

# Discover the Extraordinary

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## Project Evaluation Summary

Delivering resilient, sustained tourism growth



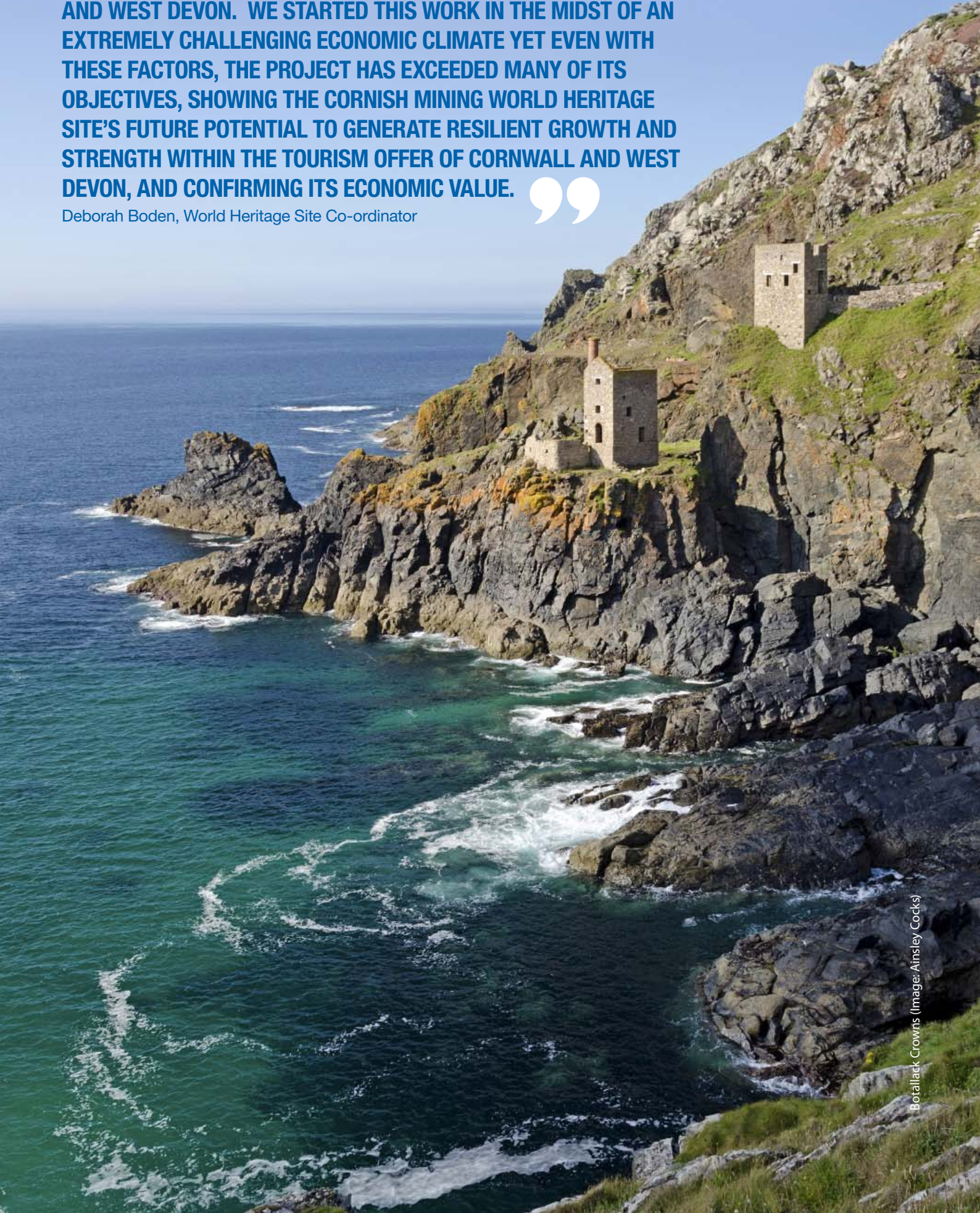
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:  
Europe Investing in Rural Areas





