

Appendix 1: Minutes from Task & Finish Groups

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Task & Finish Group Meeting 1 – 16/12/25

Members present: Cllrs Evans (Chair), Sykes, Grimshaw; Mark Strong (CVS),

Apologies: Cllrs Theobald, Earthey, Fishleigh, Cattell

Witnesses/Officers supporting: Nick Tyson (Curator, Regency Town House), Ian Harrabin (Chairman, Historic Coventry Trust), Steve Tremlett (BHCC Planning Policy and Heritage Manager), Natalie Sacks-Hammond, Giles Rossington, Luke Proudfoot (BHCC Overview & Scrutiny Team).

Cllr Evans (AE) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking witnesses for finding the time to attend. She reminded everyone that the meeting was not in public, but that the Task & Finish Group (TFG) would be producing a report which would be published, with evidence from witnesses referenced or quoted. A note of the meeting will be circulated to all witnesses to check for accuracy.

Nick Tyson (NT) started by telling the story of the Regency Town House where a small, dedicated group of people rescued a building that was in disrepair. NT lived for a time in the US and was impressed with the great care they took to look after their heritage assets, taking a “can do” attitude. NT believed that harm was being done to the historic environment back in the UK and wanted to take an active stand. The rich historic architecture in Brighton & Hove has always been a top reason for people visiting the city. In 1992 the Brunswick Town Charitable Trust was established and took over the ownership of 13 Brunswick Square with the aim of restoring it. They received funding from the Lottery, the EU, international agencies, and gifts from local people. This enabled them to develop a wide range of activities such as heritage open days and digital projects.

The Trust took over responsibility for the basement annex at number 10 and managed to get the first Heritage Lottery Grant 0001. There continued to be input from both the private and charitable sectors, but NT said that they have never managed to get enough funding to meet the overheads and have not yet fully restored the building as planned. NT is thinking about

the legacy for the building as he puts in a lot of his own time and money towards the project but once he is unable to do so, he doesn't know what will happen to the Town House. It needs to be financially sustainable to survive. They could open the house full time with a viable business plan to generate more money or fully finish the restoration so there could be a full-time occupant, but that would be at great cost. Funding is a big issue.

NT believes that the National Lottery Fund has been compromised as it was meant to be for the 'small fry' but government cuts have been so bad that everyone is being referred to the National Lottery and smaller projects are competing for funding against much larger projects such as the Royal Pavilion.

Recently, the owner of the building behind the Town House offered them a chance to buy their property. This would mean they could run more than one event at a time, be more accessible and showcase the back streets of the area, which is an exciting prospect.

Cllr Sykes (OS) asked about their relationship with the Council and what the Council could do to help the Town House. He also asked about the curtilage of the area. NT said he was aware of the funding issues the Council faces. The Town House's biggest audience is passer bys and it's them they need to connect with. Signage displaying the web address and opening times on the promenade or Western Road would be really helpful. Poster slots would be also be helpful so they could advertise events to let people passing the area know what's going on. They currently use the display board in Brunswick Square and the local Letting Agents, Brices, allow them to put adverts on their railings. They have around 200 volunteers with around 50 core members. They have trustees who formalise policies and approve grant applications, and a security officer who responds if an alarm goes off. It would be beneficial to have some help with parking, such as having a private bay or a certain number of allocated permits. Also, having access to trade service people, if the Council still employ them, such as electricians, engineers, surveyors.

NT said that it would be good if the Council showed more support for the Regency Town House and to help raise its profile as it feels a bit forgotten, especially when it comes to grants. The Royal Pavilion gobbles up the money which prevents other organisations in the local area from claiming. The Council could help with this, particularly if the Town House became part of the offer. They could develop a business model with joint tickets with the Royal Pavilion as they get hundreds of visitors. The Town House can only deal with a small number of visitors but could sell up to a practical limit with a joint ticket, which would instantly mean they are more financially viable and could use this money to finish the restoration. They have spent millions over the years but only received around £3 - 10k in 40 years from the Council. Other Local Authorities do better to help their heritage assets.

Addressing curtilage issues, NT said that Brunswick Town used to be of the highest quality, probably the finest example of such a thing in Britain at the time. Busby attached a dedicated stable and coach house to every building in Brunswick Square which drew people in to live there as it was so fashionable and convenient. Unfortunately, the coach houses were never listed and were unprotected, which meant they went into private ownership and have been converted. The pavement is of very high quality, shipped in from the South Devonian Ranges off Dublin's coastline and laid with great care, which was also unprotected. Utility companies have since brutalised the pavement during digs and smashed the paving stones.

The best of the paving slabs were put outside the Regency Town House but they also ended up being damaged. The Council needs to protect the historic pavements.

Mark Strong (MS) gave the example of Stevenage where the Council is investing in heritage trails with interpretive boards. Brighton is not good at this, for example, the information monoliths on the streets are not up to date or maintained. There is also generational history that can be tapped into, for example, an academic from Brighton University has done a virtual trail of buildings in Brighton that were owned by slave owners. It is important to look into the effect of events such as the Triangular Trade and the impact of profits made in the East India Trade which were brought back to Brighton and used to develop what we see today.

NT said he has a whole series of research projects, for example, a PhD student developed walks around the city that geosense where the listener is and starts playing information through their earphones about the historic buildings and sites they are walking past. They have 3.5 million datapoints about the history of the city.

NT said the key point for projects such as the Regency Town House is to find really dedicated people to take care of them.

Ian Harrabin (IH) gave a summary of the Historic Coventry Trust, which was set up to run historic buildings; to take ownership of them, restore them and generate income or at least balance income and expenditure. Ian has experience as a Property Developer, Chartered Surveyor and Investor. He runs the Trust for the public benefit; for restoration, repair and continued use of the heritage building in the city and to involve local people. The Trust was formed in 2011 to save the Charterhouse, which was a former monastery founded in 1385 with the only intact Carthusian interiors in the country with wall art from 1410. It was gifted to the city in 1940 and the Council were the trustees. It was mistakenly transferred ownership to an education college and used as classrooms. They put it out for sale which prompted the Historic Coventry Trust to be set up with the aim of saving it. After a lot of lobbying, the college gifted it to the Trust for £1. The Council owned the land around it which is a 70 acre heritage park that is rich in wildlife; a forgotten land not far from the city centre. It needed revenue to raise funds for repairs. The Trust put together a list of 24 properties owned by the Council that they could take on, use capital grants for and those that generated income would act as a buffer for those that didn't and subsidise the costs.

The Trust have raised around £30m in total, £5.4m came from the Council via other means such as part of a highways project or public realm investment. At the time, Coventry had won the City of Culture status and there was a pot of money from the Arts Council which was available for them. The National Lottery has been the largest funder for the Trust, which funded 3 projects. They are pretty much the only major funder around at the moment. However, there are lots of smaller funders, such as the Garfield Weston Foundation which they received half a million pounds from for the Charterhouse. During Covid, Wolfson, another funder, sent them a cheque for £100,000 and said spend it on what you need to. They received funding from the Architectural Heritage Fund early on as they provide support to set up small organisations.

The Trust was losing £100k pa on running the Charterhouse before partnering with the National Trust; who are now responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and take the income from parking and the cafe. Volunteers deal with landscaping and looking after the gardens. The National Trust tendered the operation of the café securing a new high quality operator. The site had immediately received much higher numbers of visitors through their membership.

IH went through some of the properties the Trust looks after giving a quick summary, as follows:

Cemetery: Grade 1 Listed cemetery designed by Joseph Paxton and owned by the Council - partnership Heritage Fund project restored monuments and structures including the Anglican Chapel which is now owned by the Trust and used for various activities including the volunteers' choir who sing there regularly. The fabric of the Grade 2* Non-Conformist Chapel has been restored by the Trust but ownership will not transfer until the Trust has funding to bring it back into use. The Trust is planning to turn it into a creative studio space supported by a second Heritage Fund application.

Drapers Hall: Joint project with the King's Foundation to restore a Grade 2* Georgian guild hall. Now operated by a private company putting on events such as art events and weddings

Priory Row: row of cottages that research found were more than a century older than previously thought (1400s). Now four visitor accommodation units ranging from 3 to 1 beds.

City Gates: a partnership public realm project combined with visitor accommodation. Turned 2 gates into really nice visitor accommodation next to a little park called Lady's Herb Garden. However, there are major ASB issues with drug users etc. Looking at another funding application to improve the landscape space and recapture it from the 'undesirables'.

The Burges: gifted by the Council (all transfers from the council so far have been for £1), the Trust raised £2m to restore the buildings and neighbouring buildings in third party private ownership. The plan is to put artist studio spaces on the upper floor. The area around the back of the buildings was a bit dodgy so they have supported the Council to open it up and created a new public space by the river.

