



Historic Environment Forum

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTION 2020-25

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INTRODUCTION

The Historic Environment Forum (HEF) is a forum which, by working collaboratively, carries out a range of activities to encourage and support research, conservation, presentation, enjoyment and use of the historic environment in England¹. The aim of HEF is to enhance public benefit from the historic environment and the activities of its Task and Topic groups are guided by the positive changes identified in this strategic framework.

The content of the framework has evolved over the course of 2020; and this timing is significant. Whilst the historic environment sector has a strong tradition of working well together (National Heritage Protection Plan, Heritage 2020 programme), in 2020 this was tested like never before by the global Coronavirus pandemic. As the UK went into lockdown, HEF members mobilised virtually and used the HEF's two 2020-21 task groups to assess and respond to the impact of the pandemic.

One group targeted the immediate issues linked with the 'rescue' phase of the impact of the pandemic (input to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Minister meetings; evidence of impact on the sector; assessing mitigation measures and exit strategy) and the other has developed a positive narrative focused on the longer-term recovery of the sector and its value to a post-Covid society.

We are therefore aware that this framework has been developed in a period of huge uncertainty and new experiences. We do not have a crystal ball that will enable us to see whether what have emerged as priorities for collaboration in 2020 will still be the case in 2025 so our overarching principle is that this framework must be used flexibly. It is intended to guide where HEF focuses the effort of its task groups to deliver outcomes and outputs that will benefit the wider historic environment sector and through them, society at large.

In that spirit, this framework is a practical tool to translate the goals for sector collaboration into tangible steps. It sets out broad themes for collaboration and within each theme identifies desirable 'outcomes' or areas of positive social, economic, cultural or environmental change. It will be used to determine the briefs for the task groups that are operational in any given year; it will be reviewed regularly and, if necessary, refreshed so that it remains fit for purpose. The framework does not aim to encompass all collaborative activity in the sector nor does HEF commit to the delivery of all the outcomes.

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT IN 2020

Our heritage helps us to tell our story. It is one of the most irreplaceable resources in the country. It forms the fabric of our villages, towns and rural communities, offers landscapes of outstanding natural beauty and provides opportunities to learn about our past, so much of which remains undiscovered. The historic environment defines our high streets, supports our creative and cultural identities, and provides much loved spaces for communities and businesses.

Heritage is economically vital, it generates a total GVA of £31 billion² and support hundreds of thousands of jobs in tourism, conservation, planning, archaeology and construction. Millions of people from all over the world appreciate the UK's unique heritage, not just in London or Stonehenge but in Penzance, Cumbria and Whitby – places where heritage and the historic environment provide a basis for social capital and civic identity.

We want our heritage to help the country to thrive, both as an integral part of our nation's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and but also, in the future, to play a larger part in the lives of people in the UK and strengthen our position on the world stage. The outcomes described in this framework will help the historic environment to thrive and deliver wide public benefit.



DEVELOPING THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

In this strategic framework we capture where collaboration through the Historic Environment Forum can add value to the work of individual organisations. The framework uses an outcomes-based approach to describe the positive changes that the HEF sees as both urgent (a priority for collaboration over the next five years) and where change would not occur without members of HEF working together and in partnership with others. The main mechanisms for delivery of the framework will be the HEF Task Groups and Topic Groups.

The outcomes presented in this Strategic Framework emerged from consultation with members of HEF and the wider Heritage 2020³ community. Over the summer of 2020 people nominated desirable outcomes from collaboration and the long-list of proposals was reviewed and prioritised by HEF members in terms of urgency of need, the value of HEF collaboration to their delivery, and relative importance of the outcomes to each other.

What emerged from that consultation as the changes that HEF members want to achieve through collaboration are changes in the way that things are done as well as *what* is done. These changes, or outcomes, can be grouped into four themes that encompass the areas in which change is sought and four cross-cutting principles to apply to all areas of the Framework.