“ THE DISCOVER THE EXTRAORDINARY PROJECT EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS THAT OUR INTEGRATED PROGRAMME IS A MODEL FOR SUCCESS, BENEFITING TOURISM BUSINESSES ACROSS CORNWALL AND WEST DEVON. WE STARTED THIS WORK IN THE MIDST OF AN EXTREMELY CHALLENGING ECONOMIC CLIMATE YET EVEN WITH THESE FACTORS, THE PROJECT HAS EXCEEDED MANY OF ITS OBJECTIVES, SHOWING THE CORNISH MINING WORLD HERITAGE SITE'S FUTURE POTENTIAL TO GENERATE RESILIENT GROWTH AND STRENGTH WITHIN THE TOURISM OFFER OF CORNWALL AND WEST DEVON, AND CONFIRMING ITS ECONOMIC VALUE. ”

Deborah Boden, World Heritage Site Co-ordinator







Wheal Peevor (Image: Kirstin Prisk)

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# 01

## Introduction

In 2006 ten selected mining landscapes across Cornwall and west Devon were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, placing Cornish mining heritage on a par with international treasures like Macchu Pichu, the Taj Mahal and the Great Wall of China.



Tavistock audio trail (Image: Bill Bradshaw)

The largest World Heritage Site in the UK, with almost 20,000 hectares spread across Cornwall and west Devon, it offers myriad experiences to explore our world-changing mining culture.

The Cornish Mining World Heritage Site (CMWHS) is managed by a Partnership Board comprising Cornwall, Devon County and West Devon Borough Councils, plus the National Trust and the Cornwall and Tamar Valley AONBs. The Board's role is to draft and implement a Management Plan, and deliver projects that protect and present our World Heritage landscape.

Sustainable tourism, that responds to, communicates and supports the special nature of the mining landscape, is integral to this role. But with such a diverse Site, in multiple ownerships, and limited core

resources, a substantial co-ordinated investment was needed to unlock the potential of the World Heritage Site status. In 2007 the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funding opened and the World Heritage Site submitted an Expression of Interest that identified the need for an integrated approach to tourism product improvement, business engagement and promotion. This resulted in the invitation to submit a full bid, as part of the Rural Tourism commissioning strand.

The resulting £2.4m 'Discover the Extraordinary' (DtE) project began in January 2010. Over £1m was invested in improving the facilities at 11 partner mining visitor attractions as well as improving interpretation of the wider landscape to help visitors understand the story of Cornish

mining. The Project also invested money into building new relationships across the tourism sector and promotion of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site as a tourism destination.

This has had a significant impact not only on the 11 visitor attractions but also the wider Cornish Mining Attractions Marketing Association (CMAMA) membership, and has supported business growth in a range of tourism partners across the whole supply chain.

**THIS PAPER SUMMARISES THE FULL PROJECT EVALUATION, A COPY OF WHICH CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE CORNISH MINING WORLD HERITAGE SITE.**

## Overall synopsis

The programme began and operated in the midst of the most extreme financial recession since the 1930s, and found itself in the turmoil of a rapidly changing and highly unpredictable environment in terms of visitor behaviour, visitor interests and visitor spend.

The programme also had to contend with a shifting base of data sets affected by changing local authority resources, and local business re-prioritisation in the face of a very challenging economic situation. However, a broad assessment of the figures clearly indicates that the project has achieved a step change in the wider engagement with and understanding of the World Heritage Site in general, and its immediate and future potential to generate resilient growth and strength within the tourism offer of Cornwall and west Devon, confirming its value in terms of economic growth. This is clear in both

the quantitative data available, and the qualitative response from the business engagement programme.

The Project's Objectives were to:

- Improve the World Heritage Site destination "product" and the visitor's experience through improved visitor facilities and enhanced information, interpretation and orientation

This objective has categorically been met in terms of quality of product and improved experience. Over £1m has been spent on a range of visitor facilities and interpretation, improving the destination asset value of the World Heritage Site to an unprecedented level.

