

Report for the National  
Audit Office

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**Survey of applicants to  
the Heritage Lottery  
Fund**

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Survey Findings

March 2007

**ARUP**

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Job number 120681

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## Appendix

Survey Questionnaire

# 1 Introduction and Methodology

## 1.1 Overall Approach

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Arup was commissioned by the National Audit Office (NAO) to carry out a survey of applicants to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in order to inform the NAO's value for money study of HLF. Arup implemented a straightforward approach to carrying out the survey and its analysis through a detailed review of NAO's draft questionnaire at design stage, through working with a trusted partner to administer the survey, and through internal reviews of the project at major milestones to assure maintenance of high quality standards throughout.

## 1.2 Sample Selection and Response

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Arup was provided with HLF's database of applicants from 1995 onwards. In voluntary questionnaire surveys there is a risk of a poor response, especially if the information being sought is too detailed or requires background research. It can also be difficult to track down applicant groups and those individuals within groups that have specific knowledge of the case to make a response, and this is often a factor underlying a low response rate.

In agreement with NAO, it was decided to carry out as close as possible to a 100% survey. This was because the marginal cost of each additional questionnaire was minimal. In addition, the population being surveyed was difficult to stratify, as it included multiple criteria relating to date, location, grant programme, size of the grant, and the status of the application. Last, as large a database of responses as possible was considered necessary in order to maximise the robustness of results.

The original spreadsheet database sent to Arup by the NAO comprised 9,762 projects. We were advised that this was complete but included duplication of projects across categories. Surveys were dispatched in two rounds, the first consisting of 5,346 (comprising applications since 1 April 2002 that were withdrawn or rejected and projects completed by 31 March 2004), and the second of 2,654 of those projects approved since 1 April 2002 but not yet complete by 31 March 2004. In total, the sample of 8,000 represents all projects that were completed by 31 March 2004. The second round included projects that were not yet complete as these might have had a different or incomplete experience of the implementation process. However, when the two groups were compared, no differences in the results were found.

Of the 8,000 surveys dispatched, 2,355 were returned completed (an additional 17 were returned completed but without project reference details, thus making them unsuitable for analysis by sub-class, for a total of 2,372). Over 225 were returned uncompleted. The most common reason for incomplete returns was that the people involved at the application process were no longer available. As many of the applications dated to the middle- or late-1990s, this is unsurprising.

The surveyed population is comprised of four subgroups by application status. These are:

- Applications approved since 1 April 2002, 2,620 of which were surveyed and 792 of which returned the survey;
- Applications withdrawn since 1 April 2002, 1,153 of which were surveyed and 315 of which returned the survey;
- Applications rejected since 1 April 2002, 1,170 of which were surveyed and 327 of which returned the survey;
- Projects completed by 31 March 2004, 3,057 of whom were surveyed, and 921 of which returned the survey.

There is an element of self-selection of respondents in any voluntary survey, and it is difficult to judge the views of the silent majority. We do, however, consider the 30%

response rate to be good for a survey of this kind. There is also no obvious reason to assume that highly-satisfied applicants were more or less likely to respond to this survey than those who were dissatisfied or unsuccessful in their applications.

### 1.3 The Survey

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The survey was conducted using an electronic system directly linked to a database and to analysis tables. This allowed a smooth transition from response to results to meet NAO timescales and to allow time for additional analysis. More fundamentally, however, it also made the survey as accessible as possible, especially for potential respondents who use screen readers or require large type. Further, projects registered within Wales received copies of the survey questionnaire in both English and Welsh, and translators were retained to process responses received in Welsh. A copy of the survey questionnaire is provided at the end of this report (Appendix).

The basic survey approach utilised two methods of approach to HLF applicants/recipients:

- Direct e-mails, giving reference to the web survey and including PDF copies of the survey; and
- Letters with paper forms and an indication of web references.

Paper forms were also made available for applicants unable to access the web. We entered data ourselves onto the web system upon receipt of these forms. We received four paper responses for every one response made on the web system.

### 1.4 Statistical Analysis

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The majority of the analysis presented in this report is based on the simple description of responses to survey questions. However, we also investigated whether there were any consistent and significant relationships between the answers given in the survey and the type, size and status of applicants and projects. This was undertaken through observation of differences between results for different sub groups of responses and through logistic regression<sup>1</sup>. Logistic regression is a statistical regression model for binary dependent variables and is appropriate in this case because the emphasis of the survey is on opinion and most responses take the form of yes or no or agree or disagree, etc.

The multivariate analysis revealed that very few of the responses could be explained by the classes of response. Unsurprisingly, there was a tendency for respondents whose application for HLF funding had been rejected to regard the application process slightly less favourably. The conclusion has thus been drawn that within the identifiable categories of applicant and project that could be tested there are no significant differences in the overall direction of responses in terms of overall agreement or disagreement. This may well suggest that many applicants have similar experiences with HLF, although the number of potential explanatory variables was limited and despite the large response, the response in certain categories was relatively low. The report identifies where there are significant differences. Given that each project application takes place in its own circumstances and perceptions are subject to human factors, we do not find the lack of many consistent patterns unsurprising.

### 1.5 This Report

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This report provides a summary and analysis of the questionnaire responses and is structured around the individual questions.

Percentages as referred to in this report show the breakdown between choices. These results will necessarily add up to 100%, although a difference of 1% or 2% is possible due to

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<sup>1</sup> Agreed with the NAO Chief Statistician

rounding, for example a figure of 26.7% will have been rounded to 27%. This has been carried through to 'agree' or 'disagree' totals to ensure consistency between graphical and textual references.

## 2 Survey Results

### 2.1 Introduction

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This section of the report summarises the detailed findings of the National Audit Office Survey of the Heritage Lottery Fund undertaken by Arup. Each question response has been addressed in turn, with the initial focus upon all respondents, from which key conclusions can be drawn. The analysis also considers the results of a series of sub-sets within the quantitative report, covering:

- grant programme;
- project cost, grant request, and grant award, with particular emphasis on grant award size;
- project status (approved, completed, rejected, or withdrawn);
- project type (historic building and monuments; industrial maritime and transport; intangible heritage; land and biodiversity; or museums, libraries, archives and collections); and
- type of applying body (central government; charity; church organisation; community or voluntary group; local authority; other public sector body; or private sector).

The data with which the respondents were divided into classes was supplied by the HLF.

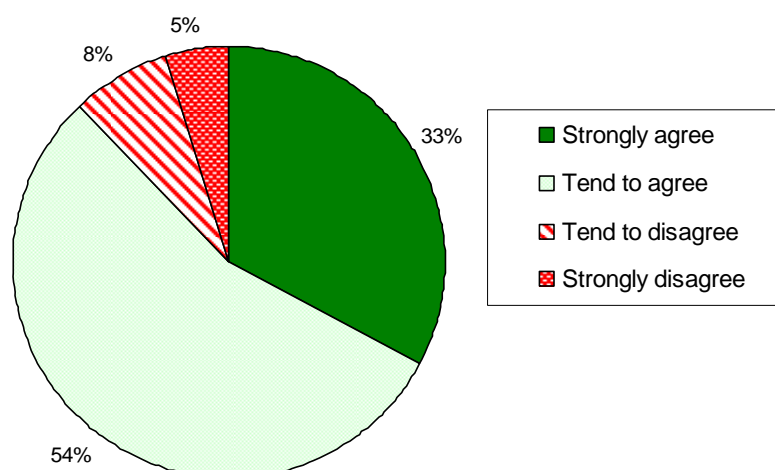
### 2.2 Applicant and Assessment Process

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#### 2.2.1 Question 2.1a: Identification of potential barriers to a successful application

Respondents agreed that HLF advice helped identify potential barriers to a successful application, with 33% of the 1,945 who replied to this question strongly agreeing and 54% saying they tended to agree.

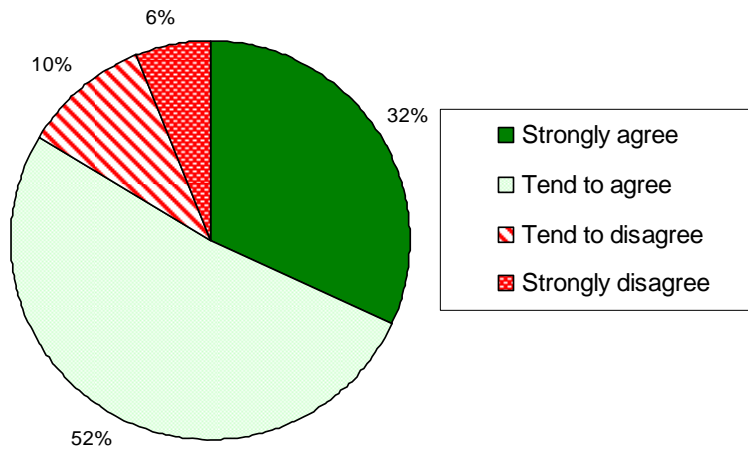
**Chart 1: 'HLF advice helped us identify potential barriers to a successful application': Total responses**



As might be expected, the group of applicants with approved or completed applications had a far higher level of satisfaction (96% and 92% respectively) with the level of advice provided when compared to those who had had their applications rejected (although this was still 63%).

2.2.2 Question 2.1b: Overcoming barriers resulting in an improved application  
 When asked if HLF advice helped to overcome barriers resulting in an improved application, 32% of the 1,853 respondents who replied to this question strongly agreed, while 52% tended to agree.

**Chart 2: 'HLF advice helped us overcome barriers resulting in an improved application': Total Responses**



Results were evenly spread across grant type, with significant differences focusing upon the Young Roots programme applicants, 92% of whom agreed with the question.

As with question 2.1a, there were significant differences between the approved, completed, rejected, and withdrawn classes; 50% of those respondents whose applications had been rejected agreed that HLF advice had helped them overcome barriers, compared to 95% and 90% for those who had their applications approved or completed their projects respectively, and 69% for those who withdrew their applications.

2.2.3 Question 2.2: Comments on Questions 2.1a and 2.1b

Most respondents stated that they had received good advice from HLF, in particular receiving clarification of HLF expectations, guiding applications to meet criteria, and supporting changes to applications to help ensure success. Several respondents praised a one-day course and pre-application workshops given by the HLF.

While many respondents said they had received good advice, those who replied that advice was bad stated that they had either been given misleading advice, had been advised the project was eligible but found it was not regarded as suitable later on, or had developed an application according to HLF advice but which was subsequently refused. A small number of respondents thought that the advice they received was

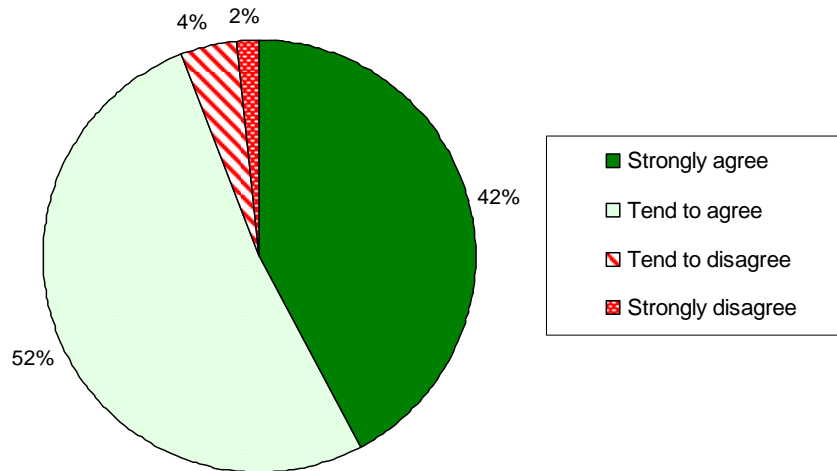
confusing, contradictory, mixed, unhelpful, conflicting or non-existent.

While some respondents had meetings with HLF staff which clarified issues or encouraged them to proceed, others said that requests for meetings had been refused or found that no advice was available. In general, however, it was thought that case officers gave good support and were helpful, and gave clarification of what HLF looks for, guided applications to meet current criteria, and helped overcome problems. Several respondents sought independent advice.

2.2.4 Questions 2.3 and 2.4: Identification of the correct grant programme  
 Some 2,261 respondents replied to question 2.3 and the subsequent free-text box (question 2.4), which asked if they were able to easily identify the HLF grant programme whose aims

and objectives most closely fitted with their project. 52% tended to agree and 42% agreed strongly with this statement.

**Chart 3: 'We easily identified the HLF grant programme whose aims and objectives most closely fitted with our project': Total Responses**



Consequently, as just 6% of applicants disagreed with this statement (one of the lowest proportions in the survey), this would seem to indicate that the grant programme descriptions were well-written and clearly defined.

The highest levels of disagreement with this question were again from those who were rejected (14% disagreed) and who withdrew (12% disagreed); by comparison, only 3% of approved or completed applicants disagreed.

The free-text responses to Question 2.4 indicated that it was clear to most applicants which programme was appropriate. Other respondents stated that the HLF and web site guidance notes were very clear, and that the HLF or the case officer had helped them to identify the appropriate programme where necessary. A small number stated that HLF guidance initially steered them towards the wrong programme, whilst some others were of the opinion that it was not clear which the appropriate programme was. Several respondents employed consultants to handle the application, or received advice from the local authority before submitting an application.

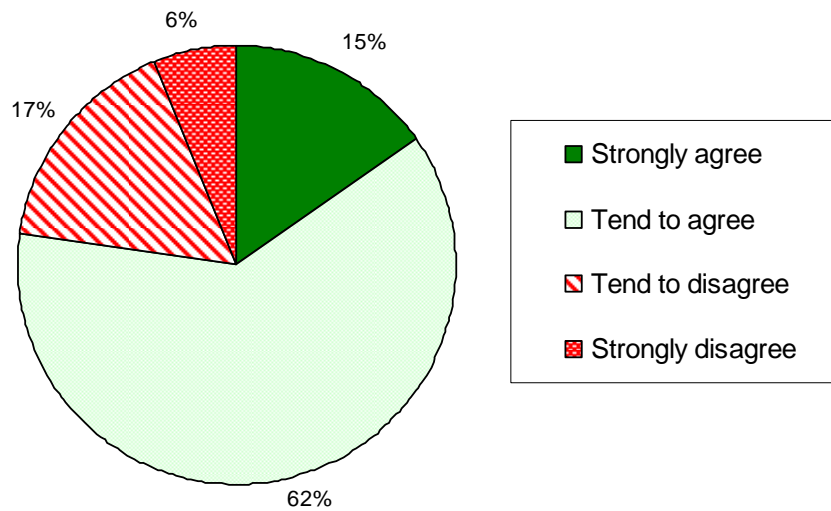
#### 2.2.5 Question 3.1a: Type and amount of information required

This question asked whether the type and amount of information that the HLF required was appropriate and proportionate. The 2,294 respondents to this question answered in a broadly positive manner (62% tended to agree), although there were far fewer who strongly agreed with the statement (15%) than in previous questions.

There were some differences between respondents when analysed according to the grant programmes to which they had applied. Young Roots (88% agreed, and 34% strongly agreed) and Heritage Grants (79%) applicants were likely to agree that the amount of information required was appropriate, but Public Parks Initiative programme applicants were far more evenly split, at 52% in agreement and 48% in disagreement.