Cross-cutting principles

The four principles to be adopted across all themes are:

- The historic environment belongs to everyone: our approach must be **inclusive**
- The historic environment matters to people: our outcomes must deliver **public benefit**
- The historic environment is green: our approach must have a **positive impact on the climate change**
- The choice of what we do and the demonstration of the difference our actions make must be supported by good evidence so that we adopt a culture of **continuous improvement**.

As such, the way that each outcome is delivered should articulate an inclusive approach with clear public benefit; where appropriate it should show how it will address the climate emergency through adaption or mitigation. In each case we should understand the role that good evidence will play in the delivery of the outcome: do we have it but need to draw it together, or does the outcome involve generating it?

On this last point the development of a 'Heritage Observatory' is a complementary initiative that is being scoped by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum.

THEMES FOR COLLABORATION

Desirable outcomes from collaboration are grouped together under four themes of:

People and places



Conservation and stewardship



Fiscal reform and funding



Skills and capacity



The framework does not list all proposed outcomes (over 75 were suggested). It focuses on those that were assessed to be of greatest urgency and where HEF collaboration could bring greatest benefit; it purposefully excludes issues that are being addressed by other groupings and fora. For each outcome some indicative tasks are listed.

#1: PEOPLE AND PLACES

The historic environment is a tangible legacy of previous generations. It is all around us; shaped by human activity for millennia. The human connection to the historic environment lies at the heart of this theme of ‘people and places’ in which the outcomes all focus on people’s future relationship with heritage.

Outcome: Positive engagement with the historic environment by people from all backgrounds resulting in their positive engagement with the civic and democratic processes that underpin place and placemaking

Engagement with heritage, as the things that are important to people such that they endure over time or are handed down from generation to generation, can catalyse people’s positive connection to the spaces around them transforming them into places with special meaning and characteristics. It can also help to connect people to each other and play a role in a cohesive society⁴.

A people-centred and inclusive approach to engaging with the historic environment provides the opportunity to explore and recognise a wide range of values and connections that can feed into placemaking as the process of designing places that serve their communities well and contribute to health, happiness and economic prosperity. When successful, this will in turn lead to greater public confidence that development can deliver high quality outcomes and places.

Tasks might include:

- Research, including participatory methods, to understand and demonstrate evidence of the contribution the historic environment makes to better places.
- Work with communities to define the special characteristics of their local area and encourage them to take ownership of and responsibility for local places and heritage assets.
- Co-production of projects with diverse groups of local residents that result in engagement with placemaking, for example linked to Heritage Action Zones or the transfer of publicly owned heritage to community assets.
- Collaboration with other sectors, such as the urban design sector, to highlight the positive contribution of heritage to placemaking.

#1: PEOPLE AND PLACES

Outcome: Heritage and the historic environment are central to the levelling-up agenda and local economic policy initiatives to address regional geographic inequalities and deliver economic recovery, growth and prosperity.

Heritage is all around us. Over 99% of the population of England lives within one mile of a listed heritage asset⁵. The levelling-up agenda aims to spread prosperity through investment in infrastructure, revitalising neighbourhoods and creating stronger links between public, private and community sectors.

Recent government investment in high streets and town centres, including in heritage-led regeneration programmes such as the High Streets Heritage Action Zones and Transforming Places Through Heritage, is an example of this. We must capture the benefits of this investment, measuring both the impact on economic prosperity and social wellbeing in the places that are receiving funding. We have the opportunity to learn from these programmes and add to the evidence of how heritage can generate new jobs and inward investment; we should analyse the data to understand what is transferable to other communities. With better evidence and case studies we can advocate for heritage to play a key role in forthcoming economic policy initiatives that have a local focus, such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Community Ownership Fund.

Rooted in place, both ideologically and geographically, we can explore the use of the

historic environment as renewable infrastructure that connects people and places across England and provides employment and skills development opportunities directly and in allied sectors such as tourism, the creative industries, archaeology and construction⁶.

