999, was funded by a range of public funding bodies including MC.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The main purpose of the grant was to contribute to the provision of a village square and a civic building that will offer social, leisure and educational opportunities to the people of the parish.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The beneficiaries are predominantly the residents of the Parish of St Ive but the centre is also regularly hired by groups and clubs with a much wider catchment.

How is the project managed?

The centre is managed directly by St Ive Parish Council. A House Manager has been appointed to assist in the day to day running of the centre.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The local community grew considerably during the 1960s following construction of the Tamar Bridge linking Cornwall to Devon. However, local infrastructure did not keep pace with housing development. In 1982 a local group formed with the sole purpose of raising funds for a community centre to meet the needs of the local community. Support for the cause was not unanimous and the proposals divided opinion locally. Funding was finally secured from the Millennium Commission in 1994.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

No.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

In 1989 a local poll took place to assess support for proposals for the community centre. The vote was close with 389 for and 383 against. The debate surrounding the centre became dominated by planning concerns and two rival groups emerged- a pro centre group and an opposing group. The Parish Council undertook consultation meetings with them both but proceeded with the development of detailed plans. The action group therefore viewed the consultation as tokenistic.

Another poll was held in 1990 in response to another backlash against the centre, this time because it was proposed that the community charge should be increased to fund the centre. The result was complete rejection of the proposal but again the Parish Council proceeded with developing the plans.

The lack of consultation and apparent disregard for public opinion is believed to be at the heart of continued resentment towards the centre amongst some local residents and the increase in local rates to help fund the centre remains contentious.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

A team of architects was appointed in 1994 and supported the project to completion in 1998. Project management was provided by a local councillor and chief proponent of the centre.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

Millennium House and Century Square opened in 1999.

Judged against the objectives set out in the original grant agreement Millennium House and Century Square have, as envisaged, provided a „civic centre’ to Pensilva and have made a wide range of social, leisure and educational opportunities available to the local population. It has also brought important facilities to the parish, such as a Post Office, pub, cafe and base for the Parish Clerk. However, the extent to which the centre serves the local community is also debatable given the limited patronage from within the local area.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

There have been changes to the activities and facilities on offer at the centre in line with demand. For example, the café has branched out into evening meals, a Post Office has been opened within the centre and there are plans to extend the bar. The range of classes on offer at the centre also changes regularly according to demand and current trends.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

The extent to which Millennium House has met its objectives to become a community resource and asset is questionable and can be attributed to two key factors.

First, the scale of the centre is not proportional to the local user base and as a result operates at 35 per cent capacity and appears to appeal to a limited number of Pensilva residents. The scale of the facility also increases the maintenance burden which is ultimately borne by local rate payers.

Second, there is a high turnover of House Managers and Parish Councillors which means there is little consistency in terms of the management and prevents the centre from realising its potential.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the centre has achieved a number of the intended outcomes of the investment. It offers an impressive range of social, leisure and recreational opportunities to those who choose to make use of it. The longevity of the project is also assured by the Parish Council's status as a Local Authority which means that any shortfalls are passed on to the electorate and the facility cannot go bankrupt.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The investment provided a community facility of considerable scale to an isolated rural community where community infrastructure had not kept pace with housing development. The centre is still in ongoing use after 12 years and in spite of significant local opposition. Without the investment it is likely that the parish would have continued to be served by three ageing village halls and would not benefit from important local amenities such as a public house, café, restaurant, gym and post office, all of which are offered by Millennium House.

Unfortunately, the benefits of the centre have been limited to those local residents who are willing to make use of it and the centre runs at 35 per cent of its capacity. The grand scale of the centre has fuelled resentment as, if the centre makes a loss, the burden falls on local rate payers.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

The Parish Council's status as a local authority means it is restricted in terms of its ability to change but the management of a facility the size of Millennium House represents a considerable challenge and has required the development of a range of new skills and capacities. They have tried to address this by attempting to attract new councillors with greater commercial awareness but despite some success in this regard, the turnover of members is high. The house manager and the three supporting managers that work beneath him provide a great deal of support to the council in managing the facility.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

The impacts of the funding on the local community have been a mixture of positive and negative. Key impacts include:

- the centre has provided 1,400sq metres of space at the disposal of the local community however, only a relatively small proportion of the local population make use of it. Those who do visit the centre tend to do so very regularly
- the creation of 18 jobs for local people 'recycling' an estimated £115,000 of revenue into the local community every year

- the centre regularly attracts visitors from other areas of SE Cornwall and most of the money they spend while in Pensilva is spent in Millennium House
- there is a constant threat that, if the costs of running the centre outweigh the revenue generated and surpluses then local rates will increase to make up the shortfall. This issue has fuelled resentment towards the centre amongst some local residents and undermined patronage
- in some cases the centre has succeeded in reconnecting a number of previously isolated elderly residents with their community by providing somewhere for them to socialise and access important services, such as the Post Office.

Name of project: Trelander and St Clements Community Buildings (Phase Two), Truro, Cornwall

Amount of Lottery funding £ 272,750

Lottery programme: Community Buildings

Key Points:

- the BIG funding has enabled the extension of a community centre serving two large and relatively isolated estates in Truro
- the extension is known as Phase Two of the Community Centre and comprises of a multipurpose sports hall
- the neighbouring communities of Trelander and St Clements have been heavily involved in the development of the community centre and have campaigned for a community space for many years - the project is genuinely 'bottom up' and responds to community need and priorities
- the Trelander and St Clements Residents Association were constituted in November 2005 specifically to secure funding for the community centre and subsequently to manage the design, construction and day to day running of the centre
- the centre is the product of a series of ongoing partnerships between the Residents Association and various local agencies including Truro City Council, Carrick Housing and Carrick Council. Successful delivery of the first phase of the centre gave confidence and credibility to the Residents Association enabling them to secure funding from BIG for a second phase
- phase Two has enabled expansion of the range of activities and services on offer at the centre. The centre has improved local people's access to a range of important local service providers, including: services for the pregnant women and young families, youth clubs, the Police, Carrick Housing (the landlord) and Truro City Council
- the centre has served to bring local people together and in doing so has helped to combat the sense of isolation many had previously felt. The activities on offer at the centre have also served to promote better understanding between residents of different ages
- the environmental credentials of the facility have helped to reduce day to day running costs and have provided a local exemplar of sustainable design.

Project Summary

The BIG grant provided funding for the extension (Phase Two) of the existing Trelander and St Clements Community Centre to provide a multipurpose sports hall in order to increase the capacity of the centre and the range of activities possible within it. Phase One of the building comprises a two room community centre accommodating a Children's Centre, flexible community space, and a kitchen and reception area. The addition of Phase Two has almost doubled the size of the building. The Trelander and St Clements Residents Association manage the centre which predominantly serves the neighbouring Trelander and St Clements Estates in Truro.

The centre appears to be greatly valued by local people and is reportedly the product of over 60 years of campaigning for a community centre in the area:

"This community here and later the St Clements community have been fighting to get somewhere to meet and socialise since the Second World War and possibly longer than

that. The centre is so badly needed and wanted." (Chair, Trelander and St Clements Residents Association).

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The grant was used to construct a sports hall adjoining the Trelander and St Clements Community Centre.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The beneficiaries are predominantly the residents of the Trelander and St Clements estates but the centre is also regularly hired by groups and clubs with a much wider catchment.

How is the project managed?

The Trelander and St Clements Residents Association were constituted in November 2005 specifically to secure funding for the community centre and subsequently to manage the design, construction and day to day running of both phases of the centre with support from a Community Development Worker and two part time administrative staff employed by Truro City Council.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

There has reportedly been demand from the residents of Trelander and St Clements estates for a community space since the 1940s. The need for such a facility was patent. Prior to the development of the centre, these two large estates, which sit on the edge of Truro, were devoid of any form of communal meeting space. After many failed efforts to secure funding for a community centre, a breakthrough came in 2003 when a Community Development Worker was appointed to work with residents to help them realise this ambition. This led, *inter alia*, to the constitution of the Trelander and St Clements Community Association in 2005 and subsequently the formation of a partnership with Truro City Council which levered in funding for Phase One of the centre.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

A formal feasibility study was not undertaken, however, a subcommittee of the Residents Association was formed to oversee the development of the centre and they undertook a series of study visits to other community centres across the country to assess what was achievable. Following this, the subcommittee appointed an architect and a project manager with expertise in sustainable design and detailed feasibility took place to determine to what extent residents' aspirations for the centre could be achieved within the budget.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

The formation of the Residents Association in 2005 and the transfer of the housing stock on the two estates to a social landlord in 2006 kick started a programme of consultation regarding the centre which remains ongoing. The Residents Association has conducted annual surveys of local residents since 2006. The first survey confirmed a community centre as the top priority amongst local residents. Subsequently, the Residents Association undertook three waves of consultation with the local community specifically in relation to their requirements and aspirations for the centre.

One of the most important facets of the Residents' Association's consultation programme was a survey of 89 agencies working in and around Truro to assess wider support and demand for a community centre in this location. The survey also sought to assess what potential users might expect from such a facility.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

The residents association appointed an architect and project manager to support them in the realisation of both phases of the centre. The support of the Community Development Worker employed by Truro City Council was key throughout.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

Phase Two of the centre has been completed as planned and appears to be meeting the needs of the local community effectively.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The project has changed very little, mainly because the Residents Association were realistic about what could be achieved within the available budget as a result of experience gained from Phase One. Additionally, time was invested at the outset in ensuring that the design of the building was responsive to the needs of the end users.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

The achievement of intended outcomes has been aided by the following key factors:

- anchoring the centre to a statutory service provider via its role as a Children's Centre
- assessing the extent of demand prior to the acquisition of funding. It also seems likely that this evidence-based approach has helped the Residents Association to make realistic and credible funding bids
- regular monitoring of the needs and aspirations of the local community and external users
- designing a flexible space that lends itself to a wide range of uses and configurations but that also offers something unique in the local area (a sprung floor)
- managing the competition via an alliance with other, potentially competing, community facilities locally.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

Key effects of the BIG investment include:

- the BIG investment in Phase Two should reduce the financial dependence of the Residents Association on Truro Council (who currently cover 60 per cent of running costs) as it has the potential to create a healthy revenue stream. The investment almost doubled the size of the centre and improved its versatility and has resulted in more frequent use by a wider range of groups
- Phase Two has enabled expansion of the range of activities and services on offer at the centre. Access to support services for the pregnant women and young families has improved most markedly, but the hall has also provided a staging post for the activities of Young People Cornwall (YPC) who operate weekly youth clubs. There are also regular meetings between residents and the Police, Carrick Housing and Truro City Council held at the hall. It has also enabled an increase in important activities for older people.
- the centre is the product of a series of ongoing partnerships between the Residents Association and various local agencies including Truro City Council, Carrick Housing and Carrick Council. Successful delivery of Phase One gave confidence and credibility to the Residents Association enabling them to go on to secure further funding from BIG.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

The investment has diversified the range of income sources benefitting the organisation as it has almost doubled the rentable space within the building.

