



WSP

ADVISING ON HISTORIC ENGLAND'S FUTURE ENGAGEMENT WITH INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Final Report to Historic England



Folk Dance Remixed, Associated Company at the English Folk Dance and Song Society; photo by Craig Newman



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GLOSSARY

AHRC – Arts and Humanities Research Council

DDCMS – Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – Historic England

HACE - Heritage Agencies Chief Executives (home countries)

HSHAZ - High Streets Heritage Action Zones

ICH – Intangible Cultural Heritage

ICOMOS-UK – International Council on Monuments and Sites: United Kingdom

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

NHCP – National Heritage Crime Programme

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1.1. This Project Report has been prepared by WSP Cultural Heritage & Archaeology Team in accordance with a Project Design (WSP Jan 2020). It has been prepared using MoRPHE guidelines (Historic England 2015).

1.1.2. Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is defined by the 2003 UNESCO convention as:

Intangible cultural heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. ICH is manifested inter alia in the following domains: (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; (b) performing arts; (c) social practices, rituals and festive events; (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; (e) traditional craftsmanship.

1.1.3. ICH is increasingly recognised as a vital element in a variety of heritage contexts, as illustrated in the recent Heritage Alliance report on *Heritage and the Creative Industries*, which covers many domains of ICH, and in its contribution to heritage and cultural tourism, as identified by International Committee on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC) (<http://icomos-ictc.org>).

1.1.4. The purpose of the project is to advise Historic England on how it can engage most appropriately and effectively in the development of thinking and activity related to Intangible cultural heritage (ICH). This will consider the degree to which Historic England could:

- Give greater consideration and weight to ICH when delivering its strategic activities and programmes, as set out in the Historic England Corporate Plan.
- Engage in ICH work as an activity in its own right, rather than occasional engagement as at present.

1.1.5. This report builds upon feedback from the Historic England Executive Committee following review of an interim report (WSP April 2020) and in fulfilling the brief and scope of work as set out in the Project Design (WSP Jan 2020). The analysis and recommendations proposed here, form the basis of the briefing process to the Historic England Advisory Committee. The headline terms of reference for the brief were:

- To identify the **main issues in ICH** that Historic England could engage with;
- To identify areas of ICH of practical relevance to the work and objectives of Historic England;
- To assess the extent to which ICH is **already taken into account** in Historic England's current work, and the **implications for more active engagement with ICH**, with particular regard to:
 - Conservation
 - Planning and Places Strategy
 - Scheduling and Listing
 - Engagement
- To consider different potential levels of engagement with ICH;

- To consider the **risks** of engaging more actively in this work; and
- To consider the **skills** required for more active engagement in ICH.

1.1.6. Whilst other public bodies in England have been increasingly engaging with ICH including Arts Council England, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Crafts Council (supported by ACE) and ICOMOS-UK, Historic England's remit has not previously focussed on ICH as an important dimension of its routine statutory activities. Historic England now recognises that its work should become more involved in this area, as recognised in the Corporate Plan and in the aspirations of the Culture White Paper (DCMS 2016), whilst recognising the potential substantial resource implications required to achieve a demonstrable national impact in this area.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

- 1.2.1. The methodology is set out in detail in the Project Design (WSP Jan 2020). It entailed a review of key documents and reports in the public realm and included interviews with selected Historic England staff.
- 1.2.2. The project has drawn upon the expertise of heritage professionals within WSP Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Team, working alongside Dr Jonathan Karkut and Dr Julie Scott, who are both recognised experts in the field of ICH. WSP is one of the world's leading multi-disciplinary professional services firms and its Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Team one of the largest of its kind in the UK.
- 1.2.3. Jonathan Karkut has extensive experience in the areas of heritage, tourism and community engagement, including contracts with European Commission, British Council, UNESCO and has worked across Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. He has extensive practical and research experience relating to ICH, including the evaluation for UNESCO India office of a major project on crafts and livelihoods, and community engagement with tangible and intangible heritage around the HS2 early works programme.
- 1.2.4. Julie Scott holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Kent and is an experienced anthropologist/ethnographer with a strong track record of research and publication on culture, heritage and tourism topics. She is an expert member of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage and has extensive knowledge of ICH and experience of recording and safeguarding practices in an international context. Julie has 18 years' experience in practical and theoretical explorations of ICH and its applications as development tool, livelihoods and the growth of Small to Medium Size Enterprises, and she was part of the organising committee for the first ICOMOS UK conference on ICH in 2014. Her previous ICH associated projects include Mediterranean Voices in 2002, EGG project in West Bengal and evaluating UNESCO's Ghana cluster office ICH programme.

DESK-BASED RESEARCH

- 1.2.5. The desk-based research comprised a review of key documents and reports in the public domain, comprising: UNESCO Convention and best practice; heritage-related UK legislation; relevant DCMS policy; Historic England policies and strategies; actions, programmes and research by Historic England and other actors in the field of heritage practice and scholarship, in the UK and internationally, relating to ICH, and its overlap with other forms of heritage. For a full list of documents considered, please see the bibliography appended to this report.

