



Historic England

Consultation on Historic England's Local Authority Strategic Framework



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1. Introduction

Historic England is the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), but we also report to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Nationally and locally, we champion and protect England's historic places. Local authorities are essential partners and we work with them in a range of ways; for example:

- We undertake high-level strategic engagement with local authority executive teams and leaders, engage in place-shaping strategy as set out in our [Places Strategy](#) and coordinate [Historic Places Panel](#) visits (see [page 13](#)).
- We provide advice on plan-making and applications for planning permission, listed building consent, scheduled monument consent and Enhanced Advisory Service (EAS) applications as set out in the [Historic England Charter for Advisory Services](#).
- We provide advice on [heritage at risk \(HAR\)](#).
- We manage major grant funding programmes, such as [High Streets Heritage Action Zones](#) (see [page 11](#)) and [Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas \(PSICA\)](#).
- We [provide funding](#) to local authorities to innovate and undertake strategically important research.
- We promote the use of and access to heritage data and information and undertake activities that support and develop [Historic Environment Records \(HERs\)](#).
- We organise training events and publish planning-related advice notes and technical guidance on the protection of heritage assets. Our advice supports place-shaping, recognising how heritage can inspire high quality design, whilst also considering the use and enjoyment of individual heritage assets, as shown in [Heritage: The Foundation for Success](#).
- We provide [advice to owners of historic buildings](#) and work with local authorities to support greater community engagement with the historic environment.



2. Consulting on a new Strategic Framework

This document summarises key elements of Historic England’s Local Authority Strategic Framework (LASF), which aims to guide our engagement with local authorities beyond site-specific casework and taking account of the organisation’s new structure. The framework supports the prioritisation of Historic England limited resources and helps local authorities to understand what we do, why and how.

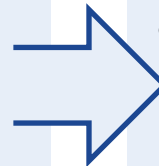
We are therefore asking consultees to consider our proposed approach through this consultation. For example, what activities are most in demand? Is there anything missing? Are there any activities we might not do, or perhaps where others can contribute instead? Please let us have your comments and suggestions, focusing in particular on section 2 of this consultation draft.

Local authorities and other sector-lead bodies are looking for clarity in the support we provide, and we also need to consider how we engage most effectively with new local, often larger authorities and directly elected mayors. There is significant variation in local heritage services and their access to information about the historic environment, and this is only likely to increase as the structure of local government itself continues to evolve.

Inevitably capacity constraints impact on how we engage. Where local authority capacity has reduced, increasing numbers of community organisations are taking on more responsibilities. Changes in local service provision have the potential to impact on Historic England’s work too. Flexibility is essential, giving room for innovation and decision-making at a local level.

The objectives of this framework

- To support local authorities in effective decision-making, place-shaping and management of the local historic environment
- To improve access to heritage data and information
- To build local authority capability and capacity to operate national policy as it relates to heritage
- To promote effective and mutually-supportive working relationships between local authorities, heritage organisations, owners, developers and community organisations



The real world impacts we are looking to achieve

- Local authority leaders are clear about their responsibilities towards heritage and appreciate that heritage can support wider agendas
- Historic England’s staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to local authorities and its resources are targeted effectively to support local authorities in doing their jobs
- The historic environment is at the heart of the planning process and place-shaping
- The public value of Historic England’s investment in local authority engagement increases

Our priority activities

Historic England's engagement with local authorities can be grouped into four themes:

Theme 1: Advice and strategic engagement: Priority Activities

1. Advising on development plan production and master-planning
2. Advising on applications for planning permission, listed building consent, scheduled monument consent and Enhanced Advisory Service (EAS) applications
3. Advising on the threats and risks to heritage (including climate change, neglect and heritage crime) and the management of heritage at risk
4. Working with local authorities, communities, businesses and property owners on the management and design of priority places
5. Engaging with economic development and regeneration specialists within local authorities, [Local Enterprise Partnerships \(LEPs\)](#), Mayoral Combined Authorities and Business Improvement Districts to promote the case for heritage-led regeneration
6. Support local authorities in delivering the conservation and economic reuse of the rural historic environment
7. Creating and implementing a web content strategy to improve the discoverability, organisation and presentation of Historic England website content for its audiences