- Implement the World Heritage Site Key and Area Centres to provide strategic World Heritage Site interpretation and orientation for visitors

Nine area centres are now established, with high quality interpretation and a strategic and well-connected

narrative across attractions, accommodation, activity and tour operators, and the Site's online and social media presence.

- Build relationships across the wider tourism industry and enable rural tourism businesses to benefit from World Heritage Site status

The 3.5 year engagement has delivered a triple benefit in this regard. The significant investment of £1m into the physical fabric; the wider stakeholder engagement across multiple heritage, arts, tourism, landscape and community partnerships; and the business engagement programme actively and directly engaging over 400 businesses has categorically improved business benefit from the World Heritage Site status. This is delivered via the high quality suite of digital tools available to the business, and the uplift in their professional and personal understanding and quality of information passed to the visitor.

- Communicate the enhanced tourism offer to target markets

Despite choppy waters in terms of visitor behaviour, data is indicating clearly that the improved and dynamic offer is being clearly communicated to a range of target markets. This has also taken advantage of the changing landscape of social media, with arguably some of the highest quality platforms for visitor engagement coming from the World Heritage Site. This is categorically clear in the 92% rating given to the Cornish Mining website by New Media Age; and by CNN's picking up of the Site in 2012 and promoting it as One of the Top 27 Sites to visit in the world.

- Convert awareness into increased World Heritage Site landscape motivated visitors to Cornwall and west Devon

Awareness of the World Heritage Site landscape is complex and comprises understanding of world heritage per se, awareness of the mining landscape per se, and understanding of that landscape having international World Heritage Site status. The awareness and understanding is a fluid phenomenon is influenced by multiple factors; however, day and overnight trips to Cornwall and west Devon remain strong despite very significant spikes and falls in overall visitor numbers in response to the economic upheaval beginning in 2008. The data can show that the Cornish Mining sites across Cornwall and west Devon have shown impressive resilience

to the economic disturbance, and in fact include some of the only attractions demonstrating uplift at these difficult times. Heartlands, the mixed use public park and visitor attraction in Pool, has seen visitor numbers of 75,000 above those of Tate St Ives during its first year of operation in 2012-13 - 36% more than Tate Ives <sup>1</sup>.

- Encourage visitors to choose environmentally sustainable options

During the programme, a range of tourism businesses including attractions, accommodation, transport, guided tours

Overall, the range of social, environmental and economic outputs and achievements, have been significant, and well-coordinated to ensure optimum impact, and overlap despite testing background circumstances. Businesses implementing simple pro-environment policies will reduce their environmental impact and also recoup costs quickly and simply. Similarly, local food production reduces environmental impact, increases economic benefit, and contributes to widespread community benefit. This is achieved by delivering wellbeing and purpose



Familiarisation Day at King Edward Mine  
(Image: Chantelle Roberts)

and activities have been encouraged to engage in sustainable tourism practices, in order to improve their own impact and to positively influence visitors to do likewise. The business engagement programme has ensured a long term alignment with sound heritage management practices and sustainable tourism, evident in the range of awards and certification secured by those businesses involved in the Heritage Champions programme.