Cllr Grimshaw (AG) said it was inspiring to see all the work that had been achieved and asked about the "National Trust" effect. IH said that the National Trust has 5 million members so all they do is put the building in the brochure on their website and people turn up! It instantly brings in people and it's vital to sustain this. The National Trust is working in partnership with the Council and the Trust to build their local support rather than just pulling in existing members. Their new plan is to focus more on urban areas and move away from the image of country houses attracting the white middle-class. They want to reach new audiences and Charterhouse is being treated as their poster child for this. Recently the DCMS gave them £9m to take on the Iron Bridge Museums and Trust. They have picked projects in urban areas where they can improve the landscape access and provide education, particularly for those who live in deprived areas.

AG asked what kind of company Wolfson is. IH said it is a charity.

NT asked whether it was the Council who had wanted to establish the Historic Coventry Trust to take on its heritage assets or was it driven by Ian? IH said that they set up the charity and they proposed to the Council that they take over their assets. The Trust owns the freehold for the Charterhouse and for most others they have a 250 year long lease. They only take the properties once they have funding and agreement from the Council on what they're going to do with them. It makes sense for the Trust to take over responsibility for Council buildings that are just sitting there not being used, particularly as the Trust can access more funding sources than the Council can.

MS asked about the portfolio and cross subsidising and how they balance the temptation to focus on the flagship areas and not the lesser-known assets. IH said it's about positive partnership working with the Council and having the right people in the right place with the right expertise.

OS asked what prevents the Council from running the portfolio themselves and what other options would they have other than giving the properties away. IH said that Councils see assets as income generators but buildings cost a lot to repair and the Council would need to invest on a regular basis. Councils currently have budget problems which is leading to buildings going into disrepair. There is a lack of money, focus, time and too much else going on for Councils that it makes sense to transfer the ownership over to organisations like the Historic Coventry Trust.

AE asked about the cross-subsidies and how it works with the different partnerships involved. IH said that all of the properties are owned by the Trust and all of the income comes to the Trust. The Trust then leases out properties to partners such as the National Trust who then take on the operation and some of the repairing obligations, which reduces the financial risk. Note: the Trust retains responsibility for the major fabric repair costs of all of the properties currently, so needs to build a reserve fund for future major works.

IH mentioned that the Lottery's new programme recognises the importance of sustainability and gives out funding based on this. If a property generates income, it means the organisation is sustainable and can reinvest in other projects, in which case they would ask for less funding in the future. The Historic Coventry Trust is now sustainable which has been achieved by cutting overheads (now only one member of staff), increasing revenue through active management and partnerships, now generating a comfortable buffer for repair costs.

MS said that he is involved with a local heritage asset, the Pepper Pot, which missed out on funding because the funder was unsure about it being an urban property and were asking about parking and access. IH said having properties in the city centre is not always the best as they get a lot of smashed windows, petty vandalism etc. They want to create a cottage garden for a property that is quite isolated but they can't use it because there are so many drug users around. Other converted cottages have done really well as visitor accommodation.

OS asked about overrunning construction costs. IH said when dealing with a historic building, you can't get a fixed price so you have to rely on the design team to get a decent budget. Inflation and Covid have been a big problem. For Charterhouse they went £2m over budget. He realised that was going to happen and stopped construction before securing funds. If they had continued they might have ended up with massive debts which could

impact on future grants from the Lottery. Councils tend to build in huge contingencies for these kinds of projects.

NT asked whether the Trust has access to the kind of skillsets that are needed when looking after a large heritage asset. Are there people around who can deliver this or train others? IH said they tried to work with the local college but nothing came from it. The Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust run programmes for young people. The Historic Coventry Trust encourages contractors to take on trainees and it hasn't been too much of an issue finding skilled people. However, their focus is on restoration and not education.

AG asked if their model is transferable to Brighton & Hove which is a different kind of city. IH said it was all about having people who want to deliver, are confident and enthusiastic. Good collaborative partnership working is successful because they harness the best of each organisation – what the Council isn't good at doing, the Trust is; and vice versa.

AE asked about the Trust taking over the Charterhouse considering it had been wrongly transferred to a college. How did the Trust gain ownership? IH said that it took 2 years to persuade the college to hand it over as the right thing to do as it was meant to have been gifted to the city.

AE said that the Brighton General Hospital had been gifted to the city of Brighton when it was a workhouse, but it is under ownership of the NHS Trust now who want to sell it. IH said they brought Historic England to the table, which was effective as he got the regional director to write directly to the college's Board of Trustees and then they sold the property for £1.

Task & Finish Group Meeting 2 – 16/01/26

Members present: Cllrs Evans (Chair), Sykes, Grimshaw, Earthey, Cattell; Mark Strong (CVS),

Apologies: Cllrs Theobald,

Witnesses/Officers supporting: Alfie Stroud, (Team Leader – Partnerships London and the South East; Historic England), Matt Kitson, (Director of Estates, Facilities & Commercial Services; University of Sussex Estates Team), Charlotte Barrow, (Senior Marketing Executive; Visit Brighton), Steve Tremlett (BHCC Planning Policy and Heritage Manager), Colin Bannon, (BHCC Planning Team Leader), Natalie Sacks-Hammond, Giles Rossington, Luke Proudfoot (BHCC Overview & Scrutiny Team).

Cllr Amanda Evans (AE) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking witnesses for finding the time to attend. She reminded everyone that the meeting was not in public, but that the Task & Finish Group (TFG) would be producing a report which would be published, with evidence from witnesses referenced or quoted. A note of the meeting will be circulated to all witnesses to check for accuracy.

Alfie Stroud (AS) talked about his experience in conservation, history and architecture and his previous work with the DCMS ALBs' Better Places Partnership and Historic England. He was an advisor on the Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) project "Kingsway to the sea",

which actually didn't need a lot of help because it was well conceived and ready to go when the funding became available. The project was based on early sound analysis of local need and opportunity, which helped with the funding application. There is real historic character on the seafront to the west of Hove with sunken gardens and a sports character, leading with the historic character can be a real asset to getting regeneration projects off the ground.

AS explained about the set-up of Historic England, his team is focussed on the south and southeast of England, and is made up of architects, surveyors, historians, researchers, advisors and conservation specialists. They make proactive partnerships with local authorities and manage grants. Their team has a regional grant, and the organisation has a national grant budget. They have a representative on the Seafront Development Board working on ambitious plans for the seafront and engaging with local people. The seafront is being considered as a whole historic asset in itself, looking at the Victorian cast iron railings etc. Historic England supported the Madeira Terraces project which had been considered "at risk" since 2020. They are taking a conservation-led approach retaining craftsmanship, quality, age and have avoided emitting lots of carbon. BHCC has adopted a similar approach with Historic England's help to retain cast-iron seafront lighting rather than replacing it and are using skills from the same conservation-specialist foundry.

Mark Strong (MS) talked about making the seafront more accessible can conflict with the heritage aspect such as putting in a lift at great expense. Some disability groups are not happy with the lift. AS said that there is a conflict with this where legislative frameworks support both preservation and accessibility. Historic England's approach is that there will be a solution and using the opportunity of regeneration to include a lift is positive, sometimes compromises need to be made. Investment creates opportunity and sometimes can result in better architecture.

AE talked about access requirements and other issues that people get het up about, such as a specific paint colour which was only available when they were originally painted but there are better materials available now.

MS asked about funding available for community voluntary groups. AS said that unfortunately, for the big funders there will always be some bureaucracy due to the need to protect public money and it's hard to fund groups without a legal structure. They try to support groups to achieve things and in ways that larger funders may not be able to. The best way is to work in partnerships to reach small grants and foundations. The Heritage Alliance has a database of funders, the Heritage Funding Directory. Historic England has an online grants process where groups can apply via a webform, they will receive a response within 6 weeks letting them know if they meet the criteria.

Cllr Ollie Sykes (OS) asked about custodians for Grade 1 listed buildings and what the threshold was for engagement. AS said that Historic England has a lot of statutory functions, the key one being in the planning process where planning officers are required to consult on certain kinds of applications. They would normally only be involved in the planning process for grade 1 and 2 listed buildings but also large developments affecting conservation areas. Our development advice team also advises on heritage in the Local Plan process. The Partnerships Team are trying to remove the engagement threshold further; whereas before, "heritage at risk" was considered a gateway to accessing funding, now it is still an important consideration, but they don't only fund "at risk" assets. They have grant objectives and priorities for what they want to achieve with and for the historic environment; if other criteria

are met, such as the indices of deprivation, then the building may not even need to be listed. The application can also be focussed on building local capacity to work with the historic environment or to benefit from the heritage asset in some way. They work with 3 grants strands: places, people and research, and have a regional grant budget of £1.5 - £2m per year for the whole of the South East including London.

MS asked whether this would include iron age hill forts. AS said that it would. For assets like monuments on agricultural land, his team will provide expertise to other government departments such as DEFRA on special funding schemes available to repair these. They also advise Arts Council England on their MEND investment scheme for museums

Cllr Mark Earthey (ME) asked about the ironwork on Madeira Drive; did they remove the corroded iron and paintwork and then put it all back together again without compromising the structural integrity? AS said that structural engineering colleagues, the foundry and other specialists devised a way of testing the structure to ensure it could bear the loads.