Theme 2: Access to heritage information and data: Priority Activities

8. Underpinned by the [Heritage Information Access Strategy \(HIAS\)](#), developing a new, accessible Heritage Gateway to replace the existing failing website, ensuring that Historic England generated data are available via the Heritage Gateway and can be shared digitally with HERs
9. Finding solutions to enable less well-resourced HERs to participate in HIAS, including use of the HER Audit Programme to support and develop HERs
10. Continuing to lead on the creation of new standards, terminologies, and tools to support HERs, as well as best practice to support access to and sharing of data, guided by the [FAIR Principles](#) (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable)
11. Providing integrated online delivery of National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and Heritage at Risk information
12. Identifying geographic areas where the age and currency of entries on the NHLE are making the work of local authorities harder, and instituting a programme to review and revise listings in those areas
13. Promoting access to and use of outputs from the [Strategic Stone Study](#), contributing to an improved understanding of the range of building stones in England and the link between building stone and the character of a place



Theme 3: Capability and capacity Priority Activities

14. Working to understand better and respond to changes in local authority historic environment services
15. Ensuring appropriate access by local authorities to specialist scientific and conservation expertise
16. Helping to secure the future of developer funding for archaeological investigation by demonstrating its public value
17. Supporting the [long-term sustainability of archaeological archives](#)
18. Providing training on the NPPF and its application to heritage, informed by research and engagement on local authorities' training needs
19. Implementing further capacity building measures within local authorities to work on heritage at risk
20. Publishing advice on the management of change to heritage assets, in particular through the planning system, and technical guidance on the protection of heritage assets through expert work
21. Funding strategically important research undertaken by local authorities and engage in other research projects that are relevant to local authorities
22. Ensuring that local authorities have access to the necessary range of new generation Research Frameworks to guide effective investment in heritage research
23. Developing the approach to apprenticeships in local authorities promoting new training standards in archaeology, conservation, and in particular historic environment advice

Theme 4: Community engagement Priority Activities

24. Supporting good practices in knowledge exchange and co-creation, involving academics, commercial organisations, local authorities and community groups
25. Engaging as appropriate with professional bodies and networks, discussing relevant issues, preparing case study material and planning joint events, research and/or training opportunities
26. Developing our understanding of the needs of local authorities regarding their ownership of heritage assets and work with local authorities to support greater community engagement with the historic environment, including the management and ownership of historic assets and heritage services and programmes
27. Promoting the use of the NHLE when working with partners on community safety and heritage crime

Outputs

1. Prepare a Prospectus outlining the services that we offer to local authorities
2. An engagement plan for the development of priority places underpinned by heritage strategy and embedded where possible in plan-making
3. A refreshed Charter of Advisory Services
4. A review of strategic threats on heritage at risk and the annually refreshed register of Heritage at Risk
5. An accessible online toolkit to assess the threat and risk of heritage crime
6. A leaflet on place and how heritage contributes positively to it, and what all representatives can do to promote this
7. A revised handbook for Heritage Champions
8. Inclusion of historic environment provision in the new Environmental Land Management Scheme and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
9. Accessible, searchable Historic England website content
10. Integrated online access to the National Heritage List for England and Heritage at Risk Register
11. A new Heritage Gateway
12. An updated OASIS system – see [page 13](#)
13. A plan to enable less well-resourced HERs participate in HIAS
14. Updated NHLE entries in targeted areas
15. A Building Stone Database for England
16. A revised approach to training and knowledge transfer
17. A programme for delivering new standards that can be used by local authorities to inform their approach to work-based training
18. A suite of online accessible and cross searchable Research Frameworks that are embedded into local authority guidance and practice
19. An expanded programme of audits and continuous improvement for HERs
20. A revised grant funding programme that supports more local authorities to undertake work on heritage at risk
21. A sustainable solution for archaeological archives
22. Project proposals to develop Research Frameworks that include representation from across the sector
23. A Communities Development Strategy that clearly articulates how our relationships with local authorities will be strengthened
24. Templates to support local authority community asset transfer informed by a deeper understanding of the cost /benefits of historic assets in community ownership
25. A plan to promote the use of NHLE datasets when working with partners to develop effective community safety plans and strategies

