

Historic Environment Forum

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Heritage 2020

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I Introduction

- 1.1 The Heritage 2020 Framework sets out priorities for collaborative action, where this will add value to the work of individual organisations, across the historic environment sector in England.
- 1.2 This paper summarises the progress of the five working groups, feedback from the recent Heritage 2020 consultation and next steps for the initiative.

2 Progress of working groups

- 2.1 Since the last HEF meeting, the five Heritage 2020 working groups have met to develop their areas of priority action (appendix A).
- 2.2 The priorities are outlined in the [briefing document](#) circulated at Heritage Day and available on the working group page of the Heritage 2020 website.
- 2.3 The priorities formed the basis of the consultation exercise that took place between 25 November and 20 December 2016. The consultation focussed on raising awareness of Heritage 2020 amongst the wider Historic Environment Sector and encouraging contributions to the working group priority areas.
- 2.4 Regular updates on the activities of the working groups are now available on the individual group pages of the Heritage 2020 website:
<http://www.heritage2020.net/working-groups/>
- 2.5 The Heritage 2020 HEF subcommittee meeting of 20 January 2017 agreed that current detailed action plans should be used as working documents by each group and that the project support officer should produce an overview that draws together high-level information for external purposes.
- 2.6 The subcommittee and working groups have discussed success measures and these are being incorporated into action plans and the approach towards Heritage 2020 communications.

3 Heritage 2020 Consultation

- 3.1 The Heritage 2020 consultation is an annual opportunity to communicate Heritage 2020 progress, invite contributions from the wider historic environment sector, gauge support for current priorities and inform future direction. The December 2016 consultation generated an encouraging level of response. The range of respondents indicates that the consultation reached new audiences beyond those that engaged with the original Heritage 2020 Framework consultation.
- 3.2 A draft summary of recurrent themes in the responses is included in this paper as appendix B.
- 3.3 At its meeting of 20 January 2017 the Heritage 2020 HEF subcommittee agreed that the draft summary should be enhanced by the addition of unattributed quotes from the full responses. The updated summary will be publicly available and will include an introduction and next steps from Mike Heyworth as Chair of the Heritage 2020 HEF subcommittee. It will acknowledge and address the need for improved communication about Heritage 2020.
- 3.4 The full responses will be fed back to the working groups for use at their February/March meetings.
- 3.5 The project officer will review responses to identify overlaps between working groups.

4 Next steps

- 4.1 The Heritage 2020 Foresight day will take place on 8 February 2017. The day focuses on Diversity as an issue that cuts across the historic environment sector and the five Heritage 2020 working groups. All members of HEF and the Heritage 2020 working groups have been invited.
- 4.2 The Heritage 2020 working groups will meet in February/March 2017 to continue delivery against the priority areas and to incorporate feedback from the consultation.

Appendix A: Working group *current* action areas, January 2017

Discovery, Identification and Understanding

Priority: Strengthening the relationship between the higher education and academic sectors.

Action: Drawing together sector knowledge and of hot and cold spots for research to demonstrate strength of existing relationships and where there is a need to enhance relationships.

Constructive Conservation and Sustainable Management

Priority: Transfer and disposal of publicly owned heritage assets

Action: Sector advice and guidance

- mapping sector activity to theory of change stages to reveal areas that are covered and those that are weak;
- using resources of the group to fill gaps.

Priority: Heritage-led response to changing face of High Streets

Action: Reviewing resources identified by the group to identify the contribution that Heritage 2020 can make to existing and recent activity.

Public Engagement

Priority: Inclusion – promote people’s entitlement to connect with the Historic Environment.

Action: Agree what diversity means to the sector and where the opportunities for partnership between heritage organisations and others lie.

Capacity Building

Priority: An integrated approach to the education, training and continuing development of heritage professionals.

Action: Work together to deliver an event focussing on Apprenticeships Reform – opportunities and challenges

Priority: Address the need for a sustainable model for Local Authority conservation and archaeology services.

Action: Work together to identify core Local Authority service provision.