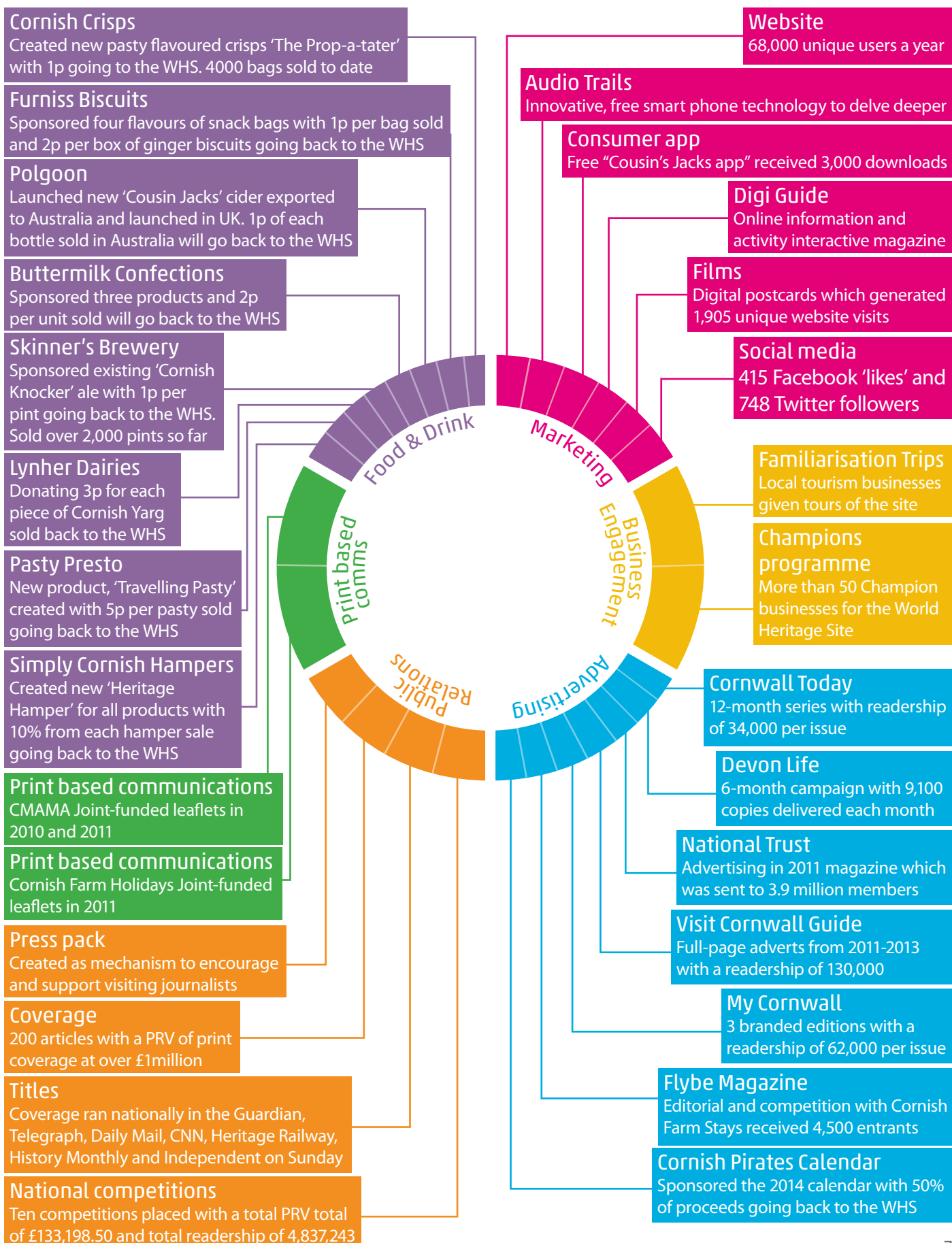
through local circular economy models, and favouring smaller businesses with greater connection to the farming environment than larger multinationals. Together, the three components knit together a more dynamic, resilient and collaborative mining heritage industry which meets the needs of visitors, businesses and communities alike.

<sup>1</sup> UK DCMS survey [Taking Part](#) is a national survey run by DCMS which aims to find out how people spend their time in the leisure activities and facilities available to them. It also looks at understanding people's lifestyle choices and what drives participation in the sectors that DCMS represents.



# An integrated marketing strategy

The diagram below shows some of the main activities delivered as part of the DtE.