Since the constitution of the Residents Association in 2005, there has been notable and progressive growth in the confidence and capacity of its members, something reflected in the series of successes associated with the community centre. Members have gained experience of making funding bids, contract management and community development and now take overall responsibility for the management of the centre.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

Key impacts of the funding on the local community include:

- the provision of a much needed and desired community facility after such a long time has renewed local residents' confidence in themselves and the range of agencies who have contributed to making this happen
- the centre, through the wide range of activities, groups, classes and events it offers has provided a focus for the spare time of people living locally and has ostensibly reduced the sense of isolation and despondency some previously felt
- particular efforts have focussed on targeting some of the most vulnerable groups in the local community, specifically; older people and young people and promoting better understanding between them
- the building exhibits exemplary environmental performance, raising awareness of environmental sustainability locally. The environmental credentials of the facility have also served to reduce day to day running costs, although maintenance may prove expensive.

Name of project: Dalmally Community Company

Amount of Lottery funding £ 45,000

Lottery programme: Scottish Land Fund

Key Points:

- the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) grant was used to purchase land to develop a sports field and a new village community and sports centre which was designed to replace an old village hall in Dalmally. The project is managed by Dalmally Community Company registered in 2002 and set up to purchase the land
- this project is entirely dependent on volunteers and progress has been a lot slower than originally anticipated because of need to obtain match funding. Changes and delays in funding sources and requirements have also affected progress
- LEADER money and Highlands and Islands Enterprise funding have altered the original project by introducing energy efficiency measures and scaling back the planned size of the new village hall
- the new village hall has been designed to maximise use from the community as well as external organisations. Facilities include a large stage, sophisticated lighting and sound (acoustics were planned by an acoustic consultant) and there is potential to bring visiting theatre companies and orchestras. The hall also has a big commercial kitchen so it is hoped that it will be used for a range of functions, and particularly weddings. Dalmally already has a picturesque church frequently used for weddings but currently no venues suitable for wedding receptions.

Project Summary

The Scottish Land Fund grant was used to purchase land to develop a sports field and a new village community and sports centre which was designed to replace an old village hall in Dalmally.

The project used a diverse range of funding and key funding sources for the new village hall included the Growing Communities Assets Fund (£461k), LEADER, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, a grant from Argyll and Bute Council, the Cloth Workers Foundation, the Robertson Trust and Trust House Forte. The community also raised £123k mainly through community events.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The Scottish Land Fund grant covered the purchase of the land.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

Members of the community are key beneficiaries.

How is the project managed?

The project is managed by the Dalmally Community Company which is Ltd by guarantee. Currently there are 10 active directors and there are around 83 members of the company. The company was set up to purchase the land and was registered in early 2002; it is run solely by volunteers.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The idea for the project goes back to a community meeting in the old village hall in 1998 which was attended by 58 people from the village. The local shinty team wanted to develop a new pavilion with new changing rooms. However, they were unable to undertake the work because they did not own the pitch. While looking at this plan, the idea of expanding the plan to develop a new village hall which incorporated changing facilities for the shinty team emerged. A steering committee was formed at the meeting with a view to taking this plan forward.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

The Community Company drew up the Business Plan.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

The community was consulted by knocking on doors and a questionnaire was used to canvas views. The community is kept informed by open public meetings, AGM and a quarterly newsletter which is produced by the local school.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

An architect was employed to identify a suitable site for the development and draw up plans for work to develop a new sports pitch and the community hall.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

Progress has been a lot slower than originally anticipated because of need to get match funding. Raising funds has delayed the project and changes to funding sources affected progress.

The new village hall is finished but work on the sewers is not yet completed. A legal issue about taking the sewers across some land is taking time to resolve. It is hoped that the hall will open by spring 2011. The sports pitch is also partially formed.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The project changed once it obtained LEADER funding. The plans were redesigned and new energy efficiency measures were introduced including a heat pump system. The original building also changed for Argyll and Bute Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise funding as it was felt that the building was too expensive. As a result the original plans for the changing rooms were taken out of the building.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

The length of time required in order to raise necessary funding has held the project back and the new village hall is yet to open.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The longer term effects of the investment will be mainly in relation to extra services provided. The village now has a car park with spaces for 50 cars and 2 buses, improved lighting and a new accessible village hall. When it opens the hall will provide new provision to the area which includes high specification acoustic and stage facilities. Links with the school and the council have been enhanced and it is hoped that adult education classes will run in the new hall.

The project has also helped to increase understanding of the needs of beneficiaries. The process of raising funds and attending seminars run by BIG, for example, has helped to broaden the Community Company's outlook of the potential uses of the village hall and increase the number of ideas generated from them and the community.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

Many board members already had specialist skills which have helped them to develop the project. The Community Company has lost 4 directors since the beginning of the project but has had no problem filling these places. Once completed the sports pitch and new community hall will be handed over to the community. A village committee has been set up to run the new hall.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

So far, the project has helped to make the community more dynamic and it is hoped the project will result in more visitors to the village. The Scottish Land Fund grant was used to buy half a field in the village. The other half of this site already has shops and a new health centre on it as well as plans to build some new houses. Once the new village hall is opened the new site will become the new centre for the village and bring a new vibrancy to the village.

The hall has been designed to maximise the range of organisations likely to want to use it. For instance, it has a large stage, sophisticated lighting and sound (acoustics were planned by an acoustic consultant) and there is great potential to bring visiting theatre companies and orchestras. The hall also has a big commercial kitchen so it can be used for a range of functions particularly weddings. Dalmally's picturesque church is a popular place for weddings but the nearest place suitable for functions is some drive away. The facilities in the new hall will mean receptions could be held close to the church.

There has also been a great deal of interest from community groups wanting to use the new hall.

Name of project: Eden Project

Amount of Lottery funding £56,374,862

Lottery programme: Millennium Commission

Key Points:

- Total capital costs came to £132 million, of which £56.3 million (43 per cent) was provided by the Millennium Commission and BIG Lottery Fund. Funding was received across four phases of site development.
- The project was built based on projected visitor numbers of 750,000 per year. The actual number of visitors in the first year was 1.7 million. This generated significant strain on site infrastructure, but also on local road networks and as such presented an immediate concern regarding ongoing sustainability.
- The third and fourth phases of capital grant aimed to address long-term sustainability in two ways
- The impact of the capital grants is in some ways quite clear cut: they made it possible for the Eden Project to be built.
- Servicing interest on commercial loans caused the Project to make a loss in two of the three years between 2007 and 2009. This did not affect its viability as a going concern, but had been responsible for putting off potential investors.
- The Project does not seem to have a problem in terms of sustainability of revenue, but questions remain about the ability to fund future capital developments through their own resources.
- The main benefits of the Project are found in its external impact. Amion (2009) calculate the net economic impact of the Project at £805 million in the six and a half years between the project opening and 2007.

Project Summary

The Eden Project is a large tourist attraction, which aims to “*showcase man’s dependency on nature*” (Project Manager, Interview), illustrated in the following mission statement:

Promote a universal understanding of the critical importance of our relationship with plants; supporting and showcasing projects, and encouraging individual actions and choices that will lead to sustainable land use.

It was built on the site of a disused kaolin (china clay) quarry. The project took two and half years to complete and officially opened in March 2001. It was a Landmark Millennium project funded by the Millennium Commission. The visitors’ centre opened a year earlier so that visitors could watch the construction process (labelled ‘The Big Build’).

The project covers 15 hectares and is centred on two large bio-domes (greenhouses) – one of which is the largest in the world – that house different plant ecosystems. The attraction also has an ice rink – which doubles as a stage for concerts – an amphitheatre, an education centre and a ‘foundation’ building, which houses the project offices.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The first tranche of funding was used to build the Project in its initial guise, including the visitors centre and two Biomes. Subsequent grants were used for the additional buildings listed above. This also provided funding for infrastructure (e.g. parking facilities) to cope with the unforeseen demand for the project and improve the year-round sustainability of the project. Capital developments took place across four phases, as follows:

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The Project has two core sets of beneficiaries: visitors to the site, and the local economy (especially the tourist industry). Schools use the attraction for education purposes, and a range of different organisations - local, regional and national - use the facilities for conferences, meetings and seminars.

How is the project managed?

A management team manages the project, overseen by an executive board, which is in turn overseen by a board of trustees.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

In the 1990s Tim Smit and colleagues (re-)developed the Lost Gardens of Heligan nearby the current Project site. This led on to an idea for a visitor attraction that aimed to show the relationship between plants and everyday human life; emphasising humans' dependence on nature.

A secondary objective was to find use for the large disused kaolin pit at Bodelva, St Austell, alongside wider potential economic benefits for Cornwall and the South West region, alongside less tangible environmental benefits through education.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

A market feasibility study was carried out. However, in terms of research to test out the feasibility of the concept "*absolutely none*" was carried out (Research Manager): this was largely because the Eden Project was essentially a „new' idea.

Some benchmarking of the proposed attraction against – for example – Kew Gardens was carried out.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

The local authority (Restormel) was consulted and was involved with the project from the outset.

Tim Smit personally carried out extensive consultation and marketing of the proposed project by touring villages and towns in the region delivering talks and holding information events.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

Professional advice was taken from a range of property, construction and land specialists. Engineering and landscaping support was supplemented by advice from horticulture specialists.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

The initial tranche of funding was based on creating 150 jobs and attracting 625,000 visitors, increasing to 750,000 over three years.

In the first year after the project opened, 1.8 million people visited the attraction, which fell to 1.1 million by 2009. Approximately 600 people were employed at the Project at any one time over the first 2 years, with 430-450 staff (full time equivalent) employed on site in 2010 (see economic impacts for further details).

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The project underwent four phases of development.

The initial bid included the creation of a third bio-dome, an „arid’ zone, but the Millennium Commission felt that this would not be financially viable. Other major changes to the project were implemented as part of the third and fourth development phases, which were aimed at improving the long-term sustainability of the project.