Outcomes

Within the coming three years, we would like this Strategic Framework to deliver the following outcomes:

1. Local authorities are aware of the work that we do and the support that we provide to local authorities
2. The importance of heritage is recognised not only in planning departments but also in facilities and assets management, procurement and more broadly in terms of economic development
3. Local authorities are aware of key sources of heritage information and data from Historic England
4. HERs are developed in line with national guidance and standards and best practice recommendations, and are recognised as the primary source of information about the undesignated historic environment
5. HERs participate in the new Heritage Gateway
6. HER parent organisations adopt the National Security Copy (NSC) Code of Practice and are equipped to ensure the long term security of critical HER datasets
7. Local authority policies, strategies and planning decisions are influenced by Historic England advice so that heritage is integrated into strategic planning, plan-making, place-shaping and strategic investment decisions
8. Local authority officers and members are able to access training and guidance from Historic England that meets their needs in terms of content and method of delivery
9. Local authorities recruit new heritage apprentices or re-train existing officers utilising heritage apprenticeship standards
10. Local authority heritage teams have access to up-to-date and comprehensive Research Frameworks to help inform their decision making, to assess the significance of heritage assets considered in planning decisions and formulate responses and mitigation strategies
11. Local authorities are more confident in using the legislative powers available to them and understand how the different protection systems interrelate
12. A preferred option for sustainable archaeological archives is accepted by DCMS
13. Academic, local authority, commercial and community groups are brought together in work to co-create inclusive Research Frameworks covering all areas of England
14. Local authorities are equipped to understand the heritage assets they own and support communities who want a greater say over how their heritage is managed
15. Designated heritage assets are considered in all that the local authority does in the development of community safety plans and activities

Outcomes

By 2030, we would like this Strategic Framework to deliver the following outcomes:

1. Local authorities have increased awareness and understanding of Historic England's role in relation to their functions and view Historic England as a partner
2. Local authority officers and members feel more confident about championing local distinctiveness and promoting good design
3. Historic England and local authority staff have easy access to the information and evidence they need to advocate for heritage and its relevance to local authority agendas such as social cohesion and competitiveness
4. Decisions and advice on casework are well supported by relevant heritage data and information
5. Historic England is better equipped to target its training and guidance activities effectively in support of local authority decision-making
6. More heritage buildings and sites are well maintained, in use and support local economic activity
7. Local authority historic environment services are fit for purpose, resilient and capable of creating public value through heritage
8. A sustainable solution for archaeological archives is implemented
9. There is improved resilience and strengthened capacity to manage the historic environment within local communities

3. Further information on Historic England's work with local authorities

Historic England's staff have a diverse range of specialisms, knowledge and expertise. A range of roles and teams in our organisation that work directly with local authorities are summarised below. Note this is indicative rather than comprehensive.

Regions

Historic England has six local offices across England, each led by a Regional Director. The regional teams are the main point of contact for local authorities at Historic England and provide advice and support for local authorities in a number of ways:

- Advice on applications for Listed Building Consent and Scheduled Monument Consent
- Advice on planning applications, plan-making and master planning
- Advice on Listing casework
- Advice on neighbourhood plans, conservation area appraisals and management plans, and advice on grants for Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas
- Advice on Heritage at Risk (HAR), including [repair grants to buildings and monuments](#)
- We promote the use of and access to heritage data and information
- We undertake activities to support and develop Historic Environment Records
- Support via our [Enhanced Advisory Services](#) (a charged-for service)
- Undertaking Historic Area Assessments and relevant building research
- Working with local authority and other partners to deliver [Heritage Action Zones](#) and [High Streets Heritage Action Zones](#)
- Advice on other local authority consultations, such as budget consultations, heritage and culture strategies
- Regular liaison with Officers and Members through Conservation Officer Groups, the [Heritage Champion scheme](#) and other forums
- Regular liaison with Chief Executives and Council Leaders
- Coordinating Heritage Counts at regional level
- Providing and supporting training at a local level for local authorities, Heritage Champions and local communities
- Advice on capacity-building projects with local authorities, community organisations and other partners

Policy and Evidence

- National Specialist Services include Technical Conservation, Investigative Science and Archaeological Investigation and engage with local authorities via the regional offices. Our Science Advisers, for example, help to inform discussions on development-led archaeological work, adding value at the pre-application stage and when assessing the impacts of submitted proposals. Our structural engineers give advice on structural stability and repair specification, whilst our architectural conservators advise on the conservation of heritage asset(s). National Specialist Services also include fire prevention advice.
- Our Strategy and Listing department brings together a range of specialisms and skills from a national perspective, such as officers involved in listing and policy casework oversight, others working on national strategy and the preparation of planning advice notes and our leads on national research and heritage crime.
- The Analytics department combines expertise on evaluation (exemplified by work on Heritage Counts) with information analysis, including the work of Heritage Information Partnerships team (responsible for the HER Audit Programme and Heritage Gateway).
- Sector Resilience and Skills (SRS) brings together Communities Development, Training Delivery, Heritage Apprenticeships and Sector Resilience. SRS delivers some services directly to local authorities (such as training opportunities), gathers sector intelligence on local authority capacity and supports capacity building projects (eg. the work done by our Research Resources Adviser on research frameworks).

Public Engagement

Our Public Engagement group inspires and enables our audiences to understand, enjoy and look after the historic environment – to encourage public support for Historic England. The Content, Marketing and Digital teams shape Historic England’s brand, producing content and campaigns which reach right across all channels, including digital and social. The Public Relations and Programmes area includes a media and public affairs team (including regional public engagement managers), and roles linked with strategic events and cultural programmes. The Learning, Volunteering and Inclusion team supports the strategic development of a diverse workforce and programme, building new partnerships across the historic environment sector, and inspires the next generation through the Heritage Schools programme.



Above: Policy and Evidence staff are working to develop a climate change strategy for Historic England and the historic environment.
© Hannah Fluck