**Chart 4: 'The type and amount of information that HLF required was appropriate and proportionate': Total responses**



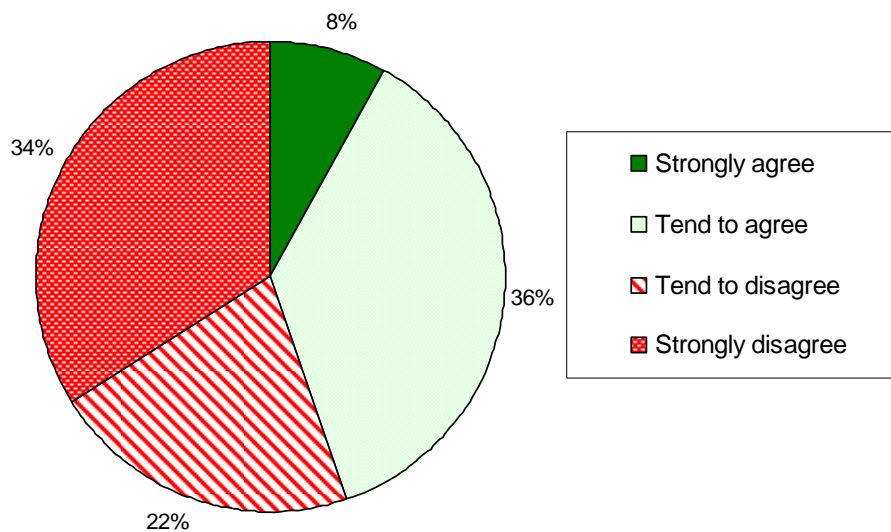
There were significant differences amongst those respondents whose projects had been completed (84%) or been approved (83%), those who withdrew (67%) and those whose applications were rejected (55%), although this should perhaps come as no surprise. Voluntary group applicants felt more than any other type of applicant organisation that the information required was appropriate and proportionate; government bodies at all levels disagreed the most.

2.2.6 Question 3.1b: Imposition of burden

This question, which asked if, in applying for HLF funding, unnecessary burdens had not been placed upon their organisations, elicited one of the highest negative responses in the application and assessment section of the survey. As indicated below in Chart 5, just 8% of the 2,284 respondents stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, 36% tended to agree, and 22% tended to disagree and a substantial 34% strongly disagreed.

Over half (55%) of the respondents found the burden of applying to the HLF unnecessarily severe.

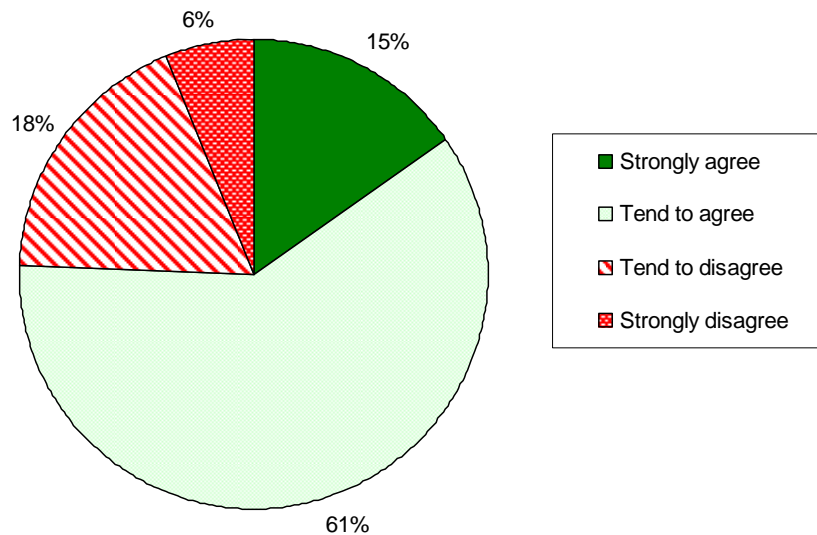
**Chart 5: 'Applying for HLF funding did not impose unnecessary burdens upon our organisation': Total responses**



Public Parks Initiative applicants agreed less (11%, with none strongly agreeing) than applicants to other programmes, for whom approval hovered around the 50% mark. Historic buildings and monuments applicants felt that the burden was less than those in other classes, especially those applying for land and biodiversity funding or museums, libraries, archives and collections. The public sector in the form of local authorities and non-central government public bodies was most likely to think that the burden of application was too high, while the private sector, churches, and central government were most likely to think that applying for HLF funding did not impose unnecessary burdens upon their organisations.

2.2.7 Question 3.1c: HLF requests for additional information  
 61% of the 1,758 respondents to this question tended to agree that HLF requests for additional information helped them address shortcomings in their original application. 18% tended to disagree, with smaller numbers strongly agreeing (15%) or strongly disagreeing (6%).

**Chart 6: 'HLF requests for additional information helped us address shortcomings in our original application': Total responses**



There were significant differences between grant programmes, namely between Young Roots – which were more positive – and most of the others. Community and voluntary groups thought more than the other groups of applicants that HLF requests for information helped them address shortcomings; this may be related to the inexperienced or non-professional nature of the applicants. Intangible heritage applicants agreed most with the proposition in the question, but, as with Questions 3.1a and 3.1b, land and biodiversity applicants and museum, library, archive and collection applicants disagreed most.

Understandably, the 54% of rejected applicants who thought that providing additional information to the HLF addressed shortcomings in their original application was lower than the 71% of those who withdrew their applications, the 79% whose projects were eventually completed, and the 82% of applicants who had their applications approved.

2.2.8 Question 3.2: Comments on Questions 3.1a, 3.1b, and 3.1c  
 In relation to the application process, there were repeated comments from respondents that applicants received many duplicated requests for the same information from the HLF, or that much of the information demanded seemed irrelevant.

Other frequent responses included the comments that:

- the information demanded was disproportionate to the size of the grant;
- the process was more concerned with bureaucracy than cost-effective grant distribution;
- each new application requires more information than the last;
- different officers demanded different information;
- the number of copies required was excessive;
- the information required was complex and confusing;
- the HLF should be more flexible;
- the deadlines for provision of further information were short; and
- forms should be written in plain English.

Many of the respondents thought that the preparation of applications is too time-consuming, with several adding that it is too costly and time-consuming for a voluntary organisation to undertake.

Some respondents did, however, think that only necessary information was requested, with several saying the need was clear and the process straightforward, and that HLF requests helped them improve their projects.

#### 2.2.9 Question 3.3: Details of avoidable delays in application assessment

A common criticism was the length of time HLF staff took to process the application. In certain instances, respondents stated that notification of failure was received so late they missed the next opportunity to resubmit.

Most respondents to this question said that the HLF took months to consider the information they had provided. Several comments stated that delays were caused by changes in HLF staff, and a further few said that timescales for delivery overran those quoted with the guidance, or that delays were caused by requests for information which the applicants had already supplied. In several cases, the

application was fast-tracked to meet an auction date in order to purchase or retain a heritage resource.

#### 2.2.10 Question 3.4: Suggestions for improving the assessment process

There was significant variance within the survey response to this question, and analysis proved challenging. Some respondents found the procedure too slow. Requests were made to maintain consistent criteria through the process and a consistent approach between HLF departments.

The most common suggestion was that forms should be simplified, leading to approval in principle, before applicants were asked to submit more detail.

Other frequent responses included comments that:

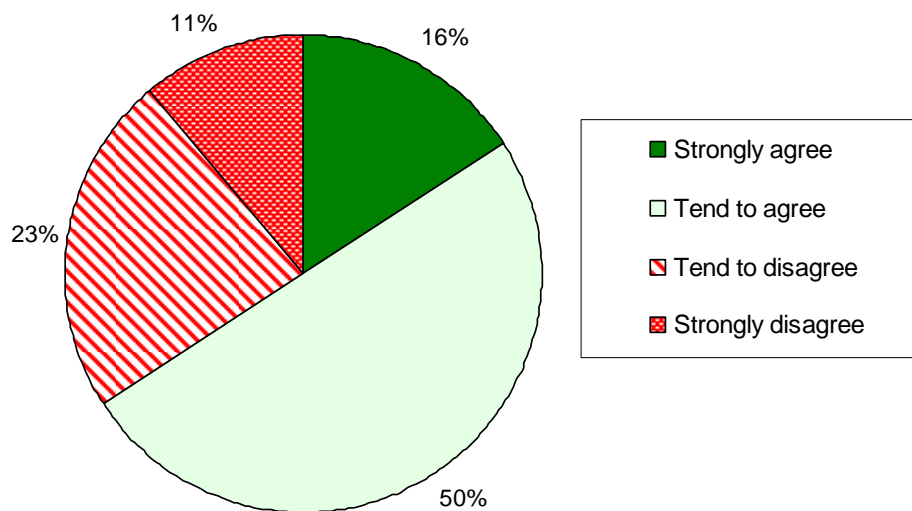
- HLF should improve dialogue, engaging with applicants to allow them to put their case;
- HLF should generally improve communication with applicants;
- feedback should be provided, which would allow weaknesses to be addressed;
- more user-friendly electronic versions of the application forms would be helpful;
- more meetings with applicant groups would be helpful;
- the HLF should state and keep to its assessment schedule;
- periods for assessing submissions should be shorter;

- duplicated questions should be eliminated;
- previously-successful organisations should be excluded from having to repeat background information in subsequent applications;
- more support should be provided in the initial stages;
- there should be less obstruction to applicants;
- there should be a simpler and easier-to-understand procedure and a more 'realistic' approach; and
- there should be fewer officers for each case, with the assignment of an HLF assistant to each project.

2.2.11 Question 4.1a: Did the HLF clearly state why an application was unsuccessful?

50% of the 251 unsuccessful respondents to this question tended to agree that the HLF clearly stated why their application was unsuccessful, and 16% strongly agreed. Of those who disagreed, 23% tended to disagree and 11% strongly disagreed. Thus 66% of all respondents broadly agreed with this question, one of the highest positive responses in this section of the survey.

**Chart 7: 'Did the HLF state why an application was unsuccessful?': Total responses**



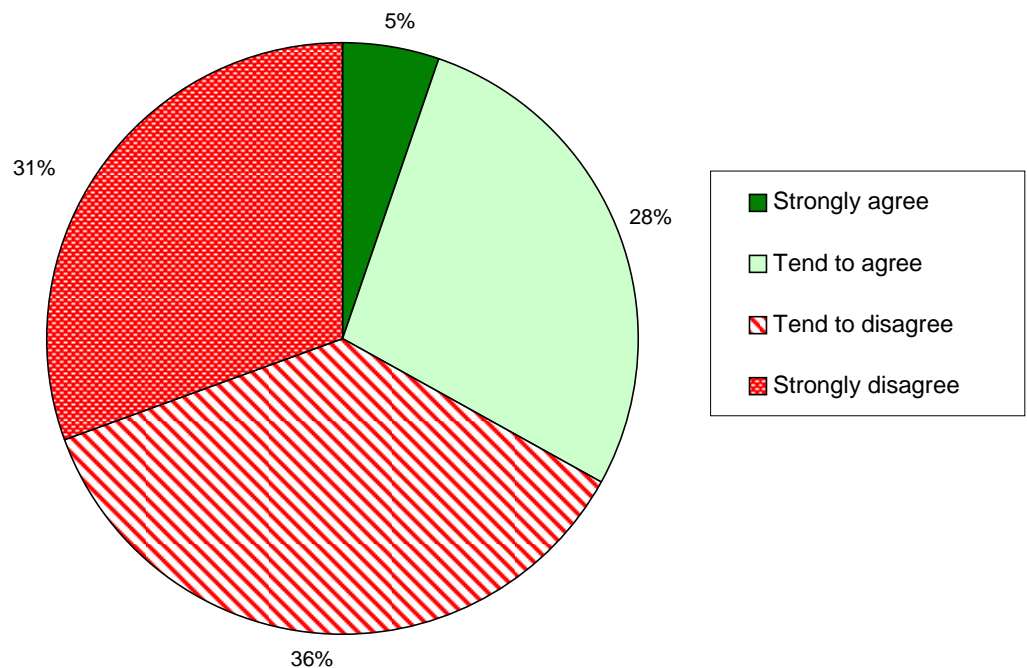
All applicants (100%) to the Young Roots programme were in complete agreement with the question, while applicants to other major programmes tended to agreement rates nearer 60%.

Historic buildings and monuments applicants and land and biodiversity applicants did not think that HLF clearly stated why their applications were unsuccessful, but industrial, maritime and transport applicants as well as intangible heritage applicants were happy with this aspect of HLF performance. All central government applicants also felt that reasons for rejection were unclear, in stark contrast to all other types of applicant, who were much more positive (44% of private sector applicants agreed with the proposition, and the range extended to charities at 73% agreement).

2.2.12 Question 4.1b: Were the reasons for rejection reasonable?

Unsurprisingly, there is an element of 'self-selection' in the responses to this question, which asked if 'the reasons given by HLF for our application being rejected were reasonable [in the respondent's perception]'. The responses showed that only 5% of respondents strongly agreed and 28% of the 242 respondents tended to agree; 36% tended to disagree and 31% strongly disagreed with the statement, resulting in one of the most negative responses in this section of the questionnaire. In total, 67% of respondents thought the reasons given for rejection unreasonable, the third highest-percentage in the application and assessment section of the questionnaire.

**Chart 8: 'The reasons given by the HLF for our application being rejected were reasonable': Total responses**



The responses varied when broken down by programme. While 54% of Young Roots and 50% of Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants agreed that the reasons given for rejection were reasonable, all Public Parks Initiative applicants disagreed. Of them, 67% tended to disagree with and 33% strongly disagreed with the proposition. Heritage Grants and Your Heritage programme applicants were not as negative but still registered, respectively, 29% and 31% approval.

Local authorities were most likely to say that the reasons given for rejection were reasonable, as were those applying for intangible heritage funding. Central government applicants disagreed more strongly than other applicants by type.

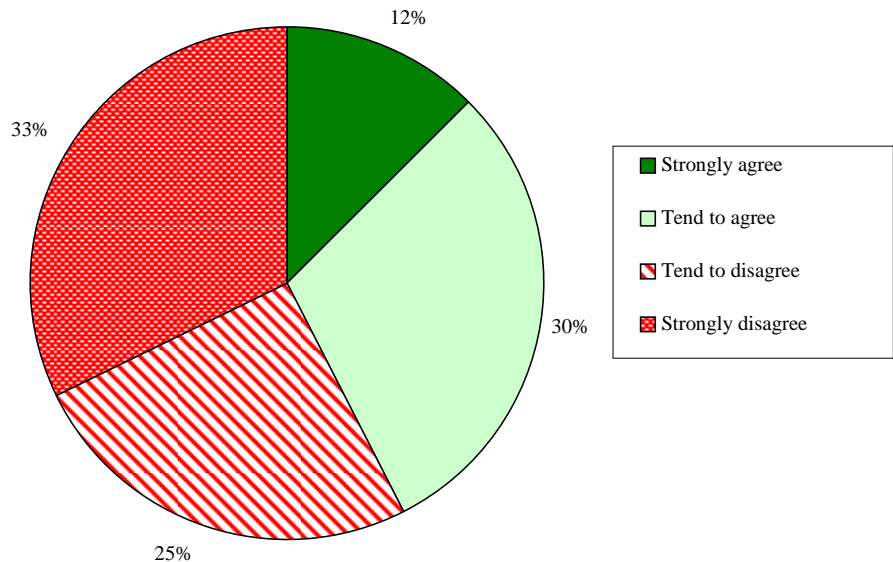
2.2.13 Question 4.1c: Provision of useful feedback for resubmission

When asked if HLF provided useful feedback on how applicants could amend their project to make it more likely to succeed if resubmitted, 25% tended to disagree, and a significant 33% strongly disagreed. This contrasts with the 30% of respondents who tended to agree and the 12% who agreed strongly.