The number of visitors to the attraction fell over time, from a starting point of 1.9 million visitors per year in March 2001 to a steady level of between 1 and 1.1 million visitors from 2006 to 2009. The decline in visitor numbers is similar to that experienced by other attractions that opened since 2001, and are still operating, while raw numbers of visitors remain more than double any of these (Amion, 2009).

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

The failure to forecast and account for such initial high visitor numbers jeopardised the long-term sustainability of the project, as the buildings and infrastructure were not designed to cope with such large numbers of people. The third and fourth phases of investment were necessary to “safeguard” the initial investment and ensure that visitor numbers could be maintained.

To meet the funding gap for capital investments, the Project took out commercial loans valuing £16.8 million. In 2008 £7.1 million was yet to be repayed (Amion, 2009). Payment of interest on these loans led to a pre-tax loss of £3.2 million in 2006 and £1.4 million in 2008.

Amion (*ibid.*) found the Project to not have an overall problem with solvency; but that the high level of overall debt could be concerning if trading conditions were to worsen in future. They also found that the debt had a detrimental effect on the Project’s ability to secure donations, “donors being concerned that their money would simply be used to pay off the debt” (p40).

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The initial capital grant was necessary for the project to take place, and subsequent developments were equally important in terms of the ongoing viability of the project.

The funding acted as the base for a range of services to be delivered on site, beyond the initial primary use as a tourist attraction. The Project facilities were since used to for a range of „outreach’ programmes across the country, including Lottery projects, and delivery of business support programmes.

The changes over Phases 3 and 4 of the development allowed it to generate funds from an increasing range of other events, including use of conference facilities and the Eden Sessions concerts.

An important part of the attempts to develop year-round revenue from visitors was to get local residents to view the Project as a local resource. To do so, the Project hosted various events that use the space in a different way to its standard use as a tourist attraction. The development of the ice rink and education centre has helped to diversify the range of events they are able to offer.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

Respondents did not really reflect on these issues: they could not really see how the capital grant had made a big difference in these areas, other than that the creation of the office building meant that staff had a better environment to work in, and that they were able to house more staff on site.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

Amion (2009) estimated that the Eden Project had resulted in between £48.1 million and £994.7 million net additional expenditure in the region between 2001 and 2007, with a central case scenario of £737.8 million. Net additional GVA for the region in 2007 was between £30.6 million and £64.3 million, with a central case net impact of £47.5million. 424 jobs were created, and 4,646 jobs were sustained by the Project between 2001 and 2007. The project had also had „softer’ impacts in terms of helping to develop the Cornwall „brand’ away from the „bucket and spade’ image of tourism.

Amion (2009) reported that 1,935 people had been „assisted with skills development’, with 255 people achieving a Level 2 or equivalent qualification.

According to Amion (2009) 33,408 school children visited the site with their school in the 2005/6 academic year. The project also collaborated with universities in Cornwall and Devon, including providing work experience opportunities for students, engaging in research projects and developing an MSc course with the University of Plymouth.

The Project had no demonstrable impact on worklessness in the area. Property prices had also risen significantly, as a result of the fact that the land was no longer a working mine. The project has resulted in some environmental costs, largely to do with its role in generating road travel in the area. The level of greenhouse gas and other emissions resulting from travel to the site had not been quantified.

The Project inevitably consumes energy and produces waste. In 2008/9 the site produced 338.4 tonnes of waste. To minimise this they have introduced recycling schemes, in-house composting, rainwater and groundwater harvesting, local sourcing of produce, and various forms of renewable energy production

Name of project: The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

Amount of Lottery funding: £ 3.6 million (£1 million of which was a short term loan)

Lottery programme: Scottish Land Fund

Key Points:

- a Scottish Land Fund grant of £3.6 million was used for a community buyout of the Isle of Gigha in 2002. Over the previous thirty years the island had experienced quite a turnover of owners and faced an uncertain future. The buyout represented a major land purchase of the island by the community and has involved a number of community led activities
- there was a high degree of community involvement in the master planning exercise for the island
- the community buy out of the island has had a significant effect on the lives of islanders. It has enhanced housing conditions, boosted business opportunities and halted a longstanding decline in the island's population
- islanders have a greater degree of control over their future lives and activities.

Project Summary

A Scottish Land Fund grant of £3.6 million was used for a community buyout of the Isle of Gigha in 2002. The buyout represented a major land purchase of the island by the community and has involved a number of community led activities which have included a major housing improvement project, the development of a wind farm to generate income for the local economy, ownership and management of holiday cottages and a hotel and the development of new business activity.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The grant was used for a community buyout of the Isle of Gigha.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The key beneficiaries are the island community themselves and also Scotland as a whole. Island communities represent a strong part of Scotland's culture and heritage which needs to be preserved and held in trust for the future of those communities and the nation. Scottish Land Reform needs to be seen in the context of the wider development of the nation and keeping communities vibrant and alive for the future.

How is the project managed?

The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust was set up to buy the land and is a company with charitable status. It has two subsidiary companies Gigha Trading Ltd (which runs the hotel and holiday side) and Gigha Renewable Energy Company. Each company has its own board. The Heritage Trust set up Gigha Renewable Energy Ltd. to buy and operate three wind turbines.

Gigha residents control the whole project and profits are reinvested in the community. The main Trust currently has six directors (five local people and one co-opted member). The membership of the company is open to all residents aged over eighteen and there are around 100 members.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The idea for the project came about when the island of Gigha was put on the market for sale in August 2001. Over the previous thirty years the island had seen quite some turnover of owners and had experienced considerable decline. It increasingly faced an uncertain future. The threat of another sale caused considerable concern and with encouragement from the local MSP, George Lyon, and other bodies, it was agreed to launch a bid by the community to buy the island. At the time there had been a number of other prominent buy outs and this helped the community see that it may be possible to buy the island. Although there was some initial scepticism from the community, a number went and visited the Isle of Eigg and came back in favour of a community buy out. The community buy-out proposal was supported by 76 per cent of the islanders. The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust (IGHT) was set up and the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) was approached for a small grant to develop proposals for the future of the 3,400-acre island.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

A feasibility study and Business Plan were developed with the help of Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The Trust also wrote the Development Plan for the area and undertook a master planning exercise for housing. It was recognised that development could have a negative impact on the island's outstanding scenic qualities. It was vital to ensure that the new housing, businesses, crofts, and related infrastructure were well designed and sited appropriately.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

There was considerable community debate about the options mainly through community meetings. Islanders participated in a mapping session which informed the Masterplan and was followed by a presentation of initial ideas and options to the Trust's Board as a basis for identifying development sites. The plan and supporting information were available at an open day, when residents were asked for their further views. Each person was asked to vote on those sites they considered most suited, and those least suited, to development.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

The Board worked in partnership with Fyne Homes and Argyll and Bute Council commissioning Anderson Bell Christie with Mike Hyatt Landscape Architects to prepare a Masterplan and Design Guides to form the detailed spatial framework for the island.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

The overall aim of the project was to buy the island and this has been achieved. In essence the islanders wanted to turn round a situation in which people had to leave to find work and a decent home, with those remaining lived in unacceptable conditions. Significant achievements include:

An increase in the population of the island, after decades of decline the population has risen from 98 in 2002 to 158 in 2010.

A £6 million housing improvement programme using support from Argyll and Bute Council and the Scottish Government. The island had exceptionally poor housing with 98 per cent below a tolerable standard. These houses are now being renovated and internal and external renovations being brought up to a 25 year life span. To date 23 properties have been renovated by the Trust and a deal has been done to develop 18 new homes for rent with Fyne Homes. The Trust has also had a subsequent GCA grant of £266,508 for the

renovation of properties owned by the community for use as holiday lets and it also owns the only hotel on the Island.

The development of the Gigha windmills which comprise three pre-commissioned turbines. The turbines are fully paid for and are now paying back £100k per year. The original turbines were funded using grant funding, loan finance and equity finance.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The trust has become involved in a number of projects that were not anticipated at the outset particularly in relation to the purchase and operation of the wind turbines.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

The Trust used the sale of Achamore House and money raised by islanders to repay the £1 million loan to the Scottish Land Fund within two years. To some extent this has held the Trust back as the money raised to repay the loan could have been used elsewhere.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The main effect is the investment has resulted in the community being able to buy the island and run the estate in a way which is more effective than previous landowners. The islanders have managed to create a community where people now see a future. The work of the Trust has helped to reverse a longstanding decline in the island's population, increase the numbers of visitors to the island and attract 14 new businesses to the island.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

Directors of the Trust have largely brought themselves up to do a job that they have never done before. When needed the Trust have bought in advice from organisations like Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council.

Staff turnover and continuity has been an issue for the organisation. Finding the right staff can sometimes be difficult on an isolated island particularly when the salary may not be as high as people can earn elsewhere. The demands of the organisation have also changed and this results in differing demands on staff and requirements for different types of skills. For example, the Trust now has staff with expertise in renewable energy and wind turbines that they did not have at the beginning.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

Ownership of the land enables the community to improve things for themselves by raising money against the assets of the Trust.

Overall social impacts have had the greatest effect and the project has helped to reverse population decline. The housing improvement programme has resulted in better living conditions for islanders. Social and community activities on the island have increased and regular activities include a music festival and a village pantomime, five-a-side-football, keep-fit, carpet bowls, afternoon tea and a drama group.

Increasing numbers of visitors to Gigha have helped to improve business opportunities and 14 new businesses have been attracted to the island. The Trust has also redeveloped self-catering cottages using a subsequent GCA grant and has improved the Island's only hotel.

The island has also seen a big change in environmental management. Renewable energy is playing a leading role in the regeneration of the island and the Trust is now looking at expanding production with a fourth wind turbine.

Name of Project: Heart of the City (Sheffield)

Amount of Lottery Funding £20.5m initially, later addition of £1.5m

Lottery Programme: Millennium Commission

Key Points:

- the project was conceived by the City Council in the early „90s as a way to restore economic vitality to the City Centre in the face of the effects of the Meadowhall shopping mall
- it had a strong economic development rationale and the management and implementation arrangements to ensure these impacts
- high calibre master planning work, with the brief to create a successful place, was reinforced by robust property development economics appraisals to ensure commercial feasibility and viability
- extensive and broadly-based community consultations occurred throughout the design phases
- the MC grant paid 50 per cent of the cost of the public and urban realm works, these being the essential precursors to securing the follow on development investment (latest estimate is £150m)
- the project and the subsequent development is now substantially complete
- a partnership-based management company sets the overall standards for care and maintenance of the public and private urban realm which are then fulfilled by the City Council and to a high standard
- the development scheme provides a mixture of uses and spaces, well used by occupiers, the public and visitors, and represents the showcase for the city's promotion and marketing.

