

SENSITIVE

MINUTES: 7th Heritage Council. 15th June 2022 / 10.30am-12pm

1	A summary of the meeting minutes will be published on gov.uk after prior circulation to members.	DCMS
1.1	DCMS and DLUHC to share stakeholder engagement plans linked to the legislative journey of the LURB.	DCMS & DLUHC
1.2	DLUHC to meet with Historic Houses to review concerns faced by private sector heritage owners with regards to planning reforms.	DLUHC
1.3	DLUHC to continue engagement with sector on digital recordkeeping through the Historic Environment Record Committee	DLUHC
1.4	DLUHC to review Environment Outcome Reports and Permitted Development Rights in consultation with the sector.	DLUHC
2.1	DCMS, DLUHC and BEIS to coordinate with the sector when meeting for the Energy Security Strategy review.	DCMS, DLUHC and BEIS
2.2	BEIS and sector to share intelligence concerning the use of the 0% VAT materials scheme.	BEIS and Heritage Alliance
3.1	Increase engagement between the sector and Visit Britain, sharing data and experiences.	Visit Britain and sector
3.2	DCMS to feed back to the sector relevant points on the XWH meeting concerning tourism and transport.	DCMS

In attendance:

Nigel Huddleston MP, Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society (MSTHCS)
Stuart Andrew MP, Minister for Housing, Stuart Andrew (Minister Andrew)
Lord Callanan, Minister for Business, Energy and Corporate Responsibility (Lord Callanan)
Robin Johnson, Marketing Director - Visit Britain (Robin Johnson)
Historic England (HE)
National Trust (NT)
National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF)
Heritage Alliance (HA)



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Historic Houses (HH)

English Heritage (EH)

Church of England (CoE)

Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (LGAO)

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)

Natural England (NE)

Landmark Trust (LT)

Historic Royal Palaces (HRP)

Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

Department for Transport (DfT)

Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Agriculture (DEFRA)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)

1. Welcome and introductions

- MSTHCS welcomed everyone to the seventh meeting of the Heritage Council.
- The Minutes of the 6th Heritage Council meeting were approved
- An adjustment to the Terms of Reference to the Heritage Council was acknowledged.

2. Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

- MSTHCS introduced Minister Andrew. Minister Andrew discussed the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and the heritage measures. Set out the department's intention for heritage protection and building on existing frameworks. Set out clauses 92, 93, 94 and 95.
- Minister Andrew thanked the sector and government officials for their engagement with the bill and his hopes for its successful implementation.
- HE highlighted the close link between Historic England and DLUHC in the drafting through staff secondment to DLUHC. HE Regarded this work as supportive of the review of the National Planning Policy Framework. HE are also aiming for a thorough and workable implementation phase.
- NLHF welcomed the draft bill. Enquired on when future engagement from the sector would be required by DCMS / DLUHC
- Minister Andrew recognised the significance of future engagement with the sector.
- SPAB encouraged the draft bill clauses and SPAB aim for non-dilution of them as the bill travels through the house. SPAB raised experience of working with LPAs and how clauses 93-95 will help the planning process. Raised concern with use of 'enhanced' in wording of clause 92 and the detachment of clause 185 from the rest of the clauses. Requested improvement to the statuses of locally listed buildings; more protection for conservation environments and continued engagement with SPAB and the heritage sector. Clause 95



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was also noted, although it was suggested that the interim protection measures in place in Wales could equally deliver the same outcome.