The range of response to this question by programme was varied. Just 20% of Public Parks Initiative applicants agreed that feedback was useful and 38% of Heritage Grants applicants agreed; 43% of Your Heritage and 50% of Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants agreed,

but a much higher 65% of Young Roots agreed. Rejected applicants were more negative (39% agreed that the feedback provided was useful) than those of other classes: 82% of those who withdrew their applications said that HLF feedback could help them amend their bid to succeed.

**Chart 9: 'HLF provided useful feedback on how we could amend our project to make it more likely to succeed': Total Responses**



The analysis for Question 4.1a showed that industrial, maritime, and transport applicants and intangible heritage applicants were happiest in their responses to that question; this was also the case in Question 4.1c. Central government was least likely (0%) to think that HLF feedback was useful, while although the community/voluntary sector showed the greatest approval, this was only 50%.

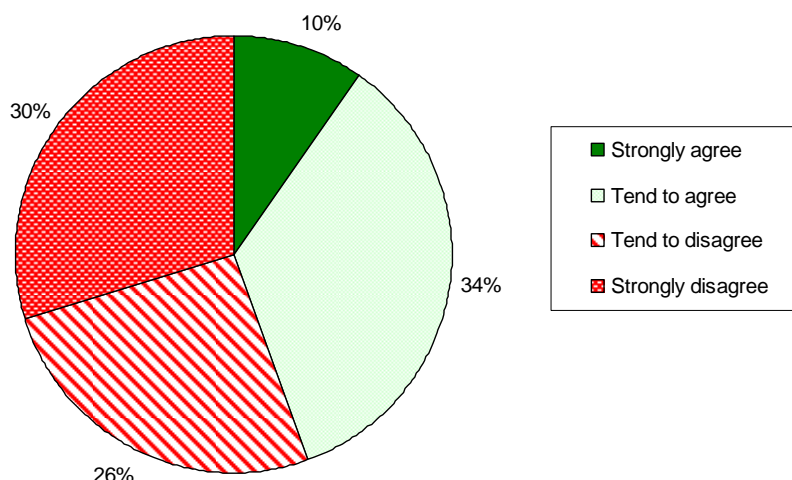
2.2.14 Question 4.1d: Value of preparing an unsuccessful application

This question asked whether preparing the application was of value to the organisation even though the project did not take place; 34% of the 236 respondents to this question tended to agree and 10% strongly agreed. 56% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

None of the central government respondents felt that preparing the application was of value even though the project did not take place; this was significantly lower than the responses for all other applicant organisation types. The greatest difference from the central government response was voiced by local authorities, of whom 56% expressed approval. Applicants to the Young Roots programme expressed the highest level of agreement with the proposition (63%), while those to other major programmes were far more likely to disagree (as low as 33% for Public Parks Initiative applicants).

Applicants with high project costs and grant requests were more likely to agree that preparing an unsuccessful application was of use than those whose projects or grant requests were smaller.

**Chart 10: 'Preparing our application was of value to our organisation, even though the project did not take place': Total responses**



2.2.15 Question 4.2: Comments on Questions 4.1a, 4.1b, 4.1c, and 4.1d

The most prevalent answers to the request for comments on the previous questions were that the HLF gave no detailed feedback and that the reasons given for rejection were unrelated to previously-stated criteria.

Other applicants stated that they understood their rejection was because no funds were left in the only possible programme they could have accessed, while some argued that the reasons for rejection were incomplete or not reasonable.

Respondents complained that the HLF gave no detailed feedback for rejected applications, and that the reasons given for rejection were unrelated to previously-stated criteria.

A smaller number of respondents noted that rejection was discouraging, as no reasons were given for it, or that the reasons given were untrue. In two cases, the project failed because

In general, the higher the project cost, the more satisfied applicants were as regards the reasons for refusal and the level of feedback provided by the HLF.

the project did not meet the criteria, as the HLF changed the requirements during the application process. It should be noted, however, that some respondents mentioned that feedback was good, the HLF was supportive in making improvements, and

they were successful the second time round.

2.2.16 Question 5.1a: Reasons for withdrawal of applications

Applicants who withdrew their grant applications before the HLF formally assessed them did so most often because they were advised to withdraw by the HLF. They were either advised that:

- the application would not succeed;
- the bid did not cover the necessary criteria in sufficient detail; or
- the application should be resubmitted.

The most common reason for applicants withdrawing their own application was directly due to HLF advice.

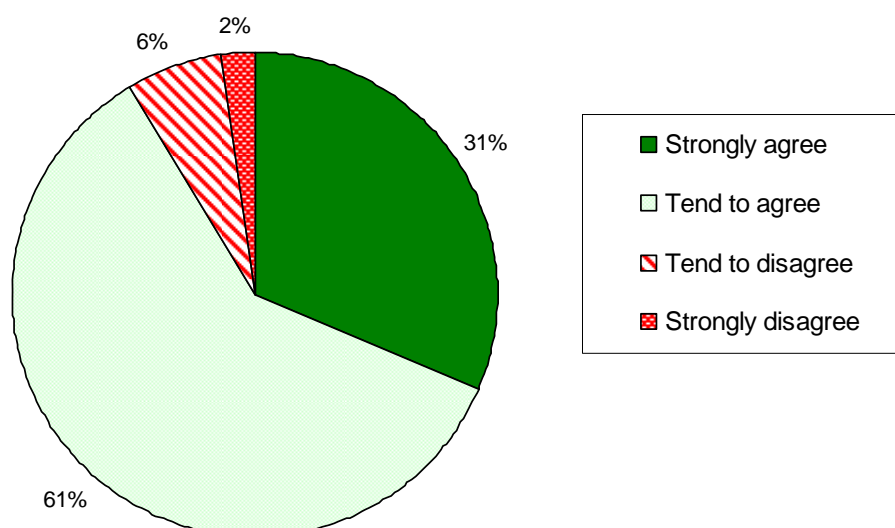
In some cases the applicants withdrew on their own initiative (because applicants were unable to raise match funding; discovered that necessary resources could no longer be

secured; found that the vendor had sold to another buyer; or thought that HLF criteria were impossibly stringent for a small organisation).

2.2.17 Question 5.2b: The role that the HLF played in the withdrawal decision  
This question drew few comments. Respondents stated that the HLF advised them to withdraw their applications, and that in some cases they were told that the application would not succeed. The HLF advised others to withdraw and re-apply later. In a very few cases, informants stated that the HLF had not influence on the decision to withdraw the application.

2.2.18 Question 6.1a: Agreement between HLF priorities and project objectives  
When asked if the HLF's funding priorities aligned with the main objectives of their project, 61% of the 2,156 respondents to this question tended to agree, and a further 31% strongly agreed. Consequently, just 8% of applicants disagreed with this statement, one of the lowest proportions across the survey.

**Chart 11: 'HLF funding priorities coincided with the main objectives of our project': Total responses**



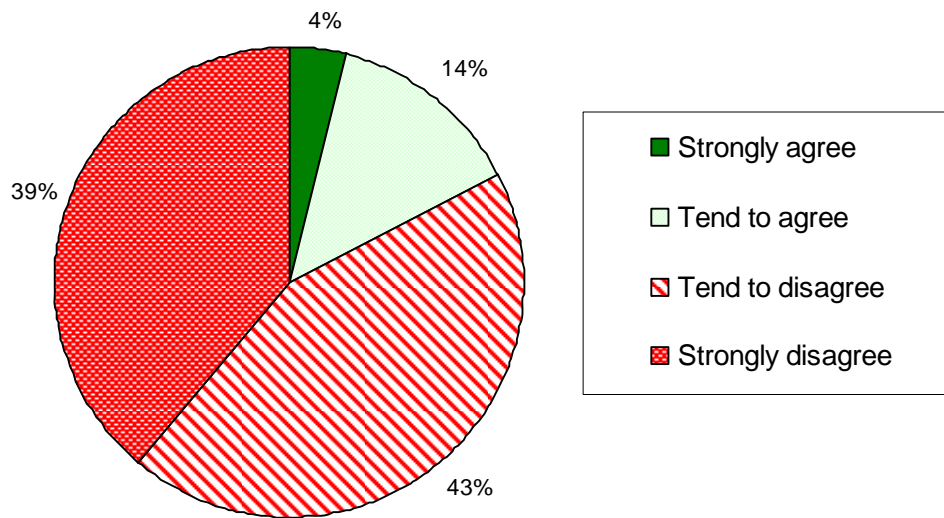
Agreement also tended to rise when project costs were above £10 million.

Applicants for intangible heritage monies were most likely to think that HLF funding priorities matched the priorities of their projects; museums, libraries, archives and collections applicants were least likely to think so. Your Heritage applicants were the least likely (87%) of all applicants, by programme, to agree.

2.2.19 Question 6.1b: Changes in projects to secure HLF funding  
82% of respondents said that they did not significantly change the scope or aims of their projects to access HLF funding. A small proportion (4%) of the 1,922 informants who answered this question strongly agreed that they did change their projects and a further 14% tended to agree that they had, while 43% tended to disagree with the proposition and 39% strongly disagreed.



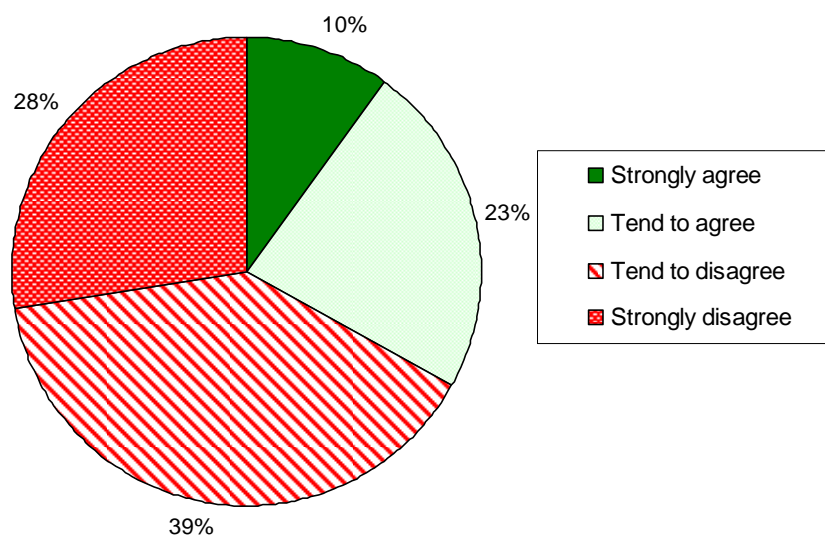
**Chart 12: 'We significantly changed the scope or aims of our project to access HLF funding': Total responses**



2.2.20 Question 6.1c: Significant changes to project costs during application phase

This question asked whether the costs of projects had changed by more than 10% during the application phase. 33% of the 1,832 respondents stated that this had occurred, while 67% disagreed.

**Chart 13: 'The costs of our project changed significantly (>10%) during this development phase': Total responses**



The number of applicants whose project costs had changed and who subsequently withdrew their applications (40%) was higher than the number of applicants whose project costs had changed and whose projects had been either rejected (29%) or approved (30%).

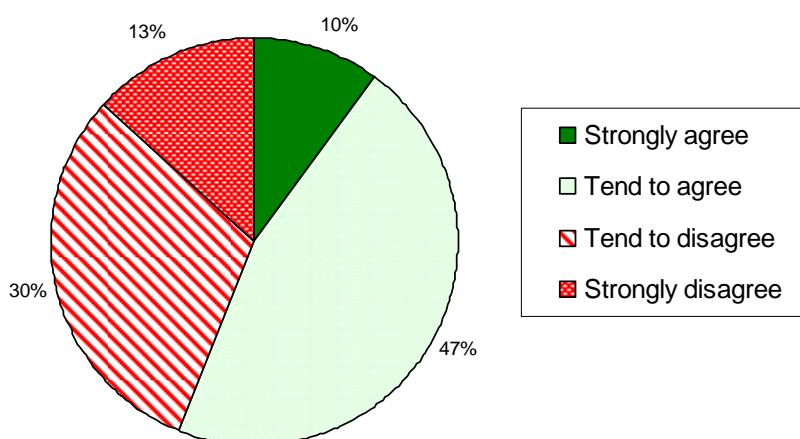
Applicants for projects to do with historic buildings and monuments were most likely to find that the costs of their projects rose by more than 10%. As project cost rose past the

£1 million mark, so did the likelihood that project costs would change significantly, although the correlation with higher grant requests was more opaque. Public Parks Initiative applicants were most likely to admit that the costs of their projects changed significantly at the application stage (64%, with 36% strongly agreeing); by comparison, a scant 23% of Young Roots and 26% of Your Heritage applicants reported similar project cost increases.

2.2.21 Question 6.1d: Did changes made to access funding improve projects? This question, which asked whether changes made in order to access HLF funding improved the overall project, saw a 57:43 split between those who agreed and those who disagreed. 47% of respondents tended to agree with the proposition.

Respondents whose applications had been rejected were less likely (41%) than any others to answer that any changes made had improved the overall project than those whose applications had been withdrawn or approved; 51% of completed project respondents agreed, as did 58% of those who had withdrawn and 65% of those who were approved.

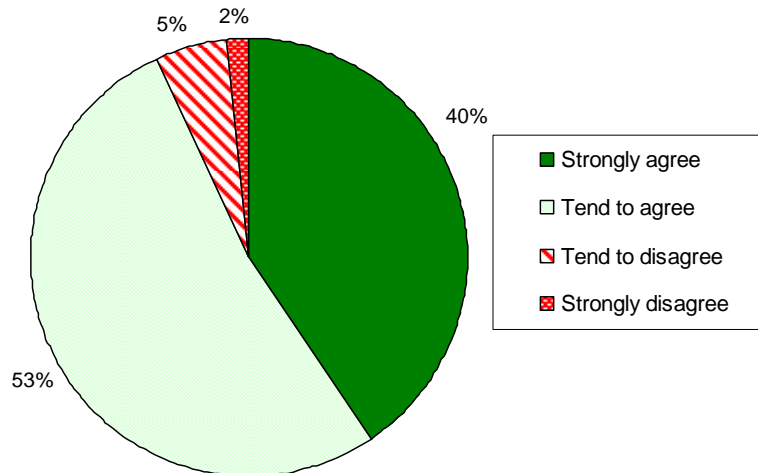
**Chart 14: 'The changes we made in order to access HLF funding improved the overall project': Total responses**



Given the response to Question 4.1d, in which central government respondents said that preparing applications which did not go ahead were of no value, it may be unsurprising to note that central government applicants felt more than any other class of applicant by type that the changes they made in order to access HLF funding did not improve the overall projects. Community and voluntary groups were most likely to feel that changes made to access HLF funding improved the projects (62%). When examined by programme, Heritage Grants and Your Heritage applicants were least happy with this aspect (51% and 59%, respectively), while satisfaction rose to 79% for Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants and 81% for Public Parks Initiative applicants.