Project Summary

The Millennium Commission grant contributed funding, along with ERDF and English Partnerships/Yorkshire Forward, towards the cost of the project comprising:

- land assembly
- clearance i.e. Egg Box, Registry
- street scene hard landscaping (inc. Arundel Gate)
- Peace Gardens
- Millennium Gallery
- Winter Gardens
- (Later), Millennium Square.

This investment has enabled the procurement of subsequent commercial office development, a hotel, restaurants, apartments and a multi-storey car park.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The grant was match funding towards the project elements summarised above

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The main beneficiaries are the people of Sheffield. Additional benefits accrue to visitors, city centre businesses and the occupants of the subsequent development. In so far as the project induced subsequent private sector investment and is reported to have had a beneficial effect on property values, there is a further set of secondary beneficiaries who comprise Heart of the City outcomes.

How is the project managed?

The MC insisted that Sheffield City Council should ensure the urban realm was maintained to very high standards. The City Council, its city development company Creative Sheffield, the Sheffield Museums and Galleries Trust and the private sector developers contribute financially and are members of the St Paul's Management Company. This arrangement specifies and monitors the service standards for maintenance and project managed individual development schemes to ensure they uphold the quality standards from the original vision.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The context for Sheffield in the late 1980'/early '90s was difficult economically. Legacy effects of cuts in steel production and in coal mining in the surrounding area were acute. The Sheffield Development Corporation was clearing and re-developing the Lower Don Valley. The World Student Games hosted in Sheffield had a seriously negative effect on Council finances and the construction of the Sheffield Supertram caused considerable disruption. Meadowhall's impacts on city centre retailing displaced businesses and jobs.

It was a City Council-inspired idea to regenerate the city centre by kick-starting the process with the two-fold aim of:

- creating a city centre heart (there wasn't one) which would set the standard for public realm
- creating a city centre commercial office market, attractive to the private sector (there had been no city centre office development for 25 years).

The MC was in its formative stage at the time and was open to different approaches that contrasted with the big iconic architecture schemes and visitor attractions. Its involvement with and influence upon the project was immensely important in securing City Council commitment to the project throughout and in giving other funding sources confidence in the project

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

The entire project development process was subject to a series of studies, in parallel with the design and master planning work. These covered options appraisals, economic impacts and a financial audit study. They, too, provided the confidence to the City Council and to match funders that the project was viable and worthwhile.

How were community beneficiaries consulted during project development?

Extensive consultations, using a wide variety of methods and routes to communities occurred. More than 160 presentations and exhibition events were held with schools, faith groups, voluntary and community groups, rotary clubs and business networks.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

The local authority and Creative Sheffield provided professional expertise, supplemented by private sector practices in architecture, economics, and finance and property development.

What progress has been made against the outcomes of the BIG grant?

All elements of the initial urban realm works are complete. Most of the subsequent commercial and mixed uses schemes are complete. One remaining commercial office development scheme is at the financing stage.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The out-turn is substantially in accordance with the original master plan. The later completion of the Millennium Square is consistent with the vision and was grant aided by the MC from underspending on other projects elsewhere, matched by Yorkshire Forward.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

The main positive external factors have been the policy, funding and economic contexts. Factors internal to the project which contribute to the successes are continuity of personnel, leadership, a high calibre team of public and private professionals and a good, real master plan, grounded in economic realities.

The onset of the credit crunch, banking crisis, collapsing housing market and subsequent recession, with prospects for public expenditure cuts and job losses and their knock-on effects have slowed the occupation of the apartments and resulted in some negative equity.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

Apart from the remarkably good amenities created, the subsequent private development and some 1500 jobs accommodated, the most dramatic effect is the transformation of a drab un-inviting part of the city into a destination of choice and quality.

Impacts cited include retention of professional services firms in the city centre, office rents up from £14 psf to £20 psf, Sheffield Hallam University's consolidation of its city centre campus on adjacent sites, increased city centre pedestrian footfall and the very real intangibles of public pride, business and investor confidence, renewed self-belief in the Council and an accomplishment to showcase the city in its marketing and promotions. The approach is being applied to other major schemes.

What has been the nature of changes to the organisation?

The City Council had, by 1999, become comfortable with the concept of arms' length organisations. The Sheffield City Development Agency, which included the officers who started the project concept, evolved into an Urban Regeneration Company (Sheffield One) and then into the current city development company Creative Sheffield. These vehicles reflect the changes in national policy fashions and were a source of funding that local Authorities would not receive direct. Their constitutions and governance may have evolved but the continuity of the officers and the mission serves to demonstrate the value of the arrangements. The future organisational arrangements are not, however, assured.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

Sheffield's population has a good part of their city now, with indoor and outdoor attractions and have made good use of the amenities. Heart of the City is a source of public pride.

Users/occupiers have a high profile/high quality location which enables confidence to exude.
The expected tone and standard have been set for future schemes to emulate.

Name of project: Kidwelly Community Hall (Wales)

Amount of Lottery funding £195,200

Lottery programme: Village Halls for the 21st Century

Key Points:

- the development of the Hall was very much based on the needs of the community
- the Hall has changed in its design and services offered as a result of the changing needs and wants of the local population
- in terms of its original objectives and anticipated outcomes the Hall has very much delivered for the local community
- the Hall has served as a site of social interaction between different people and generations that was not previously possible given the absence of a public building
- the Hall has engaged other people in sports through a diverse mix of activities beyond the traditional rugby and football. This was particularly true for local women
- the facility has evolved and it is anticipated that it will continue to do so as it is shaped by the changing needs of the community
- the Hall has also served as a venue for the delivery of services previously unavailable in Kidwelly such as flu jabs and giving blood.

Project Summary

The grant was used to build a community hall within the small town of Kidwelly near Carmarthen in South Wales as part of the Village Halls for the 21st century project.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The people of Kidwelly and, to a lesser extent, the surrounding villages of Llansaint, Mynyddgarreg and Ferryside.

How is the project managed?

The Hall is managed by a Board of Trustees comprising 16 representatives from Kidwelly: *“it’s a real cross-section of people”*. Trustees include 4 Kidwelly Town Councillors (including the Mayor), representatives from some of the organisations and clubs that use the Hall, and other local residents. The Trustees meet once a month. The day-to-day management of the Hall is the responsibility of a paid caretaker, while everyone else is a volunteer.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The Town and community was in dire need of a community facility for all sorts of activities and the *Village Halls for the 21st Century* programme was the perfect source to help fund it. Kidwelly is a small, medieval town (population circa 3,000) and there was a feeling within the community that it really lacked a modern venue with the appropriate facilities that could provide for a range of activities but also provide accessibility for all.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

Due to changes in personnel since the original grant was awarded the current Chairperson was not sure if a formal feasibility study was undertaken but thought *“probably yes, there*

was definitely a business plan and everything". There was a clear budget plan from the very early stages of development.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

As well as a large scale consultation process with community residents, at the outset a consultation exercise was undertaken which involved speaking to the formal groups already in existence in Kidwelly to ascertain what the Hall would need to offer to make it suitable for their use.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

Initially an architect was appointed by the Town Council before the Trust was established. Subsequently, the Trust replaced the architect as they were not happy with progress and rising costs.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

The progress is ongoing as the needs of the community evolve and change but it could be argued that the initial outcomes – to provide the community with education, sports, training and meeting facilities (that were previously virtually non-existent) – has been met.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

One significant alteration was a large room which was meant to be a squash court being converted into two conference rooms through a mezzanine development. Where previously this was a big empty space, with squash played by just a handful of people in the area, it is now two large rooms which are used extensively (e.g. by Swansea University for Welsh classes) and provide an income to the Hall thus aiding the move towards sustainability.

Are the outcomes for the project the ones that were anticipated at the outset of the project?

The anticipated outcomes were undoubtedly achieved and have grown and been sustained, evidenced by the growth in the use of the Hall.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

In terms of facilitating factors respondents cited a number of issues:

- overwhelmingly the most important factor was a very real need: the hall was needs-driven and this was the ideal behind its management and development
- the importance of listening to what the community wants but acknowledging that some things are simply unrealistic and would not be sustainable
- a large pool of volunteers and commitment which also enables succession when key individuals leave
- the incremental approach and awareness from the outset of the need to take a step at a time: *"it was always going to be a phased development as the financial issue necessitated it"*, as one Trustee stated.

The only real hindrance was that, initially, the use of the Hall was not great and the Hall struggled to meet its costs. Gradually, and largely through word of mouth, the community

had responded to the facility and the range of users and beneficiaries has expanded greatly as intended, bringing it with it the extra income too.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

In terms of use of facilities the effects are huge as there were previously no such facilities and their use is growing every year. This brings with it the benefits of wider engagement in sports, and particularly alternative sports, and activities which are often not easily accessible to residents of communities such as Kidwelly. The Hall has clearly engaged more people than envisaged and a wide range of ages too.

As well as the diverse activities now accessible in the town a range of new services are now delivered in Kidwelly which were not possible before: flu jabs in the winter; mobile blood donors use the Hall; Welsh classes delivered by the University of Swansea.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

The most obvious impact is the social benefit of the Hall. Not only as a place for a range of people to engage in disparate activities and access services (e.g. flu jabs) but also in terms of a focal point for the community and a site of social interaction between residents and, to some extent, different generations. The Hall also contributes to the healthy lifestyles agenda by providing a wide range of physical activities within the town itself:

"There is no other Hall...there's so many things going on that just weren't possible before".
"It's provided a venue for other sports that were previously unavailable within Kidwelly such as netball, kick-boxing and karate....it's provided the opportunity for things to happen that wouldn't have before."

While the venue acted as the catalyst, interviewees were also clear that it was the actions of individuals which were also crucial in setting up activities, clubs and groups and capitalising on the facilities on offer. In this sense the Hall had galvanised people and "kick-started" more social activities in the Town.

One female Trustee also felt that women in particular had benefited from the Hall - *"it's a very traditional town and it's always just been football or rugby"* but now there was a range of activities aimed specifically at women too (e.g. aerobics, dance classes etc)

The Hall has also led to more active participation from a number of parents. Several interviewees felt that the Hall had brought people together and into contact with each other where previously they would not have known each other. In this sense the Hall was considered a key mechanism for meeting new people and increasing social interaction. It was very much viewed as an inter-generational space - a space which brings elderly and younger generations into contact with each other.

"Without the Hall we wouldn't have anywhere...all the organisations and clubs would have to operate outside the Town...it's made such a difference and to be honest I never thought it would. It's been worth every penny".

