

Example of a Your Heritage project that meets our aims relating to: participation and learning



Project title: Gravesham – In Living Memory
Applicant: Gravesham Borough Council
Grant awarded: £47,900 (90%)
Project length: 15 months



A Sikh resident talks about working in the Gravesham cement factories

1 Summary

Gravesham is a small borough on the Thames Estuary in North Kent. The area has always been part of the gateway to and from England and as such has an ever-changing population. There is a well-established Sikh community and a growing number of immigrants groups. However, Gravesham is not well served with museums, libraries and archives where the stories of local people are told. With the help of local volunteers this project developed a new web site and DVD with audio and video oral history recordings of local people from all walks of life, as well as educational resources related to the history of Gravesham from the 1930s to the present day to support the National Curriculum. A photographic exhibition was held in a local library.

2. The aims of the project

The project had three aims:

- to increase local residents' sense of pride and place by creating a community-focussed, living history web site using oral history interviews, video interviews and photographs;
- to ensure that local people's memories of living in Gravesham were captured and preserved for future generations before they were lost; and
- to raise awareness among residents of the local history collections, and in particular the photographic material, in their library.

3. Benefits for heritage

- 36 interviews were recorded (some on tape, some transcribed on paper and the majority on digital video) and are now available through the website and DVD.

- The DVD has been deposited in the local library so everyone can have access now and in the future.
- The project has raised the profile of the local archives section of the library among Gravesham's residents, and demand for its photographic material has risen.

4. Benefits for people

- 20 volunteers, including young people and three representatives from ethnic minority community groups, were involved in designing, developing and editing the web site.
- 14 activity sheets related to the National Curriculum Key Stage 2 for history, geography and citizenship were created. Local teachers found that the interviews were not only important primary source materials but added another dimension to their pupils' learning by requiring them to analyse the value of memory, fact and opinion.
- The project has created a sense of pride in the changing history of people living in the borough, by involving them in recounting their personal histories and memories of Gravesham over a number of years.

5. Lessons learnt

- Having the right people with the skills you need on the project Steering Group is key.
- The range of professionals involved in the work could have been wider to ensure better communication and delivery of the project.
- Steering groups should reflect the kinds of people a project is aimed at to make sure it has relevance in the community.

6. Long term benefits

- Local people continue to add their memories to the web archive.
- The web site can be found at: www.graveshampeople.org

7. The budget

Main project costs	£	Funding	£
Equipment/materials	6,000	From own organisation	3,300
Freelance fees and expert advice	18,000	Project costs in 12 months pre application	2,000
Training and travel	1,700		
Interviews, website	21,500	HLF grant (90%)	47,900
Contingency/inflation	5,000	Total costs	53,200