Helping Things to Happen

Priority: Better understand and reinforce the evidence base demonstrating the social and economic value of heritage to society so that it can be powerfully communicated to Government.

Action: Carrying out a literature review of existing evidence and working to communicate this more powerfully to achieve a long-term shift to a positive vision for the contribution that heritage makes to Britain.

Appendix B: Draft summary of Heritage 2020 consultation responses (not for further circulation – public version under preparation)

I Overview

Total respondents: 55

Participation from individuals at the following organisations: Arboretum Archaeological Consultancy, ArchHeritage, Association for Heritage Interpretation, Bewnans Kernow: the Partnership of Cornish Cultural Organisations, Big Heritage, Bristol City Council, Cambridge Past, Present & Future (Cambridge PPF), Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA), Cheltenham Borough Council, CLA, Council for British Archaeology (CBA), English Heritage, Essex Society for Archaeology and History, Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC), Historic England, Historic Houses Association (HHA), Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC), Lanpro Archaeology and Heritage, Maintain our Heritage, Manav Rachna International University in India (MRIU), MB Fountain Historic Museum Ship, National Historic Ships UK, Nenthead Mines Conservation Society, Newcastle University, Nexus Heritage, Rathmell Archaeology Ltd, Rescue – the British Archaeological Trust, Robinson Wild Consulting, South West Heritage Trust, Solstice Heritage, Storyhouse, The Battlefields Trust, Wrigleys.

As well as a freelance archaeologist, an independent conservator and consultant, a local heritage website owner, and anonymous individuals.

2 Discovery, Identification and Understanding:

The large majority of respondents (94%) identified as working for the historic environment sector rather than the academic sector (6%).

Regarding areas lacking in research, six key topics emerged:

- Evidence demonstrating the value and benefits of heritage to society, from social, economic, environmental perspectives. This was the most highly requested research topic.
- Better access to existing research and data. Respondents asked for research into means of communicating research that has already been done, and of facilitating access to cross-sector research and resources. The need for the heritage and/or historic environment sectors to make better use of the data currently available to them and connect with producers of relevant information was highlighted multiple times.
- Evaluation of current methods and their impact, in particular regarding interpretation, community engagement and the use of volunteers.
- Issues regarding conservation and sustainability of historic buildings
- Skill shortages and heritage training needs
- Regional rather than national or site-specific research

Respondents from the academic/higher education sector called for more reflexive research, highlighting the need to consciously connect academe with practice and to better deliver intended outcomes.

3 Constructive Conservation and Sustainable Management:

Heritage on the High Streets:

This section generated only 11 responses. Examples of the conversion and reuse of historic building are cited, though not in much detail; respondents deemed them successful where they managed to “enhance the character” of the townscape or

environment and draw in retail customers. Successful examples are highlighted as taking into account market reality, and being aware that change can be positive. One individual suggested looking to international examples such as Asia's "living historic cities" as models.

Several respondents condemned the trend of "redevelopment behind frontages" as failing to achieve any real heritage conservation. Temporary uses of spaces (e.g. pop-ups, meanwhile uses) were cited as alternative methods of reconciling traditional identities of the high street with forces for change.

Transfer of publicly-owned heritage assets:

Half the respondents claimed to be aware of some or much advice and guidance available – often citing their own organisation's published policy and guidance – while the other half complained of a lack of available guidance or awareness of it.

The following bodies are cited as providing guidance and advice: IHBC, ACV, AHF, Historic England, Bristol City Council, HELM, "Pub is the hub"'s Plunkett Foundation, HTN (for members only), PRT, as well as some local authorities (unspecified).