Tasks might include:

- Use of Heritage Action Zones to pilot a sustainable approach to regeneration that involves partners from the natural environment to ensure that a 'green recovery' and natural capital models are embedded in social and sustainable development models alongside economic models.
- A joined-up approach to environmental management bringing together the historic and natural environment and aimed at securing Environmental Land Management funding for heritage.
- Work with rural and urban communities to understand what they see as the role of the historic environment in local development; pilot projects to test new ideas; evaluate not only impact on economic prosperity but also on local pride and sense of community.
- Seek outside-the-sector opportunities for collaboration and undertake collective advocacy to ensure the historic environment plays a central role during the national spotlight on levelling-up and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

#1: PEOPLE AND PLACES

Outcome: Management and use of the historic environment to maximise health and wellbeing benefits

Why do places mean so much? This is the question that research by the National Trust in 2019 sought to address; research that found that people with a deep connection to a particular place report higher levels of wellbeing and life satisfaction⁷. The historic environment, as the tangible legacy of people's interaction with the environment, embodies these connections. But what, precisely, are the benefits of these connections and how can the historic environment be managed or used in a way that maximises the benefits and ensures they are widely available?

Right now, health and wellbeing is a top concern for people and for policy-makers. The relationship between places and health and wellbeing, both physical and mental, has been of interest for many years but it has been brought into sharp focus during lockdown and the emergence from it. The Heritage Alliance's report '*Heritage, Health and Wellbeing*' (2020) provides evidence of the potential of heritage to boost wellbeing and recommendations on how to do so.

Our tasks now are to ensure those benefits are widely understood, encourage a consistent and wide-spread approach to the collection of evidence of the relationship between heritage and health and wellbeing, understand who does not currently benefit from interaction with the historic environment and take steps to ensure that benefits can be widely enjoyed, and foster a

closer working relationship between the heritage and health sectors at policy and practice levels.

Tasks might include:

- Publish evidence of the contribution that heritage and the historic environment make to people's wellbeing; pool data, pool research and share evidence from emerging Covid-19 impact studies.
- Address weaknesses in methodologies and data by partnering with higher education institutions.
- Encourage organisations from across the historic environment sector to use the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' model to develop evidence-based actions that will help to understand the relationship between the historic environment and wellbeing at an organisational level and, if shared, at sector-level.
- Work with communities to understand what limits or prevents access to the health and wellbeing benefits of places so that they can be addressed and there is equality of access for all.
- Share learning and embed wellbeing into the way that places are managed and used so that benefits can be enjoyed by all.
- Build links between the heritage and health sectors at policy level so that government recognises the transformative influence of heritage on health and wellbeing, for example through a joint health and wellbeing campaign like 'This Girl Can'⁸.

#1: PEOPLE AND PLACES

Outcome: An honest and open debate about heritage, the historic environment and culture that embraces difficult conversations around representation and the implications of Britain's colonial past

As the tangible legacy of previous generations, the historic environment is also complex. Heritage is not static and nor is its interpretation. If our historic environment is to remain relevant to society, it must evolve, both in terms of what constitutes our nation's heritage but also in terms of the stories that are told about it.

Enabling discussion, encouraging different perspectives and learning from them will enrich the understanding of the historic environment. New partnerships will help the sector to achieve this in the short term whilst practices are embedded that will ensure that this debate happens within the workforce, volunteer community and governance structures of the historic environment sector.

Tasks might include:

- Create partnerships to explore cultural differences in the way that the historic environment is valued, interpreted and presented.
- Share approaches to debating heritage, the historic environment and culture that encourage broader and deeper conversations and a diversity of opinion.

- Embed equality and inclusiveness in all aspects of the way that heritage organisations operate to build a more inclusive sector that can have a conversation about heritage with a more diverse audience.



#2: CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP

The historic environment is a resource for our society that is used for learning and enjoyment, for jobs and income, and for individual and societal wellbeing. Although it is constantly evolving, it is an irreplaceable resource and we have a shared responsibility to preserve it and its significance.

Conservation and stewardship ensure that the benefits of historic environment reach as many people as possible, and that we live in high-quality places, now and in the future. Everyone can contribute, in different ways, to the conservation and stewardship of the historic environment.

Outcome: Legislative and non-legislative opportunities are harnessed for positive change.