INTERVIEWS

- 1.2.6. The aim of the interviews with Historic England staff was to support the desk-based research, increase the project team's understanding of Historic England's statutory role, identify where ICH is already a factor, and explore the potential for the incorporation of ICH into the work of the organisation and the potential impacts of doing so.
- 1.2.7. Nine interviews were completed with Historic England staff across the spectrum of conservation, planning and place-making, designation and engagement, drawn from Historic England's London National Office, and a selection of regional offices and teams (North-East and Yorkshire; London and the South-East; Midlands). The staff interviewed comprised:
- Henry Owen-John, Head of World Heritage, London, Cannon Bridge House. His work in property-based/tangible heritage recognises intangible attributes, and he has been involved in discussions regarding the 2003 UNESCO ICH Convention.
 - Dr Deborah Mays, Head of Listing, London, Cannon Bridge House: works closely with DCMS, and has experience of ICH in relation to the intangible values of listed assets.
 - Dr Keith Emerick, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, North-East and Yorkshire Region, Tanner Row, York: has extensive experience of Historic England's operations that involve aspects of ICH, and particular knowledge of the York City Football Club Memories of Bootham Crescent project.
 - Rob Lloyd-Sweet, Historic Places Advisor, London and South East Region (telephone interview): his work involves him extensively in Community Engagement and training, Conservation Areas, local listing, neighbourhood planning and protecting 'historic views'.
 - Amy Pitts, Interim Director of Communications and Public Engagement, London, Cannon Bridge House: part of Historic England's Executive Team, leads Historic England's public engagement teams, including marketing, programming, campaigns, volunteering, inclusion, and the Historic England Archive.
 - Tamsin Silvey, Cultural Programme Curator, London, Cannon Bridge House: responsible for curating and delivering Historic England's Cultural Programme and developing innovative cultural projects and major exhibitions as part of a Public Engagement group.
 - Ellen Harrison, Head of Creative Programmes and Campaigns, London, Cannon Bridge House: oversees participative creative programmes and campaigns that close the gap between arts, culture and heritage, encouraging people to appreciate the heritage environment in new ways.
 - Linda Monckton, Head of Wellbeing and Inclusion Strategy, London, Cannon Bridge House: responsible for developing a strategic approach to Wellbeing delivery with Historic England and improving ways of assessing social impact.



- Rosamund Worrall, Team Leader (Development Advice), Midlands Region, Holliday Street Birmingham (telephone interview): manages a development advice team in the Midlands and specialises in planning.

REVIEW AND REFLECTION

- 1.2.8. Following the completion of an interim findings report (WSP April 2020), the consulting team participated in a series of meetings and discussions with the Historic England project team, leading up to a presentation of the Interim Report at the April 2020 Historic England Executive Committee meeting. The consulting team has now incorporated responses to the feedback from that process in this report.

2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

2.1 HISTORIC ENGLAND'S REMIT

- 2.1.1. The core legislative parameters for Historic England, lie within Part 33, sub-section (1) of the National Heritage Act (1983). The act states that: The Commission's general functions. It shall be the duty of the Commission (so far as practicable) —
- (a) to secure the preservation of ancient monuments and historic buildings situated in England,*
- (b) to promote the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas situated in England, and*
- (c) to promote the public's enjoyment of, and advance their knowledge of, ancient monuments and historic buildings situated in England and their preservation.*
- 2.1.2. Since 2015, Historic England has been the government's principal advisory body for the historic environment in England. Its updated responsibilities and statutory remit can be summarised thus:
- Advising government on designation protections and on national planning policy guidance;
 - Administering and maintaining the National Heritage List for England (NHLE);
 - Advising local authorities on managing changes to the most important parts of heritage;
 - Providing advice, training and guidance to improve the standards and skills of people working in heritage, practical conservation, and access to resources;
 - Commissioning and conducting heritage sector research (Heritage Counts, Heritage at Risk, and many more themes - <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/agenda/thematic-strategies/>);
 - Caring for nationally important archive collections; and
 - Giving grants for the conservation of historic buildings, monuments and landscapes.
- 2.1.3. In knowledge of the already extensive and diverse set of activities and pressures on resource, this report and its related recommendations do not propose to bring additional layers of responsibility or resource commitment. Rather, they work to situate the methods and forms of engagement generated through ICH within the context of that existing remit. In so doing, the aim is to emphasise the overlap and balance that exists across tangible and intangible aspects of heritage.
- 2.1.4. The research for this report has found that there are clearly multiple synergies where ICH fits within and brings significant public value to Historic England's remit with regard to the historic environment, in the high level advice given to the sector as a whole including local planning authority advisors (e.g. in the management of conservation areas, locally listed buildings, high street and heritage action zones), and also at a more local level in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans.
- 2.1.5. For the most part the Historic England staff interviewed are aware of the 2003 UNESCO convention on ICH, but primarily with reference to the diversity of routes it offers into enhancing public value and participation, and not with ICH safeguarding (i.e. the conservation of traditional cultural practices; see section 2.5) per se. ICH is currently seen internally as a means to the ends of supporting and enriching ongoing Historic England activity, by connecting practitioner communities and stakeholder voices with heritage conservation and stewardship, planning, place making and more.

