

Authentic and Meaningful Participation in Heritage or Related Activities



AMPHORA

for
Mental Health
and
Wellbeing



Guidance for Potential Participants

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Introduction

Taking part in heritage projects, like archaeology, has become a really popular way to improve mental health and wellbeing and they really can help people. But there can be times when projects might not have the right set up to make sure that the participants and the historic remains are well looked after.

Through a Delphi consultation we brought together 44 people including those with lived experience of mental health issues along with heritage and mental health professionals. Through their expertise, we built a set of best practice guidelines to help make sure that people are safe and looked after when they take part and that we look after the things and places that mean something to us.

The guidelines have three sections; project preparation, project delivery, and project follow-up. In each section are a number of detailed items.

Project preparation

Project aims and anticipated benefits
Group composition
Initial contact and joining a project

Project delivery

Working in partnership
Safeguarding responsibilities
Project delivery to enable participation
Staff expertise and training
Model of delivery

Project follow-up

Expectation for evaluation
Post-project support

Important Definitions

Throughout the toolkit we use the terms **heritage project** and **mental health issues**.

By **heritage project**, we mean a project set up as an intervention to offer active, hands on, participation to support mental health and wellbeing.

By **mental health issues**, we mean symptoms and feelings that impact on every day life and relate to, for instance, anxiety, depression and PTSD. They are different from wellbeing.

We have produced three toolkits to share the guidelines with:



project providers to help set up and deliver projects



social prescribers to help identify projects that run to best practice



potential participants to learn about the projects and support available

While these guidelines have been developed for heritage projects that support people with mental health issues, other types of projects with other types of participants in mind could benefit from them.

The Team



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Take part in our survey



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PROJECT PREPARATION: 1. Aims and Benefits

Why should I get involved with an AMPHORA project? AMPHORA projects aim to improve your wellbeing and improve heritage by:

Teaching you new things, developing your skills, and encouraging you to find out more about heritage. Getting involved might also help you to develop skills that are useful beyond heritage-based activities.

Getting you involved in real heritage work, which is interesting but also meaningful and in which you have a genuine contribution.

Creating a sense of community around heritage that you can be part of.

Giving you a place to share your views and thoughts where they are valued and respected.

Creating a safe environment where you can feel comfortable.

Working as part of a team.



Your involvement, stories and experiences are important and bring new dimensions to projects.

PROJECT PREPARATION: 2. Group Composition

What types of people will be with me on this project? This can vary depending on what the aims and objectives for the heritage project are. However, organisations must ensure that:

You are clearly told who will be involved in the project.



That there are enough trained staff to be able to support you when participating in the project.

PROJECT PREPARATION: 3. Initial Contact and Joining a Project.

How can I be confident about joining a project? You should expect projects to:

Provide you with information:

Make sure that signing up is clear and straightforward for you.

Give you an information pack with details of the project and what it will involve.

Work with you:

Work together to create a wellbeing plan.

Make sure you have access to support in case you need it.

Speak to you and find out what you might need, what your goals are and what might be difficult for you before the project starts.

Let a family member or trusted contact come with you to the first session.

Projects may also offer taster sessions or open days to help you find out more about the heritage site/ activity and to see if the project is for you.



PROJECT DELIVERY: 4. Working in Partnership

Why do I need to know that AMPHORA projects should work in partnership with other services? It's important that AMPHORA projects work in partnership so that they can ensure that:

You have enough support from professionals.

Your experiences are important to the project.

Working with other people and organisations can provide more support and opportunities.



You might be able to find out about AMPHORA projects through:

- Health care networks.
- Charity and community groups.
- Social prescribing.
- Online media.
- Word of mouth.
- Personal testimonials.
- Local press.
- Leaflets.
- Events and fairs.



PROJECT DELIVERY: 5. Safeguarding Responsibilities

How do I know that I will be safe on projects? AMPHORA projects must make sure that:

There are **policies and procedures** in place to keep you safe, and look after the heritage site and/ or objects.

