**CIfA Heritage 2020 final response**

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**4. With which sector do you most identify?**

**We recognise that the division into 'historic environment sector' and 'higher education/ academic sector' is simplistic but it is used here to identify potentially different perspectives on research needs, so please choose the best fit.**

Historic Environment Sector

**5. If you answered 'historic environment sector' above, what research do you need that isn't being produced?**

There are undoubtedly areas in which there is a dearth of research, however, it is often notable that we are not aware of existing research that is undertaken, whether by academics or within the professional sector. It would therefore be desirable to consider how we could share our discoveries better. This includes from within all branches of the professional sector (e.g. research undertaken by contractors within the planning system, as well as by national bodies) and academic sector.

One idea would be to institute an annual symposium for research students and early career researchers where research which has a specific relevance to professional practice could be promoted, which could lead to organisational partnerships. It may be that the Heritage 2020 brand would be an appropriate one for a symposium like this.

**6. If you answered 'higher education/ academic sector' above - what research do you think that the historic environment sector needs, that it doesn't know it needs?**

N/A

**9. What would you identify as the priorities and/or concerns of each of the groups of local authorities, private developers or community groups, relating to taking on and managing publicly owned heritage assets, that aren't being addressed through existing advice and guidance?**

Local authorities should focus on developing practices (possibly assisted by sector-produced guidance and training for the community transfer and management of smaller assets, such as discreet archaeological sites or monuments (see existing schemes for war memorials, as as example). Local green spaces and archaeological sites are strong candidates for community management agreements in this regard (as exemplified by Archaeology Scotland's Adopt-a-Monument scheme) as they are less susceptible to adverse effects resulting from a lack of support, resource, or skills to undertake complex management processes like running a museum. This latter trend should be resisted unless there are clear safeguards for sustainability and financial protection, as well as necessary skills - e.g. to maintain collections.

The concerns of community groups are likely to be diverse. Community groups may be driven by a perceived priority to prevent harm to a community/heritage asset and may directly organise to fill a void left by shrinking council services. They may, alternately, be motivated by a range of proactive goals to celebrate local heritage or enhance a sense of place, or improve social opportunities and enjoyment for the community. In the former case, the overriding concern is for adequate support and facilitation to be provided (both in terms of guidance, training, and financial support). The sector has engaged in schemes (such as the SPAB’s Maintenance Cooperatives project) to train local volunteers in this way. Appropriate local authority facilitation and enabling action is also necessary, particularly where public ownership and management agreements must be sought. However, the Adopt-a-Monument programme may again provide an existing sucessful model for mediation by the sector. Again, local authority cuts have had an impact on this, with a decline in outreach posts within local authorities and limited capacity of other specialists such as Archaeological Officers often limiting this type of involvement. Perhaps an exception to this is where landscape partnerships are in operation. These schemes have huge potential to provide mechanisms for community initiatives and provide critical professional facilitation. Without this type of capacity, community groups will find barriers to block their potential.

**10. What do you identify as the core services that should be provided by Local Authorities with respect to the historic environment?**

1. **Maintain Historic Environment Records (HERs):**

The bedrock of any archaeology or historic environment service is the Historic Environment Record (HER), which should be a comprehensive, accessible and authoritative record of the local historic environment. This service must be supported with appropriate expertise. The HER should be regularly updated, adding new records for newly discovered heritage assets (generally this occurs at a rate of 2-5% per year), maintaining access to public (usually free or for a small charge) and developers (for a reasonable charge). It would be beneficial if a degree of uniformity in charging was pursued.

The HER is used to formulate advice to local authorities for informed planning and decision making, to communities engaged in neighbourhood planning, and to inform those who develop, manage, interpret or study the local historic environment.

1. **Advise on the implementation of national planning guidance and development of local policy to sustain and enhance the significance and setting of local heritage assets**

Local authority archaeological and conservation advisors advise on strategic development and local plans:

* They appraise land proposed to be allocated for development
* They ensure local plan policies take a sustainable approach to the historic environment, and seek to exploit its contribution to creating growth, jobs and local identity
* They advise and manage the archaeological and conservation implications of major infrastructure development and utilities
* They trigger, where necessary, and review, environmental impact assessments

Local authority archaeological and conservation advisors advise planning authorities and developers on planning proposals that may affect archaeological sites and historic buildings:

* Local authority archaeological and conservation advisors screen all development proposals
* Where necessary they require further archaeological information to enable sustainable planning decisions to be made
* In some case they recommend archaeological conditions on planning permissions
* They advise developers on managing risk, e.g. from potential constraints caused by nationally important undesignated archaeological sites and/or human remains
* They encourage and help developers to create opportunities for community engagement
* They provide advice that can be followed through to appeal if necessary
* In extreme cases they advise planning officers of the need for enforcement

1. **Monitor compliance with planning requirements including conditions on behalf of planning authorities**

* Local authority archaeology and conservation advisors assess the standard of fieldwork and recording, normally specified to comply with Institute for Archaeologists professional standards
* They monitor the quality of post excavation assessment, publication and archiving – to ensure that the results of work are reported in the right way
* They promote broader public benefit through enhancing understanding and local engagement

1. **Annual outputs**

* Local authority archaeology advisors make 15,000 positive planning recommendations annually
* This represents 3% of all planning applications
* Their recommendations result in 5-6,000 archaeological, development-related projects annually, levering in over £100 million of developer (mainly private-sector) funding for new public understanding and appreciation of the past
* Where possible they help developers find sustainable solutions that protect, or impact minimally, on those archaeological sites that are significant
* Of all the planning applications, only 100-150 are refused where archaeology is one of the reasons – usually because the development could not be made sustainable or because more information is required