- 2.1.6. Such actions are certainly taking place either directly through Historic England actions and projects or are supported and facilitated through commissioned works, partnerships, exchanging experiences at workshops, conferences and other events. These include commissioned collaborations such as Historic England's PROCESSIONS project in 2018, which saw the London College of Fashion working with female residents of HMP Downview to create a banner inspired by the heritage of Holloway Prison; and the Human Stories: Another England exhibition at NOW Gallery in the same year. In addition to the work of the communications and engagement teams, a rich thread of knowledge and activities is emerging through development advice and partnership teams, especially in the regional offices. Examples of this are seen in Historic England's advice on the development of the London Plan, and other local plans, some of which is detailed in section 2.5.3, below. But significantly, those experiences, skills and good practices are stored in pockets within Historic England and do not currently have a formal or structured repository to enable them to be shared and used across Historic England more generally.
- 2.1.7. Added together, the impact of ICH is to contribute positively across a wide sweep of Historic England's programme of work. In particular, the role of ICH in drawing in public support, cross-disciplinary and agency collaborations, and attracting further resource, aligns strongly with Historic England's core objective of delivering public value. However, this is not currently happening in a coordinated or systematic way.

2.2 UK SISTER AGENCY POSITIONS REGARDING ICH

- 2.2.1. As the state signatory to UNESCO and any of its conventions, the UK Parliament in Westminster is the only British body in a position to ratify the 2003 UNESCO ICH convention. However, a common feature across the four constituent countries of the United Kingdom, is that each has responsibility for their own heritage policy. This means that alternative positions regarding ICH can still be taken. As the cultural and political circumstances and devolved structures in each country vary, it has ensured that issues around the historic environment and intangible cultural heritage are being managed in markedly different ways.

WALES

- 2.2.2. The National Assembly for Wales has placed responsibilities for the historic environment with Cadw, a service in the words of its website 'working for an accessible and well-protected historic environment for Wales'. The management of these assets has recently been laid out in a heritage bill, with subsequent roadmap and introductions to priorities. Throughout that process heritage has been overwhelmingly defined and considered as consisting of buildings, sites and structures, without any direct reference to intangible cultural heritage. Considering the rich oral traditions and vibrant life of the Welsh language, the formal governmental engagement with ICH can therefore be summarised as being somewhat neglected.
- 2.2.3. The position regarding ICH in Wales cannot be considered without reflecting briefly upon the National Eisteddfod. Running for well over a century, the annual festival is a highly prominent celebration of the culture and language in Wales. Showcasing many expressions of intangible cultural heritage including music, dance, visual and performative arts and literature, the festival has become a unique cultural nexus. Being hosted at different locations around the Wales each year, in terms of raising familiarity and focusing activities, the Eisteddfod plays a significant role for some aspects of Welsh ICH. However, it remains disconnected from any wider policy linkages to safeguarding or embedding ICH within other contexts at a national level.

NORTHERN IRELAND

- 2.2.4. The devolved legislature of Northern Ireland (the Northern Ireland Assembly) has emerged from starkly different circumstances to those in the other constituent countries of the UK, with the Northern Ireland power sharing mechanism being created through the 1998 *Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement*. The sensitive sectarian balance is particularly delicately felt in the area of cultural heritage, where responsibility for the historic environment is placed within the Department for Communities.
- 2.2.5. Established in May 2016, the department works to ‘record, protect, conserve and promote our heritage in ways which support and sustain our economy and our communities’ (Department of Communities 2019). In this post-conflict environment, no direct mention of ICH is made in official policy statements or programmes. When intangible heritage in this setting can mean amongst other expressions, alternative language traditions or a sectarian parades season, it comes as no surprise that decisions to engage with ICH in Northern Ireland have not been seen as a priority action area. Add to that backdrop the hiatus between 2017–20 when the political power sharing structures were frozen, it is not surprising that there are currently no new policy initiatives emerging that pertain to the intangible cultural heritage of Northern Ireland.