Caring for the historic environment involves managing the way that it changes over time and constantly balancing the protection of the significance of our tangible past with opportunities for development that will make our future life better. By using our collective insight and knowledge to engage in constructive conversations with people and government we can maintain this balance, enhance protection of the historic environment and people's experience of it.

At the sharp-edge of these conversations are the specific opportunities that arise, particularly in the policy arena, to support positive change.

Tasks might include:

- Research, agree, and present changes that will make a positive difference and advocate to get them implemented in statute, guidance and practice.
- Respond to upcoming legislative and non-legislative changes with arguments focused on opportunities to get more public benefit from the conservation of historic environment.
- Engage with policy under development (e.g. current Agriculture Bill, Environment Bill and their future implementation), to make sure that the historic environment is taken into consideration.
- Rank the impact (rather than ease of achievement) of identified reforms to the heritage protection system that will enhance protection, enable stretched resources to go further or ensure that the system works better to deliver greater public value. Focus on engaging government with these opportunities.
- Research and identify reforms that will make it easier for designated assets to be adapted to new climate conditions while ensuring the conservation of their historic fabric and significance.

#2: CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP

Outcome: Articulation of where reforms could lead to potential unacceptable damage

Conversely, there are times when planning reform or government policy has the potential to result in unacceptable damage to the historic environment. In these cases, collaboration can help to articulate the nature and extent of potential damage, as well as share approaches to mitigation.

This outcome aims to ensure that no unintended damage is caused to the historic environment and that people's future experience of heritage will not be negatively affected by reforms. For example amidst the urgency to respond to Covid-19 and kick-start the economy there is still a need to consider the wider impact of reforms on the historic environment. In circumstances such as these it will always be important to engage constructively with proposed changes in order to dispel the perception that heritage is a brake on progress.

Tasks might include:

- Collation of politically resonant arguments relevant to specific reforms.
- Focus on reforms that will deliver greater public benefit from the planning process and sustainable progress.
- Establish fora that bring together those who stand to gain and lose from specific reforms to foster a common understanding of issues.
- Preparation of a bank of evidence of the

positive contribution of heritage to reform and development, such as High Streets Heritage Action Zones.

Outcome: Environmental policy-making recognises the contribution of the historic environment to addressing climate change

The climate emergency is a global issue. It is one that is being addressed by several groupings outside of the HEF umbrella in which HEF members participate. This outcome does not therefore focus on addressing climate change directly but instead it focuses on integrating the benefits the historic environment can bring to wider environmental policy-making and the UK commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

For example, recent research shows that proper retrofitting, repair and maintenance of historic buildings can reduce their carbon emissions by over 60%. The mantra of 'reduce, reuse, recycle' can be applied to conservation and stewardship of the historic environment: looking after old buildings, adapting them where necessary and reusing them is a sustainable, circular economy approach and, with sympathetic refurbishment and retrofit a typical traditional building will emit less carbon by 2050 than a new building. This outcome is about integrating these approaches to wider work to address climate change.

Tasks might include:

- Further evidence of the energy consumption and 'whole life' carbon of old buildings.
- Engage beyond the historic environment sector on approaches to retrofitting, including with owners and users of historic buildings.
- Facilitate communication between the HEF organisations that are involved in wider groups seeking to address climate emergency at a UK-level, and other organisations that do not have the capacity to do this to maximise dissemination of research, information and good practice.
- Embed green infrastructure standards in heritage sector responses to planning proposals.
- Work with the natural environment sector to achieve an Environment Bill that does not separate the historic and natural environment.



#3: FISCAL REFORM AND FUNDING

We are facing the most challenging economic and social time since the end of World War II. Some areas of the historic environment have been hit hard by the Coronavirus global pandemic with previously robust business models based on visitors, hospitality and retail particularly badly affected. The Government has been generous in its support of the sector preserving many jobs, protecting heritage at risk and supporting organisations that are vulnerable as a result of the pandemic but the road to recovery may well be a long one, and one that not all of the sector is able to survive.