The following advice and resources are cited as already available:

- Measures and indicators on heritage and planning outcome quality
- Framework of statutory, regulatory and related considerations
- Guidance on community-led development
- Guidance for Local Planning Authorities
- Contextual or case-specific information

Respondents felt advice or support is needed to address the following:

- Guidance, training and access to specialist and project skills, in particular:
 - Conservation (for condition assessment, etc.)
 - Project/asset management and business planning (esp. for community groups)
- Advice for long-term planning and sustainability
- Clearer advice to help local authorities, private developers or community groups identify the help available to them
- Model examples
- Concrete implications of broader heritage policy (e.g. listed status)
- Advice on meanwhile uses

4 Capacity Building:

Local Authority Core Services:

Respondents identified the following priorities in core services that Local Authorities should provide with regards to the historic environment:

- Maintenance of and access to Historic Environment Records
- Planning advice and guidance on planning legislation
- Provision of specialist staff and heritage expertise, in particular Conservation Officers and archaeologists
- Community outreach, education and interpretation of the historic environment, to promote broader public benefit through local engagement.

Apprenticeship models and volunteers:

The new Apprenticeship models were welcomed by most respondents as addressing the issues of diversified access and succession in the workforce as well as capacity building, and seen as an opportunity to provide skills not covered in universities.

Nevertheless, the following concerns were raised:

- The need for Apprenticeship schemes to be promoted and encouraged by the sector as a serious alternative to higher education
- The need to include them in longer-term considerations, by designing them into larger projects or “indenture” systems
- The need for a clear path for career progression within and beyond the schemes.

Approximately a quarter of respondents were unfamiliar with new apprenticeship models in the historic environment sector.

Regarding other means of increasing the capacity for the protection of the historic environment, the following points emerged:

- Volunteers implemented as a substitute to core Local Authority services was a major concern for most respondents. Better partnerships with the voluntary sector, however, were encouraged, as were investing in and training volunteers to add value to existing professional capacity.
- Encouraging stakeholders to be better advocates of the historic environment, and “appealing to those with financial reserves”, was suggested as a means of protecting existing capacity.

5 Public Engagement:

Consultation respondents identified the following key challenges for improving diversity in public engagement with the historic environment in England:

- A focus on “national” heritage and tourism assets to the detriment of local heritages and local communities as audiences. One respondent suggested looking at issues of belonging and identity, and not just attendance, when measuring participation amongst under-represented social groups.
- Lack of funding and/or staff for outreach programmes; public engagement considered low-priority when even core services lack funding.
- Lack of diversity in the voices and perspectives presented, often white and middle-class, stemming from a lack of diversity in professional bodies.
- Heritage jargon as a barrier to engagement

The consultation also identified the following opportunities:

- Increasing access and diversity within the professional workforce (currently being addressed, for instance, by Apprenticeships)
- A renewed focus on community leadership and greater public involvement in the planning and management process
- Diversifying modes of engagement to make heritage appear more socially relevant
- An increased focus on local heritage, promoting heritage as “story-telling” and inherent to place-making

Respondents then suggested practical actions a heritage body with limited resources might take as a first step to increasing diversity, in answer to these opportunities and challenges.

6 Helping Things to Happen:

Respondents hoped for support from Heritage 2020 in the following, when talking to politicians about the value of heritage:

- First and foremost, evidence of the tangible benefits of heritage (social, economic, in supporting development and innovation, etc.) in the form of facts, figures, memorable statistics and case studies.
- Acting as a representative for the heritage sector, with a shared list of principles and statements, as well as a platform to share knowledge and best practice.
- Acting as a facilitator in the dialogue with politicians, organising events and setting broad sector goals against the political agenda

A series of examples were given – unfortunately with little to no details – of specific redevelopment and/or community engagement projects where the historic environment enhanced people’s sense of wellbeing and identity through reinforcing local identities and appreciation of local areas, work with marginalised groups (e.g. prison service, dementia groups, etc.), or providing skills development and training programmes to the public.

Regarding the promotion of economic success, respondents cited employment opportunities, purchase and use of local produce, generation of local income via visitor spend, income from venue rental and opportunities for investment as the main economic benefits of heritage in their area. Nevertheless, over half of the respondents were unable to provide examples of such economic successes.

7 Additional Comments:

A series of additional comments and suggestions were provided at the end of the consultation. Recurring concerns mention funding, disappearing skills and roles, tackling issues at the strategic level and better strategic use of heritage assets as priorities. There are also several requests for better or further communication from the part of Heritage 2020.

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