ME asked what their ideal way of working with BHCC would be and about what responsibilities BHCC has for funding repair of historic buildings. AS said that BHCC have no statutory obligation to fund and maintain heritage assets except those they own; but they have statutory powers to put on private owners where Historic England can provide support such as underwriting emergency notices on buildings that are not being maintained. AS said, they have a good working relationship with BHCC and they meet with Max Woodford 3 times a year to coordinate the Council's priority projects; for example, they will be helping with the Pavilion Gardens project. They also have a representative on the Seafront Development Board. They can grant some funding, support local plans and will be inputting into the new Conservation Strategy.

Colin Bannon (CB) said that it's a major challenge to regenerate something like the Madeira Terraces as it's so expensive and takes a really long time. They are going to the foundry for the cast iron but have had suggestions to just use stainless steel replicas instead, which they might have to consider as they can't keep going back to the Heritage Lottery Fund for grants. The project could go on for years before all the terraces are restored and there would be further degradation in the meantime which makes it more costly. Is this something that Historic England could fund? He also raised that there are other heritage assets in the city that need work urgently. AS said unfortunately, Historic England would not be able to fund the whole of this project as the regional budget is small for the area it covers. Instead, they try to fund seed projects and support them to work through challenges in order to establish sustainable models for regeneration, as with phase one at Madeira Terrace. They can advise on how to make the project economically viable, help build partnerships with other funders and talk about what adaptations might need to be made.

Cllr Amanda Grimshaw (AG) talked about Brighton Town Hall, which is a Grade 2 listed building and has the Old Police Cells in the basement. However, the basement is not lagged, and heating is very expensive, but she believes that it could be made people friendly and developed to be an educational offer to school groups. Would there be any grants available to help with the lagging? AS said sustainability is always considered when looking at grant applications as well as the benefit to the community and how it meets local needs. AG said there needs to be somewhere for children to sit and have lunch and it should be opened up as a visitor destination for the city, that there is so much possibility there to increase traffic

and make it more accessible. There is a local author who cites the police cells in her books. AS said this was something that potentially would meet funding criteria.

Matt Kitson (MK) has been employed at the University of Sussex since March 2025 and has had prior experience at Brighton University and Heathrow airport. On the University of Sussex's campus, there are around 200 buildings split between accommodation and teaching. There is a huge development going on at the moment. The academic estate dates back to the 60s, many of which were built by Sir Basil Spence and are grade 2 listed. Features such as single glazed windows, the electric and IT infrastructure, and heating require constant maintenance and upgrade work. There are numerous challenges to managing such an ageing estate, the main one being cost issues. University is a competitive market for students and it's a balance meeting the statutory requirements of the upkeep of heritage buildings with the changing demands of students. They wanted to clean up the facade of some of the buildings, estimating a cost of £20 - 30k but it ended up costing over £500k due to the building being listed and having to be cleaned in a certain way to preserve the brickwork. Many of the buildings are degrading and they are facing major constraints and challenges in keeping the estate up to the required standard.

MS said there has been a lot of deterioration since he was a student there but that Boiler House Hill was groundbreaking in its day – having one source of heating for a large area. There is the added challenge of having to keep the buildings within its environment as a national park. MK said that there will be 7000 residents on campus by 2028, they will have a supermarket and entertainment venues. The charm of Sussex is the quiet, peaceful, green setting. MK said he has one budget and needs to make decisions between fixing the heating and electricity or refurbishing a lecture theatre. They have to meet statutory obligations, which begins to dictate decisions. Since the campus is set in a national park, they have to take the environment into account through maintaining Basil Spence buildings and developing more modern buildings around them. Costs are increasing and contractors are hard to find.

ME asked whether the Basil Spence buildings were built to last and whether, despite undertaking key repairs, the buildings might fall down anyway. MK said the buildings are very solid and built to last. However, there is RAAC and asbestos to consider. For example, they looked at running a new IT cable from one location to another to then realise it needs to go through an area of asbestos and then it's not possible anymore. Most of the RAAC has now been fixed.

OS asked what caused the increase in cost for cleaning the facade and whether campus should be seen as a heritage asset to the city and should be included more widely. MK said it would be good if it were seen in that way; that Falmer House could be used as a visitors' centre and other buildings could have different uses. It is early on in their estates strategy and they need to meet sustainability goals, which may mean challenging planning processes around replacing windows with double glazing but keeping the original look and feel. When cleaning the building facade, planning permission stated that they had to use a specific process using scaffolding and treating each individual brick separately.

AG said there are competing needs between academic and heritage and the financial need to get more students in. She asked where the buck stops with these competing needs and whose decision it is. MK said there is a Council and Executive Board but the buck would stop with him to understand the costs, what needs to be done and to produce a set of

options. Statutory requirements come first and then it is looking at the risk profile and improvements needed. In an urgent situation, such as finding RAAC in an academic building, it is the Estates team who must take urgent action to close buildings and come up with a contingency plan. Sussex researchers are looking at new innovations and new technologies that might help.

CB said that there is a listed building heritage partnership agreement in place between the Council and the University of Sussex. All buildings are described in the agreement alongside any necessary works. The agreement was renewed in 2022. The background for this is to do away with some of the bureaucracy that planning permission can create and is supposed to make it easier. It could be worth re-looking at this agreement so that Matt can input into it before the next renewal stage. Historic England are also involved in this agreement.

MS asked if campus had public access as some grants depend on that, to allow and welcome anyone from Brighton to wander in. It could be made into an attraction for the city. MK said he considers it an open campus although there is confidential research going on but the public couldn't access those buildings. They worked with the Council to trial the Park & Ride scheme and there were no problems having the public on campus. They would like to be more linked with the city. They are creating new places that the public could use like a much bigger supermarket, and fans from the AMEX stadium use the bar and parking as it's much cheaper. AS said that public access can be a condition of grants. Charlotte Barrow (CHB) added that the University of Sussex also hosts conferences which attracts a lot of business visitors. The Attenborough Centre on campus is also a venue for the Brighton Festival which brings people onto campus.

CHB gave an overview of Visit Brighton; that they work in partnership with 375 different businesses who pay an annual fee which goes back into promoting the city. They are both publicly and privately funded. Visit Brighton is part of the Local Visitor Economy Partnership working alongside East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council. They also have links to Visit England. They are part of Brighton & Hove City Council although they have a different branded look. Tourism is one of the biggest industries for Brighton as a destination. In 2024, there were 12.1 million visitors but 85% of them only visited for the day. Their challenge is not to increase the number of visitors but to increase the number that stay overnight as they will spend more. Heritage is not treated as a separate pillar but is intrinsically a part of the offer for the city. There are only 10 attractions that label themselves as 'heritage' which includes the seafront, pier and the Pavilion, which is used a lot in marketing. For marketing, they have their website, social media, blogs and various campaigns; they support the heritage open days and were the lead channel with the crowdfunding campaign for the Madeira Terraces. When looking at barriers, such as accessibility, CHB recommended the toolkit put together by Visit England that goes beyond attractions that are not suitable for wheelchair users, but looks at quiet spaces for neurodivergent people and ensuring information is provided to visitors so they can make an informed choice as to whether to visit or not.

AG asked what the majority of the day-trippers are spending their time doing, what is the draw and how do we convert them to stay overnight. CHB said that most of them go to the seafront, mainly the part of the beach between the two piers. Many bring their own picnics and actually end up costing the Council money in terms of cleaning up their litter. For the longer stays, visitors will go to the Pavilion, pier, SeaLife Centre, i360 and go shopping in the

Lanes, which are also technically a heritage attraction. They are looking for different ways to encourage people to stay longer and are looking at Brighton as a base to explore the whole area. They're looking at wine tourism and other sites across Sussex, such as Charleston House.

AG asked if she could wave a magic wand, what would CHB introduce, is there anything that the city is really lacking? CHB said a really iconic gallery would be good and gave the example of the Tate opening in Margate which rebranded it as a tourist destination.

AE asked about the more obscure heritage assets and whether they could be turned into a tourist offer, such as the Pepper Pot, the oldest church in Brighton etc and turn them into visitor attractions or on the route to others. CHB said this would be a good idea and that visitors coming off the train and plonking themselves on that stretch of beach creates overtourism in that area. It would be good to disperse visitors more across the city. Initiatives such as art sculpture trails are a good example of this, encouraging visitors around the city and they get a different experience. Some more obscure heritage assets are quite isolated, such as those in Patcham, and if there is only one thing to see, people are realistically less likely to go to it. It's best to have a trail or a cluster of things to visit. The Artists' Open Houses is another good example with different trails around the city.