2.2.22 Question 6.1e: Access to the necessary skills to develop the project Of the 2,164 respondents to this question, an overwhelming 93% tended to agree (53%) or strongly agree (40%) that they had access to the necessary skills to develop a successful project, the highest positive proportion in the 'application and assessment' survey section. Just 5% tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed.

**Chart 15: 'Our organisation had access to the necessary skills to develop a successful project': Total responses**



There was little variation in responses to this question by sub-set. Rejected and withdrawn applicants were, however, least likely by a small margin (90% and 89%) to agree (compared with 94% for approved applicants and 95% for those whose projects were complete).

2.2.23 Question 6.2: Comments on Questions 6.1a, 6.1b, 6.1c, 6.1d, and 6.1e:

The majority of respondents said that their projects met HLF priorities without the need for further adaptation. In a few cases, it was noted that close liaison with the HLF led to a project whose aims coincided with those of the HLF. While respondents said they had the necessary specialist skills in house, some had no access to the skills required and two could not afford professional help. Others used professional help to apply to the HLF, a few sought partners to provide skills, and some had to buy in expertise to help.

The vast majority of respondents felt that the main objectives of their project coincided with the priorities of the HLF, and consequently very few felt the need to change their projects in order to secure HLF funding.

Most respondents were confident that they had the skills in house necessary to deliver their project.

Several respondents commented that conditions applied by HLF improved the project or that good advice from HLF or regional offices led to improvements in the project, but in a number of cases, HLF requirements either:

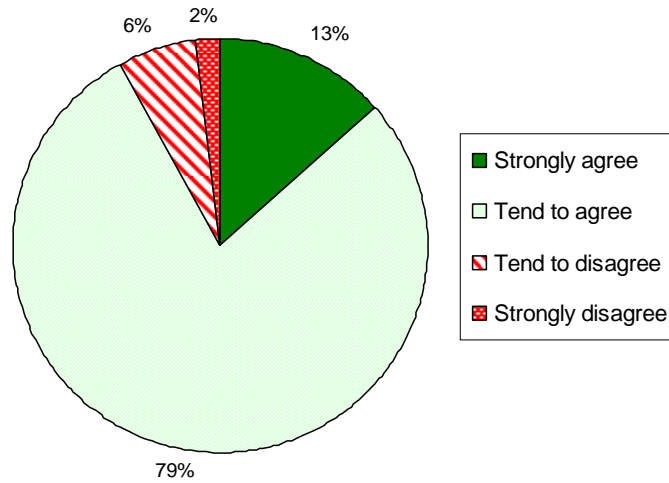
- added to project costs;
- resulted in delay that meant costs increased,
- resulted in changes that made the scheme too expensive.

Finally, in a very few cases, the HLF advised the applicants to be more ambitious in their approach to their preferred project.

2.2.24 Question 7.1a: HLF approach when assessing applicants' business plans

This sub-section asked respondents to consider the costs of the project in question and its business plan. Question 7.1a asked informants whether the HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing their business plan.

**Chart 16: 'HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing our business plan': Total responses**

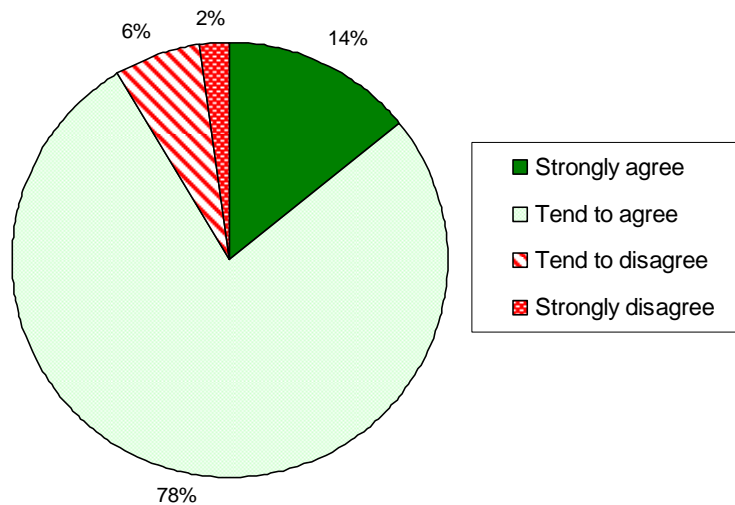


Of the 1,711 respondents to this question, 92% agreed, to a greater or lesser extent (79% of respondents tended to agree with this statement). Just 2% strongly disagreed with this statement, suggesting a high degree of acceptance of the HLF's approach in this regard.

All applicants whose grant value was over £10 million agreed that the HLF's approach was challenging but fair, although those in the band just below (between £5 million and £10 million) displayed the lowest level of agreement, at 81%. Unsurprisingly, respondents whose applications were rejected agreed with the proposition far less (71%) than those who withdrew their applications (84%), completed their projects (95%), or whose projects had been approved (98%).

2.2.25 Question 7.1b: HLF approach when assessing proposed project costs  
78% of the 1,933 informants who responded to the statement 'HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing our proposed project costs' tended to agree, whilst a further 14% strongly agreed. Just 2% of respondents strongly disagreed with this contention, the second lowest in this section of the questionnaire.

**Chart 17: 'HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing our proposed project costs': Total responses**



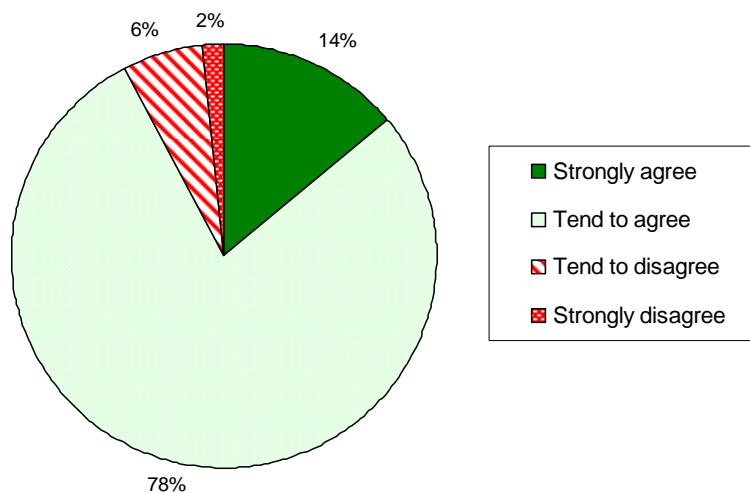
Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants displayed the lowest level of agreement (86%) when compared with applicants to other programmes; indeed, 100% of Public Parks Initiative applicants agreed that the approach to assessing proposed project costs was challenging but fair (this is interesting given that Public Parks Initiative applicants were by far most likely to have reported significant changes to their project costs during the development phase). Respondents whose applications were granted and whose projects were completed or approved were more likely to agree with the proposition (94% and 96% respectively) than those who withdrew (85%) their applications or whose applications were rejected (73%).

More intangible-heritage applicants agreed, when compared to other applicants (as regarded by project type), that this aspect of HLF performance was satisfactory.

2.2.26 Question 7.1c: HLF approach when assessing proposed partnership funding

When asked if the HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach in assessing the amounts and sources of their proposed partnership funding, 92% of respondents replied positively (with 14% agreeing strongly). Consequently, just 8% of the 1,794 respondents disagreed to a greater or lesser extent with the proposition.

**Chart 18: 'HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing the amounts and sources of our prop partnership funding': Total responses**

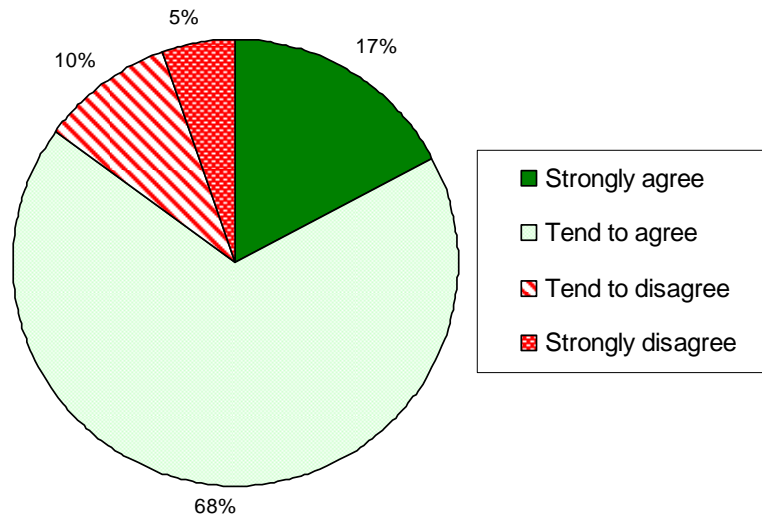


As in previous questions, the level of agreement with the proposition in the question was highest for successful applicants (91%) and completed projects (88%), fell for those who withdrew their applications (78%), and was lowest for those whose applications were rejected (62%).

2.2.27 Question 7.1d: Ability of the HLF to assess applicants' project costs and business plan

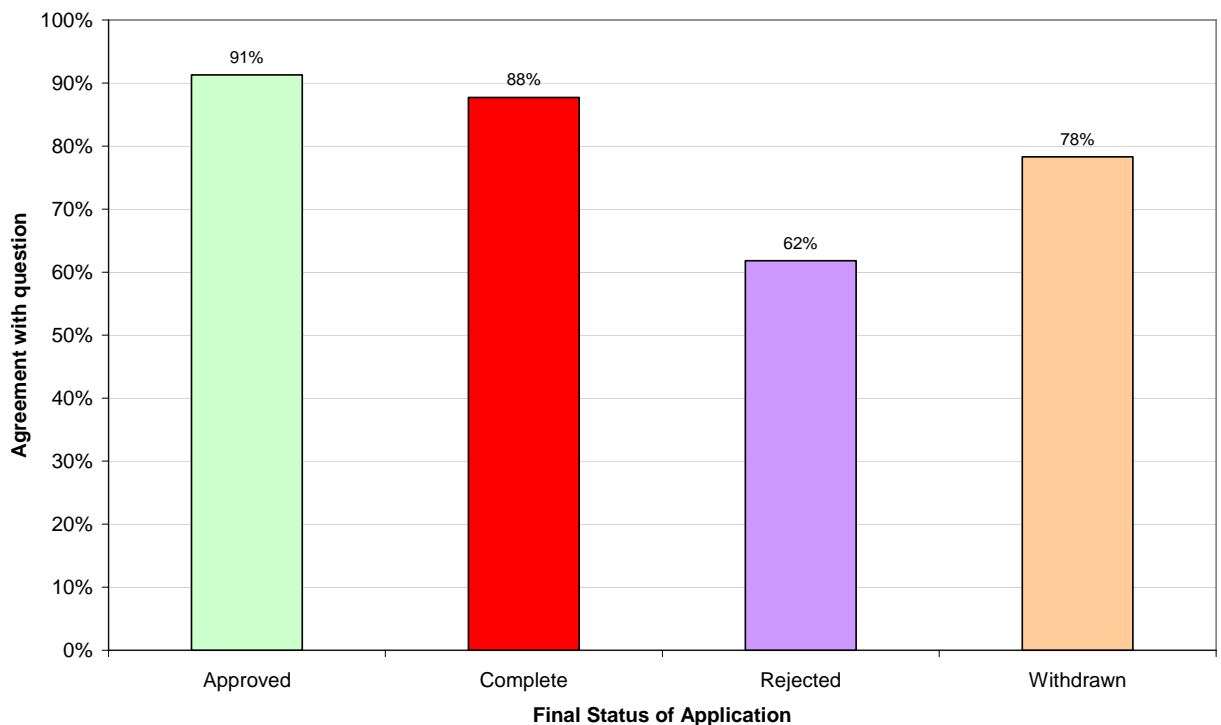
Agreement with this question, which asked whether the HLF showed sufficient technical knowledge and expertise to assess project costs and business plans effectively, was – as in questions 7.1a, b, and c – relatively high, with 85% agreeing to a greater or lesser extent with the question (68% tended to agree). 10% tended to disagree, with 5% disagreeing strongly.

**Chart 19: 'HLF showed sufficient tech knowledge and expertise to assess our project costs and business plan effectively': Total responses**



Again, as with previous questions, applicants whose proposals were rejected were less likely (62%) to respond positively than those who withdrew their applications (78%), and particularly those whose schemes were approved (91%).

**Chart 20: 'HLF showed sufficient technical knowledge and expertise to assess our project costs and business plan effectively': Response by success of application**



2.2.28 Question 7.2: Comments on questions 7.1a, 7.1b, 7.1c, and 7.1d  
 A significant number of respondents to this question stated that they felt the HLF or the case officer did not understand their project, although this conflicts with the views of other respondents (albeit fewer in number) that stated that the HLF understood the project or chose a suitable assessor.

The majority of respondents felt that the HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach to the assessment of business plans and project costs.

Several respondents praised the sub-contracted assessor for a fair and rigorous assessment, whilst many more thought the process was appropriately rigorous, that it was effective and fair, and the HLF were very clear as to what was expected to ensure a successful project. Some thought it could have been more rigorous (or that it was too rigorous for

a small organisation or project).

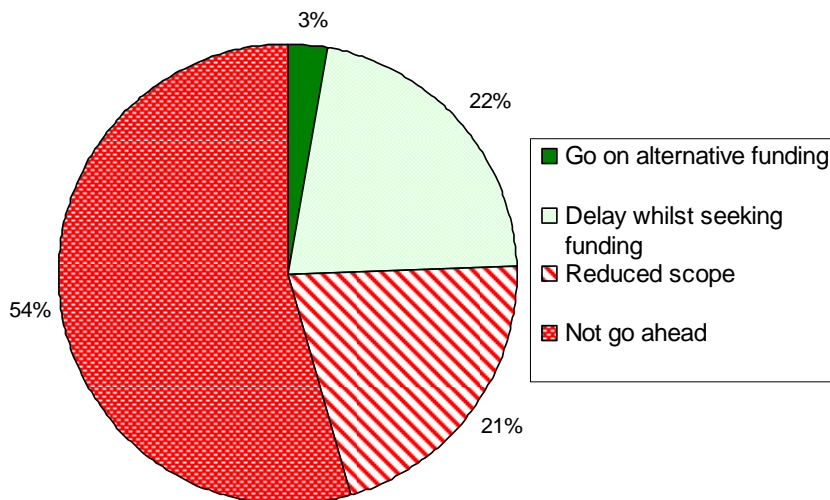
Several respondents stated that they received no feedback about how their project had been assessed or that the HLF did not have technical knowledge of their project. In a few instances, comments were made that a site visit by the HLF aided their understanding, that the grant was generous and that the case officer was helpful. Others stated that, since many aspects could not be costed until after the project had begun, they found the assessment process too rigid. Some respondents added that the restriction on using internal costs as part of the matched funding was unfair.

2.2.29 Question 8.1a: Effect on project if no HLF funding had been available

Applicants to the HLF were asked what the effect on their project would have been had no HLF funding been available. Over half (54%) of the 2,275 respondents to this question stated that their project would not have gone ahead at all. 21% replied that the scope of the project would have been reduced to take account of the reduced funding available, and 22% said that the project would have been delayed while alternative sources of funding were sought. The number of respondents who replied that the project would have gone ahead as planned using alternative sources of funding was much smaller, at 3%:

Over three quarters of respondents stated that if HLF funding had been unavailable, their project would either not have proceeded at all, or would have proceeded at a smaller scale or with a reduced scope.