Whilst the outcomes under this theme are not all linked to these new challenges, decisions on fiscal reform and funding will be affected by the economic fallout from the pandemic for the period of this strategic framework. Without dismissing the serious impact that the pandemic has had on the historic environment sector, this is the time to think creatively about opportunities for the future. This is the time to think about how the historic environment can contribute to future growth and prosperity and what changes will help to make that happen.

Outcome: A developed evidence base to support fiscal decisions

The heritage sector is an important economic sector producing a total GVA of £31 billion and providing over 464,000 jobs¹⁰. This type of data, produced as part of Heritage Counts¹¹ in 2019, is an essential part of compelling arguments for change to fiscal policy or investment. It is necessary to support the development of business cases and ultimately, to support decision-making.

Evidence of the full economic impacts of heritage, quantification of the net fiscal benefit government derives from heritage, and a costed

business case for reduction in VAT on repairs and maintenance are all examples of the data that is needed. Collaboration will be necessary to achieve this but in contrast to many of the other outcomes, this one will benefit from a single lead on research and analysis with the benefits of collaboration coming from (1) the contribution of evidence that is representative of the breadth of heritage, its beneficiaries and associated values, and (2) access to the evidence that is produced so that it can be re-used for maximum impact.

Tasks might include:

- Agree a lead for research and analysis.
- Agree a holistic set of repeatable measures to

#3: FISCAL REFORM AND FUNDING

generate longitudinal data.

- Explore new economic models that include an assessment of social value and contribution to economic and environmental wellbeing.
- Identify where fiscal reform will bring greatest benefit.
- Target production of evidence to support specific fiscal or funding issues.

Outcome: Changes to fiscal policy that will promote the use, repair and maintenance of the historic environment

The sustainable use and reuse of heritage assets can be incentivised by specific changes to fiscal policy. This is good for people, good for the environment, and good for our nation's historic environment – whether that be the iconic attractions behind thousands of domestic and international tourism visits, or the homes and workspaces of people in the c.400,000 listed buildings in England¹².

Tasks might include:

- A fully costed business case for changes to VAT on repairs and maintenance, including the scenario of equalisation of VAT on repairs and maintenance with that on new build; evidence of the potential impact of this change on productivity and social and environmental well-being.
- Feasibility and impact studies of changes to

income tax on heritage maintenance funds (e.g. from 45% to 20%)¹³ and on changes to business rates that will make the use of historic buildings more attractive as workspaces and encourage new businesses into town centres¹⁴.

- Continuation of the Listed Places of Worship grant scheme (grants to cover the VAT incurred in making repairs) and exploration of its expansion to other listed buildings.
- Work alongside other sectors or groups with similar goals, e.g. construction sector and listed property owners on VAT.

Outcome: Heritage assets have a clear role in rebuilding the economy, attracting inward investment, and future growth and prosperity

The historic environment is all around all of us. We want to use this to help the country recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Investment in heritage-led regeneration of high streets¹⁵ is showing how heritage can revive high streets and create new places for community use, new premises for businesses, and new places for people to live (including affordable housing)¹⁶. It is not only the end result that is of value but the process through which it is reached, which creates jobs and brings communities together.

This outcome centres on opportunities for levelling-up, reviving domestic and international tourism, creating jobs (and skills) in the heritage,



craft and construction industry, and new methods for attracting inward investment. It's about opportunities to use our strengths in digital innovation, academic research, heritage science and cultural protection.

Tasks might include:

- Target emerging schemes such as Environmental Land Management scheme and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to ensure benefits for the historic environment.
- Work across society and with investors, funders and government to create systems of long-term revenue support that will enable NGOs to focus on sector support and sustainable growth.
- Explore new models for tax and giving to increase philanthropy.
- Build on the collaborative effort of the creative industries and heritage sectors to innovate and work together as a positive driver for growth and job creation¹⁷.
- Show how science, technology and research can leverage new knowledge from the historic environment as an asset that contributes not only to a better and wider understanding of heritage, but also to knowledge in other fields such as climate change, infectious disease and evolutionary biology.
- Use the research capacity within heritage organisations and the higher education sector to work in partnership with industry, including SMEs to drive technological innovation in areas such as advanced visualisation, sensor development and bio-imaging.
- Work with local partners and through the Regional Historic Environment Forums to address regional disparity in investment and employment¹⁸.