SCOTLAND

- 2.2.6. Historic Environment Scotland is the executive non-departmental public body responsible for investigating, caring for and promoting Scotland’s historic environment. Unlike the other devolved agencies in the UK, Historic Environment Scotland embraces a more holistic approach to heritage. This has been expressed most explicitly in the document *Our Place in Time: The historic environment strategy for Scotland*, which uses the following definition: ‘The historic environment could be said to be “the cultural heritage of places”, and is a combination of physical things (tangible) and those aspects we cannot see – stories, traditions and concepts (intangible)’ (Historic Environment Scotland, 2014).
- 2.2.7. Engagement with ICH in Scotland and the governmental recognition of its value and potential uses, stretches back over a couple of decades involving a wide spread of agencies. The initial spark however, came in 2008 when Museums Galleries Scotland commissioned a report entitled *Scoping and Mapping Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scotland*. The commission was conducted by Enrich (Edinburgh Napier University Research in Cultural Heritage), which subsequently followed up with a far reaching project funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), to compile an inventory of ICH in Scotland (McCleery and Bowers, 2016).
- 2.2.8. An innovative step taken by the project was to produce the inventory through a ‘wiki’ style website, allowing the entries to be generated and updated by local communities as well as academics and other heritage specialists. By 2012, the management of the inventory was passed into the hands of Museums Galleries Scotland.
- 2.2.9. The proactive development of partnerships across museums and academia alongside subsequent exchanges with Historic Environment Scotland and other governmental bodies, has led to significant progress around understanding, safeguarding and application of ICH in Scotland. Beyond academic research and reflection this engagement has most recently led to the publication by Historic Environment Scotland in March 2020 of an ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage policy statement’, which provides a full context of ICH in Scotland, in terms of issues, definitions, principles, priorities, along with recent case study projects.

- 2.2.10. Although the Scottish parliament cannot legally ratify the 2003 UNESCO ICH convention, the research, innovative projects, community involvement and demonstrations of benefits conducted over an extended period and throughout the nation, has led to overwhelming cross-party support for the recognition of ICH in Scotland. A further demonstration of the advances that can be made without formal state ratification is seen in the accreditation of Museums Galleries Scotland as an expert advisor to UNESCO on the 2003 convention and an active member of the ICH NGO forum.
- 2.2.11. The Scottish position with ICH shows a fluid combination of local level community responses backed by political will and support at a regional and national level. Although a number of different platforms and partnerships have evolved, currently no single agency is leading or coordinating the effort to steer ICH in Scotland.

2.3 SCOPE FOR HISTORIC ENGLAND ENGAGEMENT WITH ICH

- 2.3.1. It is important to start by clarifying ICH concepts and terminology - these differ in some respects from 'conventional' heritage terminology and practice and have implications both for the nature and outcomes of potential engagement by Historic England.
- 2.3.2. Clearly, there are wide areas of overlap between 'tangible' and 'intangible' forms of heritage. Both are strongly anchored in place. Heritage sites and buildings have evidential, historic and communal values that are rooted in the intangible, whilst tangible artefacts form part and parcel of most intangible cultural heritage expressions and processes. However, the UNESCO 2003 ICH Convention has given intangible cultural heritage expressions weight and existence in their own right, identifying different categories of expression and proposing safeguarding mechanism appropriate to diverse categories and circumstances.
- 2.3.3. The UNESCO Convention identifies five different ICH domains:
- *Social practices, rituals and festive events* - which embrace a very wide range of expressions, including religious rites, rites of passage, traditional legal systems, traditional games and sports, kinship systems and ceremonies, settlement patterns, culinary traditions, ceremonies to mark seasonal cycles, gender specific practices, hunting, fishing and gathering practices, greeting and gift-giving practices...
 - *Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe* - includes traditional healing systems and knowledge about local flora and fauna, traditional ecological knowledge, shamanism, and their expression in language and the arts.
 - *Oral traditions and expressions* - including proverbs, riddles, nursery rhymes, legends, myths, stories, epic songs and poems, charms, prayers, chants and dramatic performances.
 - *Performing arts* - music, dance and traditional theatre, pantomime, puppetry, sung verse.
 - *Traditional craftsmanship* - the skills and knowledge involved in the traditional production of tools, clothing and jewellery, costumes and props for festivals and performing arts, storage containers and objects used for storage, transport and shelter, decorative art and ritual objects, musical instruments and household utensils, toys...
- 2.3.4. It is important to recognise that ICH extends far beyond oral and social history, although this was the general perception of ICH emerging from the interviews with Historic England personnel – and, as oral and social history is frequently deployed in heritage interpretation and engagement, this also reflects the common perception of ICH amongst lay audiences. In contrast, ICH should be regarded

in terms of living practices that are embedded in and symbolise the social and cultural 'DNA' of a community or place.

- 2.3.5. In all of these domains, the focus rests on process rather than products (a verb instead of a noun!) - for example, by enabling artisans to continue to produce craft and to pass on their skills and knowledge to others, particularly within their own communities.

2.4 FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT

- 2.4.1. The 2003 UNESCO Convention outlines a range of actions, all of which contribute to ICH 'safeguarding' to varying degrees. In the terminology of the 2003 UNESCO Convention, 'safeguarding' is to ICH what 'conservation' is to the built heritage environment, and comprises;

*'...measures aimed at ensuring the **viability** of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the **revitalization** of the various aspects of such heritage.'*

- 2.4.2. The keywords here are 'viability' and 'revitalization' - whilst education and building awareness at the wider level are important activities, they fall short of 'safeguarding' if they do not incorporate elements aimed at ensuring their **generational** transmission, which is often linked to securing the **spaces and places** in which they occur and in which associated knowledge and practices are passed on, and, in some cases, addressing their **economic viability** as a means of **generating a livelihood** for their practitioners.