**v. Advice on the management of the rural historic environment**

It is not only development that may have an adverse impact on important archaeological sites and historic landscapes. The effects of agriculture on sites in the rural landscape can result in severe damage and erosion, even to protected sites. Accordingly, local authority advisors

* Provide advice to Natural England and Defra on options for improving the management of archaeological sites, historic buildings and the wider historic landscape through agri-environment schemes
* Through these schemes support environmentally sensitive farming and the income it brings to rural communities

**vi. Community outreach and education**

Local authorities are focuses of their communities, and local authority archaeology advisers respond to the strong community interest in local heritage by:

* Working with all elements of the community to foster understanding of the historic environment
* Where resources permit, leading – or enabling – community-based projects to explore the local historic environment, and through this contributing to skills development, learning and community cohesion

This role is particularly under threat due to recent budget cuts, as many authorities prioritise core development control functions, however there is a strong relevance to this type of, particularly enabling, activity, as localism agendas seek to improve the utilisation of community enthusiasm for heritage, and funding from the likes of the Heritage Lottery Fund continues to drive local heritage value and protection (this is a clear cross-over with the Constructive Conservation and Sustainable Management Group).

**11. How do you see the new Apprenticeship models as best building the capacity of the workforce of the historic environment sector?**

Apprenticeships are a positive way in which local authorities and sector employers can address common issues of access, capacity and succession. For the archaeology sector, apprenticeships are one way in which contractors should be able to seek to narrow the skills gap, ensure effective succession planning, and train new entrants into the profession. Many of the larger contractors are developing extremely promising programmes, but it is important to encourage professionals to design apprenticeships into larger projects. In some cases, this may be possible to secure through planning conditions. HE should expect to see commitment to the apprenticeships in any successful bid for SMC for archaeological purposes, and in most archaeological fieldwork it funds. Funded projects like the HLF’s Skills for the Future have been extremely successful.

Central government apprenticeships schemes could be better utilised within the sector. Many small and medium-sized contractors are potential beneficiaries from government support for apprenticeships. Involvement in these schemes could be encouraged by sector actors, or guidance developed.

CIfA have published good practice guidance for designing workplace learning schemes and is available here: <http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/2014.PPP_.Training-toolkit-web_0.pdf> along with supporting resources, also on the website.

**12. What other means are there to increase the capacity for the protection of the historic environment including, for example, contributions of volunteers?**

One aspect of increasing capacity is surely protecting existing capacity. It will therefore be important to address the weaknesses of proposed and agreed changes to the planning system.

Encouraging and equipping local stakeholders to be better advocates for the historic environment is an important activity for the sector to be involved in. The CBA’s Local Heritage Engagement Network seeks to do this by providing structured guidance and a peer-learning network where examples of campaigns and advocacy concerns could promote action in other parts of the country.

However, there is a concern that using volunteers to increase capacity is considered primarily as a way to add value to existing professional capacity, and is not seen as a substitute for such things as core Local Authority services and adequate legislation and policy.

**13. What are the key challenges for improving diversity in public engagement with the historic environment in England?**

The continued focus on most sector activity on a narrow spectrum of 'national' heritage, without giving equal attention to diverse local heritages. Although fantastic work to access and celebrate diverse local heritages does take place, nationally, focus on tourist assets creates a disenfranchisement among diverse audiences.

It would be extremely interesting to see data collected of recent immigrants and BME communities as to their perceptions of 'heritage'. This data should look deeply at issues such as belonging and identity, and not simply attendance. Research should consider heritage in a broad sense, and seek to assess whether local heritage and typical visitor attractions are viewed differently. A qualitative approach to this issue would also be beneficial to understand personal reflections. It is, however, extremely encouraging that recent Historic England data shows a narrowing gap in participation and visitation of heritage sites among traditionally underrepresented social groups.

**14. Where do the opportunities for increasing diversity in public engagement with the historic environment in England lie?**

In addition to diversity in public engagement, it is important to consider access and diversity within the professional workforce. There is a significant lack of diversity within the sector itself, which needs to be both recognised and addressed. We don’t have a series of priority actions for this, but we would very much welcome a recognition of initiatives that recognise the lack of diversity within the sector. Achievable, practical, examples of sector activities include; ensuring apprenticeships recognise equal opportunities, or producing guidance for disability access to events. A more diverse sector should *de facto* be able to more readily engage with a more diverse public.

**15. What are the (one or two) most important practical actions a heritage body with limited resources might take to increase diversity as a first step?**

1. Review content on their web-pages and publically accessible material and consider audience appeal
2. Explore partnerships with organisations which work regularly with diverse communities to share knowledge and seek opportunities for new projects or practices.

**16. What support might you need from Heritage 2020 when talking to local politicians about the value of heritage?**

1. An agreed set of shared principles for why heritage matters & sector-wide commitment to promote them
2. A list of broad sector goals for each annual period (e.g. timetable for influencing manifestos, elections, policy agenda, party conferences)

**19. Are there any other comments that you would like to make on this first phase of Heritage 2020 activity?**

It is important to progress to a stage where action plans are in place and projects are being taken forward. Some groups may wish to pursue actions jointly with other bodies, or perhaps look to reassess whether the right bodies are on the right committees. An updated mandate to all sector bodies may be useful to prompt stakeholders to consider internal changes as a result of the programme's activity.