MS gave an example of Stevenage where they have city trails, people like to tick things off and this kind of incentivisation is very popular. There is a coastal cultural trail in parts of Sussex but it doesn't come over to Brighton. CHB said that there are some trails in the city. She also works with commemorative plaques and that there is an interactive blue plaque map online. There is the ability to create your own trail online where the public can filter by political figures, for example. There are also walking tours with different themes such as 'Brighton on screen'; filming locations, and guided walks. There was the unbarred brewery tour trail. CHB took note of the suggestion to add incentives to trails and said they will look into this.

Cllr Julie Cattell (JC) talked about brutalism and that Hove Town Hall is considered to be a gem in brutalist circles and they could get it listed. OS said that they had tried this in the past and it had been rejected. AS confirmed it had been rejected because significant alterations had been made from the original design. CB said that a number of buildings in the city, such as the synagogue had been put forward for listing and that Hove Town Hall is locally listed.

OS asked whether Visit Brighton received any comments from visitors in relation to heritage, about signage around the city and if there was any interest in bringing Tram 53 to Stanmer Park. CHB said due to cutbacks they don't have as much interaction with visitors anymore and it is limited to feedback; they are setting up a survey on their website. They get lots of positive comments on social media about how great Brighton is. She said that the wayfinding monoliths and miniliths are outdated and agreed that more signage would be better.

Task & Finish Group Meeting 3 – 27/01/26

Members present: Cllrs Evans (Chair), Sykes, Grimshaw, Earthey, Cattell;

Apologies: Cllr Theobald, Mark Strong (CVS)

Witnesses/Officers supporting: Catherine Jeater (Southwark Council), Owen Broadway (Chichester Council), Rebecca Crook (Former Saltdean Lido Trust), Deryck Chester (Saltdean Lido Trust), Louise Peim (BHCC Museums and Heritage Business Manager), Natalie Sacks-Hammond, Giles Rossington (BHCC Overview & Scrutiny Team).

Cllr Amanda Evans (AE) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking witnesses for finding the time to attend. She reminded everyone that the meeting was not in public, but that the Task & Finish Group (TFG) would be producing a report which would be published, with evidence from witnesses referenced or quoted. A note of the meeting will be circulated to all witnesses to check for accuracy.

Catherine Jeater (CJ) has 20 years' experience as a Design and Conservation Officer, she has worked at Southwark for 10 years. Catherine was the dedicated Heritage at Risk Officer at Southwark, tasked with taking 25 buildings, parks and gardens off the "at risk" list. To do this, the team concentrated on larger schemes such as townscape heritage initiatives and heritage action zones. They have around 3000 listed buildings and 48 conservation areas. Southwark Council has a healthy budget with high pre-application fees that are used to fund regeneration projects. Southwark Council's 'Heritage at Risk' is unique in that it includes grade 2 listed buildings unlike the rest of the country. Many of the "at risk" buildings are owned by people who don't have the capacity to maintain their buildings which, consequently, fall into a state of disrepair.

CJ went through a few examples of individual buildings:

Manor Place: Grade 2 listed building that used to be a Bath House. It is owned by the Council who used it as a waste transfer station for many years. It was almost derelict and in a state of disrepair and they managed to completely restore it. It is such a massive space that they weren't sure what to do with it and they ended up leasing it to a popular skating company called Palace Skates. The interior of the building is now a skate park with flexible space such as a 5-a-side football pitch that comes out of the old swimming pool, and the back area was turned into offices.

Nunhead cemetery: The East Lodge in the cemetery was derelict for many years, it didn't have a roof or a front elevation and needed to be restored. Southwark Council had a poor relationship with the community group "Friends of Nunhead Cemetery" due to a communication breakdown but this has now improved. They got a £4.5million grant from the National Lottery and restored it into a community space with offices for the "Friends of" group to use.

Caroline Gardens: An old grade 2 listed chapel on the "at risk" register located in an estate in Peckham. All the houses on the estate are occupied by people aged over 55. It is currently leased by an artist group who use it for photoshoots and it once appeared on the tv show "Don't tell the bride". They managed to restore the windows but it continues to exist in a state of partial disrepair. They put a bid in for a lottery fund grant of £3.5million but it wasn't granted, mainly because the whole estate should be on the "at risk" register. It has been challenging as there are different teams working on the site in silo and it would be more beneficial if they worked together better.

8 Addington Square: A beautiful Georgian property owned by an elderly lady and was in such a state of disrepair it was raining indoors. The owner lived in the property and loved it but she didn't have the capacity to fully restore it, she ended up funding the roof repairs but then sadly she passed away, the building was sold and it has now been restored. They allowed a few things they wouldn't normally for other listed buildings, such as an extra storey on the side and a large extension to the rear to allow it to be liveable by a family.

Cllr Julie Cattell (JC) asked about the resources for enforcement at Southwark. CJ said they are lucky to have an enforcement officer who used to work in conservation and is like a dog with a bone, being instrumental in some cases such as restoring tiles on an old pub on Old Kent Road.

Cllr Amanda Grimshaw (AG) asked how they were allowed to add extra storeys to the Georgian house. CJ said they argued it was for the public benefit to bring the property back to life and that the extensions were to the rear of the property and the main core of the building, including the staircase, was preserved.

AG asked what the building in Nunhead Cemetery used to be. CJ said it was the Superintendent's lodge and office. The office was turned into a house, but the lodge became derelict. AG wanted to know what properties are vacant in the cemeteries in Brighton & Hove.

CJ talked about how their funding is for individual projects, normally lead by one Project Manager and how important it is to have a calm person for this type of work. CJ talked about Walworth Town Hall which was used as Council offices and as a ceremonial Town Hall. However, in 2013 there was a fire that gutted two-thirds of the building, and the Council wasn't properly insured. A company called General Projects won a competition to get the building and they converted it into a workspace with hot desking and collaborative spaces. It was completed a year and a half ago and has won a lot of awards.

Cllr Ollie Sykes (OS) asked whether the pre-app fees were earmarked as it normally just goes into the general fund. CJ said it is earmarked and covers some staff costs. They have huge areas of regeneration such as the Old Kent Road action plan and Canada Water that has very large development builds.

AE asked about Manor Place which was turned into a skate park and how that worked with planning policy. CJ said that it was a building in two parts – the offices at the front and bath houses at the back. The Council demolished part of it and used it as a waste transfer site where the pool used to be. It was in an eroded state when they put it up for lease. They didn't want to divide up the big hall into individual units and were happy with the new use as it also allowed the local community to use it. AE asked if there were any contamination issues. CJ said there was some contamination at the rear, which was sorted under the housing application.

AE asked about how they work with community groups and what support they offer. CJ said they have both formal and informal relationships with community groups, some of which sit on the Conservation Action Group (CAG). The Council also set up the Peckham Heritage Partnership Group which included community groups and members. Their priorities do not always align but it is something worth pursuing. They act as a critical friend.

AG asked about Southwark Cathedral and the mudlark's exhibition and whether this increased footfall to the area. CJ said it didn't have a huge impact but she didn't have the figures. Southwark includes huge tourist areas such as Tower Bridge, Tower of London, Tate Modern, Tate Bridge, The Globe, the OXO Tower, and the Dulwich Picture Gallery which all have a large footfall.

AE asked about enforcement in Southwark. CJ said they have 5 enforcement officers and they are frequently responding to reports, such as people replacing windows with UPVC in listed buildings, and trying to find solutions for "at risk" sites.

Owen Broadway (OB) said that his team at Chichester Council is made up from qualified architects, landscape officers and tree officers who act as specialist consultants to the development management team; they feed into planning policy, the Local Plan, and provide a lot of guidance. There are 85 conservation areas in Chichester and three and a half thousand listed buildings. They have to consider the South Downs National Park and Chichester Harbour National Landscape in planning applications. They have 12 buildings at risk that currently do not have any development opportunities.

AE asked for a breakdown in listed building categories. OB said they have 12 grade 1 listed buildings, 40 grade 2* and 2900 grade 2. Many of the grade 1 listed buildings are churches and cathedrals which are not subject to building applications. AE asked if they get involved if these are at risk. OB said they have their own system for giving themselves listed building consent but would still be subject to planning permission. They have to take into account the needs of the congregation rather than the public benefit. Church Commissioners act as developers so when buildings cease to have a congregation or used by the Commissioners, they will put them on the open market. In Chichester, two churches have been turned into residential housing.

OB said that the area contains stark inequalities, with wealth concentrated in places like Midhurst, Petworth, and Chichester, while other towns, especially coastal settlements, experience much higher levels of deprivation. Strict land protections, particularly in the South Downs, make housing development difficult, creating significant pressure over where and how new homes can be built. The team focuses on working closely with developers to improve the quality, design, and landscaping of housing schemes so they gain local support and can pass planning committees, offering reassurance that it will be done properly.