# 02

## Highlights

**Increase of  
at least 5.5%**

of visitors who indicate the World Heritage Site's historic mining landscape has influenced their decision to visit

Overall increase of

**24 jobs created**

across a sample of heritage attractions (not including accommodation sector)

Average percentage

**increase in visitor  
spend/income of 138%**

amongst a sample of 20 inland heritage related businesses

### Thoughts on heritage: Awareness and attraction value of the WHS tourism product

Around 15% (of a market of 4 million + visitors p.a.) now report the WHS mining landscape as one of their motivations to visit. This is equivalent to 600,000+ visitors to the area. In addition, the project has delivered an uplift in the awareness and appeal of industrial heritage and its relationship with WHS status.

**Increase of 16%**

in those who consider industrial heritage to be a contributory factor in World Heritage Site status

**Upward trend**

in those who plan, or would consider a visit to an industrial heritage attraction

**Increase of 14%**

in those who consider mining heritage to be a contributory factor in World Heritage Site status

**Increase of 4.6%**

of visitors who considered industrial heritage to be of high or some interest



## Attractions

The £1.1m capital investment in attractions and subsequent marketing activity has contributed to a growth in the quality of experience and visitor activity at partner sites.

### **21 awards**

and commendations for excellence were won at local, regional and national level by CMAMA attractions and Heritage Champions in 2013 alone

### **8 out of 9**

heritage attractions are showing or expecting an overall increase in visitor numbers over the period of the programme

### **Overall increase**

10.5 FTE posts across a range of heritage attractions

### **Increase from**

### **14% to 32%**

of visitors who recalled seeing World Heritage Site specific information between 2011-2013

## Visitors

Customers are the lifeblood of any business. Improvements in product quality, skills transferred to tourism businesses and the resulting increased awareness and satisfaction, has delivered impressive income growth.

Average actual

### **increase in visitor spend of 20%**

amongst a sample of 20 inland heritage related businesses

### **Percentage uplift**

in visitor spend amongst sample of heritage related businesses ranges from 11% to 1000%

### **Over 10,500**

new unique Cornwall based visitors and 13,600 unique Devon based visitors accessed the Cornish Mining website in less than two years, from a total of 181,400 unique visitors worldwide

# 03

## Top priorities for the future



Cycling on the Tamar Trails (Image: Simon Burt)

### Continuing collaboration and communication

Ensure **continued investment in strategic communication and engagement**, to overcome presumptions and social barriers to the concept of "heritage"

Continue **collaboration across the whole tourism industry to ensure that the offer is joined up**, with businesses in the wider World Heritage Site working to 'pass on the golden baton'



Champion training at Heartlands (Image: Silvia Lowe)

Continue to develop **excellent links with related sectors**, such as arts, culture, food, activity and accommodation, to build a year round, multi-thematic and resilient offer with a variety of possible audiences.

Future programmes will focus on **developing support for World Heritage Site cultural events**, which have proven to be a major factor in growing and broadening new audiences.

**Specific support within the business engagement programme** has excited enthusiasm between food providers, activity providers, accommodation providers and attractions, and has generated much support for ongoing collaboration and networking to promote a coherent offer to visitors.

**Engagement of local communities** in the local natural and built heritage is critical and will form a central part of future investment opportunities.

### Market Intelligence

Ensure that **data is carefully and appropriately collected**, despite decreasing local authority and tourism destination budgets, to allow intelligent investment and resource management

Ensure the **overall progress in tackling the issues of seasonality during the programme is communicated** amongst all businesses operating within the World Heritage Site, to build on the platform of success

Ensure that **support is targeted towards businesses who invest in clear and operational visitor tracking systems**, to enable broad, comparable and authoritative analysis.



New winder/ compressor house at King Edward Mine funded by DtE (Image: Ainsley Cocks)

Further data remains to be captured in the wider and related sectors of creative arts, food and drink and a range of outdoor activities to capture the full value of a thriving heritage sector.

