

Is Our Heritage Marketable?

**Posterity cannot endure if nobody
cares.**

Leadership in Action Report
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UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

The
St. Andrew
the Less

Community
Project



Acknowledgments

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What is the St Andrew the Less Community Project?

St Andrew the Less is a 13th century church built by the Augustinian Canons of Barnwell Priory for the laypeople and labourers that lived in the area. It survived the Dissolution of the Monasteries because it functioned as a vital parish church for the public. Because it served a crucial civic role for the community, it was deemed relevant enough by the Crown officials to prevent the church's structure and assets from being repurposed in the construction of Cambridge's colleges. This makes St Andrew the Less the only church in Barnwell Priory to survive the Reformation intact. However, in recent years St Andrew the Less has come to lie abandoned behind bushes and locked away in one the most deprived areas of the Cambridge that is desperately in need for community spaces.



St Andrew the Less Community Project is the charity set up to restore the church, repurpose it for modern needs, and ensure it is preserved for generations to come.

Project Outline

Over six weeks I produced eight outputs that combine to form the Fundraising, Donations and Individual Giving Proposal for St Andrew the Less. This mainly involved identifying potential donor markets, researching angles that make StAtL appealing to these donors and creating physical and social media resources to communicate StAtL's newfound relevance to the modern community of Barnwell Priory, now known as Abbey Ward.

Week 0 - Setting SMART goals and Identifying the SDG

1. To improve my public speaking and networking abilities by interviewing leaders in fundraising spaces and assisting in 'Heritage Talks' at the local primary.
2. To understand the massive economic inequality of the Abbey Ward by engaging directly with the local community.
3. To manage my expectations and avoid aiming for perfection in any task. This will be achieved by deliberately limiting how much time spend on individual outputs.
4. To answer if St Andrew the Less' heritage is marketable and if its possible for a heritage site to survive if you cant communicate its appeal.

SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities: StAtL's overall missions it to restore a centuries old building on the Heritage at Risk register, which works towards preventing the erasure of the Abbey Ward's working class history while providing much needed third spaces.

Week 1 & 2- Outputs 1, 2 + Gilfried School Heritage Talk

Outside of London, Cambridge has the highest concentration of millionaires per capita in the UK— a stat that needs to be utilised for the benefit of the greater community, especially when you consider that Cambridge also has the worst disparity between richest and poorest neighbourhoods. This is why these my project's outputs were focused on identifying the motivations behind high-new-worth (HNW) individuals to support charities, tracking their giving patterns and broadly categorising them. In doing so, we can personalise the selling point of St Andrew the Less to that specific sector, making it far more appealing for investment. I found the best place to start was interviewing my supervisor and the rest of the StAtL trustees to find out what made them want to donate their time, effort, and resources to save this deconsecrated church to begin with.

The only time I felt nervous during this entire project was during week 2, when I prepared to give a brief talk on why knowing your heritage is important. I did this by sharing the history of Hastings that I was told throughout primary and secondary school. Where I live in Hastings is also a deprived area somewhat similar to Cambridge's Abbey Ward; it is historically dependent on tourist attractions such as the 1066 Battle of Hastings and the Bayeux Tapestry to fund

infrastructure repairs, as well as conservation projects like the restoration of Hastings' Pier after it was burnt down.

Giving the talk taught me two critical lessons. First, it made me feel more comfortable with the adrenaline and nerves I will always feel when speaking in a group or in an unfamiliar situation. The experience has encouraged me to be



resilient and to not give into temporary nerves or awkwardness if my aim is to improve my communication skills. Second, after the speech I learned that the Battle of Hastings never occurred in Battle or even Hastings. I researched how the founders of the '1066' tourism brand marketed the historical fact that William the Conqueror marched and based his army in Hastings, and successfully turned that narrative into a £901 million revenue stream that supported the reversal of Hastings's severe post-industrial collapse. The founders leaned into the drama, mythos and visuals of the Bayeux Tapestry to do this, and they utilised the historic misnomer of the battle being called Battle of Hastings. I began applying these methods to research some (historically accurate) ideas that St Andrew the Less Community Project could communicate its own appeal on a smaller scale.