OS said that they get a lot of lobbying from "Friends of" groups in relation to heritage and that he finds they have a positive role to play although they ask for a lot. OB said that they have a lot of very well-informed, well-qualified, retired barristers, architects, and engineers all grouping together to hold them to account on the decisions made on applications. They have a big AGM where they invite people to come and speak with them, they meet regularly and invite them to the office to go through a weekly list of applications that they're concerned about. This helps form positive relationships.

Cllr Mark Earthey (ME) asked about striking a balance between heritage needs and modernisation such as solar panels, double glazing and other sustainable initiatives. OB said it is quite clear that there is a benefit to the public in allowing historic buildings to become sustainable. In the past, officers saw fit to restrict permitted development rights for things like solar panels in conservation areas, concerned they would change its look and feel. As

technology has advanced, these things have got smaller and smaller and you can clearly make the argument of public benefit. Historic England's guidance and documentation, including an advice note 18 that they issued last year includes pictures of good quality historic buildings with solar panels all over them, and actually goes into some detail about the sorts of things that should be routinely accepted and should be being approved by officers generally. Advice note 18 goes into a lot of detail about what can and can't be done.

AE asked about the more obscure heritage assets. OB said that they have dealt with a lot of commemorative plaques and statues; some have been removed as the person is no longer someone the public want to celebrate. This has been contentious at times when the building is owned by someone else; for example, who applies for the removal, particularly if it needs listed building consent. They have had a few applications for new statues but they need to be careful not to over-saturate certain areas.

Rebecca Crook (RC) told the story of the Saltdean Lido and how it was saved from demolition and turned into the popular visitor's site it is today. Brighton & Hove City Council owned the Saltdean Lido and had issued a 125 year lease to a private company in the 90s. Unfortunately, the building had fallen into a state of disrepair; although it was still open, it wasn't very attractive to visitors as it wasn't well maintained. The owner held a local meeting where it was announced that he intended to build over 100 flats on the site and concrete in the pool. Rebecca and some other locals, set up the "Save Saltdean Lido" campaign, and they spent 2 and a half years lobbying the Council to hand the site over to the community. They submitted an application and were successful in getting the lido listed as grade 2*. The campaign group met with others around the country for advice and wrote a business plan for what they could do with the building as swimming pools don't make money so other elements were needed to become financially sustainable. Their aim was to take the lease back from the current owner by lobbying the Council, so the group attended Full Council and presented deputations and petitions. They did lots of fundraising initiatives as there are no grants available to community groups when they are campaigning, which was one of the big challenges they faced. They were a well organised group with support from across the community and local businesses; they ran fun days in the park that attracted 10,000 people, held music events, produced merchandise, photography campaigns, and genuinely engaged with the local community. In 2013, the Council took back the lease from the owner who had unfortunately undertaken some unauthorised works in the interior. The Council opened up a competitive pitch process and they submitted a tender as the community interest company (CIC) Saltdean Lido Trust, which was successful. Following that, they fundraised for millions of pounds. The Heritage Lottery Fund ended up giving them over £7million and the pool opened in 2017. The restoration of the main building completed in 2024.

Deryck Chester said the whole project took 16 years and the crux was what the Lido meant to the local community. The site includes Saltdean Library which is really well used, a community centre, various rooms for hire, and the swimming pool. The Council bought the Lido in 1960 when it was a treasured asset for the tourist industry in Brighton. They have brochures from the 70s promoting the Lido alongside the Royal Pavilion and the Palace Pier.

Around 1994, a lot of Councils were letting go of their Lidos because swimming pools are expensive to operate, especially as this one is open air. A developer acquired the site and planned to build flats. Saltdean has around 14,000 residents who saw the Lido as a community asset, and their support was key to driving the campaign and accessing grants. They gathered community stories about the importance of the site, and these now form an oral history hub with stories from every decade. By the time the Trust were able to instruct structural surveys, the condition of the building had worsened. There were different issues to tackle such as the 1938 facade, cavity brick extensions from the 70s and so on. With the Heritage Lottery Fund, they managed to bring the design team together and work on what the new layout of the building would look like. The community was involved throughout the process who said they wanted a heated pool, a gym, rooms they could hire at community rates, and an entertainment space. The spiral staircase that connected the ground floor to the first floor was restored as was the special doors that open outwards onto the sun terrace. This space can now be used for weddings or corporate hire. They created the Heritage Hub, which was a condition of the funding, which allows people to learn about the history of the Lido, the community and the wider Saltdean holiday resort that it once was. Other original features had been salvaged such as parquet flooring in the ballroom, the original chlorine gas machine in the plant room, and they replaced a chimney in the ballroom that brings fresh air into the building.

AE said that the building was used as the national fire training centre during the war and its sister building, the Ocean Hotel, had been used to train officers.

OS asked if there was anything that the Council could have done better at the time. RC said that they didn't understand the Council systems and didn't use them effectively, which wasted a lot of time, during which the building continued to deteriorate. They had a solid case that it would benefit the city and attract visitors but it took a long time to be heard.

AE asked whether the developer had obtained the lease under false pretences. RC explained that the campaigners reported the developer to the Council for breaching the lease, which they confirmed after accessing it through an FOI request - something they hadn't previously realised they could do. They gathered photo and video evidence of the breaches, including a news film by the BBC, but the Council took no action. It later emerged the developer had behaved similarly with other properties nationwide. RC noted that a key lesson for the Council is to carry out proper due diligence when granting long-term leases.

AG asked how they took the lease from the developer in the end. RC said that it was a private settlement so they don't have access to the information. DC said it was key to get the building listed as grade 2* which gave it some protection and put off the developer who then had to jump through more hoops at the planning stage.

RC said once they had access to the building, they found out that there wasn't enough electricity to service the pool so they had to build a substation. It would have been good to have had all the information up front so they knew exactly what they were taking on. They

asked the Council to match-fund for this but they did not. In the end, they crowdfunded £70,000 with both national and international donations. It was a stressful time.

DC said that Historic England were a real asset during the process and that they were very flexible, for example, allowing double glazed windows, and they had a positive relationship because they understood what the Trust was trying to achieve.

AE asked how they promote the Lido and attract visitors into the area. DC said there are 23 paid members of staff including a marketing team and social media is their biggest tool; they partner with Visit Brighton and there is organic free marketing due to the project becoming nationally recognised and has legend status. They often feature on TV, such as This Morning and get a lot of press enquiries. RC said that “Dogtember” is really popular; that when the pool is closed, they open it up for people to bring their dogs for a swim. It now lasts for 6 weekends, sells out in minutes and attracts national press. Thousands of people come from across the UK.

DC said that the Ocean Hotel used to be one of the city’s biggest hotels, bringing in 800 guests a week with 200 staff, which brought tourism into local villages like Rottingdean but also to Brighton. When the hotel closed, the footfall was lost but events like “Dogtember” are now bringing people back with all the AirBnBs full and people coming from afar.

AE asked about catering in the restaurant and cafe. DC said they work with a catering partner who runs the catering and upscale events like weddings or corporate hire. RC said as it is mainly run by volunteers, it would be risky for them to take on the catering as well.

JC asked if it was a registered wedding venue. DC confirmed that it was. JC asked if the whole pool can be hired out. DC said that they have to adhere to the lease arrangements but out of season they could although there are season ticket holders that they would need to consider. They do receive requests from film companies and might close for this on the odd occasion. RC said diversification was key and one of the original suggestions was to have an ice rink over the pool during the winter which would attract a lot of visitors, particularly as the ice rink at the Pavilion will not be there next year due to building works.

OS asked if they had benefitted from looking at similar buildings across the UK, or networks to help develop. RC said that they have met with owners of other pools and lidos and did some informal networking. The Historic Pools of Britain are a go-to organisation for national press to approach if there’s an issue with swimming pools and they are a member. The 20th Century Society are very supportive and celebrate modernist buildings, they feature the Lido in a lot of their media.

AE asked if they were able to access more grants than the Council because they were a Community Interest Company. RC said it cost £25k to set up the CIC and at the time there were national government initiatives promoting ownership of assets. Becoming a CIC did allow them to access funding that helped with professional fees. DC added that there are

smaller funders and foundations that won't give to CICs which is why they also have the Trust. The Trust looks at what funding is available and the CIC operates the building.

RC said that they would be happy to talk to other Community Groups if they want advice. AE suggested the Council could facilitate a kind of mentoring scheme. RC said it would have been really helpful to have a facilitator role to connect people. There are lots of things they would have done differently and they could share lessons learned. Having the support of the local councillor was key as they would know how to navigate Council systems in the best way.

Task & Finish Group Meeting 4 – 10/02/26

Members present: Cllrs Evans (Chair), Cattell, Earthy and Grimshaw, Mark Strong (CVS)

Apologies: Cllrs Theobald, Sykes

Witnesses/Officers supporting: Louise Peim (BHCC Museums and Heritage Business Manager), Lewis Church (BHCC Acting Strategic Manager for Culture & Creative Industries) Guy Smyth (Representative from Friends of the Pepper Pot), Peter Insole (Urban Design Team Manager, Bristol City Council) Natalie Sacks-Hammond, Giles Rossington, Luke Proudfoot (BHCC Overview & Scrutiny Team).