- HH had concerns with the LURB, starting with the fact that the Planning White Paper of 2020 contained commitments which are not present in the bill. Most heritage is owned privately, and many private owners of heritage properties have development proposals blocked by Local Planning Authorities. There was an opportunity for reform that has been missed by the limited measures of the LURB. On clause 95 specifically, BC is concerned that dropping compensation is not meeting the condition of 'accountability' for intelligent investment in buildings. Advised there had been no consultation with the sector on this clause, which removes a fundamental safeguard within the planning system for no apparent reason. There is in any case an alternative, which is the interim protection measures enjoyed in Wales but not in England. Was interested in the Historic England pilot for indemnification of councils issuing BPNs that has been running since 2018 - it would help to have seen the results of this pilot before the complete removal of compensation was enshrined in legislation.
- LGAO highlighted that local archaeology is in part managed by local planning systems. Regarded the statutory requirement to digitise Historic Environment Records (HERs) as raising standards and a recognition of local heritage and what it can offer society. Offered collaboration with DCMS and DLUHC to develop and deliver a system to manage digital HERs. Welcomed collaboration of Gov and experts, who are working together in the HER committee.
- NT celebrated the bill and recognised that it will foster a stronger approach. As a developer, NT recognises the significance of statutory environment records. Enquired if there was an intention to replace EIA/ SEAs with a new form of EOR. NT keen to ensure that the new arrangements for EOR cover the same scope as the current EIA/SEA, to protect cultural heritage and landscape, with the same weight as natural environment. How will this work? Raised general pressures to amend clause 116. However, NT keen to revisit the non-regression provisions in clause 120, which refers to Environmental law as defined by the Environment Bill. Enquired about the handling of strategic cross boundaries issues, and raises concerns around the replacement to the 'duty to cooperate' set out in the Bill, due to the voluntary nature of new spatial development strategies. Raises the challenge of capacity in constrained LPAs.
- HA advised it is keen to collaborate with DLUHC to foster future collaboration. Supportive of statutory HERs. Enquired about plans to protect sites of significance from demolition and to incentivise reuse of assets.
- Minister Andrew responded to comments from the Council and noted that a meeting has been arranged to discuss HH concerns and membership's experiences. Stated DLUHC intention for uniformity across LPAs. Welcomed LGAO offer of help on HERs. Responded to NT that the Environment Outcome Report needs review and welcomed suggestions.

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Actions

- **1.1 DCMS and DLUHC to share stakeholder engagement timeline linked to the legislative journey of the LURB, with the sector.**
- **1.2 DLUHC to meet with Historic Houses to review concerns faced by private sector heritage owners with regards to planning reforms.**
- **1.3 DHULC continue engagement with sector on digital recordkeeping through the Historic Environment Record Committee**
- **1.4 DLUHC to review Environment Outcome Reports and Permitted Development Rights in consultation with the sector.**

3. Energy Security Strategy

- MSTHCS introduced Lord Callanan.
- Lord Callanan introduced the government's Energy Security Strategy and investment to date in decarbonisation and programmes to support energy efficiency in UK homes and businesses. Set out a commitment to a public sector decarbonisation scheme.
- Minister Andrew followed, advising the HC of the government's review of planning barriers that owners face, when wanting to make adjustments to their homes. This will be coordinated through a project board attended by DCMS, DLUHC and BEIS. Highlighted this is in the early stages.
- NT outlined the organisation's intention to be net-zero by 2030 but that its biggest challenge is emissions from historic buildings. Highlighted need for amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG); a skilled workforce capable of undertaking retrofits; financial support for the sector. Reported the work NT is doing with the National Grid particularly with the distribution of energy from offshore through coastal AONB.
- HA raised that using energy efficient materials have limited benefits to their members and that a 0% VAT on repairs to properties would have a better impact. Raised concern that there is a 0% VAT on demolition of buildings but 20% VAT rate when repairing buildings. Suggested a grant pilot scheme in Heritage Action Zones would promote reuse over demolition. Shared a recent Historic Environment Forum publication on [Climate Change and Heritage](#).
- HH welcomed the review. Hoped the project board would take evidence from the sector. Concerned that the heritage section of the National Planning Policy Framework does not include the words 'climate change' anywhere in writing. Raised example of Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea with its good example of using a local building listed consent order to promote the use of solar panels on grade II listed buildings.
- EH outlined English Heritage decarbonisation efforts in the organisation and welcomed ES strategy. Enquired when energy efficiency funding would be available for non-domestic buildings in private ownership.