StAtL : Inside

Week 3 - Output 3 & 6

During the first few weeks of my placement, I worked on the project at Neubau, an architectural consultancy directed by StAtL trustee Brigitta Lenz-Giarlis. Working here gave me immediate insight into the physical and social vision the trustees had for St Andrew the Less. For example, transforming the church's overgrown yard into a biodiverse wildlife sanctuary and mental health garden, alongside the start of a Heritage Trail project in collaboration with the Anglia Ruskin University. This

collaboration is specifically designed for the young people facing social and economic disadvantages. By establishing this partnership early, the goal is to prove establish St Andrew the Less as an active charity making a well-documented tangible impact on the community, an absolute imperative for securing investments later on.

I was given the opportunity to sit in on planning meetings to observe how the project navigates local governance and permissions. This included reviewing the strategic integration of nature trails and listening the StAtL team's consultation process. Witnessing this allowed me to understand how glasswork conservation is aligned with municipal frameworks, showcased by the Mayor of Cambridge, Maria Cleminson, who also serves as a trustee for the project.

As this week progressed, the project shifted towards me requiring to pitch my own creative input during weekly meetings with my supervisor. This initially triggered a lot of apprehension for me because I was operating on the false assumption that any contribution I gave had to be flawless, so my primary goal became avoiding inconveniencing the team rather than contributing best I could, so I initially remained silent.

However, I reached a turning point that same week when I watched my supervisor's ideas get turned down by other trustees. Nothing happened, she just changed came up with something else. Seeing her continue like nothing happened made me question my own thought process regarding the perfection I required of myself before allowing myself to participate. I reached a point where I felt comfortable with the possibility of giving a 'bad idea'. Letting go of the perfectionism trap fostered open communication between my supervisor and I ultimately allowing us to deliver the best project results.

Week 4 - Output 7

For the remaining weeks of my placement, I transitioned to working at the Cambridge Museum of Technology. This shift is where I discovered so many hidden gems of Cambridge, including the historic Engineer's House. I quickly found that CMoT, much like StAtL, is fundamentally a Heritage at Risk charity combatting structural dereliction. Pushing myself to ask questions without extra thought, led to me discovering that the site was originally used as a vital Victorian sewage pumping station powered by steam engineers to clear the sewage in the River Cam. The machinery required constant maintenance, so a house was built for the engineer to live nearby. The station ran



Engineer's House: Inside

successfully until 1968, when it finally shut down due to invention of cleaner, modern pumps. The engineer left the site and the structures began to wear away until a group of people saw the potential of both areas and found a way to convey the opportunities it could bring to the surrounding communities, which is where I ended up spending a lot of my placement.

Week 5 & 6 - Outputs 1, 2, 3 & 8

Nearing the end, I worked at Dan and Joel's engineering consultancy, which operated out of a historical and confusing building. Many thanks to them for setting up a workspace for me to use their large monitors, where I was able to easily clip and compile together promotional reels for StAtL.

In my last meeting with my supervisor, we explored strategic partnerships with established local organisations to boost public knowledge and increase brand awareness of the StAtL project. Specifically, we focused on leveraging the two major historical connections to evaluate the visibility of the St Andrew the Less and 'Abbey' name within the wider community:

- **Cambridge United FC Partnership:** We explored a potential collaboration with CUFC, capitalising on the historic fact that the club was originally founded as Abbey United in 1912 by the choirboys of the Barnwell Abbey district. By re-linking the modern club's identity back to its grassroots heritage, we can engage a massive, passionate local sporting demographic.
- **The Abbey Beer and Ale initiative:** We investigated the marketing potential of Barnwell Ale, and explored how we could leverage this local product to build public awareness. By organising its distribution into local bars and regional breweries, in the future, we can organically embed the historic Abbey/Barnwell/StAtL name back into everyday community and social spaces.

Conclusion

Volunteering with the St Andrew the Less Community Project has led to some invaluable experiences that have greatly accelerated my personal growth. This Leadership in Action project forced me to step outside my comfort zone, significantly improving my communication skills and driving me to put myself forward for opportunities I would never have considered prior to this summer. Cultivating this new leadership mindset has entirely reshaped my long-term career goals. It has inspired me to pursue a profession that remains firmly grounded in STEM, but heavily utilises creative communication, strategic branding, and stakeholder management that drives tangible community impact. Moving forward, I am staying on with the project to continue providing social media resources and digital assets, ensuring I can support the long-term growth of StAtL.



St Andrew the Less Before