- 2.4.3. Two more key points to bear in mind:

- *Listing* - the creation of ICH inventories is an important aspect of safeguarding as envisaged by the 2003 Convention. Signatories to the Convention are able to propose ICH expressions for inscription in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and to contribute to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. In addition, there is a List of ICH in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. However, international listing is not the primary goal - good safeguarding practice requires the creation of inventories (linked to further forms of safeguarding) at national, local and regional levels - regardless of whether a country is a signatory to the convention, or not. Although this has started to happen in Scotland (C.f. for example the case of Scotland and its wiki-inventory of ICH expressions From First Footing to Faeries <http://ichscotland.org/>), ICH listing is not currently being carried out in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.
- *The importance of 'community'* - in the terms of the 2003 Convention, ICH expressions belong to their communities of practice - groups, individuals, or communities of various forms - who are the 'bearers' of the tradition or cultural expression. The Convention is very clear that all safeguarding actions - including listing - must be community-led and must demonstrate community consent.

2.5 AREAS OF ICH OF PRACTICAL RELEVANCE TO HISTORIC ENGLAND, AND AREAS OF WORK WHERE IT IS ALREADY TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

- 2.5.1. Desk-based research and interviews revealed that there is already a considerable amount of ICH related work taking place within pockets of Historic England - although the ICH component is not always specifically recognised as such. Where there is explicit recognition of links to ICH, this tends

to be with a focus of 'intangible heritage values' - bringing out the associative or historical dimensions of tangible heritage assets (for example the research and report on Digbeth outline historic area assessment (<https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/research/back-issues/uncovering-digbeths-heritage/> and Historic England (2018)) - rather than in terms of actions directed at 'intangible heritage expressions' in their own right (i.e. expressions for which there is no structural material presence). Yet it is evident that, in a number of cases, ICH elements have been integral to some of the bread-and-butter work of Historic England, with benefits both to ICH safeguarding, and to core Historic England concerns.

CONSERVATION

- 2.5.2. Broadening the understanding of the historic environment to encompass social and cultural practices associated with heritage assets has supported conservation by informing their management and protection, promoting stewardship by the community, and providing a platform for under-represented heritage.
- Historic England sponsored doctoral research on *Religious Heritage in Transition - Sikh Places of Worship in England* uncovered the significance of the gurdwaras in Leicester, which were re-used from existing and often historic buildings. The project used ethnographic research to understand the everyday value of Sikh religious spaces, their continuing evolution, and the ways in which their community values them as 'heritage'.
 - Local planning authority designation of Brierly Hill High Street as conservation area (on Historic England's heritage at risk register) following the closure of the steelworks - again adopted an anthropological ethnographic social history approach to uncovering the heritage value of the area

PLANNING

- 2.5.3. A large part of Historic England's role in providing high level guidance in neighbourhood and local planning is community-led - as expressed by one of Historic England's historic places advisors, 'facilitating access to resources to enable people to look after what's special about their town or village'. Historic place associations often surface in on-going social practices and traditions recognisable as ICH domains. For example:
- *Lewes Neighbourhood Plan* protected the Bonfire Society Sites following representations from the historic societies maintaining the tradition.
 - *Oxford Stadium, Blackbird Leys* - research commissioned as part of the neighbourhood plan established the greyhound and speedway stadium as a site of special heritage interest based on its contemporary history of working class leisure traditions, a planning decision preventing development of the site for housing which was appealed by the housing developer and upheld at appeal and judicial review - the site is currently the subject of a proposed compulsory purchase order by the local council.
- 2.5.4. Both these examples resulted in the protection of spaces crucial to the flourishing of an ICH expression.

LISTING

- 2.5.5. Criteria for inclusion in the National Heritage List for England are determined by DDCMS, which has responsibility for designation decisions, on the advice and recommendations of Historic England, and the list itself is a key tool for national planning. In the Historic England Conservation Principles Consultation Draft (2018), the principles for selection was revised to give further weight to the value

of historic interest. 'Special architectural or Historic interest' have been required for listing since the inception of the List in 1947, this implicitly recognises intangible heritage values, but these are associative, rather than intrinsic to the listing. Beyond this, there are several ways in which ICH crosses over into listing:

- Heritage designation creates a *demand for traditional skills and crafts* - to maintain and restore buildings - such as thatching, flint knapping, etc.
- *Enrichment of the list* - the capacity to enrich the online list by enabling the public to upload images and information about listed sites can bring out some of the links between sites and ICH. That further enriching material can be used by Historic England to make the difference in for instance promoting a listing from being of grade II significance, to grade II* significance and allowing for Historic England to directly fund conservation or other measures (C.f. for example the case of the Elizabeth Gaskell house in Manchester, which was enriched by the ICH associated with social and cultural context <https://elizabethgaskellhouse.co.uk>). The contribution of ICH to the assessment of the overall significance of a heritage asset and how it is understood and appreciated is already a feature of the work of Historic Environment Scotland, and is an aspiration towards which Historic England could work, supported by the development of future published Historic England guidelines on ICH (see Recommendations and Solutions section 3.2, below).
- *The significance of place* - ICH expressions are often intrinsically linked to specific kinds of structures and spaces, and their value in these cases may be more than associative. For example, the listing of bee boles, bee houses and bee shelters - of which there are 14 grade II listings - has clear links to beekeeping and bee craft as a form of ICH linked to knowledge and practice concerning nature and the universe.

ENGAGEMENT

2.5.6. A key area of Historic England activity where the potential of ICH to contribute to the work of Historic England is already clearly recognised, and ICH is widely integrated into practice.

- Much of this has taken the form of oral and social history linked to established 'historical assets' or Historic England curated or co-curated exhibitions (both on-line and museum-based). However, this work has opened up greater awareness of the scope for ICH to play a bigger role in an expanded understanding of heritage and the historic environment.
- The focus on the transformational and therapeutic potential of heritage in Historic England's emerging wellbeing strategy - with its emphasis on heritage as process, as participation, and as a mechanism for bringing people together and creating a strong sense of place - also points to a widening concept of the historic environment, with a shift towards incorporating a focus on people, alongside historic assets, and opening up a space for an enhanced recognition of the role of ICH in places and communities.
- National Heritage Crime Programme (NHCP) - ICH has been an important component of the NHCP since 2013 and has been integrated into the working definition for Heritage and Cultural Property Crime. Activities within the NHCP particularly complement Historic England's partnership, community engagement and wellbeing actions.
- Diversity and inclusion - the recognition of ICH as rooted in communities of practice, as well as in particular places and spaces, opens up new possibilities for understanding and celebrating the multi-layered heritage of historical assets and under-represented heritage - for example, in the

case of the Historic England sponsored doctoral research on *Religious Heritage in Transition - Sikh Places of Worship in England* (see also above).

2.6 SKILLS REQUIRED FOR MORE ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH ICH

- 2.6.1. A recent critical review of approaches to social values associated with heritage places, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), highlights the gap between the long-standing heritage expert assessment focus on historic and scientific values, and the more fluid, unofficial and informal modes of engagement through which social value is created (Jones, 2017). There is considerable overlap between the methods and disciplinary expertise proposed for capturing social value, and the safeguarding of ICH, suggesting growing convergence between the skills required for ICH focused work, and social-value based approaches to 'conventional' heritage conservation and management.
- 2.6.2. It is evident that some sections of Historic England - specifically those involved in aspects of engagement, and local and neighbourhood planning - have skills and professional practices that are well adapted to more active involvement with ICH, in particular, with regard to community-led work, collaborative partnership working, and awareness of social and cultural context. In addition:
- *Anthropological and ethnographic research skills* have been brought in where necessary - for example, in work on the Oxford Stadium, Brierly Hill, and the work on *gurdwaras*.
 - *Collaborative working* has been successfully tried elsewhere e.g. in Operation Nightingale, a partnership between the MoD, Wessex Archaeology, and a veterans' mental health charity.
 - *More active involvement in ICH safeguarding* would also be able to call on *collaboration with some established organisations* - for example, the Historic Crafts Association, the English Folk Dance and Song Society, etc.
- 2.6.3. Whilst there is, thus, considerable scope for outsourcing specifically ICH orientated skills, there are also compelling arguments for bringing some of these skills in-house. In so doing Historic England would strengthen its **public value framework**, through capitalising more effectively on the convergence between ICH, and opportunities for enhancing the social value dimension of heritage conservation and management.

2.7 RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH MORE ACTIVE ICH ENGAGEMENT

- 2.7.1. This research so far has identified the following potential risks:
- *Resource-related* - there is a perceived risk that a shift towards more active engagement with ICH could overstep Historic England's statutory remit. Consequently, it is essential to conduct any additional ICH engagement through a close integration within the threads of that remit.
 - *'Tracking' ICH related work* - existing mechanisms within Historic England are not adapted to tracking ICH work - with implications for accountability, reporting and funding. This is a potential risk that was also raised in connection with Historic England's visibility and acknowledgement in partnering with external organisations.
 - *Raised expectations* - despite the lack of formal acknowledgment for ICH in England, there exists a high level of popular interest, participation and engagement with a wide range of ICH practices and expressions across the country, from the informal, local-level of individuals and small groups, to national organisations. Since no organisation in the UK currently has a remit for ICH, a move in this direction by Historic England, unless carefully managed, runs the risk of raising expectations and demands beyond its capacity to deliver.