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- HE emphasised that historic buildings must be made more efficient, but with interventions appropriate for each place. Welcomed chance to look at the policy framework.
- CoE recently researched the highest emitting buildings, in pursuance of its own 2030 net zero carbon target. It showed that no matter how high the listing, reaching net zero carbon through a combination of retrofit and good management is possible. For many churches the measures needed to make a building carbon neutral are basic - draft curtains, fixing holes in windows, limiting heat loss, heating the people not the building though installing different types of heating system. Basically it is good maintenance - not everything needs to be big changes. Funding incentives to bring down the cost of technologies and grant funding for skilled installations are two major things that were identified to help achieve this.
- EH has also created solutions from its own research and experience which can usefully be shared with the wider network involved in retrofitting pre 1919 buildings. It has also been harnessing technology, installing smart sensors to understand more about the nuances of our site energy use and how to adapt accordingly.
- Lord Callanan responded to comments. Acknowledged that Energy Performance Certificates don't cover carbon emissions. Welcomed contributions to support the strategy review. Recognised the need for the National Grid to restructure its distribution system but constraints of budget and environmental impact.
- Minister Andrew responded to comments and emphasised the need for partnership between sectors and industry.

Actions

- **2.1 DCMS, DLUHC and BEIS to coordinate with the sector when meeting for the Energy Security Strategy review.**
- **2.2 BEIS and Heritage Alliance to share intelligence concerning the use of the 0% VAT Materials scheme.**

4. COVID-19 recovery and In-bound Tourism

- MSTHCS introduced Robin Johnson, Marketing Director of Visit Britain. RJ gave a presentation on current trends of inbound tourism to the UK. VB has this month recorded an overall 29% drop in flights compared to pre-pandemic levels. There is a global discrepancy of where visitors to the UK originate; Northern American visitor rates are reasonably high but Asian are very low. RJ set out the activity and campaigns of Visit Britain and its sector partnerships. Surmised that COVID-19 is not the only reason for reduced visitors to the UK, and that costs of visiting and entry requirements were also barriers to inbound tourism.
- EH thanked RJ for the presentation. Raised the issue that East Kent is perceived as gridlocked and resulting in reduced visitors to EH sites e.g. Dover Castle. Also a concern that high fuel costs and rail strikes would impact domestic tourism.



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- MSTHCS advised there was a X-Government meeting on these issues.
- HRP Advised RJ that it records each visitor's country of origin and that there were currently similar trends to VB data; 80% of European visitors and 0.1% of Chinese visitors compared to before the pandemic.
- LT reported to the Council high levels of occupancy in sites across 2023 (95% compared to 84% pre-pandemic) and that 2024 bookings, when they open, will help with forecasting and if there is a decrease in demand. Noted higher operating costs (heat and light up 250%) for the organisation.
- CofE noted encouragement for domestic tourism is seen as the priority for most places of worship.
- NLHF highlighted the Heritage Pulse Research Panel for the Heritage sector and the [Feb 2022 findings](#).
- EH raised that reinstating the ID card as satisfactory for school party visits would make a considerable difference to visitor numbers and indeed encourage future tourism as those school children become adults and choose GB for their holidays.
- HA made the point that research from Tourism Alliance supports EH's point above - school visits are a real concern as if a small number of children in the class don't have a passport the whole lot can't go. Scotland really seeing this impact too.
- RJ thanked members for their comments and that it was really important to have feedback from the sector, as well as real-time data sharing.
- MSTHCS discussed the Tourism Recovery Plan.

Actions

- **3.1 Engagement between the sector and Visit Britain, sharing data and experiences.**
- **3.2 DCMS to feed back to the sector relevant points on the XWH meeting concerning tourism and transport.**

5. AOB and closing remarks

- MSTHCS thanked the attendees and encouraged ongoing contribution and discussion of the issues covered today.
- MSTHCS advised that the Heritage Statement will be published soon, ideally before the summer recess.