Name of project: Millennium Coastal Park, Carmarthenshire (Wales)

Amount of Lottery funding £ 13.75m

Lottery programme: Millennium Commission

Key Points:

- importance of historical legacy in terms of de-industrialisation and the acquisition of coastal land enabling the development
- difficult to over-emphasise the transformation of the coastline both environmentally and aesthetically
- long-term agreement with the Council has been key to ensuring the sustainability and continuing high standards within the Park
- the original plans were scaled back in order to ensure the sustainability of the Park and make its ongoing maintenance more manageable and realistic
- the knock-on effects in terms of economic investment have been significant though hard to quantify
- the local housing market has been bolstered by the development of new housing which has served to diversify the housing stock
- there are further ongoing ideas for revenue-making activities within the park
- coastal erosion and the ever changing nature of the coastline represent a natural but difficult challenge to the Park, stakeholders and staff
- importance of partnerships in making the development happen.

Project Summary

The Millennium Commission grant was used to transform a 20km stretch of industrial coastline in a bid to trigger economic investment in south Llanelli and Burry Port and rejuvenate the area. The idea was to link this stretch of coast with existing tourist destinations to the east and west: 'the project will create a continuous 20km coastal park, linking the great natural resources of the Pembrey peninsula to the west, with the Loughor Estuary to the east. The main access to the park and its activity focus will be within the town of Llanelli itself'.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The main beneficiaries are the people of Carmarthenshire for whom a previous no-go area of the coast is now an impressive landscape offering a range of activities unavailable elsewhere in the area. Other beneficiaries include the County Council and to a lesser extent *Sustrans* (a UK charity/ social movement "enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day"). The Council in particular have benefited from the emergence of the coastline along Llanelli and Burry port as a tourist attraction in its own right and one which complemented the existing attractions along the coast. Visitors come from far afield to enjoy the Park and its facilities.

How is the project managed?

The project has always been managed through the same Park Manager who operates as part of the Tourism and Leisure section of Carmarthenshire County Council. He reports to the Council through a Director but the Manager is the budget holder.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

The project was essentially a product of de-industrialisation and the legacy of the former industrial works that dominated the coast. In the 1960s and 1970s Llanelli Borough Council began buying up a lot of the land on the coastline. Then in 1981 the large steelworks in south Llanelli closed and Sandy Water Park was created on a piece of land where the steelworks once stood. This, along with a Garden festival bid created sufficient momentum and confidence to realize the idea of the Coastal Park.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

A huge environmental impact study was undertaken as the estuary is a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). The study was conducted by consultants, stretched to 1,000 pages and had to prove that the development was beneficial.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

The primary means of consultation was through a forum group of 100 residents who were consulted throughout the development phase. A local Councillor also noted the involvement of residents associations within the consultation stage as well as wide engagement on a less formal basis from other groups and individuals. This was important to the local area and served to retain an element of historical continuity and acknowledge the industrial past.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

The project progressed and evolved throughout with the design and plans re-visited on a regular basis. However, in terms of the overall aims of giving the coast back to the people then the outcomes have arguably been achieved.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

As one respondent noted *"the Park is very different from the original project plan"*, having been scaled back from a £45m development to a £27.5m one, with sustainability a key factor in this.

Are the outcomes for the project the ones that were anticipated at the outset of the project?

The anticipated outcomes were public access to a sustainable coastal park with wildlife that could help facilitate healthy lifestyles. In this sense the anticipated outcomes have been realised.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

There are a number of reasons for the success of the project and also some factors which have hindered development:

- the Council has committed to sustaining and maintaining the MCP to its current high standard for 75 years which is obviously another crucial factor in helping the sustainability and long-term maintenance of the Park
- the great versatility of the Park has ensured its extensive use and access by a range of groups

- a 200m stretch of the coastal path was lost to coastal erosion two years ago and the constantly changing coastal landscape represents its own challenges on an ongoing basis

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The investment from BIG is proving to be more valuable year on year and the investment that has been pulled into south Llanelli and Burry Port as a result of the Park is huge: *"Tens of millions that just wouldn't have happened otherwise"*.

It was also felt that the longer-term effects would continue to be realised over time as tourism was still considered a relatively untapped area for Carmarthenshire County Council and the MCP was one of the leading lights on this.

In terms of specifics, the Park is very well used. As there are over 50 access points along 12m of coast it is very difficult to ascertain user numbers but as an indicator the Discovery Centre gets 250,000 visitors through the door every year.

Sustainability was also enhanced through the partnership working established through the Park project.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

There was a strong belief from all interviewees that the knock-on effects of the park, in terms of the wider economic impact in attracting inward investment, have been "enormous". The development of the Park served as a trigger for the development of new housing and a brand new golf course, designed by famous US golfer Jack Nicklaus, which have brought people into the area. This has precipitated a change in the housing stock of Llanelli which has always been dominated by two-bedroom terraced houses.

On the social side Burry Port now has a thriving boating community which never existed previously and the *Discovery Centre* hosts a range of events such as crafts fairs etc. The Burry Port carnival has also recently moved to the harbour and a winter festival also takes place there. Some community groups were also set up since the Park was completed: Pwll Park recreational community and the North Dock residents association.

The environmental legacy of the park is obvious: the conversion of an industrial stretch of coastline into a thriving wildlife reserve and conservation area, with the wetlands centre attracting all kinds of different birds. The park has been designed in such a way so as to provide suitable breeding grounds for wildlife. The visible transformation in terms of the coastline, the water and the proliferation of green spaces is massive.

Name of project: Upperthorpe Health Living Centre

Amount of Lottery funding £ 1 million

Lottery programme: New Opportunities Fund Healthy Living Centre Programme

Key Points:

- The Trust is made up of three partners Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe Community Association, Sheffield City Council and the Primary Care Trust. After early problems operational management of the Healthy Living Centre was transferred to Zest, the trading arm of the community organisation in 2007.
- The core activities provided by the Healthy Living Centre include a library which is run by the council, a pool which offers range of public swimming sessions, a gym and a café.
- Issues of sustainability have been addressed by broadening the appeal of the Centre beyond its geographical locality to include beneficiaries across the city. The Centre is also used by all groups in the community and provides an important community focus.
- To help with income generation the Centre rents out more office space than originally envisaged. The Centre has managed to retain its health ethos through the tenants and third sector organisations accommodated.

Project Summary

A New Opportunities Fund Healthy Living Centre Programme grant was awarded to the Upperthorpe Healthy Living Centre Trust for the refurbishment and linking up of three buildings in the community (a library, swimming pool and community hall) to create a new hub for a Healthy Living Centre. The total BIG grant was for around £1 million but substantial SRB6 funding was also used to redevelop the buildings. The Trust was made up of three partners Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe Community Association (NUCA), Sheffield City Council and the PCT.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

The main beneficiaries for the project were the local community (Netherthorpe, Upperthorpe and Langsett), which is made up of a number of different ethnic groups and a proportion of people with disabilities. The bid emphasized the Centre was for all members of the community rather than for a number of specific groups. Since opening the Centre's appeal has expanded beyond its immediate geographical area to include city wide beneficiaries and this has helped enhance its sustainability.

How is the project managed?

The Centre experienced financial difficulties early on in its development and in July 2007 Zest (trading name for NUCA) took over operational management of the Healthy Living Centre. The Trust still owns the building and through service level agreements still delivers the Healthy Living Centre but subcontracts the operational management to Zest.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

In 1997 the area received URBAN funding and a new community forum called the **Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe Community Association (NUCA)** was set up. By 1999 the community forum was in a position to apply for and then deliver an SRB 6 scheme

worth £15 million. A key project for the SRB6 funding was the development of a community centre. At the time the community had three separate buildings, the pool, library and community hall all run by different local departments and running separate projects.

Using European money, NUCA were in a position to develop a BIG Lottery bid and the New Opportunities Fund Healthy Living Centre Programme acted as a catalyst to develop the community buildings into a Healthy Living Centre project. The community forum looked at developing a Healthy Living Centre in a number of buildings but the bid did not come together until focus shifted to consider the swimming pool. At the time of the bid the local pool and the library were threatened services and the Healthy Living Centre project was a way of increasing funding and preserving these facilities for the community.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

A Business Plan for the Healthy Living Centre was submitted. The council worked extensively with the community and PCT to develop the Business Plan. Feasibility work was undertaken around governance structures for the community association and management of the Centre as well as consultation with different agencies about the type of services they would want at the Centre. Zest has also undertaken consultation with the local community around health issues and needs.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

There was also wider community consultation using conferences and workshops.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

Good progress has been made against outcomes.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The core activities provided by the Healthy Living Centre include a library which is run by the council, a pool which offers range of public swimming sessions, a gym and a café.

The gym and pool provide much of the centre's income. The pool provides a number of 'women only' swimming sessions where female lifeguards are guaranteed. There are a lot of classes for non-swimmers as well as male only sessions requested by the community. In addition the pool offers additional targeted classes which include GP exercise referrals with higher staff ratios, warmer water and ramps provide.

Since opening Department of Health Social Enterprise funding has been used to relocate and increase the size of the gym. A high number of gym users use the Slice Card Discount Scheme. The gym runs sessions for older people and disabled groups as well as specific sessions for GP referrals e.g. cardiac rehabilitation. There are also a standard range of exercise classes as well as classes geared to target groups including chair based exercise classes and cardiac rehabilitation.

The Centre also provides a range of health services funded from elsewhere including a community food worker funded through a Public Health Programme, health champions and a counselling service funded by IAPT.

One change is the Centre is providing more office accommodation than was perhaps originally envisaged. The shift has helped with sustainability and the Centre has managed to retain its health ethos through the type of tenants and third sector organisations accommodated. The linking of services has become much stronger. The space available in

the Centre is full and there are several tenants including: Sheffield City Council - children and young person's service, Bridge Employment which helps get those with health problems and disabilities into employment, Headways, a brain injury charity and Langsett Advice Service. The main benefit quoted is that of all being under one roof and so shared services and signposting are seen as added benefits. Tenants that occupy the Centre like being based there and it is seen as a popular and effective place to deliver services from, which was not available before.

Are the outcomes for the project the ones that were anticipated at the outset of the project?