- *Potential for tension and controversy* - there is some anxiety over the potential for 'traditional' expressions to become a channel for mobilising particularistic claims to places or historic identities, with the risk that Historic England could be drawn into areas of controversy and conflict. This is, indeed, a risk associated with the historic environment more broadly, as diverse groups draw on heritage-related narratives to stake multiple claims to places and histories (c.f. Jones op.cit. p. 25).

3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1. Across the activities of Historic England and the staff interviewed there is an overwhelming acknowledgement that incorporating ICH brings something further to the ongoing work of the organisation, as long as the scope of that engagement is clearly defined within the specific remit of Historic England, as outlined in Section 2.1.
- 3.1.2. A view clearly expressed amongst the staff interviewed, was that meeting ICH head on through discrete engagement with the 2003 UNESCO convention is not compatible with the existing Historic England remit. That convention has a strong focus on safeguarding, listing and transmission through viable livelihoods. Such an emphasis would add to, and distract from, an already heavy workload, and falls outside the specific remit of Historic England, as outlined in Section 2.1. Historic England cannot spread itself so thinly as to do everything in the heritage sector. Consequently, it is important to delineate carefully where ICH usefully works within the existing remit and builds upon areas where staff and programmes are already active.
- 3.1.3. Our research demonstrates that the value of ICH for Historic England already consists in far more than window dressing for the interpretation or presentation of planning or conservation sites. Oral histories are a familiar and accessible route, for both interpretation and the creation of social value, but ICH operates along multiple channels that connect and motivate local publics and visitors alike around all manner of heritage assets.
- 3.1.4. The recommendations that follow offer proposals for the immediate, mid- and longer-term, some of which aim to formalise and consolidate existing ICH practice within Historic England, whilst others are intended to grow and expand its ICH involvement. Some of the recommendations primarily concern internal stakeholders, whilst others require consultation and engagement with external stakeholders.
- 3.1.5. It is clearly not practical for Historic England to try to spread itself over the whole range of possible ICH-related actions. Collectively, the solutions proposed here are intended to help position Historic England to step up as a champion for ICH in England, operating from within its specific remit in a coordinating role alongside other active agencies.

3.2 RECOMMENDATION 1 (IMMEDIATE TERM): TRACK AND SHARE INTERNAL ICH EXPERIENCE

- 3.2.1. A great deal of experience in utilising ICH exists within Historic England - In other words this is an existing resource - but this is applied ad hoc within individual projects rather than structured around Historic England programmes or shared consistently throughout the organisation. Recommended actions comprise:
- *Systematic mapping of ICH knowledge and experience within the organisation.* This would focus on the following, within a carefully and clearly defined scope that adheres to enhancing capability within Historic England's specific remit:
 - Distribution of individual knowledge and practical experience in the different ICH domains, perhaps achieved through the organisation's Intranet and/or the Historic England group server system, 'FUSE'.

- Compilation and circulation of case studies highlighting effective deployment of ICH in listing, planning, development advice and conservation action, and its potential for use in current and emerging Historic England strategies (such as Engagement Strategy, Inclusion Strategy, Wellbeing Strategy, the National Heritage Crime Programme, Heritage Counts). The case studies might be readily accessed through the organisation's Intranet and/or group server FUSE.
 - Identify scope for improving internal training so that (1) Historic England planning advice takes ICH values and practice into account (for example, the London Plan directly references the heritage values of assets such as music venues, LGBT venues etc, and specialist practices such as tailoring in Saville Row); (2) archive enhancements can be achieved by improving skills in recording aspects of ICH such as oral history, traditional craft practices in action, etc.
- Development of heritage sector guidelines on ICH, explaining what it is, its contribution to public value, and how it can be applied in listing, local planning, and place-making etc. activities. Historic England's other guidelines, such as those on the Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England 2012) are very influential and adopted throughout the heritage sector. Similarly, a guidance note on ICH could be incorporated into the series of Introduction to Heritage Assets (IHA) guidance for local authorities. These presently cover a number of categories, including archaeology, buildings, designated landscapes, ships and boats, but as yet not the theme of intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, ICH could be incorporated into a revised Conservation Principles, which sets out the values that are considered in assessing heritage significance.
 - Consolidation and development of existing collaborations - Informal exchanges are already occurring with staff and their wider connections (for instance within academia and to the other UK sister agencies). The opportunities for sharing UK-wide experience already exist at the CEO level through the regular 'HACE' meetings. As a next step, we recommend exploring the possibility for scheduling similar formal exchanges between identified staff who have drawn upon the application of ICH in their everyday work at Historic England. In addition, informal channels such as Fuse Community and Lunch and Learn sessions could be a useful way for staff to share their experience of ICH and its applications, for example, in planning advice (neighbourhood planning, HSHAZs, and place-making).
 - Build up research on ICH within Historic England. This strand could lead to access to additional funds since Historic England is an accredited research institute. Additionally, such research provides an ideal opportunity for exchanges and partnerships with academic institutions in England (as has successfully been conducted in Scotland by Historic Scotland). In addition to enabling Historic England to keep abreast of the evolving understanding of heritage, bolstering research and PhD collaborative partnerships on ICH topics would enable Historic England to keep a watching brief on ICH developments in England, and assist in the periodic evaluation and review of the organisation's work in this field.