#4: SKILLS AND CAPACITY

In this theme we come back full-circle to people and place. We need to have the right skills and enough capacity to care for, protect and improve access to and engagement with heritage. This is not just the responsibility of those who work in the historic environment sector but it's a responsibility (and opportunity) for everyone: and there's good evidence that people feel that way too with over 600,000 heritage volunteers in 2016¹⁹.

But is it really an opportunity for everyone? Data shows that unfortunately, it isn't as much as it could be. The DCMS Taking Part Survey shows that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities and people from disadvantaged socio-economic groups are less likely to engage with heritage²⁰ and that's also reflected in the workforce and amongst volunteers.

If we are to be successful in delivering any of the outcomes in this Framework so that they truly benefit society as a whole, we must ensure that the people who deliver them reflect society as a whole. We know this and are taking steps towards more inclusive working practices and equality of access to heritage which should be championed. But it feels painfully slow and we know we need to move more quickly on ensuring that the benefits of the historic environment really can be enjoyed by everyone.

Where an opportunity does lie is in building a refreshed, skilled, diverse workforce; and in creating voluntary and paid opportunities, particularly for young people. The outcomes in this theme reflect a few key changes that could make a real difference to the way that heritage is managed and experienced in the future.

Outcome: Collective consideration, evidence gathering, and access to data on the workforce, volunteers and audience.

There are pockets of data available, but these tend to have been collected by specific sectors or organisations and are rarely directly comparable or repeated so as to build up a picture of who takes part over time. This could change though, following the creation of the Labour Market

Intelligence (LMI) toolkit that was funded by Historic England and developed by Icon and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

Following the principle of basing decisions on good evidence and learning from what evidence and past practice reveals, we have an opportunity to collect data individually and then collaborate on what that data tells us and how it can meaningfully support change.

#4: SKILLS AND CAPACITY

Tasks might include:

- HEF members use, and promote wider use, of the Heritage LMI Toolkit to generate labour market intelligence in a consistent form that can be shared and reused.
- Work with government to ensure that 'Taking Part' statistics provide meaningful data on sector engagement.
- Work together to analyse and use pooled LMI data, for example to identify skills gaps and needs (driven by demand, e.g. expansion of infrastructure projects) or to understand and address the impact of policy changes (e.g. operating outside of the European Union).
- Assess where there are gaps in training provision in relation to skills needs, and where there are opportunities to develop new ways of filling those gaps.

Outcome: A substantial expansion of training and apprenticeship programmes to meet need.

Significant work has been done on development of apprenticeship standards for the historic environment sector. These now exist at multiple levels and provide a new route to skills development. New routes are important because we want to provide options that are attractive to a wide range of people including those who don't want to or can't use established routes. For established routes, we need to open up access to

them and ensure they are attractive to people from many different backgrounds.

Tasks might include:

- Share lessons learned from the ground-breaking apprenticeships that are underway, including getting funding for them, recruiting to them, and engaging training providers. Do this regularly (online) to increase sector engagement with the opportunities that the apprenticeship programme provides.
- Encourage organisations to engage with the new apprenticeship standards to see how they match their skills needs and competencies and identify where new standards might need to be developed.
- Seek greater engagement with historic environment apprenticeships from training providers.
- Research the feasibility of a support network or consortia model that would enable small employers to use apprenticeships as a route to skills development and employment.
- Form a cross-sector group (i.e. with other allied sectors) that works together to develop a pre-training or employment scheme that will inform and engage people with the possibilities of a career in the heritage/creative/construction/tourism sectors and the different entry routes that are available.



Outcome: Heritage skills are valued and in demand.

The majority of England's heritage is cared for by private owners. We need to make it easy and straight forward for people to access skilled practitioners and understand the clear benefits of using them. Work to deliver this outcome could build on existing initiatives (such as work by the Client Demand Task Group and the Historic Environment Protection Reform Group). A complementary outcome would be that decision-makers and industry understand the positive role that historic environment can play in delivering high-quality development and jobs.