Heritage in numbers

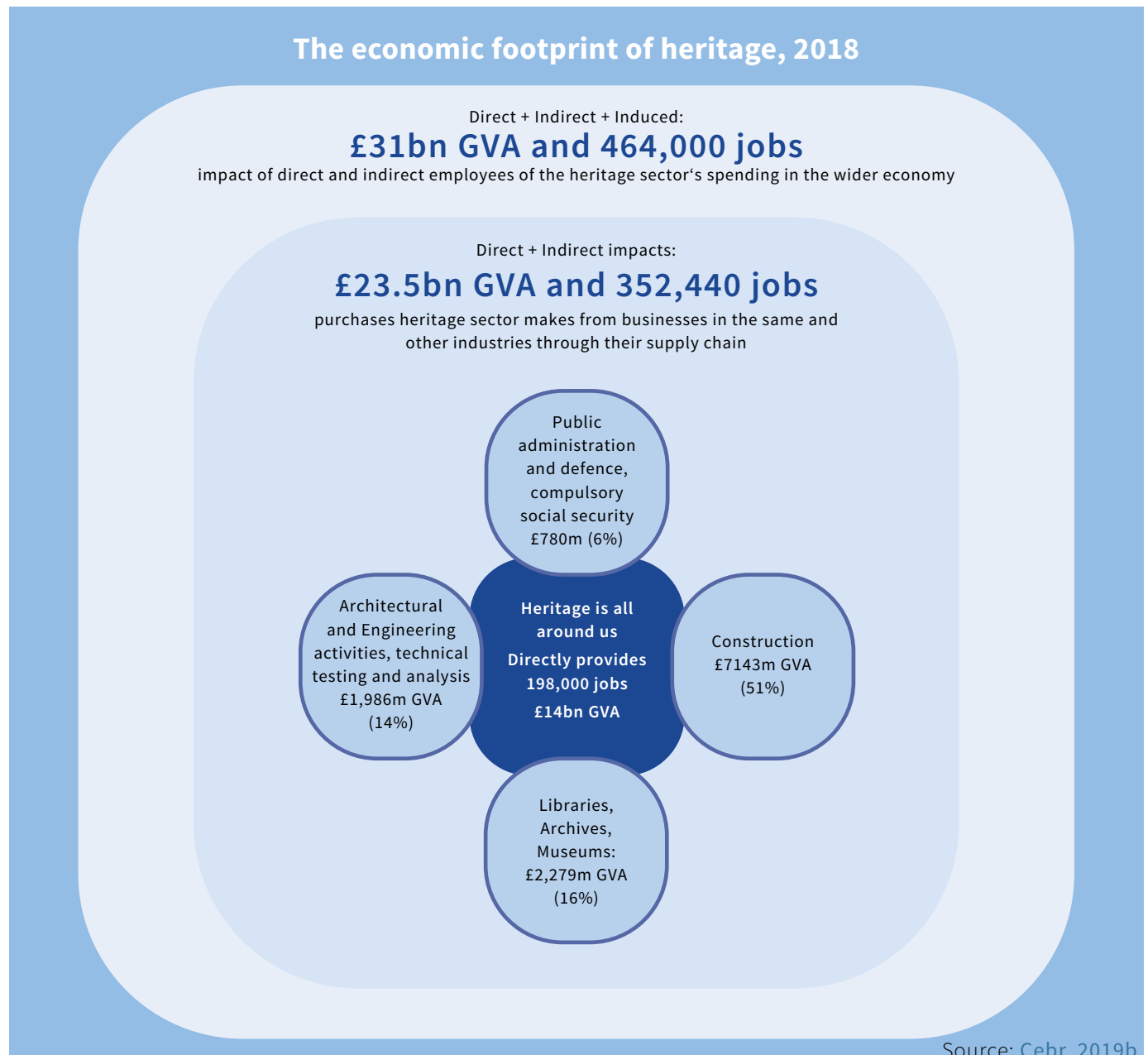
Historic England funds a range of posts within local authorities, such as roles linked with the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) programme, Heritage at Risk officers, World Heritage Site posts and other support officers. In 2019/20 Historic England's grant funding for such roles totalled over £665,000.

In addition Historic England provides funding to sector support bodies, which in 2019 totalled £1.4 million (excluding funding to the Architectural Heritage Fund).

Planning is a significant area for our engagement with local authorities. In 2018 our casework totalled 17,122 cases, dominated by applications for planning permission and listed building consent.

We also support local authorities to undertake strategically important research. The combined research grant aid to local authority applicants over the past three years was: £957k in 16/17, £800k in 17/18 and £777k in 18/19.

Focusing on Heritage at Risk, we provided the following repair grants over the past three years: £11,032,173 in 16/17, £9,918,254 in 17/18 and £8,693,686 in 18/19.