Overall the outcomes of the project were the ones that were anticipated. However, the project has generated additional opportunities and there is a wider range of services than perhaps anticipated at the outset.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

Early on achievement was restricted by problems with the management of the Centre and operational management was changed to Zest in 2007. Initially some projects were not financially viable and the Centre needed a great deal of intervention from the council. These problems have been addressed and since Zest took over management has improved and the council is no longer involved in the day to day management of the Centre. There is much greater emphasis on earned income and the Centre rents out more space for offices and has found alternative uses for the space which has brought more money in.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The community facilities and buildings would probably have gone out of use without BIG Lottery funding as their quality was poor and they were in desperate need of repair. Many of the services provided would not be available without the initial BIG investment.

The Centre provides a central point for partners involved to meet. It also brings benefits as has a range of organisations and agencies are located under one roof. The project has strengthened the relationship between the Trust, the PCT and the Council. The level of involvement of the PCT in the management of the Centre is unique and is much greater than in other such projects in Sheffield. The PCT provide funds for gyms and health referrals and uses the Centre as an important delivery point for their enhanced Public Health development Programme. Zest has partners in the community and without the BIG investment it would not have been so easy to bring these relationships about and gain the benefits from them.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

Organisational capacity has been strengthened and financial management improved. Sustainability issues have forced some staff changes and helped provide the impetus for the Centre to begin to develop better skilled staff. Since Zest took over operational management, the Centre has gained from economies of scale and now has much greater volume of business. Turnover of Zest is around £4.4m and the Zest Centre brings in 750k. Zest also have experienced and skilled core team.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

The impact of the Centre on the community is greatest in social terms and 90 per cent of users say that they have made friends at the centre. The Centre provides a community focal point and is a place where people can spend time. A real mix of people use the centre and it is well used by the different ethnic groups in the community - Somalis and Yemenis etc. Sessions like the women only swimming also bring people into the centre that may not use it

otherwise. At times particular ethnic groups have wanted to use services separately but this has always been resisted as it is seen as a Centre for all the community.

Beneficiaries appreciated the facilities and services available and enjoyed using the Centre. A number commented on the “friendly atmosphere” and excellent staff. Many had started using the Centre after being referred by their GPs to the Centre’s cardiac rehabilitation courses and exercise programmes.

Economic impacts in the community are more limited. The Centre provides local employment and volunteer opportunities and contributes to increased foot fall in the area. Whilst there have been an increase in the range of shops in the area, the infrastructure and shopping offer remain very poor.

Name of project: Co-operating Health Healthy Living Scheme - the Winning Post Healthy Living Centre

Amount of Lottery funding: £1.1 million in total (£30,000 to the Winning Post project)

Lottery programme: New Opportunities Fund Healthy Living Centre Programme

Key Points:

- the Winning Post is a community centre based at the heart of Moorends in Doncaster. It has been refurbished through the Doncaster Healthy Living Project BIG Lottery Funds to facilitate a Healthy Living Centre scheme
- the building is being used by different groups and is now much more accessible as the BIG capital grant paid for a disabled ramp
- the project has given the community a better building, use of the building has increased and there is greater capacity for events and activities in the community
- new services have been established and the funding provided encouraged a number of health related activities within the venue. However, the activities at the venue have not been as medical and counselling based as originally hoped
- the work of the public health development workers based at the Centre has helped strengthen partnerships with the community and contributed to health networking. Having a suitable venue in the community has facilitated this work and acted as a catalyst for understanding the needs of beneficiaries. By having dedicated staff at the Winning Post, Doncaster PCT has been able to deliver work in the community more effectively.

Project Summary

The Co-operating Health project aimed to develop a network of healthy living projects or schemes across Doncaster and link the provision of healthy living activity across communities (both geographical and interest) to encourage a healthy living culture to develop in order to reduce health inequalities. There were a number of initiatives² under the Co-operating for Health project, one of which was the Winning Post Healthy Living Centre in Moorends and Thorne.

The Winning Post is a community centre based at the heart of Moorends and has been refurbished through the Doncaster Healthy Living Project BIG Lottery Funds and Neighbourhood Renewal Funding to facilitate a Healthy Living Centre scheme.

What is/was the main purpose of the grant from BIG?

The capital grant of £30000 for the refurbishment of the Winning Post Healthy Living Centre paid for a disabled ramp, the re-modelling and refurbishment of two front rooms and a folding partition so that the large front room could be divided. Around a quarter of the total refurbishment of the Winning Post was covered by the BIG Lottery money.

² Other projects across Doncaster included Active Recreation, Bentley Community House, Services for Asian Women Project, Mental Health in Thorne project, Advice via GPs surgeries, Age Concern project, Arts and Health, Early Interventions project, Mental Health Drop in, Nutrition, the Dome project.

Who are the key beneficiaries of the project?

Key beneficiaries of the Winning Post project are Thorne and Moorends residents and those living in the wider borough.

How is the project managed?

The Winning Post is owned by the Town Council. The project was managed by Doncaster PCT and overseen by a Healthy Living Co-ordinator. Public Health Development workers based at the Centre facilitated and co-ordinated local healthy living activities and health promotion, working closely with local groups and organisations.

How did the idea or concept of this project come about?

In July 1998 a multi-agency Healthy Living Co-ordinating Group was established to take forward Doncaster's approach to healthy living centres. Membership comprised of Doncaster Health Authority, the Local Authority, the Community Health Council, the Council for Voluntary Service, and the two Trusts (DRI Acute Trust and Healthcare Community Trust).

In October an information launch about the new initiative on healthy living centres was attended by over 120 people with much interest generated across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. Following this event the initial co-ordinating group was re-formed to give wider community representation. Community and voluntary sector members were equally represented, via a formal election process, on the Doncaster Healthy Living Advisory Group.

The local need for the Winning Post scheme was identified through various consultations, surveys, health documents, and through specific beneficiary groups. Death rates from cancer and circulatory disease are above the national average and there are high suicide and accident mortality rates. Poverty, unemployment and low levels of educational attainment amongst children and young people are key factors in the high incidence of teenage pregnancy, smoking and substance misuse and poor lifestyle choices.

Was a feasibility study undertaken?

A lot of consultation was carried out but a feasibility study was not undertaken for the Co-operating for Health project.

How were the community/ beneficiaries consulted during project development?

Community networking events were supported by the Doncaster Healthy Living Advisory Group to generate interest and ideas for healthy living projects: These were held in central Doncaster, Rossington, Hexthorpe, Carcroft, Bentley, Thorne and Moorends. In June 2000 key stakeholders from all sectors attended a community consultation seminar to help shape Doncaster's bid for NOF funding. It was agreed that the various projects would be presented as a single co-operative bid so that:

- local autonomy and control could be maintained within a strategic approach to tackling health inequalities
- schemes at a more developmental stage could benefit from the support of the overarching partnership body until they had developed their own management capacity
- use of resources could be maximised and duplication avoided.

Was professional advice sought in the design and development of the project?

Professional plans were drawn up for the remodelling work of the Winning Post.

What progress has been made against the outcomes for the BIG grant?

The funding provided spring boarded a number of health related activities within the venue including amongst other things: an Over 50's exercise, a dance class for older people, a Community Memory Therapy Service, Hearts & Minds which is a health promotion and social activity group for older people in conjunction with the Choosing Health Development Worker and a sexual health adviser at the Youth club.

Other services available include a Citizens Advice Bureau and the local community radio is broadcast from the venue.

Overall the outcomes of the Winning Post are in broad terms what were anticipated. The original bid mentions most of the initiatives that the project has ended up delivering and these have reached all the groups of beneficiaries mentioned in some way.

The project has given the community a better building, use of the building has increased and there is greater capacity for events and activities in the community. It has not been possible to undertake some of the activities that were originally envisaged. For example, one idea was to have a female GP based at the Winning Post but at the time there was no capacity within the NHS. Also not undertaken all that wanted on sexual health advice (again due to capacity within the NHS), although have provided a sexual health adviser at the Youth Club.

Has the project changed or developed over time?

The activities at the venue have not been as medical and counselling based as originally hoped but there have been a range of other health initiatives and health related activities based at the Centre.

What factors have facilitated or hindered achievement of the intended outcomes of the investment?

Up until recently the presence of a dedicated PCT public health development worker at the Centre has helped to promote and organize activities at the Centre. The Healthy Living Coordinator who is now a Public Health Development Manager and still based at the Centre also has a longstanding good working relationship with the Town Councillor and this has contributed to the development of community activities at the Winning Post. One factor which may have affected achievement of intended outcomes of the project at the Winning Post is that it has never had a dedicated community centre manager or staff. The lack of dedicated staff at the Centre has perhaps held back what it has been possible to do at the Winning Post.

Due to financial cuts the PCT's involvement in the Winning Post will cease also at the end of March 2011.

What have been the effects of BIG investment?

The capital grant has helped bring the building back into community use faster than it would have otherwise been possible. The Town Council did not have the money to undertake the refurbishment of the Centre that the capital grant contributed to and without the grant the building may have remained stagnant. The grant has helped to increase use of the centre and people feel that it is a nicer place to use. They now book the venue for parties which they did not do before.

The building is being used by different groups and is now much more accessible as the BIG capital grant paid for a disabled ramp. New services have also been established and many health related activities run from the Winning Post including the Community Memory Therapy group which now uses the building three times a week. This group would never

have occupied the building if the front rooms had not been refurbished using the capital grant. There is no other suitable venue for this group in the locality.

The funding has also helped the PCT as they have been able to use facilities at the Winning Post. It has helped to increase PCT capacity as they have been able to deliver services in the community that could not do if the building had not been refurbished. It has also provided the NHS with cheap office space and storage. The PCT pay £4,000 per year for the use of 2 offices and the building.

What have been the nature of changes in the organisation?

The work of the public health development workers based at the Centre has helped strengthen partnerships with the community and contributed to health networking. Meetings are now held at the Winning Post and the physical improvements at the Centre have helped to facilitate this working. If the Winning Post had not received the lottery funding then Public Health workers would not have been based in the Winning Post and as such the capital grant has helped provided the opportunities for PCT staff to meet with members of the community and get to know their needs. Having a suitable venue in the community has acted as a catalyst for understanding needs of beneficiaries and by having dedicated staff at the Winning Post the PCT has been able to deliver work in the community more effectively.

Impact on community and beneficiaries

The refurbishment of the Winning Post has provided Moorends and Thorne in Doncaster with a better building. Community use of the venue, the provision of services and the number of activities have increased resulting in social benefits for the community. Many of the activities in the building such as the Over 50's exercise class, exercise on GP referral and the Community Therapy Memory group are aimed at keeping people fitter for longer and helping people maintain independence for longer and help to improve the lives of those taking part in the activities.

