

First Meeting of the Cross Government, Cross Sector Heritage Council

Thursday 3 May, 9:00am -10:30am

MINUTES

OFFICIAL

Summary of actions

1	A summary of the meeting minutes will be published on gov.uk after prior circulation to members.	DCMS
2	ToR 2.C should say organisations and departments working together.	DCMS
3.1	DCMS to carry out a deep dive of upcoming policy over the summer and prepare a forward look for the next Council meeting.	DCMS
3.2	DCMS to work with HEF on future agenda items and top items for November. Confirmation of agenda will be issued in September to allow sufficient time for papers.	DCMS
3.3	An official from HMT will attend the sector's next tax meeting convened by the Heritage Alliance	HMT/HS*
4.1	Defra and the sector to discuss how the heritage sector can best support the development and rollout of Environmental Land Management Pilots/CAP replacement.	DEFRA & NT
4.2	Discussion to consider how the Council and Government can work together on rural connectivity.	DCMS & NT
4.3	Discussion on natural capital and heritage, building on HE and NE's work on natural capital accounting.	DCMS/DEFRA & HE
5.1	The Heritage Alliance to coordinate a response representing the views of sector members on the current NPPF and Planning Guidance drafts to address concerns on drafting for MHCLG.	THA
5.2	MHCLG to discuss drafting points with the sector/HEF/Council members ahead of final publication of the NPPF in the summer. MHCLG will convene a round table discussion with sector representatives and update at next meeting.	MHCLG/HS
5.3	MHCLG to have further discussions with the sector on 'Building up' and update at the next meeting.	MHCLG

*HS= Heritage Sector members

Attendees

Chair - Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Michael Ellis MP

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

Department for Education (DFE)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

- attended by Lord Gardiner of Kimble

Department for International Development (DFID)

Department for Transport (DFT)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

HM Treasury (HMT)

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

Historic England (HE)

Historic Houses (HH)

National Trust (NT)

Natural England (NE)

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)

The Heritage Alliance (THA)

Item 1: Introductions

1. After introductions, the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Michael Ellis MP, introduced the Heritage Council. As a commitment in the Heritage Statement, government's strategy for heritage, the Council's objectives are to: provide a link between the heritage sector and all government departments with an interest in, or impact on, the heritage sector; enable dialogue; and drive progress on key policy areas for heritage.
2. The Council aims to ensure a better coordinated and collaborative implementation of heritage policy in England.

Item 2: Terms of Reference

3. The Minister for Heritage reflected on the positive responses and engagement received across government with attendance from most Departments that transect with heritage policy.
4. The Minister also reflected that there will be some organisations who will be disappointed not to be invited to sit on the Council. A close relationship with the Historic Environment Forum (HEF) will ensure that the Council has access to sector expertise from within HEF organisations and to the wider sector through their wider networks.

5. The Terms of Reference were agreed, subject to 2.C being amended to say organisations and departments working together. A summary of the meeting minutes will be published on gov.uk after prior circulation to members.

Item 3: Future Agenda Items

6. The Minister for Heritage set out his proposal to commission a mapping exercise across departmental policy in order to drive proactive discussion with a 'forward look' of upcoming policy development which may impact on heritage as well as sector developments that could be weaved into policy development. DCMS will then circulate the map to Council members for feedback and will share with the HEF to get wider sector input. This was welcomed by sector members and all departments agreed to assist. DCMS will carry out a deep dive of upcoming policy over the summer and prepare the forward look for the next Council meeting.
7. It was agreed that some standing items should be included on the agenda. Lord Gardiner suggested a contribution from Defra should be a standing item.
8. Topics for consideration at future Council meetings include:
 - Fiscal measures for heritage, including encouraging investment and discussion of new Green Book guidance (HMT)
 - Heritage and Soft Power (DFID/FCO)
 - Update on Brexit (DEXEU)
 - Update on NPPF (MHCLG) and Housing, including the Clean Growth Strategy (MHCLG/BEIS)
 - Disposal of Assets
9. DCMS will work with the HEF on future agenda items and top items for November. Confirmation of agenda items will be issued in September to allow sufficient time for papers.
10. HMT offered support for discussion on asset sales and advised Tax reliefs are considered to be inefficient, ill-targeted and not value for money. It was agreed that an Official from HMT will attend the sector's next tax meeting.

Item 4: DEFRA paper on the 25 Year Environment Plan

11. Lord Gardiner of Kimble introduced the discussion paper from Defra setting the focus on how the sector can best collaborate with Defra across multiple areas. The cultural and natural environment are inextricably linked. The countryside is a huge draw for tourists and is a living cultural resource.

12. Defra agreed to engage at official level with sector representatives about the next steps on the 25 year plan and to provide an update at the November meeting.
13. It was agreed that the following discussions would take place before the next Council meeting:
- Environmental Land Management Pilots: How can the heritage sector best support the development and rollout of the pilots. The sector is keen to provide expertise on the heritage impact of the pilot schemes.
 - How Council and Government can best work together on rural connectivity and 'do it well'. Good rural connectivity is important to the National Trust as a significant rural business and a landlord. As a conservation charity and the owner of many of our most precious landscapes it is also important that infrastructure is delivered in the most appropriate way for these important places. The Trust would be pleased to continue working with Government on effective ways to resolve some of the challenges we have all experienced. DCMS Heritage to progress with DCMS Mobile Team.
 - How a natural capital approach can be used in a catalytic way to inform planning and investment decisions and how the work being done between HE and Natural England on natural capital accounting can be factored into the implementation of the 25 Year Environment Plan.
14. The sector welcomed a model of working together, especially on the future of CAP and having an opportunity to integrate heritage more than the current 1% that goes towards heritage. Nationally important sites have been protected because they are in the CAP program. There is a balance to be struck and knowing what is in an area up front is essential. Early engagement with the sector on a replacement program will be key.
15. Sector members also raised three specific asks for heritage in the Agriculture Bill around replicating and improving the wording from the Agriculture Act 1986, amending the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 to cover archaeology without structures, and Class Consent One reform.

Item 5: MHCLG discussion paper on revisions to the NPPF.

16. Simon Gallagher, Director of Planning represented MHCLG with a paper on the revisions to the NPPF. The revisions need to bring forward land for housing to address social and economic challenges.
17. It has not been MHCLG's intention to change anything in terms of heritage but he acknowledged that the minor change of a word can have a big impact. It was noted

that words can be read as a change of intent. Developers want clarity and the sector are concerned word changes will weaken what currently works well.

18. It was agreed that sector Council members would coordinate a response on the current NPPF and Planning Guidance drafts to address concerns on drafting for MHCLG to consider asap. MHCLG will discuss drafting points with the sector/HEF/Council members ahead of final publication of the NPPF in the summer to ensure there are no unintended errors in drafting.
19. MHCLG also agreed to have further discussions with the sector on 'Building up' upon which they are committed to consult and therefore will put something to the sector on this in due course. The Minister requested an update on these items for the next meeting.