Tasks might include:

- Work with groups that represent owners of historic buildings to understand their needs, e.g. information, access to skills, financial support.
- Review the heritage protection system to identify ways of embedding heritage skills at each stage.
- Publish a joint document to promote traditional buildings skills and provide guidance on the importance of using a practitioner with the heritage skills for historic buildings.
- Develop a website to encourage the use of accredited heritage professionals.

USING THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The goal of this framework is to provide a structure that HEF can use to focus the effort of its task and topic groups. It provides HEF members with a picture of the collective priorities for collaboration. The outcomes won't all be relevant to all HEF members but the process of developing this framework has sought to ensure that the outcomes that are included have broad support.

Where the framework will bring most value is as a tool for identifying what each task group should focus on each year. In a change from previous models of HEF collaboration, the Forum now has the advantage of personnel that can bring the sector, and other partners, together to deliver measurable outputs and impact. It is envisaged that in the autumn of each year, HEF uses the framework to discuss and agree which outcomes should form the focus of task group activity (one outcome per group) for the

following year. On direction from HEF, the HEF manager with support from the HEF steering group will develop an outline of the activity and expected outputs associated with each task group's outcome. This brief will be reviewed by HEF and, once agreed, will form the basis of the task group action plan and for achieving buy-in from HEF members and other partners to deliver the activity that has been agreed.

As stated in the introduction, it is intended that the framework will be used flexibly. Some of the outcomes (or suggested actions) might be better delivered through standing 'topic groups' rather than time-limited annual task groups; some other areas, such as collaboration to generate sector views on a specific policy issue, may require a much faster turnaround time than a year's work – the key will be to use the framework as a guide and to adapt its implementation as needed.

Finally, it will need to be reviewed. The new HEF model for collaboration provides resource (personnel) for both dissemination of, and evaluation of, the things that HEF is doing to support research, conservation, presentation, enjoyment and use of the historic environment in England. This framework has been put together under the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic. Things may look very different in two years' time and if we have learnt anything from the last five years it's that the political, social, economic and environmental landscape evolve rapidly over a five-year time span and we need to review, adapt and reimagine to remain relevant.



Endnotes

¹ Historic environment definition: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora (National Planning Policy Framework).

² Heritage and the Economy (2019) Historic England.

³ The Heritage 2020 programme ran from 2015-2020 and supported collaboration amongst the historic environment sector on five strategic themes. It brought together over 50 organisations.

⁴ Britain's Choice: Common Ground and Division in 2020s Britain (2020) More in Common.

⁵ Heritage and Society (2019) Historic England.

⁶ The heritage sector in England and its impact on the economy (2019) report by Cebr for Historic England; Heritage for Inclusive Growth (2019) RSA in partnership with the British Council.

⁷ Places That Make Us (2017); Why Places Matter to People (2019) National Trust.

⁸ This Girl Can – Sport England's campaign (2015) to improve women's participation in sport.

⁹ There's no place like old homes (2019) Historic England.

¹⁰ Heritage and the Economy (2019) Historic England.

¹¹ Heritage Counts is an annual publication of trends, insights and data about the heritage sector produced by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum.

¹² Historic England – Listed buildings: identification and extent.

¹³ Heritage Maintenance Funds: Cost/Benefit Analysis (2018).

¹⁴ See emerging evidence from the High Streets Heritage Action Zones.

¹⁵ High Streets Heritage Action Zones (Historic England); Transforming Places through Heritage (Architectural Heritage Fund).

¹⁶ See case studies from the Architectural Heritage Fund: <http://ahfund.org.uk/recentcasestudies>

¹⁷ Inspiring Creativity, Heritage & The Creative Industries (2019) The Heritage Alliance.

¹⁸ Regional data available in The heritage sector in England and its impact on the economy (2019) report by Cebr for Historic England.

¹⁹ The heritage sector in England and its impact on the economy (2019) report by Cebr for Historic England.

²⁰ Taking Part 2018/19 statistical release (heritage) Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

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