Beneficiaries of the Community Therapy Memory group enjoyed social support and company at the group. Their carers commented on how much beneficiaries of this group enjoyed the sessions and how it was an important service as it enabled the carers to have peace of mind whilst taking a break from caring responsibilities. Without the Memory group at the Winning Post many of the beneficiaries would have to look further afield for the sort of help that they were receiving.

In terms of longer term change the refurbished Winning Post now brings people into the area that did not come before and this contributes to economic benefits in the locality. For instance, the Community Therapy Memory group which uses the Winning Post three times a week have lunches delivered from the local fish and chip shop.

Annex 4: Photo Novella

This annex presents a selection of the material generated by the photo novella exercises conducted in five of the case study projects. The results are presented by case study, providing additional insights into those projects to those in the main body of the report where findings are arranged thematically.

The exercise was conducted in five very different environments with a diverse range of beneficiaries. In response to this, the exercise took slightly different form in each case, determined to a large extent by the beneficiaries themselves. As a result, the findings presented in this annex vary between cases in terms of the volume and form of the material generated.

Project: Trelander and St Clements community buildings (Phase 2), Truro, Cornwall

Programme: Community Buildings

BIG Lottery provided funding for the addition of a sports hall to the existing Trelander Children's and Community Centre under the Community Buildings programme. This addition has increased the range of activities and services that the Trelander and St Clements Residents' Association (the grant recipients), who run the centre, are able to offer to the local community. The sports hall is also available for hire, creating a revenue stream for the association.

The photo novella exercise was organised via the residents association who distributed cameras to a wide range of the groups and individuals using the centre, allowing them to showcase their offer and highlight how the extension of the community centre has impacted on local residents.

The following photographs and captions represent a selection of those to emerge from the exercise and highlight the wide range of groups making use of the centre, many of which have reportedly been able to expand and improve provision as a result of the capital investment.

Baby massage group, run by Truro City Council - the addition of the sports hall has provided a more appropriate environment for this activity as the caption below highlights. It has also enabled the council to offer a wider programme of activities for local families with children under five years old by creating additional, versatile space within the centre.

Figure A4.1: Baby Massage Class in Trelander and St Clements



The sports hall is perfect for baby massage as it's clean, private and light. This helps to provide a relaxing atmosphere which is very important for baby massage.

(Nikki Ross, Play and Crèche Supervisor, CYPFS)

Youth clubs for 5 to 19 year olds- run by Young People Cornwall (YPC) - YPC run three youth clubs for different age groups every week. The sports hall has increased the amount of space available to these groups and therefore the range of activities they can run concurrently. In particular, the sports hall has provided more appropriate accommodation for the 14 to 19 year old group and has created opportunities for indoor sport.

Figure A4.2: Youth Club in Trelander and St Clements

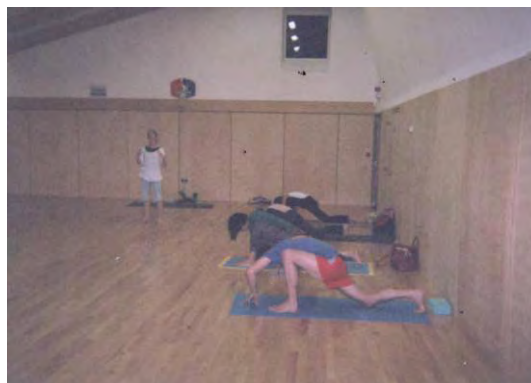


younger group - generic session
YP do art, cooking, sports and games,
work is done through consultation with YP and
then choosing activities as well as workers
introducing new ones.
equipment has been provided by the centre and
it is brilliant for young people to have so many
resources.

The sports hall has provided opportunities for indoor sport and exercise during winter or bad weather. Local residents can now take advantage of regular yoga, karate and keep fit classes which would previously have involved a trip to Truro's only leisure centre. The provision of a purpose built facility offers an alternative to the leisure centre and has attracted a number of instructors who run exercise classes with a city wide catchment. The hall is one of very few purpose built sports halls in Truro and the surrounding area and offers the most modern facilities. The installation of a sprung floor has reportedly given it a competitive edge.

Yoga classes are offered twice a week at the centre and attract participants from across Truro and beyond.

Figure A4.3: Yoga Class at Trelander and St Clements



The sports hall is considered particularly appropriate for yoga, as one regular attendee points out:

I love the space it is perfect
for yoga.

The instructor agrees, stating that it is "the best hall she uses for yoga":

www.onships.com
The hall is perfect for
my yoga classes- the floor is
smooth even & we need clear wall
spaces to use for our poses.
It is the best hall to use for yoga.
Bridget Woods-Kramer.

(Bridget Woods-Kramer, Yoga Instructor)

The Trelander and St Clements Residents Association and other local agencies provide a range of activities for older residents including; coffee mornings, bingo (attended by all ages) and keep fit for the over 60's.

Coffee mornings are held once a week and are well attended.

Figure A4.4: Coffee Morning at Trelander and St Clements



Lovely Building ^{always} warm and welcoming & clean. My members are happy average 80 each morning and always well looked after by everyone at the centre

(Local resident and organiser of coffee mornings)

Figure A4.5: Be kind to yourself- keep fit group for the over 55's at Trelander and St Clements:



What the group say

"The community centre is ideally located, and a fantastic building for the group to meet. The group is very enjoyable and the people are very nice and friendly."

(Statement from 'Be kind to yourself' group members)

Bingo is reportedly the most popular activity run from the centre and has been particularly key in bringing together and promoting understanding between various age groups:

Figure A4.6: Bingo at Trelander and St Clements



The community hall
is great!
Bingo is fun, meeting
all different ages from
the estate.

(Bingo participant and Trelander resident)

Figure A4.7: Karate Class at Trelander and St Clements

Karate classes offered at the centre attract participants from across Truro and beyond:



^{HALL}
THE ^{HALL} IS GREAT PLACE TO TRAIN
& TEACH AND THE SERVICE IS
REALLY GOOD. D. Wilson.
INSTRUCTOR WITH J.K.A. in
ENGLAND
KARATE.

(D. Wilson, Karate instructor)

The Residents' Association run a Dad's and Kids Group from the sports hall to complement the activities for mothers and babies run at the centre by Truro City Council:

Figure A4.8: Dad's and Kid's Group at Trelander and St Clements



THE CENTRE AT TRELANDER IS WITHOUT DOUBT A SUPERB FACILITY THAT IS PERFECT FOR OUR DADS AND KIDS GROUP. THE SPORTS HALL IS A BRILLIANT ADDITION AND IS ENJOYED BY ALL WHO ATTEND. THE STAFF AT THE CENTRE PROVIDE A FIRST CLASS SERVICE TO US AS SERVICE PROVIDERS IN THE CENTRE.

PETER COOKE HAS BEEN A GREAT ~~TO~~ SUPPORT TO US AND IS ALWAYS VERY HEARTFUL.

Matt Noble
Dads + Kids Group.

(Matt Noble, Dads and Kids Group)

Project: Millennium House and Square, Pensilva, Cornwall

Programme: Millennium Commission

Millennium House in Pensilva is a multipurpose community facility set in a landscaped public square (Millennium Square) and funded, in part, by the Millennium Commission. The centre opened in 1998 and provides a range of services and facilities to the isolated parish of St Ive, including a pub, café, sports hall, gym, function room, sports fields, Post Office and versatile hireable space which a number of local and regional groups and clubs make use of.

The photo novella exercise conducted at Millennium House was organised via the House Manager who issued cameras to groups making regular use of the centre. Three groups returned cameras; the Penmill Art Group, The James Parkinson Society and the University of the Third Age.

The following photographs and captions represent a selection of those to emerge from the exercise at Pensilva.

The Penmill Art Group - art classes were run at the centre when it first opened and over time evolved to become the Penmill Art Group, a group of artists from across South and mid Cornwall who come together to paint without an instructor. As the caption below suggests, the group appears popular and well attended:

Figure A4.9: Penmill Art Group at Millennium House



Daphne Dan (contre jour!) Lives in Looe. She collects the money from the others and pays for the room.
We pay monthly, just enough to cover the cost of the room.
We all say how helpful and enjoyable our Monday group is.

The group is one of the longest standing users of the centre and members remain very satisfied with the accommodation and the service they receive. They particularly appreciate having a café on site so they can break for coffee or lunch together:

Figure A4.10: Display of art work at Millennium House



Not very clear photo, but some of our current work.
We'd like to say how much we enjoy the atmosphere at Millennium House and the facilities, such as the café.

Only one member of the group comes from Pensilva, all others travel in from outside the parish and much further afield, reflecting the concerns of some local residents that the centre is not sufficiently focussed on meeting local needs.

Figure A4.11: Local member of Penmill Art Group in Millennium House



Joan, the only one of us who lives in Pensilva

The James Parkinson Society (JPS) meets monthly at the centre and provides opportunities for sufferers of Parkinson's disease to meet and socialise with fellow sufferers and access support and advice. The centre is one of few locally that offers disabled access and parking which is very important for this group who come from across south and mid Cornwall to meet.

Unfortunately, members of this group were unable to caption their photographs due to the nature of their conditions. However, it was possible to discuss the photos with some members of the group during a visit.

Figure A4.12: The James Parkinson Society (JPS) at Millennium House



The meetings are well attended and group members appreciate the space available at the centre, which allows those using wheelchairs to circulate and chat with ease. The location is central and fairly easily accessible by road and disabled parking is provided in close proximity to the disabled entrance. Group members agreed that it is the most 'disability friendly' venue in the area.

Figure A4.13: Group members at Millennium House



The Liskeard branch of the University of the Third Age also meets regularly at the centre. The meetings are very well attended, as the photographs below reveal and members have commented that there is no other facility in the local area with the capacity to accommodate this large group:

Figure A4.14: The Liskeard branch of the University of the Third Age at Millennium House



Members appreciate the versatility of the centre- they can use the sports hall for large events and smaller rooms for more routine meetings:

Figure A4.15: Meeting held at Millennium House



Project: Heart of the City, Sheffield

Programme: Millennium Commission

The Heart of the City (HOC) comprises a series of connected public spaces and facilities in the centre of Sheffield funded, in part, by the Millennium Commission. It comprises the Peace Gardens, Winter Gardens, Millennium Square and the Millennium Galleries. The photo novella exercise was not as straightforward to implement in the HOC as, although well used, it does not have an easily identifiable set of regular users or a one clear agency through which to channel the exercise. For these reasons cameras were issued directly to visitors to the HOC by members of the study team stationed in the Winter Gardens who

returned their cameras at the end of their visit. Following development of the photographs, selected participants were interviewed and asked to caption their photographs.

