

## Third Heritage Council minutes – 7 May 2019

### In attendance:

Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Michael Ellis MP (ME) (Chair)  
Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive - Historic England (DW)  
Dr Ben Cowell, Director General - Historic Houses (BC)  
Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive - National Lottery Heritage Fund (RS)  
Lizzie Glithero-West, Chief Executive - Heritage Alliance (LGW)  
Ingrid Samuels, Director of Policy, Historic Environment - National Trust (IS)  
Matthew McKeague, Chief Executive - Architectural Heritage Fund (MM)  
Caroline Cottorell, Natural England (CC)  
Davide Minotti, Deputy Director for Environmental Regulations - DEFRA (DM)  
Stephen Jones, Director of CLoG - MHCLG (SJ)  
Phil Duffy, Director, Enterprise and Growth - HMT (PD)  
Sarah Lingard, Deputy Head of Soft Power and External Affairs - FCO (SL)  
Giles Smith, Deputy Director for Heritage, Tourism and Cultural Diplomacy - DCMS  
Keith Nichol, Head of Cultural Diplomacy - DCMS (KN)  
Danny Kruger, Expert Advisor - DCMS (DK)  
Claire Smith, Economic Migration Policy - HO (CS)

### Apologies:

Joshua James, DFID

### **Welcome and Introductions**

- ME welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the Heritage Council. ME stated that the council provides an important forum for collaboration between government and the sector.

### **Minutes and Actions**

- ME queried whether the council were content with minutes. Everyone in attendance was content and had no comments to make.
- DW updated on actions relating to Planning Practice Guidance revisions (where they hope to move onto the second phase soon) and the sector's concerns relating to MHCLG's consultation on 'building up' (where he felt it was important for there to be sensible exceptions).

**Action:** SJ to feedback to MHCLG planning colleagues about getting density and HE and THA to engage directly with relevant MCHLG colleagues.

### **DEFRA item on Environment Bill**

- DM outlined progress on the Environment Bill. The first part will focus on replacing principles when we leave the EU. The second aspect will focus on advice and scrutiny, and creating an Office for Environmental Protection. The third aspect will focus on an environmental improvement plan.
- ME highlighted that there is significant interest from the Heritage sector in this bill. In particular, ME noted that there was discontent about the lack of reference to historic environment.

- ME updated the Council on a discussion with Michael Gove about the bill, who is sympathetic about sector concerns. ME argued there needs to be a longer term discussion about responsibility of departments to environment and suggested there is a memorandum of understanding as to the delineation of these areas.
- IS thanked DEFRA for their engagement and was glad the bill takes a holistic approach to the countryside, but raised concerns about the bill being siloed. Both natural and historic environment are interdependent. The National Trust would like to work more collaboratively with DEFRA going forward.
- DM confirmed he will take back this feedback and speak to relevant colleagues. Silo working is not what DEFRA are trying to do. DM recognised the interplay between natural environment and historic environment and anything which can be done to promote that understanding is something DEFRA will support.
- IS wondered if it might be helpful to have another meeting about the documentation to be published alongside the Bill and for DEFRA to publish further information about the scope of the bill ahead of the launch.

**Action:** LGW to circulate Heritage Alliance paper on environmental policy.

#### **Heritage and Place**

- SJ noted that £55m of the £675m Future High Streets Fund was for heritage places. MHCLG was currently at the EOI stage and expected to announce before summer recess. MHCLG are also stepping up engagement with LEPs to engage on LISs to hone industrial strategies in different parts of the country.
- SJ also noted that MHCLG had recently announced (February 2019) a Stronger Towns Fund. James Brokenshire spoke to DCMS SoS on how we engender and improve the chances of people in towns.
- DW was grateful for the level of cooperation in play. However, LEPs can vary greatly and some do not utilise heritage assets. LEPs do not all prioritise investing in heritage but have a vital role to play in delivery. DW was pleased to see the connected growth manual targeting heritage so much.
- DK spoke on local prosperity. DK clarified that one aspect is the heritage manual that just been published. DK noted that a generic approach is not possible for LEPs. DK has a small team and they cannot deliver an intensive programme/ strategy for 35 LEPs.
- DW argued that the sector need a strategy for engaging with LEPs. RK noted key objectives for NHLF is to enable heritage assets to make places thrive. What they have found in investment is that joining up culture and place can have a big impact.
- SJ was encouraged by the enthusiasm for engaging with LEPs. Noted it is good to work with LEPs individually and not treat them as a whole group. SJ clarified that on the strategy writing they are being co-produced between central Government and the LEPs as they want to make sure strategies talk to a whole Government agenda.

**Action:** Heritage Sector to consider how best it can strategically engage LEPs including what role regional HEFs may play in this.

#### **Soft Power Strategy**

- KN noted it would be misguided to think soft power is just about influencing through activity which happens abroad. What we do within the UK is just as important.

Heritage sites in the UK are a major aspect of this. KN suggested we should want more international heritage-focused engagement and that we should target priority countries who are keen to engage on culture issues.

- BC argued that it is important the sector becomes more aligned and less atomised. Historic Houses is working to address this.
- ME clarified that the Foreign Secretary said soft power is top of his agenda. Heritage is important for the economy and how we project ourselves in the world.
- IS stated that the National Trust works with other trusts around the world and is keen to engage more in the capacity of the 'mother trust'. It is also important to think about sustainable tourism.
- DW noted that HE keen to work with FCO and DCMS on this. Need to be realistic about charging for services: HE has already invested significantly in China.

**Action:** KN and SL offered to convene a Heritage meeting on the soft power strategy to test ideas on mainstreaming soft power and engaging with this audience more specifically.

### **Immigration**

- CS clarified that free movement is ending and that there will be a new single global system. There will be a new Temporary Workers Route which will not be subject to a skill or salary threshold. It will enable people to enter at any salary for up to 12 months. This is uncapped and will act as a safety valve for the economy. Students will continue as normal and Government will support international students with an increased post study offer to remain in the UK.
- PD flagged that as well as looking at the future immigration system, need to think about how the mobility framework with the EU can serve the needs of the heritage sector.
- LGW said it was good to hear that issues have been addressed. However, the MAC recommendation on 30k salary will be damaging. Rare heritage skills can be jeopardised. LGW also noted the UK must enable expertise to move between the UK and EU.
- ME noted that many sound points have been made. Some aspects of the new system will improve what we have now but the issue is how it is marketed.

**Action:** HO committed to engage with the heritage sector on concerns and issues over the summer. It will be useful for LGW to meet with CS to discuss.

### **Future Agenda items**

The following items were suggested by the council for future meetings:

- DEFRA on a rolling basis
- Heritage and Health (DH)
- Fiscal (HMT)
- Cultural Capital and the economic case for heritage
- LA resources / National Planning Policy Framework MHCLG
- Public sector asset disposals and the impact on community groups (MOD & MOJ)