**Chart 21: 'What would have been the effect on your project if no HLF funding had been available?': Total Responses**



Public Parks Initiative applicants were most likely to report (73%) that their projects would not have gone ahead at all had HLF funding not been available.

Applicants who were rejected for HLF funding were more likely to say that their projects would have found alternative funding than those who withdrew their applications or those

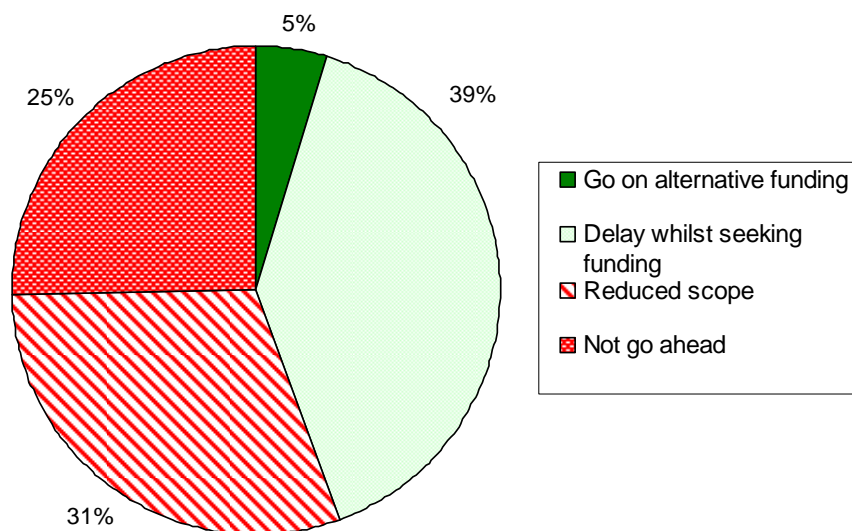
who were approved funding. Only 1% of approved or completed applicants reported that they would have continued with alternative funding compared to 8% of rejected applicants.

It should finally be noted that as project cost or the size of grant awarded increased, the availability of other funding generally fell, although this is not the case for projects costing between £1 million and £10 million.

#### 2.2.30 Question 8.1b: Effect on project if HLF had required greater partnership funding

In contrast to Question 8.1a, Question 8.1b queried what the effect would have been had the HLF required greater partnership funding. The results were significantly different from those for the previous question. 39% of the 2,203 respondents said that the project would have been delayed while they sought that additional funding, while a smaller number (31%) replied that the scope of the project would have been reduced. Fewer again responded that the project would not have gone ahead at all (25%), but in the remaining 5% of cases, the applicants would have gone ahead as planned using other funding sources.

**Chart 22: 'What would have been the effect on your project if HLF had required greater partnership funding?': Total Responses**



Intangible heritage applicants felt that their projects would have had smaller chances than other applicants if the HLF had required greater partnership funding. Those who made grant requests between £5 million and £10 million, however, expressed the greatest confidence that additional partnership funding would have had little effect on their projects.

Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants were most likely (58%) to report that their projects would go ahead with a reduced scope if the HLF had required more partnership funding, while the 32% of Young Roots applicants who said that their programs would not go ahead at all was the highest figure when the results were broken down by grant programme.

### 2.3 Project Delivery

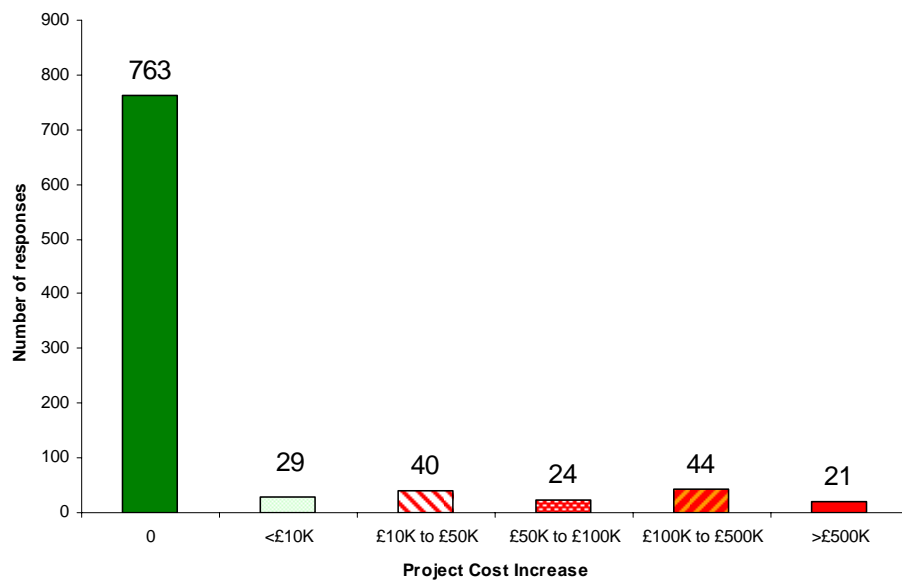
This section was only to be completed if the respondent's application was successful. For consistency, responses from applications which were refused or withdrawn have not been included in this section, and only responses from completed projects are analysed for questions 9 and 10.



### 2.3.1 Question 9.1: Project cost increases

The majority of respondents (83% of the 921 applicants who replied to this question) answered that project costs did not increase at all. There was no general trend amongst the 158 (17%) whose project costs had increased; 3.2% experienced increases of under £10,000, 4.3% had project costs increase by between £10,000 and £50,000; 2.6% were in the band between £50,000 and £100,000; 4.8% replied that their projects increased by £100,000 to £500,000; and a further 2.3% indicated increases of over £500,000.

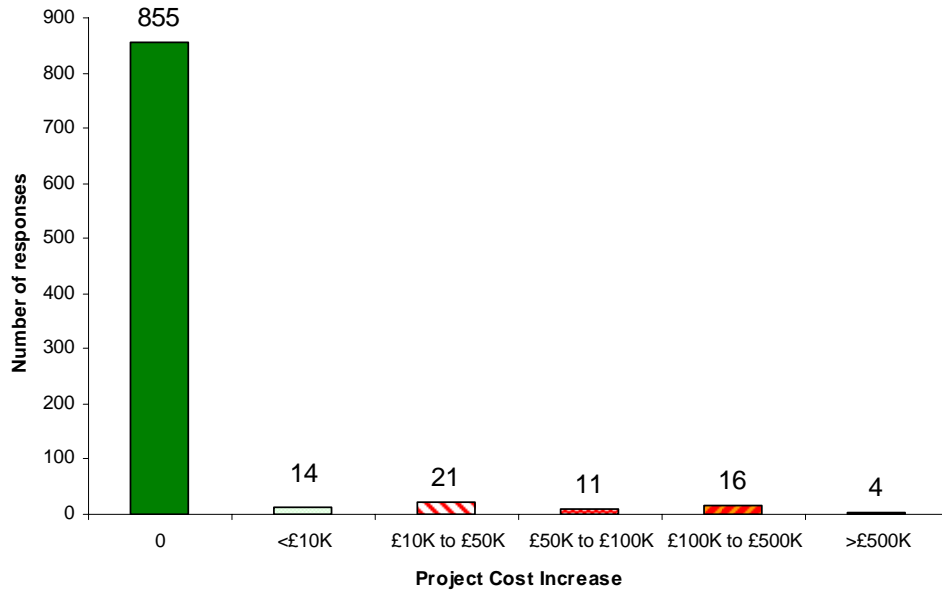
**Chart 23: 'By how much did project costs increase?': Total responses**



### 2.3.2 Question 9.2: Additional funding provided by HLF

The number of grant recipients whose project costs increased and who indicated receiving additional funding from HLF to cover those increases was 66; the remaining 855 respondents who replied to this question stated that they received no additional funding.

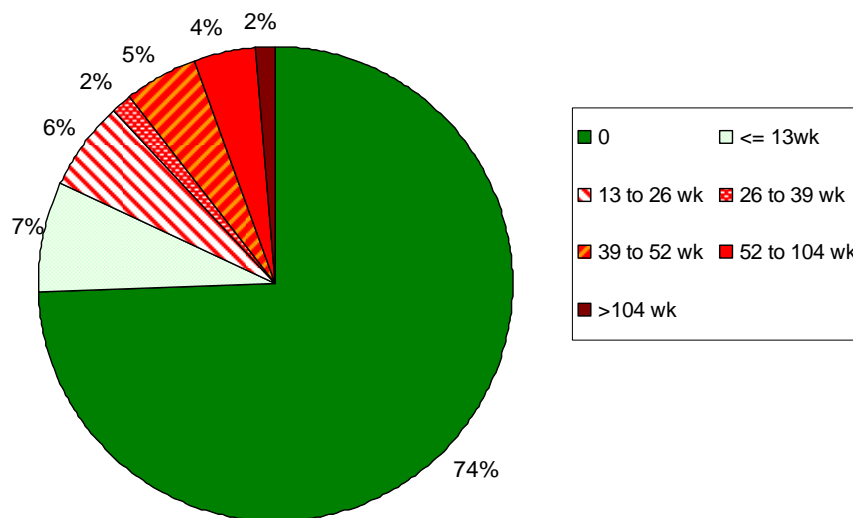
**Chart 24: 'How much additional funding did HLF provide to help cover the increase in project cost?': Total responses**



2.3.3 Question 9.4: Length of extension to project completion date

Of the 921 respondents to this question, 686 of the informants claimed no extension; 235 replied that their projects did go longer than originally planned, of which the majority (7%) were less than 13 weeks longer, with an additional 6% between 13 and 26 weeks longer than planned. The number of projects experiencing further delays began to decrease after 26 weeks' time; 2% experienced delays of between 26 and 39 weeks, 5% were between 39 weeks and one year late, while 4% of the projects were between 52 and 104 weeks over. Completion of a further 2% of the projects in this class was more than 104 weeks late.

**Chart 25: 'By how long was the project completion date extended?': Total responses**



#### 2.3.4 9.5: HLF reactions

Respondents were asked in what ways the HLF reacted to the situation. Their responses were almost unanimously positive. In most instances, the HLF's reaction was characterized as 'helpful', a significant number of those informants called the HLF 'very understanding', some said there was 'no problem', and several respondents replied that HLF were very supportive. In a few cases the HLF made no comment. A very few respondents did variously report negative responses, saying that the initial response seemed like panic, calling the HLF unrealistically rigid, or reporting that the HLF put pressure on the grant recipient to complete the project.

#### 2.3.5 Question 10.1a: Reasons for increased project costs

Question 10.1a asked informants why project costs increased. The majority of the 158 respondents to this question said that they were faced by events they had not anticipated (54%). These were most often that the extent of necessary repairs was greater than expected or that unexpected structural issues were discovered, while several respondents explained that there were unexpected costs on site, that contractors went into receivership, or that tender prices increased. Smaller numbers of respondents gave inflation (30%), unspecified other reasons (22%), or underestimation of the time and cost involved in undertaking the project's core tasks as reasons for increased project costs.

Analysis of the responses shows that Townscape Heritage Initiative and Heritage Grants applicants had difficulty raising partnership funding, and that Townscape Heritage Initiative, Heritage Grants and Public Parks Initiative applicants underestimated the cost involved in the project. Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants also found that project costs increased because the time and effort needed was more onerous than they had expected, and Townscape Heritage Initiative, Public Parks Initiative, and Heritage Grants applicants all explained that inflation had caused increases to project cost. Public Parks Initiative and Heritage Grants applicants were faced by unanticipated events which increased project costs, and Public Parks Initiative applicants were also affected by inflationary cost increases. Local authorities, followed by charities and church organisations, had the greatest problems with increased project costs as a result of unanticipated events; central government and 'other' public sector bodies reported 'other reasons' for project cost increases; and the private sector attributed most project cost increases to underestimating the time and cost involved in the project's core tasks. No intangible heritage applicants or community/voluntary groups reported increases to project costs.

#### 2.3.6 Question 10.1b: Reasons for completion date extensions

The level of responses to Question 10.1b, which asked why completion dates slipped, was far higher, at 235 respondents, than the 158 who responded to Question 10.1a. 56% stated that they were faced by unanticipated events, such as delays involving contractors or consultants. Underestimation of the time or cost involved in core tasks and unspecified other reasons each was a factor in 29% of the responses, respectively. 12% of the respondents said that the time and effort required was more onerous than expected.

Public Parks Initiative and Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants were significantly the most likely to have considered raising partnership funding a cause of delay. These respondents as well as Young Roots and Project Planning Grants applicants underestimated the time and costs involved in core tasks, while Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants raised difficulty in recruiting staff as a reason for delays. Heritage Grants, Public Parks Initiative, Young Roots, and Townscape Heritage Initiative respondents also reported that they had been faced by unanticipated events which led to time overruns, and Young Roots and Public Parks Initiative applicants said that the time and effort required was more onerous than expected. Your Heritage applicants, however, reported no completion date extensions.

Grant value had no great impact on the reasons for extensions to completion dates through £10 million. No respondents with grant value of above £10 million reported extensions to completion dates.

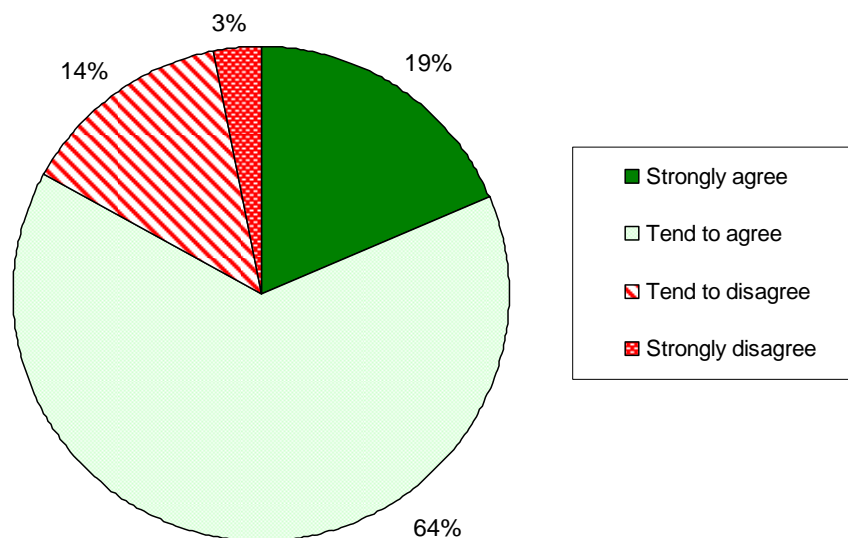
The private sector and central government had to extend project completion dates as a result of underestimating the time and cost involved in core tasks. Central government also extended completion dates because of unanticipated events and 'other' reasons. Charities, church organisations, local authorities and 'other' public sector bodies all reported extensions to completion dates because of unanticipated events. As in Question 10.1, no intangible heritage or voluntary/community groups reported extensions to their project completion dates.

### 2.3.7 Question 11.1a: HLF provision of guidance for on-time delivery within budget

When asked if HLF provided effective guidance and support to promote delivery to time and cost, 64% of the 1,295 respondents tended to agree. As 19% who answered strongly agreed, those who felt HLF did not provide effective guidance were only 17% of respondents.