Cllr Amanda Evans (AE) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking witnesses for finding the time to attend. She reminded everyone that the meeting was not in public, but that the Task & Finish Group (TFG) would be producing a report which would be published, with evidence from witnesses referenced or quoted. A note of the meeting will be circulated to all witnesses to check for accuracy.

Louise Peim (LP) explained that her role is part of the Culture and Events Team and she is responsible for managing the contractual relationships the Council holds with relevant partners. This includes the Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust and the Brighton Dome and Festival, which are the two custodians for the city's most valuable heritage assets. There are service agreements in place they must adhere to and the Estates Team have oversight to ensure the buildings are protected and maintained properly. LP is also involved with the capital programmes that take place across the estate to preserve and enhance heritage assets and make them more accessible for residents. She was involved with the masterplan for the Corn Exchange and the Royal Pavilions Garden project, which are in the process of being delivered. One team objective is to investigate new uses for those heritage assets that are underused and falling into a state of disrepair. They need a strategic plan to look at how investment is sought for many of these heritage assets. The city has a wealth of heritage assets which creates a competing demand for funding as they need to be prioritised and the Grade 1 listed Pavilion, which is in disrepair, takes up most of the funding. This means they have to look at alternative models, such as community asset transfers and approaching independent trusts.

Lewis Church (LC) explained that his role is more focussed on managing relationships with cultural organisations and the creative economy in the city, often looking into fundraising opportunities. He has other workstreams such as looking at where cultural activity is happening that might be “at risk”, such as music venues and theatres. He looks at how this might map on to heritage assets and how there might be solutions embedded in repurposing some of them.

Mark Strong (MS) asked if they know what level of visitors come to the city because of its heritage assets. LP said they have data for visitor numbers but not data on the reasons for visiting, she suggested Visit Brighton might have this. MS said some attractions have a joint entry deal such as the Sealife Centre having a discounted entry ticket with the Royal Pavilion. Other cities, such as London, offer discounts with their railway ticket. Cllr Earthy (ME) asked whether we could look into this with Southern Rail or National Express coaches. LP said the Regeneration Team have these relationships but it would be worth looking into.

AE asked about fundraising and that Grade 1 listed buildings will always take priority; what about the other lesser known, smaller assets. The costs are so high to maintain the big Grade 1 listed buildings that it doesn't leave much for assets like the Pepper Pot, Portslade Police station, Patcham Dovecote etc. Are there pockets of funding out there that community groups could access? LC said the funding picture nationally and internationally is constrained. It is a double-edged sword being a city with so many assets, in that they must prioritise in such a limited funding environment. They need to look at what assets they might secure funding for but also how to strategically apply for that funding without the Council ending up competing against itself for different projects.

JC said that most heritage assets are privately owned and there are hidden gems like the Pepper Pot across all wards. MS said there is a list of local assets online but it would be great if they could be plotted on a map with a short description and photo. LP said that having a cultural infrastructure plan for the city is something that has been thought about but it is a question of capacity and prioritisation.

LP said the major funder is the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which is not infinite so when a city like Brighton has so many major projects such as Brighton Town Hall, Royal Pavilion, Madeira Terraces etc, there is a need to look at other models to get these assets funded. They are looking at smaller trusts and supporting community groups.

Cllr Grimshaw (AG) said that before the covid pandemic, the Royal Pavilion was visited by a lot of international school groups with thousands of school children running around. Once they were unable to visit the UK, they probably looked for alternatives closer to home and have not come back, which is a major blow to visitor numbers.

AE said that having everything listed as a heritage trail would bring people visiting the major attractions to also see the more obscure ones if they happened to be on the route. Although this would help with tourism, it wouldn't necessarily result in money being raised and spent on the upkeep of those assets.

ME said that the Royal Pavilion could be described as a national treasure, and that other national treasures are not owned by the relevant local authority. LP said most assets are owned by the local authority if they don't fall under the Crown. JC said that the Royal Pavilion was put into a Trust so they could access funding better and ensure it was not

susceptible to local government budget cuts. For the smaller assets, they will probably have to rely on small groups such as the Hove Civic Society, to raise funds. LC said that everyone is looking at different funding models to diversify their funding sources and ensure their businesses are sustainable. JC said that it might be an idea to set up a fund where people with a bit more money in their pockets could choose to invest in the city. LC said there is a project going on at the moment funded by Arts Council England, which was about encouraging philanthropy for cultural organisations. They held an event at the Theatre Royal which brought together the cultural organisations and philanthropic networks. A working group was set up as a result.

Guy Smyth (GS) said he read an article about the rise and fall of Britain's parks, which can also be considered as heritage assets. Local authorities are not legally required to do anything with parks so they are an easy target when cuts need to be made. The article looked at America where they have different governance structures and all the parks were owned by Trusts. People readily donated to these trusts, including in their wills. Everyone is chasing the same pots of money which makes it very difficult. The Friends of Queens Park group was looking for funding when Queens Park was on the "at risk" register but the funding went to Stanmer Park which is much bigger with a larger audience. AE said Queens Park is interesting because the park is surrounded by some of the most valuable housing in the city but the ward itself has high levels of deprivation.

MS said back in 1986 there was a proposal to sell off the Pavilion because it was seen as a symbol of imperialism and royalty, but the officers informed them about how much money the Pavilion was making and the plan was dropped. MS said it was a historical reason why the Pavilion was never taken on by national organisations like Historic England. He also said that parks have a major public health benefit but any income generated from them does not go towards their upkeep.

LC said that Brighton & Hove does attract a lot of investment but it doesn't feel like enough. Historic England's grant for Madeira Terraces is the largest it has ever given out so it's difficult to go back to them and ask for money for another project.

AE asked about the officer's recent trip to London where they looked at different funding models. LC said they were visiting creative workspace providers such as Someday Studios who develop underused heritage resources in Westminster; Proposition Studios, an old London Electricity Board building in Bethnal Green that is now a profit making artist's complex, and Lewisham Council's partnership with a vacant school in Deptford that is now occupied by artists.

Guy Smyth (GS) gave an overview of the Pepper Pot's recent history. He explained that the "Friends of" group originally grew out of the Local Action Team, back when the Council repainted the Pepper Pot each year. At the meeting, local residents raised concerns about the building's deteriorating condition. There was a high level of enthusiasm, but also some inexperience about what was achievable. Early discussions highlighted a divide within the group: some members were keen to propose potential uses for a fully restored building, while most were focused on understanding how to secure a sustainable future for it in the first place. As a result, the group became a bit fragmented.

The Pepper Pot used to be part of an estate that sat at the top of Queen's Park and the park used to be the gardens of the estate. The Pepper Pot was an ornate housing for the technology of the day for pumping water, which was a steam engine, explaining the purpose of the big chimney running straight through the middle of it. The building was designed by Sir Charles Barry, a great British Architect, who was also involved with the Houses of Parliament, Saint Peter's and the manor house that is in Downtown Abbey.

The Friends of the Pepper Pot soon realised that they could not save the building themselves. Instead, their role would be to help facilitate a solution, while ownership, and ultimate responsibility, remained with the Council. The group first approached the Landmark Trust, an organisation founded by John Smith, a philanthropist with a strong interest in buildings, architecture, and heritage. He established the Trust after observing that, for every stately home preserved by the National Trust, many smaller but historically significant buildings were being lost simply because they lacked a viable use. The Landmark Trust proposed converting the Pepper Pot into a holiday let. This suggestion divided opinion within the group: some objected because King Charles is the Trust's patron, while others saw the proposal as a sensible and sustainable way to secure the building's future. The Landmark Trust had a proven track record, dedicated staff to manage funding applications, and a longstanding model in which income from lettings is reinvested directly into the upkeep of each property. A surveyor assessed the Pepper Pot and was impressed. Unlike many of the Trust's rural properties, the Pepper Pot sits on a main road, surrounded by a mix of architectural styles, with pubs, restaurants, and Brighton station all within walking distance. GS drew comparisons with Clavell Tower in Dorset, similar in scale to the Pepper Pot, which the Landmark Trust successfully restored and now operates as a holiday let that is booked up two years in advance. With Council support, the group worked closely with the Landmark Trust through multiple stages, eventually reaching the final shortlist of three before ultimately losing out. They then approached the Vivat Trust, which expressed interest in taking on the Pepper Pot. However, around the same time, Vivat had also committed to restoring Hadlow Tower in Tunbridge. The Friends of the Pepper Pot later discovered that the Vivat Trust had entered administration, resulting in Hadlow Tower being put on the market.