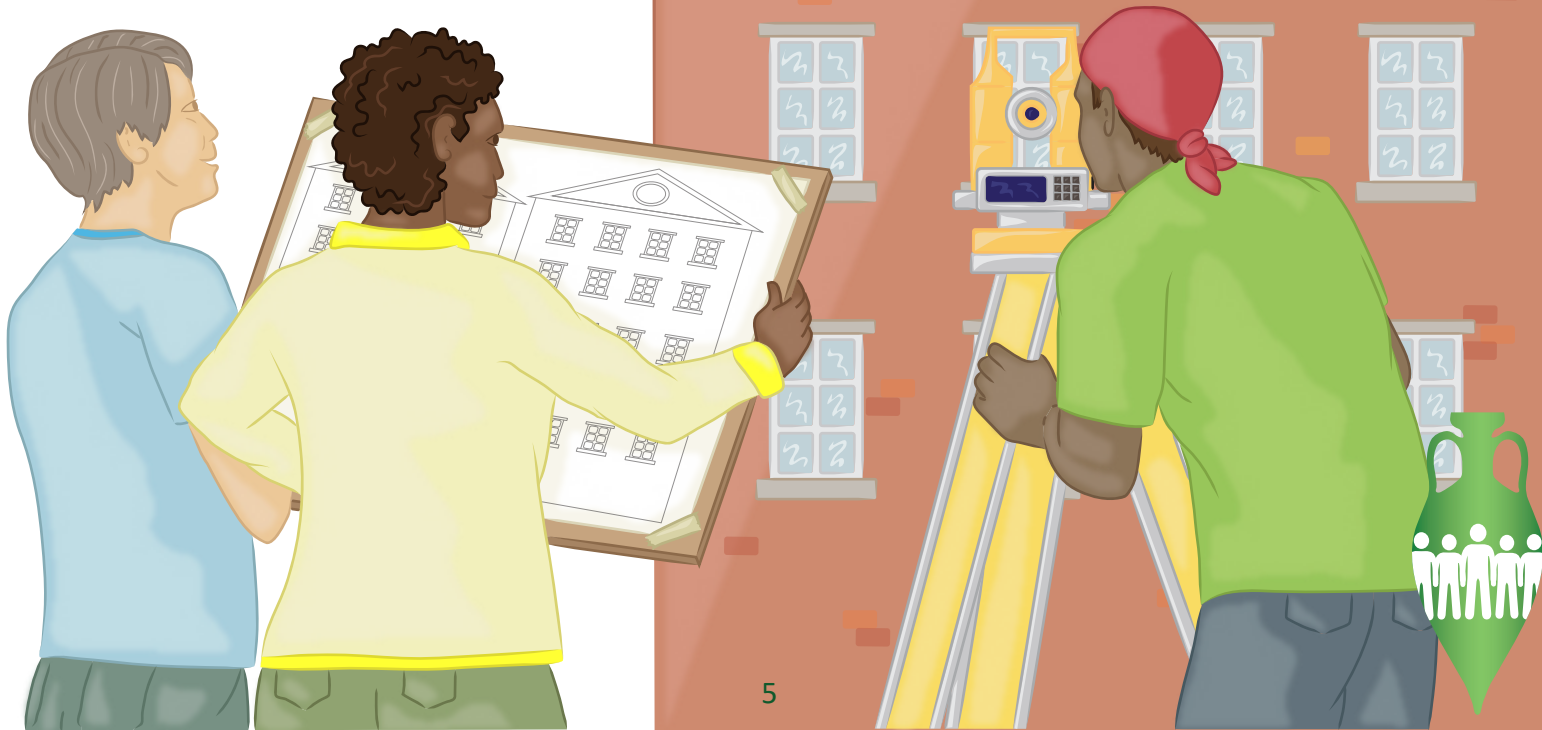
If you need any **training** for an activity, that it is provided.

There are **plenty of staff** and they are **prepared and trained** before any activity on the project.

Support is available to you if you need it.

You have the chance to speak about both **good and bad aspects** of a project.

There is **appropriate health and safety equipment** provided.



PROJECT DELIVERY: 6. Enabling Participation

How will I be supported throughout my time on the project? You should expect to be supported, and there are a number of ways AMPHORA projects could do this.

To ensure everyone is safe and supported on the project you will have to sign a **code of conduct**.

Projects may provide support including:

Arranging shared mealtimes or breaks to **encourage chatting and getting to know people**.

Providing **food, transport and/or accommodation** if the activity is taking place away from home.

Allowing **flexibility for you** if you have family or work commitments.

Projects should also support your involvement by ensuring:

That you **benefit from the activities**.

Reports of inappropriate or discriminating behaviour are recorded and investigated.

For **residential projects** a responsible person should **be always available** to provide immediate assistance or support if you need it.

“Safe spaces” are available for you if you need them.

There is **flexibility** if you are unwell and cannot participate.



A range of activities that are interesting and at varying levels is provided for you.

Your **wellbeing** is monitored throughout your involvement.

Carers that you would like to accompany you are allowed to be involved.

It's important that you know that Projects have a duty to help a person seek appropriate support or report the information to relevant authorities, if **someone discloses a risk of harm to themselves or others**.



PROJECT DELIVERY: 7. Staff Expertise and Training

What expertise and training can I expect teams offering AMPHORA projects to have? It is essential that projects:



Have at least one **mental health first aider** on site, with more for larger groups.

Ensure that training is provided by a **trained instructor** or a reputable provider.

Offer **Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults** training to some of its staff/volunteers that are supporting the project.

Offer **Equality and Diversity** training to any of its staff/volunteers that are supporting the project.

Offer **Mental Health Awareness** training to any of its staff/volunteers that are supporting the project.

Offer **Mental Health First Aid** training to some of its staff/volunteers that are supporting the project.



Offer **General Data Protection Regulation** training to any of its staff/volunteers that are supporting the project and have no prior GDPR knowledge.

PROJECT DELIVERY: 8. Model of Delivery

What sort of activities will I take part in? The activities offered will depend on the expertise of project providers. But is essential that all projects:

Have some structure to their delivery based on its **objectives** and on the capabilities of **those organising it**.



Allow flexibility to accommodate **emerging interests** and **individual needs**.



PROJECT FOLLOW UP: 9. Expectations for Evaluation

What is evaluation and why is it done?

It is **essential** to evaluate AMPHORA projects that are delivering activities to find out what went well and what could have been improved on. Organisations should **measure wellbeing** by a method that is **agreed with you**.



Evaluation of an AMPHORA project could include:

Feedback from staff/
volunteers.

Audience surveys.

Organisation data.

Feedback from participants.

A previously agreed upon,
validated psychological
measurement to assess
wellbeing.



PROJECT FOLLOW UP: 10. Post Project Support

Will I be supported after the project ends? It is essential that you are supported at the end of a project. They should do this by:

Signposting further support for you if you need it.

Inform you if there are any possibilities to take part in **future projects**.

Encourage post project **contact with other people who were part of the project**.

Offer some post project contact with you to **check on your wellbeing**.

Encourage you to find new roles or opportunities within heritage if you are interested in further involvement.



Heritage organisations may also provide you with guidance on career goals and progression.



With thanks to our Delphi stakeholder panel, including the following who waived their anonymity after the process concluded:

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