Applicants to the Townscape Heritage Initiative programme were least satisfied with this aspect of the HLF's performance but felt least strongly about it, as they never answered with either 'strongly agree' or 'strongly disagree'; while applicants to Young Roots (30% strongly agreed) and those whose projects were for intangible heritage were most satisfied.

**Chart 26: 'HLF provided effective guidance and support to promote delivery to time and cost': Total responses**

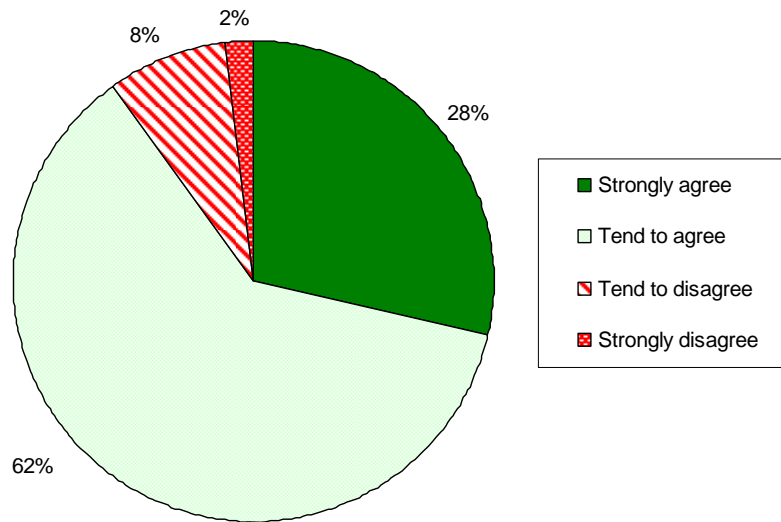


Those whose grant requests or awards were for more than £10 million were more satisfied with this aspect than applicants for smaller grants, especially as regards the number who strongly agreed with the question. Church and voluntary organisations were generally most likely to agree that the HLF provided effective guidance and support to promote delivery to time and cost.

### 2.3.8 Question 11.1b: Grant officer project knowledge and understanding

Applicants were generally happy with the knowledge and understanding of their projects shown by grant officers. 62% of the 1,432 respondents to this question tended to agree, and 28% strongly agreed, that the officer showed good knowledge and understanding. Only 8% of the respondents tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed.

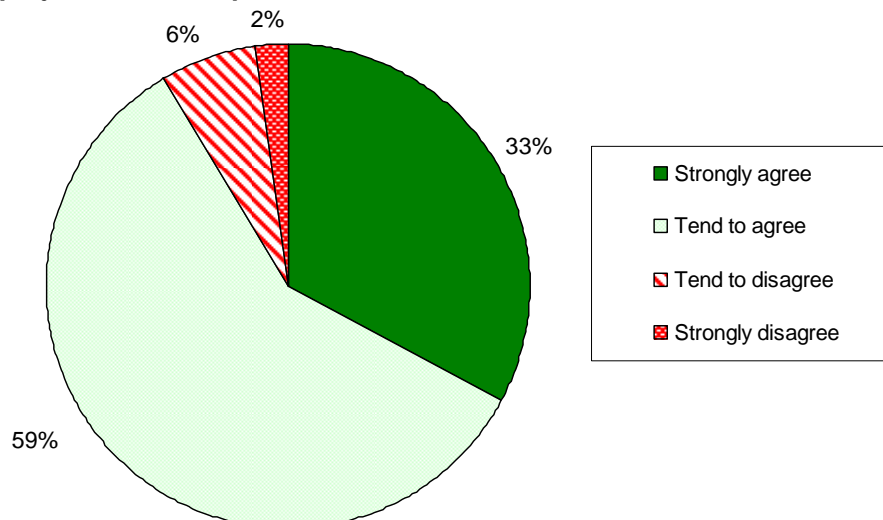
**Chart 27: 'The grant officer showed good knowledge and understanding of our project': Total Responses**



Local authority and private sector applicants were the least satisfied, while community and voluntary group and church organisation applicants were the most satisfied with this aspect of project management. Young Roots applicants were most likely (of all programmes) to strongly agree that grant officer knowledge was good, and all respondents whose grant award was over £10 million agreed completely with the proposition.

2.3.9 Question 11.1c: Project monitor knowledge and understanding  
 The responses to this question were very similar to the responses for Question 11.1b. 92% of respondents (compared to 90% of respondents for Question 11.1b) tended to agree or strongly agreed that the project monitor showed good knowledge and understanding of their project; 6% tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed.

**Chart 28: 'The project monitor showed good knowledge and understanding of our project': Total responses**



In general terms, the lower the project cost, the lower was the satisfaction expressed with the knowledge of the project monitor. Townscape Heritage Initiative, land and biodiversity applicants were also less pleased with their project monitors than other applicants. While respondents whose grants were less than £5 million expressed between 89% and 94%

agreement with the question, a low 71% of grantees awarded between £5 and £10 million either strongly agreed or tended to agree that the project monitor showed good knowledge and understanding of their projects. 78% of grantees awarded over £10 million claimed strong agreement with the question.

2.3.10 Question 11.2: Comments on questions 11.1a, 11.1b, and 11.1c

Written comments relating to Question 11.1 were very appreciative of case officers and project monitors; by far the majority stated that the case officer was very helpful or outstanding and that the monitor was very helpful, very knowledgeable, and supportive. Some people noted that staff were helpful, supportive, and that close liaison helped. In a smaller number of cases comments were made that the case officer or staff were repeatedly changed, that the case officer seemed to lack relevant experience, that there was no contact with the project monitor, or that staff were too remote.

In the vast majority of instances, HLF case officers and project monitors provided helpful and informed advice to the applicant.

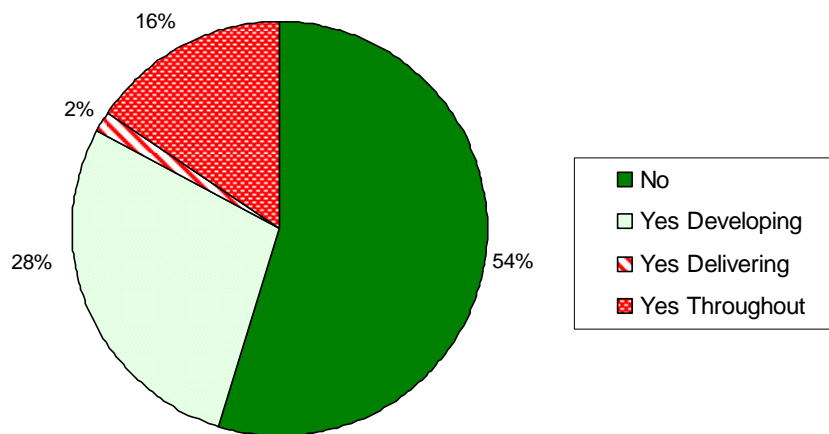
2.4 Mentoring

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2.4.1 Question 12.1: Contact with other HLF-funded projects

The majority of applicants did not speak to people involved in HLF-funded projects similar to their own (54% of the 2,372 who responded to this question). Many spoke to others involved in HLF-funded projects while developing the project (28%) and throughout development and delivery (16%), but very few – 2% of the total respondents – only had contact while delivering the project.

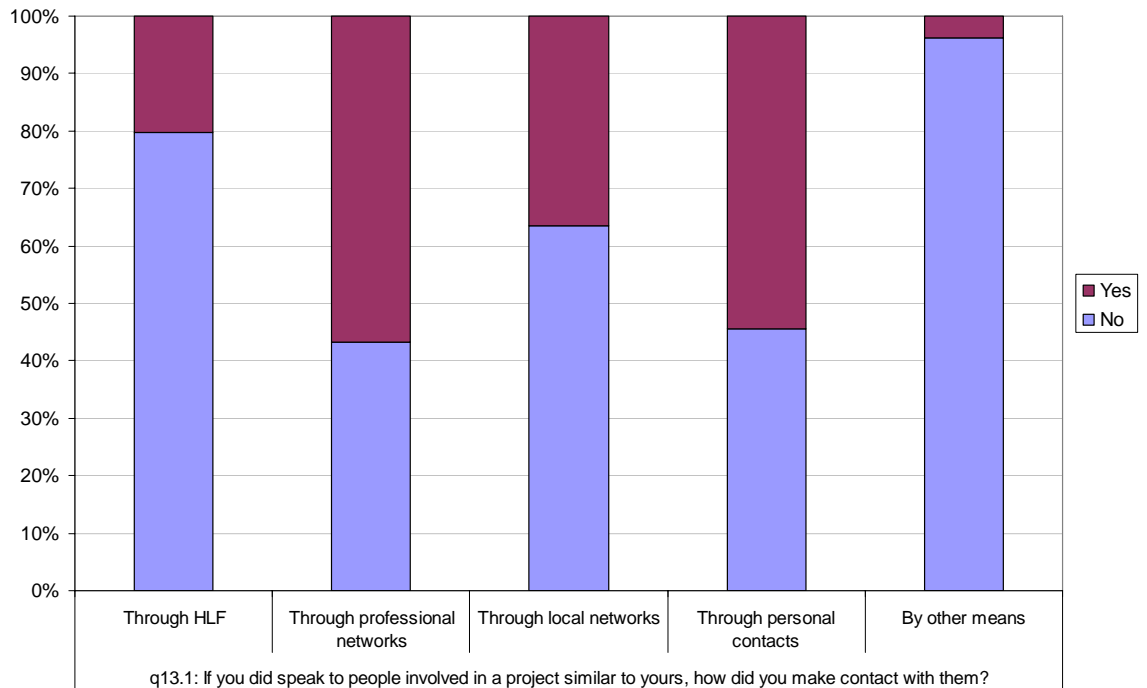
**Chart 29: 'Did you speak to people involved in HLF- funded projects similar to yours?': Total responses**



Applicants for Townscape Heritage Initiative and Public Parks Initiative grants spoke to people involved in other projects more than those who applied to different programmes, while church organisations were least likely to have spoken to others. There was an upward trend in contact with other HLF grant recipients as project cost rose over £1 million and as the size of grant award rose.

2.4.2 Questions 13.1 and 13.2: Making contact with other HLF-funded projects  
 Applicants who made contact with people involved in HLF-funded projects similar to theirs were asked how they made contact:

**Chart 30: 'If you did speak to people involved in a project similar to yours, how did you make contact with them?': Total responses**



Respondents' answers made clear that they made contact in multiple ways; 57% made contact through professional networks, 54% did so through personal contacts, 36% used local networks, 20% worked through the HLF itself, and 4% had other means for finding contacts.

Central government applicants (and the public sector in general) were least likely to use local networks to contact other applicants; the private sector was most likely to use personal contacts. Intangible heritage applicants were most likely to have made contact with other grantees through the HLF. While the public sector (central government and local authority in particular) used professional networks, charities, church organisations, community and voluntary groups, and the private sector made contact with others through personal contacts. Heritage Grants and Public Parks Initiative applicants, too, made contact through professional networks, and personal contacts were particularly useful to Heritage Grants, Townscape Heritage Initiative, and Your Heritage applicants. Museums, libraries, archives and collections applicants and land and biodiversity applicants also made use of professional networks. Some respondents reported using experience of HLF projects within their own organisations and a very few spoke with other funders.

2.4.3 Question 13.3: Benefits from contact with other HLF-funded projects

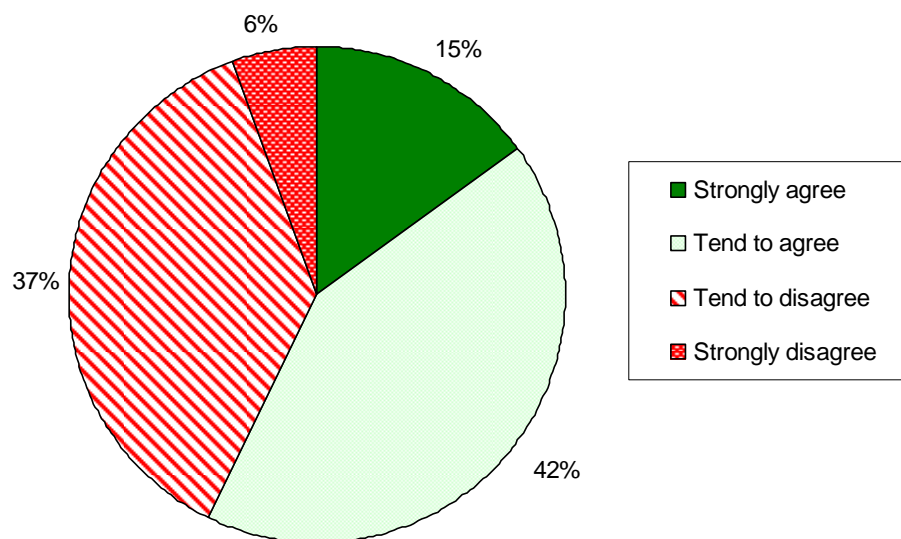
When asked what the benefits of talking with other HLF grant recipients had been, the opportunity for mutual support, help with bid formulation, a better understanding of the HLF, good advice on technical matters, useful ideas on project scope, and gaining experience of others' projects were by far the most prevalent answers. Respondents said that these helped them to avoid making the same mistakes as others and gave them a better understanding of procedures, time-scales, and of the criteria and level of detail required by the HLF. A small number of respondents said that there were no comparable projects to approach.

Speaking with other HLF grant recipients helped applicants understand the HLF application process better and generally provided them with helpful insights.

2.4.4 Question 13.4: Would applicants have benefited from contact with other HLF-funded projects?

While 1,300 applicants responded 'no' when asked in Question 12.1 if they had spoken to people involved in other HLF-funded projects, 827 responded to Question 13.4, which asked those who had not spoken to people involved in a project similar to theirs if they would have benefited from doing so. Of these 827 respondents, 42% tended to agree and 15% strongly agreed that they would have benefited from speaking to other grant recipients, while 37% tended to disagree and 6% strongly disagreed.

**Chart 31: 'We would have benefited from speaking to people involved in similar projects when developing ours': Total responses**



Applicants whose project costs, grant requests, or grant awards were greater than £10 million were all most likely to have regretted not having contact with other HLF-funded projects; all applicants whose grant awards were over £10 million responded that they tended to agree with the proposition. The second-ranking set of responses for this question by grant value came from those whose grants were for between £5 million and £10 million (75% of whom tended to agree and 25% of whom tended to disagree). The most significant disagreement by grant value was from respondents whose grants were between £500,000 and £1 million, 62% of whom disagreed with the proposition.

Half of all Public Parks Initiative and Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants strongly agreed (with 75% of Parks and 80% of Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants strongly agreeing or tending to agree) that they would have benefited from speaking to involved in other projects when developing their own projects. This contrasts with just 50% of Heritage Grants applicants tending to or strongly agreeing that they would have preferred to have spoken to others.

Intangible heritage applicants and – particularly – the private sector thought that they would have benefited from contact with other HLF grant recipients. Although those whose applications were rejected were more likely (63%) to think that they would have benefited from such contact than those who withdrew their applications (59%), both groups thought so to a greater extent than those whose grants were completed (49%). 65% of applicants whose application was approved were also of the opinion that they would have benefited from such contact.



