**HEF Heritage Skills Demand Group**

**Terms of Reference**

The HEF Heritage Skills Demand Group (HSDG) is a topic-group of the Historic Environment Forum (HEF). It operates within the wider principles of the Historic Environment Forum (HEF).

**1 Role of Group**

HSDG’s role is to suggest, examine, recommend and help to implement proposals, both reactively and proactively, to ensure that owners of heritage assets in England appreciate when they need heritage skills, are able to locate those skills, and actually use them in practice, in the interest of achieving high-quality outcomes for heritage, and of achieving a sustainable balance of demand and supply and resilience in the market(s) for heritage skills.

**2 Membership**

HSDG membership is open to all HEF member bodies and others, as appropriate (generally not more than one HSDG seat per body), subject to the agreement of the Group, with a view to maintaining a broad balance of interest and expertise across the Group. HSDG can agree via the Chair(s) to invite observer and other expert members (who may be additional representatives from HSDG member bodies) to join the Group and its sub-groups for meetings or initiatives. A member of the HEF team will be a standing observer and will provide Secretariat support.

**3 Accountability**

Members are representatives (rather than delegates) of the organisations from which they are drawn. They should make clear if/when they are speaking in a personal capacity. Their organisation may send an alternate or additional representative when a member is unavailable for a meeting or where specialist expertise would be useful (in accordance with 2) above). There is no limit to terms of membership except in the eventuality of a member leaving their organisation.

HSDG itself can take a view on a matter under discussion but, when it does so, member organisations retain the ability to comment independently on proposals.

**4 Confidentiality**

Members will report back to their organisations but, given the exploratory nature and potential sensitivity of some of the matters which are the subject of the Group’s discussions, some matters are likely to be confidential. Confidential matters will be identified during the meeting, such matters should not be discussed by members outside their immediately relevant colleagues within their organisations.

**5 Reporting to HEF**

HSDG normally reports to formal meetings of HEF. A short, normally written report is made to each formal meeting of HEF, based on notes and action points from those meetings, with written and verbal enlargement at HEF meetings where necessary. Further reports can be made to other HEF meetings as appropriate, upon agreement with HEF Secretariat.

HEF Secretariat will provide HEF Communications Updates to group members and the Group will provide material for these Updates, as appropriate.

**6 Resourcing**

The Group has no resources itself, but HEF intends to provide secretarial and possibly task support where appropriate and possible in resourcing terms. This should be agreed by the group and HEF. Whilst no support can be guaranteed, it is HEF’s intention to support the Group.

**7 Working methods**

• HSDG determines its workload considering priorities in the sector and in discussion within the Group.

• Chair and secretariat: HSDG will normally have two Co-Chairs, from different parts of the sector. Where possible, HEF will provide secretariat support as above.

• The Group meets three or four times a year – formal HSDG meetings, as below. It may meet at other times, and as working and sub-groups, as appropriate.

• HSDG may convene sub-groups to consider individual initiatives where necessary. These may take the form of sub-sectoral groups. All HSDG members can however involve themselves in all the work of the Group.

• HSDG will normally seek consensus, but, if that is not achieved, a majority view of those at present at a meeting or otherwise communicating a view (one per member body) is sufficient to constitute HSDG’s formal view on a matter.

• See also Accountability above.

**8 Meetings**

• Formal HSDG meetings are timed to precede formal HEF meetings (currently 3 per year), ordinarily allowing time for deadlines for papers (ie more than two weeks before HEF meetings).

• Other meetings and meetings of sub-groups can be convened at any time.

• Meetings are convened by/on behalf of the Chair(s), following consultation with the Group (usually after agreement of a programme for future meetings).

• Extraordinary meetings can be called by any member at the discretion of the Chair(s) and by agreement of the Group.

• Meetings may be in person or on-line or a mixture of the two.

• The Chair(s) will organise the meetings, and will chair them, though sub-groups may be chaired by other members of the Group, and other members may carry out work on behalf of the Group.

• Non-HEF members may be invited to meetings, as agreed within the Group.

• Papers and other materials circulated within the Group will usually be confidential, except where the Group decides to circulate papers more widely and invite wider discussion of matters under consideration.

• Member bodies may request that papers be sent to an additional nominee within their organisations, for information.

• Agendas and notes of action of HSDG meetings are not normally made public, though summaries of meetings and activity may be published on its webpages (see 9 below); other papers prepared for HSDG may be published more widely at its discretion.

**9 Web space**

HSDG has space on the HEF website for the publication of papers, as appropriate, such as:

* A summary of HSDG’s objectives and activities on the Topic Groups pages of the HEF website
* Any summaries of activity
* Any other resources, eg links to documents and documents produced by HSDG.

HEF Skills Demand Group: agreed – 03/03/2022

Historic Environment Forum: agreed – 14/03/2022