The Friends of the Pepper Pot continues but the situation remains tricky. The Pepper Pot is a negative asset as far as the Council are concerned and it's hard to justify spending a lot of money on it when Council Housing needs investment and other demands outweigh it. The only option would be to find an outside funder and get the building restored to the point that it could be used for something.

ME asked about the Pepper Pot's current condition. GS explained that it continues to deteriorate, there is damp forming around the chimney, and a recent incident occurred where children were playing on the toilet block roof. Unfortunately, one fell through, damaging the roof and injuring themselves. GS said that the Landmark Trust had previously carried out a full feasibility study on the Pepper Pot, appointing Witherford Watson Mann as the architects, a firm that had won the Stirling Prize the year before. He gave the example of Astley Castle, which was in a terrible state of disrepair, that Witherford Watson Mann revitalised by inserting a modern building within the walls, which ended up looking really good. Unfortunately, the Pepper Pot was not granted any funding.

GS and Friends of The Pepperpot felt that a micro-area strategy is needed, taking into account the whole immediate footprint, including the bin area, bus stops, and other nearby infrastructure together with impact from ongoing street trading. GS added that several elected representatives have been involved in ongoing discussions, including Cllr Rowkins, Cllr Gauge, and MP Chris Ward as well as St Luke's Residents Association.

Peter Insole (PI) introduced his role at Bristol City Council; he is responsible for heritage and his team is made up of urban designers, landscape architects, archaeologists, conservation officers, ecologists and arboriculture officers. As with other local authorities, they face challenges in looking after heritage assets and getting the best future use for them. They are working on a Heritage Strategy and identifying how to be strategic about approaching funders to help with the upkeep of council-owned assets. They have been supporting community groups to manage their assets. They have developed a characterisation toolkit for community groups to understand the story behind their assets and start to look at what future aspirations there might be.

When providing funding advice, PI says not to go to the National Lottery because they are under incredible pressure to fund things across the country, and to look for alternative providers instead. It is important to get the use right for the asset, then define the funding strategy for it and get the business model right. PI talked about a grade 2 listed swimming pool that was built around 1890, which became a dance centre in the 1980s, much loved by the community. The building had to close in 2015 due to a lack of funds; it ended up going through a community asset process and was taken over by Trinity Community Arts who had experience of managing another heritage asset. They are in the process of going to a stage 2 lottery bid to conserve it and are looking to turn it into a multi-use community facility. Another challenging asset is Ashton Court, a large grade 1 listed Manor House on the edge of the city which is owned by the Council but the land is in the neighbouring authority. It is a big country house that was used for weddings, and other ideas put forward included a cafe or a hotel. The Council doesn't have the capacity to manage it effectively so they are considering establishing a Trust to do so but they are a long way off and don't know where the money will come from to fund it.

AE asked about the smaller heritage assets. PI said there are a lot of smaller heritage assets in Bristol and gave the example of Castle Park, which is in the city centre. Castle Park is a historic second World War site that has a ruined church in the middle of it, and they are considering the best use for it. On the northern edge of the city, there is an anti-aircraft battery which is on the "at risk" register. It is near a large council estate, and they are working with the local community about its future use, possibly as an education centre, and how local residents can become custodians for it.

MS asked how the Council's relationship was with the local community groups. PI said it was varied but generally good; there are a lot of amenity groups, but they also have limited capacity. There are a lot of retired, older people involved who have a lot of expertise and interest, but they also have other things going on.

MS asked about the Colston statue. PI said he had actually proposed a new plaque for the Colston statue before the BLM protest happened, but the Mayor at the time wasn't happy with the wording. The statue then ended up in the river following the BLM protest. PI argued that the statue shouldn't be put back and should go into the museum. Since this event, they have been raising awareness of this legacy across the whole city, telling the story and talking about how this causes equality, diversity and inclusion issues. Part of their new Heritage Strategy is a commemoration memorialisation section that talks about who should be remembered and how.

AE asked about their resources for enforcement. PI said that was an area that hadn't been so well resourced until fairly recently, so they are playing catch up. There are 4000 listed buildings in Bristol, which is the largest concentration outside of London. A quarter of them are in the Clifton Conservation Area but they are distributed all across the city which makes enforcement difficult.

AG said that Brighton & Hove is missing a trick as there are a lot of properties built with money that was given to owners who were coming out of the slave trade. The Royal Pavilion is an example of this and it is well known that William the Fourth and George the Fourth were connected with the slave trade, but it isn't acknowledged anywhere. AG talked about difficulties they have had with the Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust in asking for a monument in the Pavilion Gardens to commemorate the Indian soldiers who were burned on a pyre during World War 1. AG asked if, as a Local Authority, can they ask Trusts what to focus on. PI said he has included this as part of their Heritage Strategy, to ensure that they have open conversations and to make it clear how they will help manage the asset.

PI said that he would send over their Know Your Place web resource that overlays different data sets relating to heritage onto a map and is a great portal for enabling community work. People can also upload their own information and stories to the site. An academic has recently launched one on transatlantic slavery economy, which shows who got compensation payments in 1833 and mapped it onto the city. This allows people to make connections between the kinds of industries that was born out of the compensation payments, such as the Great Western Railway, the SS Great Britain, the Suspension Bridge, the zoo etc. MS said that an academic in Brighton has done something similar.

Task & Finish Group Meeting 5 – 27/02/26

Members present: Cllrs Evans (Chair), Earthey, Sykes, Cattell, Grimshaw, Theobald; Mark Strong (CVS)

Witnesses/Officers supporting: Allan Grainger (Brighton Society), Derek Wright (involved in many community groups), Hedley Swain (CEO Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust), Steve Tremlett (BHCC Planning Policy and Heritage Manager), Natalie Sacks-Hammond, Giles Rossington, Luke Proudfoot (BHCC Overview & Scrutiny Team).

Cllr Amanda Evans (AE) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking witnesses for finding the time to attend. She reminded everyone that the meeting was not in public, but that the Task & Finish Group (TFG) would be producing a report which would be published, with

evidence from witnesses referenced or quoted. A note of the meeting will be circulated to all witnesses to check for accuracy.

Allan Grainger (AG) gave a summary on the work of the Brighton Society. He has been a part of the society for 12 years; he is involved with the design of the website, and he is on the society's committee that discusses issues in the city. The Brighton Society has been running for over 50 years and tries to connect people with heritage through the website. When issues come up, the society is brought in for support and to provide advice. The society started in 1973 by the director for the Royal Pavilion at the time and Selma Montford MBE; and it dealt with schemes affecting the city such as housing, new roads, public transport, new conservation areas and the character of the city. It all started in the 1960s with a proposal to demolish 700 houses to build an elevated motorway that would go over Preston Circus and into the North Laines area. Although it had RIBA support, government policies changed and the scheme didn't happen. It showed a disrespect for heritage, which is important as it defines our past, present and future. The society hopes to make people aware of what heritage actually is and means to the city. AG gave an example of another scheme the society had been involved in; Beetham Tower block next to Brighton station, a 42-storey building that would have dominated the area. The Brighton Society joined the North Laine Community Association and the Council to oppose this development, and it was finally dismissed. AG said that they collaborate well with the Council but at times they need to challenge them and they will step in if they feel that heritage is under attack. They are concerned about the skyline and quality of buildings and the current need to build upwards. They are not against modern buildings but as long as they are sympathetic to the city and don't endanger heritage. The society campaigned for 30 years for the restoration of the birdcage bandstand which is something they are particularly proud of. AG said the little things are important too such as the seaside shelter near Lower Rock Gardens which is in a really poor state. Tourists would see this and not think it looks good, especially with people using it as a place to sleep. All these heritage assets impact how we feel about the city.

AE said that there are more obscure heritage assets that are in need of upkeep, like the dovecote in Patcham that most of the public are not aware of. AG said if there is a significant issue, they would make the public aware by putting it on the website and they would email the relevant ward councillors. However, the response is slow and they had to wait a month to hear back regarding the seafront shelter. The quote to refurbish the shelter was £100k and it needs anti-graffiti paint and unbreakable windows. He questioned why quotes for these projects end up so large and then doesn't happen when all it needed was a lick of paint that could be done straight away.

AE said that there are legal constraints if the heritage asset is listed and they have to do things in a certain way that ends up costing a lot.

Cllr Carol Theobald (CT) said there was a Tudor house in Preston Park that was knocked down and replaced with flat, which was a shame. The shelters on the seafront all need some work with many vandalised. People are fighting for the Patcham Dovecote, which is almost falling down, and she raised the issue of the floral clock in Palmeira Square. Is there any funding for these?

AG said the Brighton Society will be discussing the floral clock and that he would bring up the dovecote with them. The society doesn't raise money and any money that is gifted to them is used to keep it running.

Cllr Julie Cattell (JC) said she was surprised no one had put in a bid to the CIL for the dovecote as it is meant to be used for projects like that.

Cllr Ollie Sykes (OS) said that there is inconsistency with the Council's approach and the community's desire to help out with easy solutions. There was a bench in Palmeira Square that the community weren't allowed to repair, instead it was removed. He suggested putting forward a recommendation around responding to community options on supporting the repair of heritage assets.