2.4.5 Question 13.5: What advice would most have helped?

This question asked those who did not speak to people involved in a project similar to theirs, but who think that they would have benefited from doing so, what advice or guidance would have most helped them. The majority of the respondents said that they would have benefited from advice on how to complete HLF forms and to get the benefit of others' experience, although a similar number said that they felt there would have been no point as their project was unique. Other answers included getting advice on fundraising, on the HLF application process, on the volume of information required, or networking with partner organisations; however, some complained that the HLF could have directed them to other projects but did not.

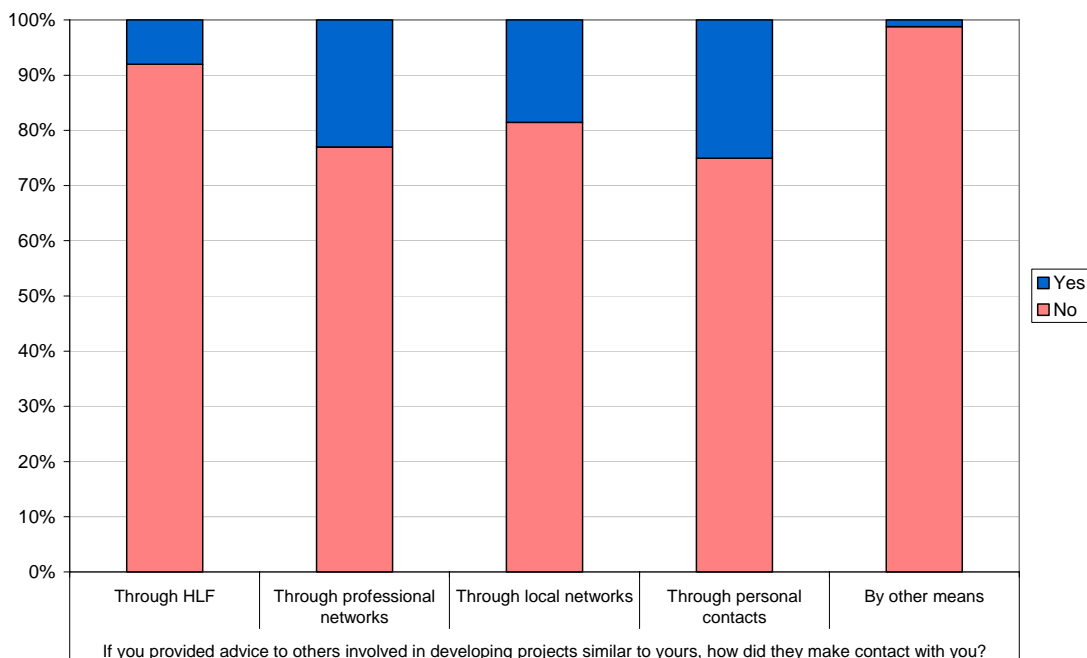
Applicants would most have benefited from others' advice on how to complete HLF forms and to generally obtain their experience.

2.4.6 Question 14.1: How were those who provided advice contacted?

When asked how applicants had contacted those who provided advice to others involved in developing projects similar to theirs, 25% of the respondents to this question said that the contact was made through personal contacts, 23% mentioned professional networks, and 19% replied that local networks put the applicants in touch with them. It was most likely for applicants to have contacted Townscape Heritage Initiative grantees through the HLF. Those whose grant awards were over £5 million were more likely to have been contacted through professional networks or through personal contacts than those who received smaller grants.

The responses to Question 13.1 revealed that museums, libraries, archives and collections applicants were likely to contact other applicants through professional networks. It therefore comes as no surprise that the responses to Question 14.1 show that these applicants were also the most likely to be contacted through professional networks.

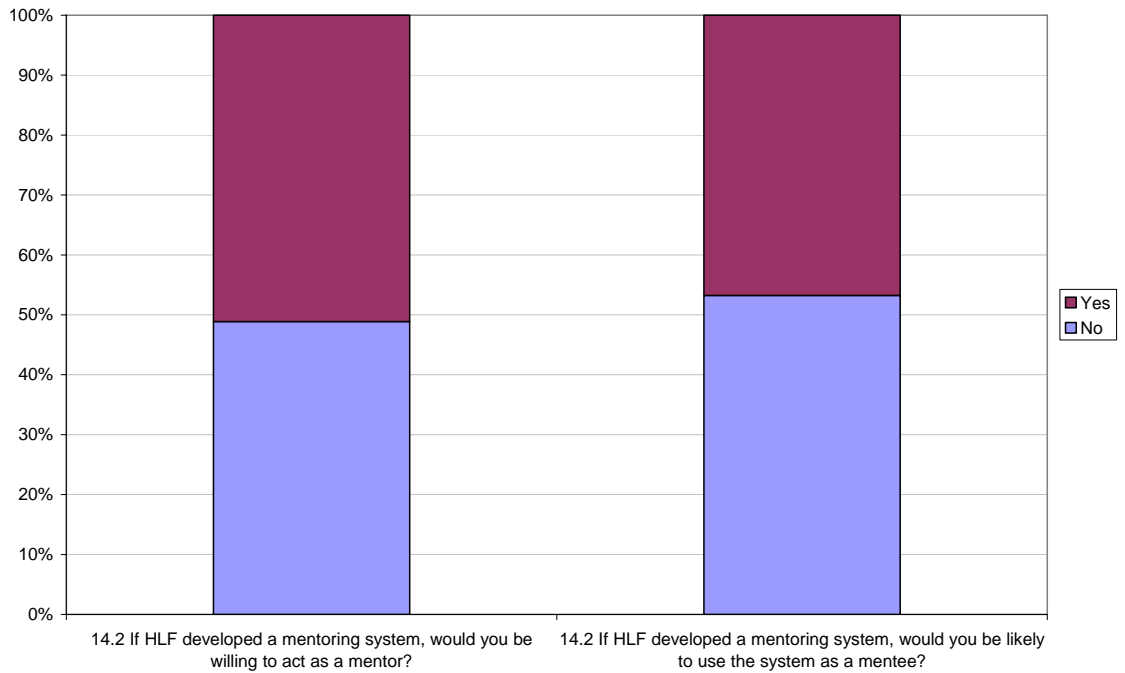
**Chart 32: 'If you provided advice to others involved in developing projects similar to yours, how did they make contact with you?': Total responses**



2.4.7 Question 14.2a: Willingness to act as a mentor, and  
Question 14.2b: Likelihood of becoming a mentee

Just over half (51%) of the 2,372 respondents commented on their willingness to act as a mentor if the HLF developed a mentoring system, compared to 47% who would be willing to use the system as a mentee.

**Chart 33: 'We would be willing to act as a mentor / use the system as a mentee':  
Total responses**

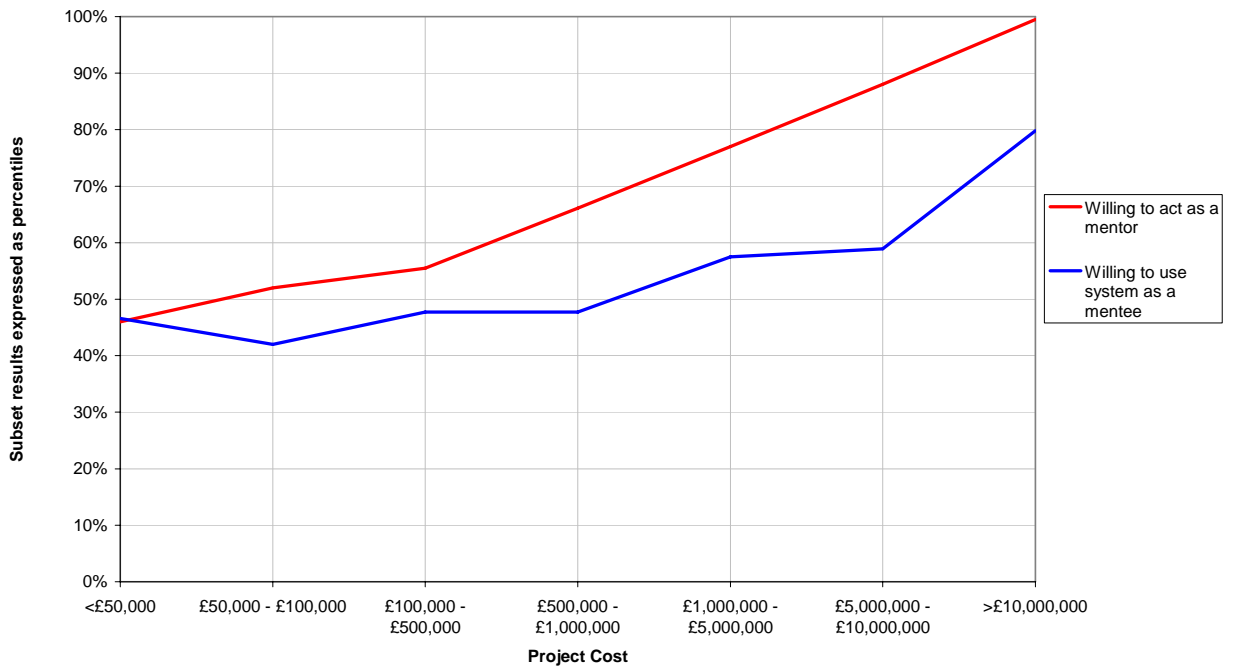


Young Roots applicants were generally very likely to be willing mentors. Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants were the most likely applicants to use the system as mentees.

Applicants for historic buildings and monuments grants were less likely than those applying for other funding to be willing to act as mentors (and, to a lesser extent, to want to be mentored); church organisations were least likely to mentor or want to be mentored, while a very high 70% of central government respondents were willing to mentor others.

There is a positive correlation between willingness to act as a mentor and project cost, size of grant request and grant award, as seen in the following chart:

**Chart 34: 'We would be willing to act as a mentor / use the system as a mentee': Relationship with Grant Award**



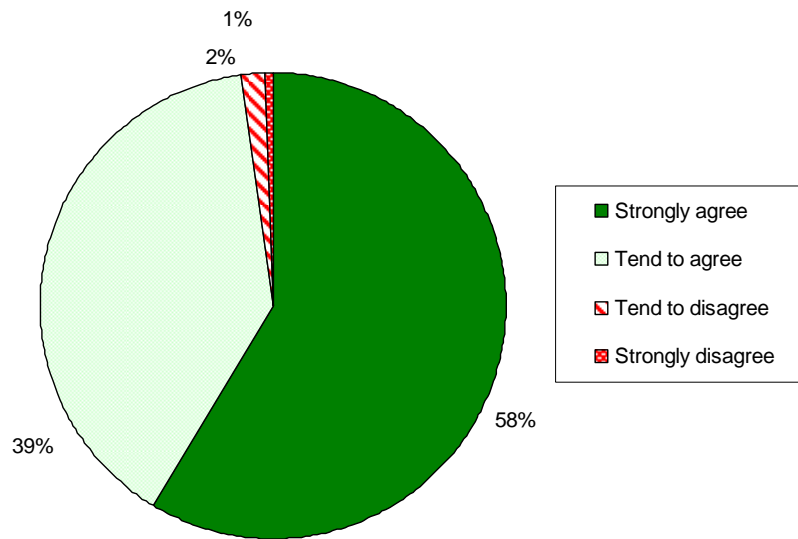
## 2.5 Completed Projects

### 2.5.1 Question 15.1a: Achievement of project goals

Respondents were very happy with their projects, with 58% of 687 respondents saying that they strongly agreed that their project had achieved all its goals upon completion, and 39% tending to agree; in other words, 97% of respondents' projects had achieved their goals.

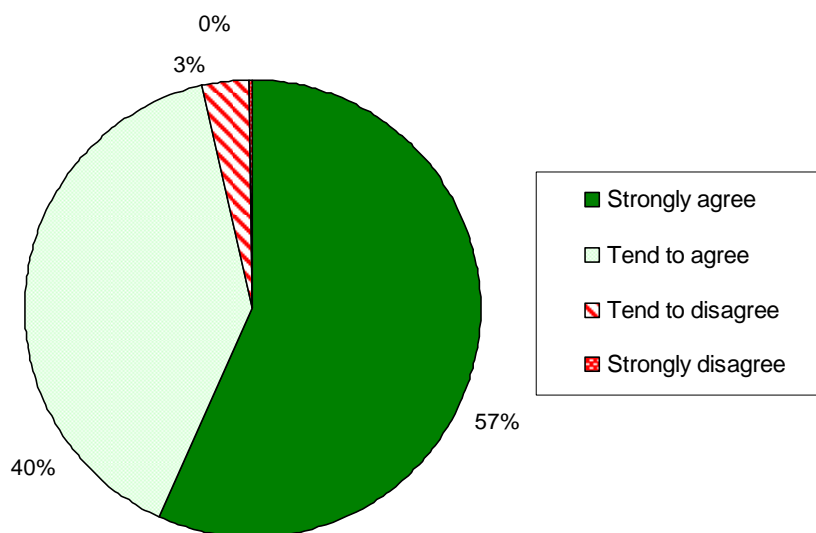
Those whose projects were for intangible heritage and community and voluntary groups were in complete agreement with the question – every member (100%) of these classes of respondents replying to the question reported that their projects had achieved all their goals. The private sector was most critical but nonetheless reported only 11% dissatisfaction. All grant programmes save Townscape Heritage Initiative reported very high levels of satisfaction. Townscape Heritage Initiative applicants were nonetheless very satisfied, as 50% strongly agreed that the project had achieved all its goals and 25% tended to agree; this left 25% tending to disagree and none strongly disagreeing.

**Chart 35: 'When completed our project had achieved all of its goals': Total responses**



2.5.2 Question 15.1b: Continued delivery of intended benefits after completion  
 The responses to this question were almost as positive as those to Question 15.1a. Nearly all (97%) of the 672 respondents to this question said that their project has continued to deliver all its intended benefits since it was completed (57% agreed strongly with this and 40% tended to agree, while 3% tended to disagree and only two respondents, just 0.3%, disagreed strongly). Differences amongst grant programmes, by grant size, and by applicant type were minimal.

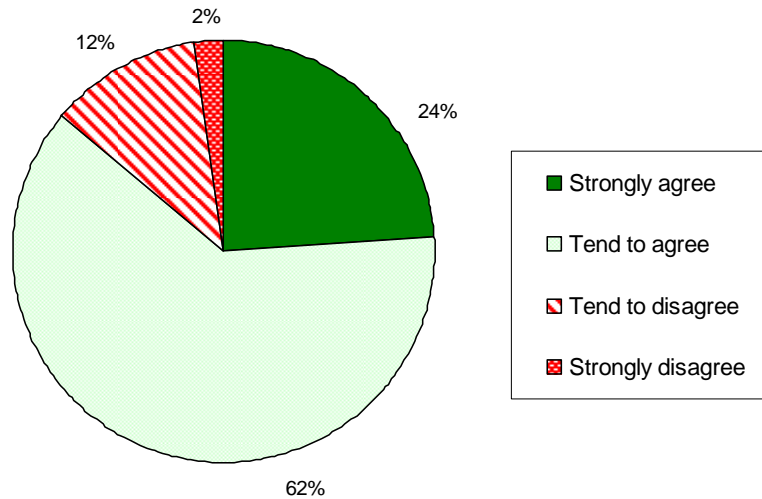
**Chart 36: 'Our project has continued to deliver all its intended benefits since it was completed': Total responses**



2.5.3 Question 15.1c: HLF advice and project durability  
 While respondents showed high levels of satisfaction in terms of project goal achievement and the continued delivery of benefits after completion, fewer thought that the advice and assistance provided by HLF helped them to build realistic plans for a durable project. Most

of the 537 respondents to this question tended to agree (62%), but fewer strongly agreed (24%), and almost 14% disagreed (12% tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed).