Build on relationships established during the programme to enable all participating businesses and attractions to draw up, and adhere to, standard and shared data collection to expedite later comparison and analysis

## Encouraging sustainable business practices

The first steps taken by the DtE programme have indicated the potential to join up businesses and strategic management agencies to mutual benefit. An overall objective of "Resilient Places" could harness and galvanise even greater joined up activity at micro and macro level to ensure investment is attracted to, and remains in, those destinations



Tourism Business Familiarisation trip, Portreath

There is a clear opportunity to develop mentoring schemes to enable the very best operators in sustainable resource management to share that expertise and encourage those who need support from their peers to move forwards with confidence. There are several clear contenders for such a role within the CMAMA grouping who could support the wider group onto a new footing, with support from officers and related organisations.

Clear success and emerging enthusiasm for green activities will be built on to build a simple means of capturing the impact of such activities, particularly if they are not being implemented as part of a formal scheme which would have its own data collection tools available for use.



# 04

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## What our partners say

**“ WE’LL DONE TO EVERYONE FOR GETTING THIS KIND OF HIGH PROFILE EXPOSURE...MANY, MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE ON THE TEAMS WHO WORK SO HARD TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF SOUTH EAST CORNWALL.**

Heritage Champion Business



**“ WE HAVE NOT DONE MUCH SPECIFIC HERITAGE MARKETING OURSELVES EITHER SO [OUR 15% INCREASE] MUST BE AS A RESULT OF THE ACTIVITY RELATED TO WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND OTHERS PUSHING... WE KNOW OF NUMEROUS [MENTIONS IN ] ARTICLES IN SOME OF THE GLOSSIES OVER THE LAST 12-18 MONTHS, FOR EXAMPLE.**

Heritage Champion Business



**“ OUR TOUR GUIDE ACTIVITY IS UP BY OVER 100%... ”**  
Heritage Champion Business

**“ I KNEW THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE EXISTED, BUT I WASN'T SURE WHAT IT MEANT, OR HOW IT CONNECTED WITH US LOCALS...NOW I UNDERSTAND IT'S ACTUALLY ABOUT FOOD AND LAND AND CULTURAL HERITAGE - AND HOW EVERYTHING IS UNEXPECTEDLY AND NECESSARILY CONNECTED! ”**  
Heritage Champion Business and Resident







Tourism familiarisation day, Morwellham Quay  
(Image: Deborah Boden)

“ BRILLIANT CONVERSATION WITH SOME GUESTS LAST NIGHT IN THE POLRAEN HOTEL BAR! HE'S FROM WALSALL, BUT STUDIED AT THE CAMBORNE SCHOOL OF MINES AND SPENT 3 YEARS IN THE KINROSS DIAMOND MINES (S. AFRICA) BEFORE RETURNING TO THE UK. THEY WERE AMAZED AT MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE CORNWALL MINING INDUSTRY AND MY ENTHUSIASM, THANKS TO THE CHAMPION'S DAY AT WHEAL MARTYN LAST WEEK. FELT REALLY GOOD AND CONFIDENT TALKING ABOUT IT ALL. THANK YOU!

Heritage Champion Business



“ THIS HAS GIVEN ME A REAL UNDERSTANDING OF HOW OUR HERITAGE HAS DEVELOPED, AND WHY. I WOULD BE VERY INTERESTED IN ANY FURTHER SESSIONS IF THEY BECOME AVAILABLE AND OF COURSE ANY EMAILS, ETC. THANKS FOR A GREAT DAY!

Heritage Champion  
Business and resident











## MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For the latest press release, further imagery, interviews or additional information, please contact:

Daniele Cole  
Account Manager, Excess Energy Communications

[Daniele@excess-energy.co.uk](mailto:Daniele@excess-energy.co.uk)  
01637 852130/07807994746

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Cornish Mining World Heritage Site  
Cornwall Council  
Economic Development  
4th Floor (West Wing)  
County Hall  
Truro  
Cornwall  
TR1 3AY

[www.cornishmining.org.uk](http://www.cornishmining.org.uk)

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