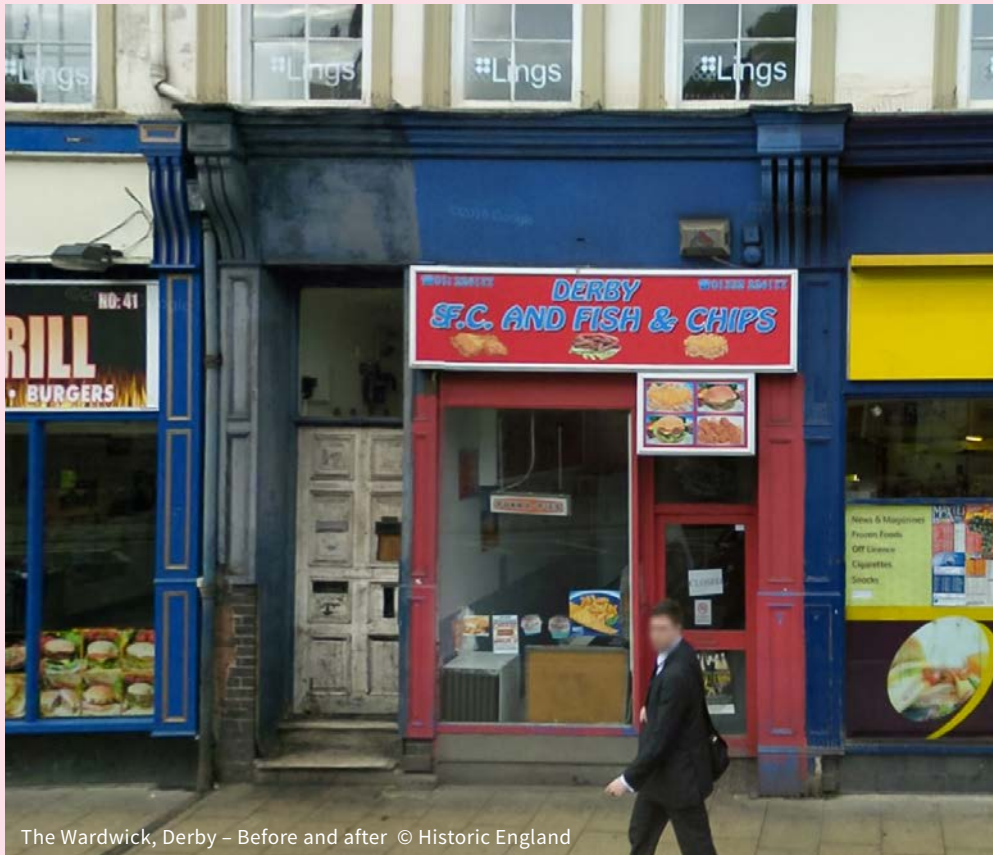


Exemplar programmes and projects

High Streets Heritage Action Zones

High Streets Heritage Action Zones is a four-year, £95m programme of physical improvements, community engagement and cultural activities to revive England's struggling historic high streets and town centres.

Working alongside local partners, Historic England will be delivering positive change; supporting high streets as they adapt to the challenges they face by investing in their local heritage.



The Wardwick, Derby – Before and after © Historic England

Development Advice – Redevelopment of Bristol Old Vic



September 2018 saw the re-opening of the Bristol Old Vic, following completion of the final phase of its multi-million pound redevelopment.

The auditorium of this Grade I listed building dates from 1766, and the latest phase of works was to provide enhanced front of house facilities (café bar, etc.), along with an improved, and more accessible, entrance space.

The proposals reinstated the lost form of the main room of the 1744 Coopers' Hall, with a new studio theatre at ground and basement levels; but unfortunately involved the loss of some of the 1970s work designed by Peter Moro, including his grand entrance stair.

Historic England was involved from an early stage of the proposals, including in an extended period of pre-application discussions with architects Howarth Tompkins.

Although the loss of the Moro work is regrettable, after careful thought we agreed the merits of the new work, and that the enhanced facilities would allow this important theatre to continue to operate successfully.

The redevelopment project has received multiple awards, including RICS Project of the Year 2019, South West, RIBA South West Conservation Award 2019, RIBA South West Building of the Year 2019 and RIBA National Award 2019.