The following photographs and captions represent a selection of those to emerge from the exercise in the HOC. A number of clear themes emerged from the exercise and the results are presented according to these.

A place of sanctuary that is accessible to all

One theme that emerged repeatedly in connection with the photographs taken in the HOC is that it is viewed as something of an oasis or 'breathing space' within the busy city centre, popular with workers and shoppers from the surrounding shops and offices.

Figure A4.16: Peace Gardens in the Heart of the City



The Peace Gardens are somewhere where I enjoy spending time - eg sitting, thinking or more functionally eating (sandwiches).

Figure A4.17: Shops opposite the Peace Gardens in the Heart of the City



A peaceful, enclosed space away from the hustle and bustle of the shops where passers by can stop, talk and have a coffee

A number of participants also felt that the HoC was a place for meeting and mixing and provided free was not the preserve of any one group but instead attracted all manner of residents and visitors. One participant, referring specifically to the Winter Garden, described it as 'informal and inclusive':

Figure A4.18: Winter Gardens in the Heart of the City



This photo captures the difference, the uniqueness that the Winter Gardens brings. An informal, inclusive space in contrast to the commercial business orientated buildings which surround it.

A multifaceted space offering a diverse range of activities

Participants also endeavoured to highlight the diversity of activities that are possible within the various spaces of the HOC. Commenting on the photograph below, one participant explains that the attractive setting of the Peace Gardens and the prominent fountains inspire a wide range of activities and encourage passersby to slow down and enjoy the scene:

Figure A4.19: Fountains at the Peace Gardens in the Heart of the City



Fountains outside a French Consulate - encourages many activities: relaxation, play or just a slower walking pace to enjoy the view

The Millennium Galleries, which lead directly into the Winter Garden, keep visitors interested by offering ever changing exhibitions in addition to a gift shop, café and function space:

Figure A4.20: Exhibition entrance at the Millennium Galleries in the Heart of the City



This shows the entrance to an exhibition that is about 1914 to 1945. This is a period of history that I am very interested in.

Figure A4.21: Millennium Galleries in the Heart of the City



The Millennium Galleries are amazing & draw you through to the gardens beyond with inspiring pieces.

An attractive and stimulating space

The attractiveness of the HOC was also a recurrent theme and the many ornamental and artistic features keep visitors stimulated and give the HOC the feel of an attraction rather than just a public space:

Figure A4.22: Water feature in the Winter Gardens in the Heart of the City



Really like the features
in the Winter Gardens,
makes visit more
enjoyable

The participant who took this photo expanded on his motivations for taking this picture in a follow up interview:

"The 'perpetual motion' water feature in the Winter Garden is a nice engineering feature ... it adds to the experience in there, all these little extra features do. Breaks up the monotony."

Importantly, one participant highlighted how important high quality, visually striking spaces like the HOC are in shaping the image of the city:

"It's those wow-factor spaces that can make the difference in terms of how your first impressions of a place are formed".

A space that connects places

It was discernable from the comments of several participants that the spaces that make up the HOC were viewed as interrelated and overlapping. The connectivity between the spaces and the way they link together was a key factor in creating this impression:

Figure A4.23: Millennium Square in the Heart of the City



"The Millennium Square is a transitory space - I don't spend much time here though use it as a means of getting to/from the Winter Gardens & the Peace Gardens."

One participant commented that he sometimes varies his route through the city centre to incorporate a walk through the HoC, suggesting that it has changed the way he uses the city centre:

"I even walk a different route to get to places now to incorporate Heart of the City."

Management and maintenance

The architectural styles of the commercial and residential developments constructed in the vicinity of the HOC proved controversial amongst some participants. Many of the commercial units remain empty and are considered by some to impact negatively on the setting of the HOC:

Figure A4.24: Modern architecture in the Heart of the City



Epitomises what's wrong about modern architecture!

Figure A4.25: Architecture of the Winter Gardens in the Heart of the City



Corporate Sheffield — but
I do love to eat lunch there!

Figure A4.26: Commercial buildings in the Heart of the City



A rather desolate & empty
space beside ~~the~~ 3
successful ones. It's a great store
enclosed and dark

Two participants used their photographs to highlight the importance of maintenance:

Figure A4.27: Workforce in the Heart of the City



helps to meet the
essential work force
around the central area

On the other hand, one participant was concerned about the scale of public investment in one city centre project in the context of a city with so much deprivation. She used a photograph of a bin to highlight this and explained her rationale in a follow up interview: *"The bins are not allowed to be more than half full. There has been so much money and attention given to this small area, when there is so much deprivation within less than a mile of the site. On the other hand, it's great to have this attractive public space for everyone to use."*

Figure A4.28: Public Investment in the Heart of the City



What would happen
if the bins overflowed?

Project: The Winning Post Living Centre, Doncaster

Programme: Healthy Living Centres

The Winning Post Healthy Living Centre is one of a number of HLCs developed across Doncaster as part of the Co-operating Health project in a bid to reduce health inequalities locally. The Winning Post was funded using funding from BIG, The Neighborhood Renewal Fund and Objective One. The project involved the conversion of an existing building and the BIG grant funded around a quarter of this work. The Winning Post is owned by the Thorne and Moorends Town Council, and the local Primary Care Trust delivers services and activities from the centre.

Beneficiaries are primarily the residents of the Thorne and Moorends areas of Doncaster and the wider borough. Activities run at the centre include a range of fitness classes, dementia sufferers groups, young person's dance group, two youth clubs (age 11-13 and 13-19) and Citizen's Advice Bureau sessions.

The following photographs and captions represent a selection of those to emerge from the exercise at The Winning Post and highlight the wide range of groups making use of the centre.

The majority of the photographs emerged from The Memory Group run at the centre. Attendees of this group all suffer from advanced dementia and therefore, on the advice of staff at the centre, the photographs were taken by staff and carers with the permission of attendees and their carers.

A recurrent theme to emerge from the exercise was the importance of the project in terms of providing a local source of care, support and respite for dementia sufferers and their carers in Thorne and Moorends. The Memory Group is clearly very popular and in high demand. Prior to the development of the centre, sufferers would have had to travel much further afield to receive comparable care. The building is also considered to be comfortable and fit for purpose following refurbishment.

Figure A4.29: The Memory Group at the Winning Post Living Centre



"Mother attends the Memory Group once a week on a Wednesday between 11am and 3pm and has been going for about three years or so. She was referred when her problem got worse. The Winning Post is in the next village about one mile away and mother is collected and dropped off by minibus."

The Group occupy the front room which was renovated using Lottery money. It's really cosy and ideal for people with memory problems as access is direct into the room and it is self contained so reduces the risk of people wandering off."

The group do things like card making and also provide specialist help for mother. It was a place where they understand mother's problems. She seems contented when she's been. Without the group I don't know what I would do but it would mean having to look further afield for the sort of help that Mother is getting. It would be more difficult if she had to travel further and having to go to a different centre may make her unsafe. It provides me with peace of mind because she's being looked after, it gives me a break." (Daughter and carer to regular attendee of the Memory Group).

Figure A4.30: Memory group member at The Winning Post Living Centre



"My husband has been attending the Memory group for about a year. He enjoys it because it's his main trip out of the week because it's difficult to get out with him. He likes the company and having somebody to talk to and the dominoes and painting. He's definitely chattier when he comes home. He looks forward to Wednesdays. I would really like it if he could attend on another day too but places are limited." (Wife and carer to regular attendee of the Memory Group).

Figure A4.31: Members of The Winning Post Living Centre



"Mum still lives independently and attending the group helps this as she is enjoying herself and being stimulated. She's getting a lot socially from the group and likes the quizzes. It's been a real battle to find somewhere suitable for her and it took about a year to get a place." (Daughter and carer to regular attendee of the Memory Group).

Project: The Zest Centre, Upperthorpe, Sheffield

Programme: Healthy Living Centres

The Zest Centre in Upperthorpe, Sheffield received funding under the Healthy Living Centres programme. The capital grant was used to refurbish three existing buildings and link them together via a central hub. It also funded the creation of a new café on site. The centre offers a gym, swimming pool and exercise classes.

The majority of participants in the photo novella exercise were regular users of the centre, many of whom had been referred to the centre by their GPs for health reasons. The following photographs and captions represent a selection of those to emerge from the exercise at Zest.

Those who participated in the exercise were very positive about the centre and the impact it has had on their lives. Participants highlighted the importance of the centre in terms of providing access to affordable and high quality fitness opportunities in an area where provision was previously poor.

Figure A4.32: The Zest Centre



"We both feel very much at home when we go down to Zest, and it is great that this facility is available, and especially that as pensioners we have been able to participate at a reasonable cost. I admit that if it had been a bit more expensive we might have thought twice about continuing, but it is good value for the money."

Several participants also used the photo novella exercise to highlight their own success stories and emphasise the impact that the centre has had on their lives and their wellbeing in particular. The importance of supportive and encouraging instructors was highlighted by a number of participants:

Figure A4.33: Fitness area at the Zest Centre



This gentleman came here after a stroke and his progress has been amazing

Figure A4.34: Fitness class the Zest Centre



"We have found it very enjoyable, and of great benefit. Until this opportunity came along, ironically only as a consequence of having had a heart attack, I was never much of a one for physical fitness. I used to feel I was too busy working --and claimed that all the running about I did in my job was sufficient exercise. I have been surprised at how much I have enjoyed attending the sessions, and I think that it's largely down to the friendly atmosphere and the fact that we are all, so to speak, roughly of a similar age and have a good instructor. She ensures that we do all the right things, in the right order, and yet at the same time she doesn't expect us to take it too seriously."

Figure A4.35: Exercise machines at the Zest Centre



The cross trainer I first
did two minutes when I first
started I now do twenty five
minutes now.

Elaborating on his motivations for taking this picture, one regular user highlighted the significant impact that the centre has had on his health:

"I was 34 stone when I first started coming. I was apprehensive at first but after 2 or 3 weeks I thought it was fantastic. I've now lost 20 stone and feel a million times better and it only cost me £6.25 a week for the gym and pool."

He went on to explain that he prefers to use this centre over other comparable facilities available locally because *"the people are friendlier, there is a good atmosphere and you can have a laugh and a joke."* This is a sentiment shared by several other participants:

Figure A4.36: Social gathering at the Zest Centre



"The social aspects of going along to the gym at the Zest Centre are very important to me. There's always banter and laughter in the gym and a great atmosphere around the Centre. I live on my own so coming to the gym starts my day off well, it gives me company. It's changed my life really and I'll keep coming."