**Chart 37: 'The advice and assistance provided by the HLF helped us build realistic plans for a durable project': Total responses**



All Public Parks Initiative applicants strongly agreed that HLF advice helped build realistic plans for project durability; however, Heritage Grants and Your Heritage applicants were more critical (24% strongly agreeing and 62% tending to agree in the first case, 50% and 50% in the second). As grant award value increased, so did the likelihood that respondents would strongly agree (from 25% for awards under £50,000 to 50% for those over £10 million). Private sector applicants agreed less than any other type of applicant (73%, of which only 20% strongly agreed) that the advice and assistance provided by the HLF helped to build realistic plans for a durable project.

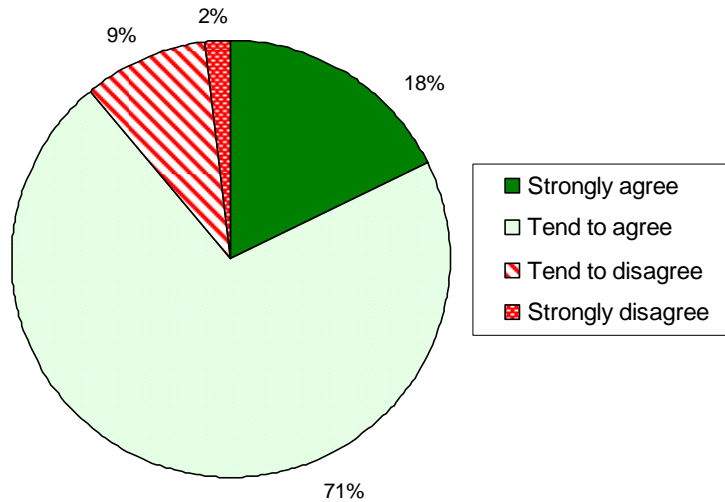
2.5.4 Question 15.1d: Appropriateness of depth of information requested since project completion

Project grant recipients were generally happy to say that the information requested by the HLF about their project since its completion has been appropriate in terms of depth. 71% of the 583 respondents to this question tended to agree and 18% agreed strongly, leaving 9% tending to disagree and 2% to strongly disagree.

All Townscape Heritage Initiative, Young Roots, and Your Heritage grantees strongly agreed that the depth of information requested was appropriate; all Public Parks Initiative grant recipients tended to agree; and 89% of Heritage Grants applicants agreed.

Once again, intangible heritage and community or voluntary group applicants were completely (100%) satisfied with the depth of information the HLF had requested since project completion, and private sector applicants were the least likely to agree (29% felt that the depth of information requested was inappropriate).

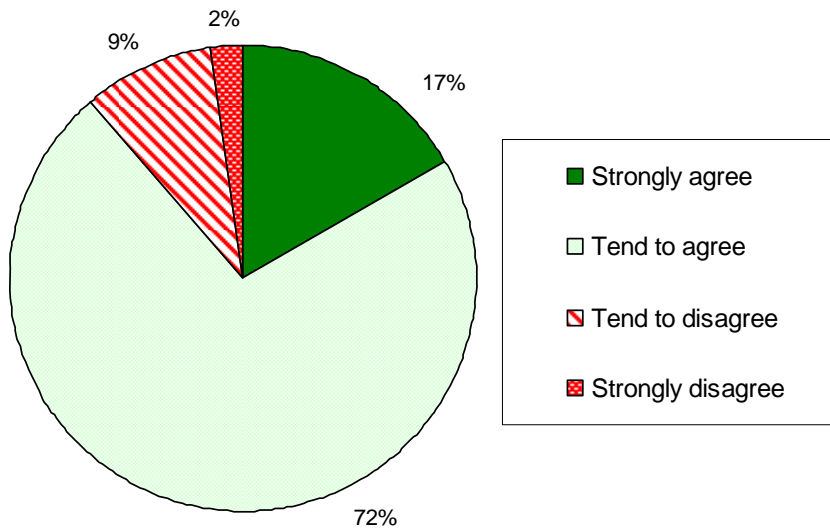
**Chart 38: 'The info the HLF has requested about our project since its completion is appropriate in terms of depth': Total responses**



2.5.5 Question 15.1e: Appropriateness of frequency of information requests since project completion

Question 15.1e, which asked if the frequency of information requests by the HLF since project completion is appropriate, achieved a very similar response to Question 15.1d. Of the 621 respondents to this question, 72% tended to agree with the proposition and 17% strongly agreed with it. 9% tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed.

**Chart 39: 'The information the HLF has requested about our project since its completion is appropriate in terms of frequency': Total responses**



Applicants to the Young Roots programmes as well as intangible heritage and community or voluntary groups were particularly approving of the frequency of information requests. As in the previous question, Heritage Grants applicants approved least of the frequency of information requests (89%), as did church organisations (83%) and, particularly, the private sector (72%).

2.5.6 Question 15.2: Comments on Questions 15.1a, 15.1b, 15.1c, 15.1d, 15.1e  
Of those respondents who commented on their experiences after project completion, most said that they thought there were too many questionnaires after the event. Several respondents thought that it would be useful to find a way to help with stage payments which have to be paid before HLF funds are released; some stated that they had received repeated requests for information which had already been supplied. A few said that they had had no contact with HLF since completion, and others commented that there had been no requests for information or that the information sought was appropriate to the scale of their projects.

Applicants felt that there are too many questionnaires from the HLF after the project has finished.

2.5.7 Question 15.3: Most important outcomes and outputs  
Respondents were asked to identify the most important outcomes and outputs from their projects. This free-text box received far more comments than any other free-text box on the survey. Although many positive outcomes were identified, several stood out. Building restoration was the single most common category of response; the greatest number of

The important outcome put forward most frequently from projects was the restoration of historic buildings or community venues.

comments were that historic building, listed building, or church restoration, as well as restoration of church or community meeting/function space, was made possible by HLF funding. Other prevalent comments were that more museum collections were put on display and interpreted, that museum facilities were improved, and that artwork was acquired through the HLF.

Other important benefits identified included securing important wildlife habitat and increasing community involvement. Several respondents identified that success laid the foundations for future HLF applications.

2.5.8 Question 15.4: Key factors in assisting project durability

Dedicated volunteers, community involvement, and public support were identified as important factors in assisting the durability of projects. Continued funding and maintenance were also considered key. Respondents noted that good design and work completed to a high standard made projects much more durable. Careful planning, dedicated staff, clear objectives, and effective partnership agreements also received notable mention.

The support of volunteers and the involvement and support of the local community were highlighted as the most important factors in ensuring the durability of projects.

2.5.9 Question 15.5: Barriers to project durability

Fewer respondents identified barriers to project durability than identified key points for assisting durability as in Question 15.4. Most of the comments related to finding funding for running costs; maintenance and a lack of long-term funding were considered the major barriers to project durability. Finding staff, especially volunteers, can also be difficult, and it is important to maintain interest in the project.

Common barriers to the durability of projects generally related to legacy funding and ongoing operational costs.

2.5.10 Question 15.6: Unexpected benefits

Unexpected benefits from projects often relate to increased public interest and the resultant flow of visitors.

Many respondents identified unexpected benefits achieved by their projects. Greater public interest and increased visitor flow were the most common unexpected benefits, as were increases to or changes in community spirit. Some grant recipients were also given

awards for their achievements – most certainly these were unexpected benefits.

#### 2.5.11 Question 15.7: Lessons learned

The final question in the survey asked those whose projects were complete what lessons they had learned from running their projects. A few respondents were negative, replying that they would never apply again. Others answered that one should be persistent, to allow realistic time to get things done, that one should not underestimate the costs and effort required to complete a project, not to take on more than staff and volunteers can cope with, and not to be over-ambitious. The respondents said that sound project management, with a good team, is essential and that it is important to plan carefully. Community involvement was also considered important. Some respondents recommend using professional advisors.

Applicants have learned to be persistent and above all realistic in what can be achieved.



### 3 Findings

In relation to the application process,

- Applicants are generally happy with their experiences of applying to the HLF;
- Applicants report that HLF-funded projects almost always achieve their goals and continue to deliver their intended benefits after completion; and
- As the size of projects increases, so generally does applicants' satisfaction with the HLF funding process.

Regarding the eventuality of HLF funding,

- Many projects would not proceed without HLF funding;
- Applicants do not, however, change project aims or presentation simply to receive HLF funding.

In preparing applications,

- Applicants easily identify the correct grant programmes to which to apply; but
- The burden of applying to the HLF can seem unnecessarily severe; and
- The preparation of applications can seem too time-consuming.

Regarding the application determination process,

- Many rejected applicants believe the reasons given by HLF for their rejection were unreasonable; although
- Applicants (including rejected applicants) generally approve of the HLF's approach to assessment of projects, costs and business plans.

As regards project completion,

- Project cost estimates appear accurate;
- Applicants claim most projects are completed on time; and
- Grant recipients generally consider the information requested by HLF after programme completion to be appropriate.

Last, applicants have offered constructive criticism:

- Applicants desire speedier decisions;
- Applicants desire improved dialogue, communication and feedback; and
- A mentoring programme would be welcomed by HLF applicants.

## **Appendix: Survey Questionnaire**



National Audit Office



## NAO SURVEY OF THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

1.1 Project Reference:

1.2 Project Title:

### APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

2.1 If you requested advice from HLF **before** submitting your application, thinking about the pre-application advice that HLF provided, do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
HLF advice helped us identify potential barriers to a successful application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HLF advice helped us overcome barriers resulting in an improved application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.2 If you strongly agree or disagree with any of these statements, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

2.3 Thinking about the application process, do you agree with the following statement?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
We easily identified the HLF grant programme whose aims and objectives most closely fitted those of our project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.4 If you strongly agree or disagree with the statement, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

3.1 Thinking about the efficiency of HLF's application and assessment process, do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
The type and amount of information that HLF required us to provide in our application was appropriate and proportionate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applying for HLF funding did not impose unnecessary burdens upon our organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HLF requests for additional information helped us address shortcomings in our original application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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3.2 If you strongly agree or disagree with any of these statements, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

3.3 If you think that there were avoidable delays in the assessment of your application, please provide details here:

3.4 If you have any suggestions as to how the assessment process can be improved, please provide these here:

4.1 If your application for HLF funding was rejected, do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
HLF clearly stated why our application was unsuccessful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The reasons given by HLF for our application being rejected were reasonable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HLF provided useful feedback on how we could amend our project to make it more likely to succeed if resubmitted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparing our application was of value to our organisation, even though the project did not take place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.2 If you strongly agree or disagree with any of these statements, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

If you withdrew your grant application before HLF formally assessed it, please:-

5.1 a) tell us why

5.2 b) tell us about any role that HLF played in you coming to this decision

6.1 Thinking about the development of your project between your first discussions with HLF and its final assessment, do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
HLF's funding priorities coincided with the main objectives of our project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We significantly changed the scope or aims of our project to access HLF funding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The costs of our project changed significantly (by more than ten per cent) during this development phase	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The changes we made in order to access HLF funding improved the overall project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our organisation had access to the necessary skills to develop a successful project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NAO SURVEY OF THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

6.2 If you strongly agree or disagree with any of these statements, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

7.1 Thinking about the costs of your project and its business plan, do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing our business plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing our proposed project costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing the amounts and sources of our proposed partnership funding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HLF showed sufficient technical knowledge and expertise to assess our project costs and business plan effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.2 If you strongly agree or disagree with any of these statements, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

Please tick one box in each row to indicate the effect on your project...

	The project would have gone ahead as planned using alternative sources of funding	The project would have been delayed whilst alternative sources of funding were sought	The scope of the project would have been reduced to take account of the reduced funding available	The project would not have gone ahead at all
8.1 ...if no HLF funding had been available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.2 ...if HLF had required greater partnership funding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**PROJECT DELIVERY (to be completed only if your application was successful)**

If your project costs are greater now than when your grant was awarded, or its completion date has been extended:

9.1 By how much did the project costs increase? £ \_\_\_\_\_

9.2 How much additional funding did HLF provide to help cover this? £ \_\_\_\_\_

9.3 How did you meet the balance of the greater project costs (the costs not covered by HLF funding)?  

9.4 By how long was the project completion date extended? Weeks

9.5 In what ways did HLF react to this situation?

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10.1 Please indicate the reasons for increased project costs or any extension to the completion date: (please tick those applicable)

	Increased costs	Extended completion date
We had difficulty raising the partnership funding we needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We underestimated the time/cost involved in undertaking the project's core tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We had difficulty recruiting the staff needed to undertake the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We had difficulty in attracting/maintaining the volunteer help needed to undertake the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We were faced by events that we had not anticipated (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The time and effort needed to manage the project was more onerous than we had expected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inflation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11.1 Thinking about project delivery, do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
HLF provided effective guidance and support to promote delivery to time and cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The grant officer showed good knowledge and understanding of our project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The project monitor showed good knowledge and understanding of our project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11.2 If you strongly agree or disagree with any of these statements, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

**MENTORING**

12.1 Did you speak to people involved in HLF-funded projects similar to yours? Tick only one.

- No
- Yes - when we were developing our project
- Yes - when we were delivering our project
- Yes - throughout the development and delivery of our project

13.1 If you did speak to people involved in a project similar to yours, how did you make contact with them? Tick as many as apply.

- Through HLF
- Through professional networks
- Through local networks
- Through personal contacts

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13.2 Other (please specify)

13.3 If you did speak to people involved in a project similar to yours, how did your project benefit?

If you did not speak to people involved in a project similar to yours, do you agree with the following statement?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
13.4 We would have benefited from speaking to people involved in similar projects when developing ours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13.5 If you did not speak to people involved in a project similar to yours, but think that you would have benefited from doing so, what advice or guidance would have most helped you?

14.1 If you have provided advice to others involved in developing projects similar to yours, how did they make contact with you?

- Through HLF
- Through professional networks
- Through local networks
- Through personal contacts
- Other (please specify)

14.2 If HLF developed a mentoring system for grant applicants and recipients, would you:

- |  | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Be willing to act as a mentor?           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Be likely to use the system as a mentee? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**COMPLETED PROJECTS**

**(to be completed only if your project was completed before 31 March 2004)**

15.1 Thinking about your completed project and what it has achieved, do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion / N/A
When completed our project had achieved all of its goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our project has continued to deliver all its intended benefits since it was completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The advice and assistance provided by HLF helped us build realistic plans for a durable project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The information HLF has requested about our project since its completion is appropriate in terms of depth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The information HLF has requested about our project since its completion is appropriate in terms of frequency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15.2 If you strongly agree or disagree with any of these statements, or have any other comments to make, please give details here:

**(to be completed only if your project was completed before 31 March 2004)**

15.3 What were the most important outcomes/outputs from your project?

15.4 What are the key factors that have assisted the durability of your project?

15.5 What barriers to the durability of your project have you faced, and how have these been addressed?

15.6 Please highlight any unexpected benefits that your project has achieved

15.7 Please highlight any lessons learned from running your project


END OF SURVEY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

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