Heritage Champions Cllr Philip Davis, Birmingham City Council



Philip was founder Chair of the UK Local Authorities World Heritage Forum and is now working with lead councillors and partners to promote and protect the city's heritage. This has included the creation of a Heritage Strategy Group within the Council, and the establishment of local ward heritage champions. Philip was awarded an MBE for services to heritage in the New Year Honours List in 2020, having been a Heritage Champion in Birmingham for 8 years. The network of [Heritage Champions](#) across the country supports the protection of the historic environment at a local level.

Historic Places Panel

The Historic Places Panel – previously known as the Urban Panel – provides a broad spectrum of independent expertise to help local authorities and others engage in the regeneration and revitalisation of historic places. The Panel's visits, which typically last for two days, provide strategic recommendations and a legacy of networking that can have formative and lasting

benefits. It is a free service, and provides not only expert advice from a range of national experts but also an excellent opportunity for networking with local partners. If you have an area that you feel would benefit from a visit by the Panel, please contact your local Historic England office who will be able to discuss the possibility of a visit.



The Strategic Stone Study



The Strategic Stone Study is a county by county, nationwide survey to identify the building stones used, map their sources (active, dormant and historic quarries within England) and representative buildings and structures and collate them in one online resource: A Building Stone Database for England.

This resource can be used by minerals planning authorities to inform mineral plans, by Conservation Officers across the country to inform local conservation projects and programmes, and more generally in local authority heritage and planning work, ranging from updating Conservation Area Appraisals to work on local listing.



Top: A thatched cottage near to Woburn village in Bedfordshire, built of local Totternhoe stone which would have been sourced from the quarry 9 miles away. © Historic England

Left: Farmhouse and boundary walls in Aymestrey, Herefordshire, constructed of 'Aymestry Stone' produced from the Aymestrey Great Quarry (which lies behind the hill seen to the rear of the building). © Scenesetters

Right: A close-up view of the herringbone Aymestry limestone from Wigmore Church, Herefordshire. © Scenesetters



The Heritage Information Access Strategy (HIAS)

The Heritage Information Access Strategy (HIAS) programme coordinates a series of interlinked projects designed to improve public access to heritage data held or generated by Historic England, HERs and other bodies.

OASIS (one element of HIAS) is an online data capture system for historic environment fieldwork, investigation and research; it informs HERs and national bodies when work is carried out and facilitates public access to the reports.



The Guide to Historic Environment Records (HERs) in England supports HER host authorities in ensuring they are managing their records in line with best practice and accepted standards, thereby raising quality and consistency across the network of English HERs. © Historic England

The Heritage workspace online network

Heritage Workspace network is Historic England's collaboration space, hosted on the Knowledge Hub platform. It provides projects, committees, learning and training groups, and other communities of practice in the heritage sector with secure online options to share files, hold discussions and work together to share knowledge.

The Knowledge Hub was created by the Local Government Association, and is the UK's largest public service collaboration platform. It's the place where people working across public services go to exchange knowledge, experiences and ideas on how to improve services, and create connections with peers and experts in a secure environment.

Find out more at www.khub.net/historicengland

Training Strategy

There are three main programmes in Historic England's current training strategy: **Essentials**, which develops a foundation level of heritage knowledge and skills; **HELM**, which builds on this foundation level to explore planning policy and heritage in more depth; and **Heritage Practice**, which enhances practical, technical & specialist heritage knowledge and skills. Going forward, Historic England is working to understand as clearly as possible what local authorities need from us in terms of training and guidance, informing a revised approach to training and knowledge transfer.



Delegates at our HELM training events have the opportunity to work together on case studies and to network and share good practice. © Historic England

The Apprenticeship programme



Historic England's first cohort of Historic Environment Advice Assistant Apprentices, September 2019 © Historic England

Historic England has led the Historic Environment Trailblazer which has developed a number of new apprenticeship standards; including those specifically around offering advice on the historic environment. To demonstrate sector leadership in this area we launched our own heritage apprenticeship scheme in September 2019, based on the level 4 Historic Environment Advice Assistant standard; and have worked with a training provider partner, Strode College, to develop a brand new formal training programme to deliver the taught

20% “off the job” learning requirement of the apprenticeship. Thirteen apprentices started this programme; 11 employed by Historic England, but 2 coming from local authority historic environment teams. We are sharing what we have learnt from running this scheme with colleagues in the sector, including with local authorities, to demonstrate how to make best use of these new apprenticeship standards to help develop their own future workforce and provide upskilling and retraining opportunities for existing staff.