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.2.2. The measures proposed above address two of the risks identified in Section 2.7: by establishing a resource baseline and maximising the use of existing internal resources; and by establishing channels for tracking the value added by ICH-orientated actions.

3.3 RECOMMENDATION 2 (MEDIUM TERM): HISTORIC ENGLAND LEAD AND COORDINATE CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

3.3.1. As the next phase of Historic England's investigation into the scope of its ICH engagement, we recommend a consultation exercise with a range of external stakeholders, at both local and national level. We are recommending this approach in place of the market research design proposed in the project tender and presented in the Project Design (WSP Jan 2020), which we suggest would not be appropriate, for the following reasons:

- A focus on audience and consumer-led research reverses ICH safeguarding priorities, which should be firmly on tradition-bearers and communities of practice. As the 2003 UNESCO Convention makes clear, safeguarding measures must be practitioner-led, demonstrating their involvement and consent at all stages;
- An audience/consumer focus implies a rather limited role for ICH, as an ancillary aspect of other forms of heritage;
- It also runs the risk of encouraging the commodification of ICH expressions – one of the threats to ICH integrity that is explicitly warned against in the 2003 UNESCO Convention.

3.3.2. The stakeholder consultation we recommend in place of audience research would address the question of what role Historic England can most appropriately take with regard to ICH safeguarding and practice in England. Should it be that of ICH 'champion' for England? If so, the proposed research would enable Historic England to ascertain how it might fulfil that role, within its specific remit, and how it fits into the existing stakeholder landscape.

3.3.3. The proposed consultation exercise would have the following aims:

- *Map out the ICH stakeholder landscape in England*, identifying the key actors, and assessing the significance of existing external ICH practice within the historic environment - with a mind to coordinating a 'roundtable' platform of national and regional agencies who are prominent in the sphere of ICH and with whom Historic England could/already does collaborate. These would include, but not be limited to, bodies such as the Arts Council; ICOMOS UK; the Heritage Crafts Association; The National Trust, English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund, English universities with a track record of ICH related research and projects – such as the Universities of York, Reading, and Birmingham; and museums with a strong ICH component to their work – such as the Museum of English Rural Life.
- Explore how Historic England might complement existing external ICH interventions across the range of listing, planning, place-making, public engagement and well-being services and activities - drawing also on the results of the systematic internal mapping exercise outlined as recommendation 1 (section 3.1), above. These might include:
 - Local ICH listing, as an aspect of ICH safeguarding that local authorities might choose to employ as part of their place-making, local planning, or HSHAZ activities;
 - Review of training provision for the historic environment, to incorporate ICH considerations
- *Identify the potential for collaboration and the possible expansion of Historic England's paid-for services in this area* - this report has already highlighted the part played by ICH-related concerns in aspects of Historic England's statutory activities (see Section 2.1, above).

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.3.4. In addition to assessing the wider ICH environment, the consultation exercise would provide an opportunity to build stakeholder relations and manage stakeholder expectations (2.7.3.).

3.4 RECOMMENDATION 3 (LONGER TERM): ASSESS NEED FOR EXPANSION OF IN-HOUSE ICH EXPERTISE & KNOWLEDGE

- 3.4.1. Whilst considerable utilisation of ICH exists within Historic England, and may also be readily externally sourced on an ad hoc basis, it may become desirable to consolidate those skills in-house, or to formalise the organisation's existing ICH expertise through a dedicated position:

- **To spread awareness** and training for ICH within the organisation (see section 3.2.1, above).
- **To develop enhanced paid for services** - the business case (see section 3.3.3, above).

- 3.4.2. The following are some examples of actions Historic England could undertake, aligned to the existing statutory remit:

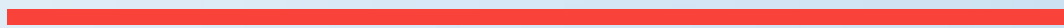
- Advising government on designation protections and on national planning policy guidance - (Local knowledge of ICH could input into decisions on the assessment of the overall heritage significance of an asset, when currently only tangible elements are considered); or
- Commissioning and conducting heritage sector research (Heritage Counts, Heritage at Risk, and many more themes - <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/agenda/thematic-strategies/>) - (If Historic England takes the mantle of champion they could conduct/coordinate ICH research); or
- Caring for nationally important archive collections - (there is scope to enhance the archive through the inclusion of ICH recordings and materials – see recommendation at 3.2.1, above.)

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.4.3. Bringing an element of dedicated ICH expertise in-house would help mitigate the risks associated with dissonant heritage controversy, identified at 2.7.

Appendix A

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