Tackling heritage crime

Historic England works closely with police services and local authorities to prevent and investigate crime and anti-social behaviour in the historic environment. A growing number of authorities have integrated Heritage Crime and Heritage Watch within local community safety plans and strategies. Find out more at www.khub.net/historicengland



A multi-agency problem-solving workshop in North Yorkshire © Historic England

Relevant projects, programmes and key Historic England publications include (amongst others):

- A Guide to Historic Environment Records (HERs) in England 2019
- The HER Audit Programme
- HERALD – The Oasis redevelopment project
- The Heritage Action Zones programme
- The Heritage Schools programme
- The High Streets HAZ programme
- The Heritage Champions initiative
- Heritage Counts
- Heritage Crime Preventative Measures
- The Heritage Gateway
- The Heritage Information Access Strategy
- The Heritage at Risk Register
- The Heritage Workspace
- Our advice notes & other guidance, from Pillars of the Community to Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice
- Historic England Charter for Advisory Services
- Historic England Communities Research Plan (2018)
- Historic England’s market research
- Historic England sector resilience plan (2019/20)
- Historic England Inclusion Strategy
- The Historic England Training Strategy 2018-2021
- Historic Environment Record (HER) Annual Survey, from 2019
- Listing Selection Guides and Introductions to Heritage Assets
- The Historic Environment Trailblazer, chaired by Historic England, leading the development of new apprenticeships
- The National Heritage List for England and the listing enquiry service
- Research Frameworks
- The Strategic Stone Study

The relationships and networks that facilitate our engagement include (amongst others):

- Arts Council England
- The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT)
- Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO)
- Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (CIfA)
- The Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA)
- Civic Voice
- Country Land and Business Association (CLA)
- Forum on Information Standards in Heritage (FISH)
- Heritage Alliance
- Heritage and Cultural Property Crime Working Group
- HM Land Registry
- The Historic Environment Forum (HEF) and Regional HEFs
- The Historic Environment Record Forum (HER Forum)
- The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)
- The Joint Committee of National Amenity Societies
- The Local Government Association (LGA)
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- National Trust
- The Planning Officers Society (POS)
- Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
- Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
- The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)
- The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)



Historic England

Contact Historic England

East of England

Brooklands
24 Brooklands Avenue
Cambridge CB2 8BU
Tel: 01223 582749
Email: eastofengland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Fort Cumberland

Fort Cumberland Road
Eastney
Portsmouth PO4 9LD
Tel: 023 9285 6704
Email: fort.cumberland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

London and South East

4th Floor
Cannon Bridge House
25 Dowgate Hill
London EC4R 2YA
Tel: 020 7973 3700
Email: londonseast@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Midlands

The Axis
10 Holliday Street
Birmingham B1 1TG
Tel: 0121 625 6888
Email: midlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North East and Yorkshire

Bessie Surtees House
41-44 Sandhill
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 3JF
Tel: 0191 269 1255
Email: northeast@HistoricEngland.org.uk

37 Tanner Row
York YO1 6WP
Tel: 01904 601948
Email: yorkshire@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North West

3rd Floor, Canada House
3 Chepstow Street
Manchester M1 5FW
Tel: 0161 242 1416
Email: northwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk

South West

29 Queen Square
Bristol BS1 4ND
Tel: 0117 975 1308
Email: southwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Swindon

The Engine House
Fire Fly Avenue
Swindon SN2 2EH
Tel: 01793 445050
Email: swindon@HistoricEngland.org.uk

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