Derek Wright (DW) said that the post office development in Patcham means that there will be CIL funding for that area.

Mark Strong (MS) asked about liability and accountability; who is liable, who owns it, what happens if someone painted a heritage asset without permission. When volunteers help with a park clearance, they have to sign a form for insurance, have a briefing etc that means they're covered by the Council's liability; would it be an idea to do this for community groups and have certified volunteers who are able to do certain repairs without going through a whole process?

JC said that some "Friends of" groups have to meet a strict set of criteria to make the group a proper group, such as having a first aider. It can get a bit complicated and some things require planning permission. However, it is clear that lots of community groups would like to do more. The cucumber benches is a good example of the community coming together to restore a heritage asset. JC suggested a recommendation around facilitating community groups to do this, a pragmatic community response.

AE asked about the Brighton Society's questions on the Royal Pavilion gardens. AG said one of the issues was about the long bench that has been moved from New Road and he has contacted the company who provided the wood. That type of high quality wood should have lasted over 25 years but it only lasted for 18. The life expectancy of the wood is likely to be nearer 50 years. They thought this would be a heritage asset that would last for years as it originally looked really good, but it didn't last. JC said that the benches were rotten along the bottom and needed to be removed as part of the Royal Pavilion Gardens project. They were a cause of big anti-social behaviour issues and weren't able to be restored. If properly maintained, as the wood company suggested, the benches would have lasted longer. MS said it is important to remember why they were put there in the first place – to allow people to sit on and rest. They needed to be fit for purpose when first installed.

AG said there were further concerns about the Royal Pavilion Gardens project such as erecting a 7-foot fence around such a major asset to keep the public out at night. It was quoted there were 20,000 incidences recorded there in one year which would mean 55 serious anti-social incidences in 24 hours every day, which can't be right. Quoting unrealistic numbers reduces the credibility of the custodians. If the gardens will be open 24/7 and the fence is meant to stop anti-social behaviour, it doesn't make sense. He asked how the South Gate will end up looking aesthetically. MS said that the purpose is to restore the gardens to how they were in the regency period when they didn't want the public to walk through.

DW began by talking about the various projects he is involved with and ideas he has; he talked about creating lots of heritage trails that go from Kemptown, linking all the wards in the city and ending up on the Downs. It would encourage people to walk and learn about heritage and wildlife from information boards along the way, which could include QR codes.

Stanmer Park has benches that can be wound up and they talk to you about the area. DW is a member of the Martha Gunn Trust that raises funds and awareness of the fishing community and how it shaped what Brighton is today. He has been a part of the campaign to save Madeira Terraces which has been going on for 10 years with a lot of residents who realised it would be lost if they didn't do something. They increased public awareness and set up a crowdfunder and received a lot of support from the residents. They had a raffle going which raised £17,600 and the crowdfunder raised £500,000. There is a lot of work involved in gaining community support such as talking to people, visiting local businesses, setting up fundraising events, knocking on doors and putting leaflets through letterboxes. One of the biggest challenges is getting people to attend events. The vision is to maintain heritage assets by listening to communities and giving them what they want. DW is in favour of repurposing heritage buildings and believes that Madeira Terraces, the Shelter Hall lift, the Pepper Pot and the Queens Park water fountain should be prioritised. DW partners with many other community groups such as Friends of Valley Gardens, Kemptown Community Notice Board, Martha Gunn Trust, Madeira Drive Development, Valley Gardens Past and Present, among others. He would like to do more social media engagement to continue to build support from residents, also utilising WhatsApp groups, and in person meetings. DW said they would like to create a cultural heritage attraction with Martha Gunn and would like to name a square in East Street after her and installing a plaque. He would like to see a heritage trail on the seafront with information including the fishing community and Pool Valley. The fishing community helped transform the city into a tourist attraction as nobility didn't like the smell of the fish which allowed the introduction of bathing machines, and these attracted visitors to the seaside. DW said engaging with Council officers, councillors and leaders is often a waste of time and that they need to create projects that everyone supports. The Council needs to be bolder and to communicate better with residents.

DW listed some of his ideas of generating money for heritage assets;

- if a tourist tax is introduced, it could go towards heritage;
- The i360 gave £1 million to Madeira Terraces which the Council match-funded, could see if other businesses are willing to do the same;
- With some visitor attractions, they could impose a % of ticket sales to go towards protecting heritage
- Introduce a Council Lottery similar to Rother Council where residents suggest what the money goes towards;
- Crowdfunding;
- Create Trusts for some heritage sites who are responsible for its maintenance;
- Look into Art Levy to pay for sculptures;
- Partner with the Business Improvement District;
- Bid for maintenance of parks;
- Devolution might bring some money in for heritage;
- Partner with large companies who have community funds such as AMEX and Pride;
- Put a levy on outdoor events such as the marathon and put a % of ticket sales towards heritage;

DW said this would show investors that heritage is important to the city which makes it more likely they will step in

JC liked the idea of the Council lottery. MS said that 120 councils have this and make around £200,000 per year.

AG said it is important to bring in the big spenders like AMEX and make them feel like they have a stake in the city. JC said the Seafront Development Board exists to draw in investment and they need to sell the city. AG said as a heritage society, they have concerns that those funding heritage projects will want something in return and it won't always fit with the heritage site. AE gave the example of the Box Park Scheme which didn't happen but it would have changed the heritage nature of the area. Circus Street is an example of this whereas the Rox building has included a nod to its old use as a cinema. Big developers can be disrespectful of heritage which impacts on the look and feel of the city.

MS said that things do have to change and not everything can be preserved as it is. Things like climate change and demographic change has an effect; what one generation likes, another will not. Re-use needs to be done in a sensitive and sensible way and to be bold. The Preston Barracks site has taken 10 years to be built and the length of time is a planning problem as things change. Steve Tremlett (ST) said it will always take a long time to get from the initial concept work to completion, especially for the very big sites like Preston Barracks. ST agreed that things change over such a long period of time and the way the building will be used might be different from the initial concept. There are natural changes in circumstances and schemes get adapted to accommodate this. JC gave the example of Toad Hall Valley that was approved as a site for a new secondary school but now there are less children in the city so it isn't needed.

OS said that there are ways of doing this and gave the example of St John's Church in Hove that was repurposed into a community centre. However, it has been designed to be reversible so it can be put back again as a church if that was what was wanted.

Hedley Swain (HS) gave a summary of the Royal Pavilion and Museum Trust which became a trust 5 and a half years ago and looks after the Royal Pavilion and Gardens, Brighton Museum, Hove Museum, the Booth Museum and Preston Manor. They have a clear remit to look after the buildings and collections and to bring value to people. They have an important role in the visitor economy and in terms of a sense of place and pride in the city. They do a lot of partnership working with, for example, the local schools, the bus company, BHT, the crew club etc They want to welcome as many people as they can so they leave with a sense of how important these sites are. There is a crisis in the country with heritage buildings not being invested in for many years. For example, the Royal Pavilion hasn't had any meaningful capital work or improvement for 40 years, the wiring that probably goes back to the 1960s, and in the next 10 years they will need to spend around £40 - 50million on the building. This is at a time where there is little funding available so it will need to bring together money from the lottery, council, national pots and private sources. At the same time, they need to continue to provide value to their audience. The situation was made worst by covid where many organisations were wiped out or had their reserves wiped out at a time when the tourist economy was suffering. Then there is the issue of climate change and how it is affecting heritage buildings in particular as they were not built to withstand the extremes of the weather we have now. There was not the kind of heavy rainfall when the Pavilion was built and this degrades the building and has a serious effect on mould. They are trying to deal with some serious challenges and have to be entrepreneurial and find as many external funders as possible. They have a fundraising team and just in the last couple of weeks have

received £150,000 from the Garfield Western Trust to support the Pavilion Gardens project and the offer to apply for £50,000 from the Historic Houses Trust to support Preston Manor. HS said he spends a lot of his time maximising income for the Trust and reacting to societal changes such as visitors now getting their information digitally rather than using physical posters, for example. Using social media influencers is a popular way to promote things.

AE asked about influencers driving traffic to the sites. HS said that is the way of the world now especially with markets like China. They have identified key influencers and encouraged them to visit the Pavilion and film a TikTok or Instagram video which creates a large influence.

OS asked about the interaction between heritage and the climate and whether there was any government funding available for climate resilience that can help protect heritage assets. HS said they work with the Southeast Net Zero Carbon Zero Hub and there is hopefully some public money attached. They secured £1.5million to do the roof at Brighton Museum and part of the reasoning was for energy efficiency. The Rampion have provided some support to the Trust as well. However, the funding need is daunting, for example, the drainage for the Pavilion and Brighton Museum is interior and there's very little that can be done to improve this.

ST added that there is a new draft National Planning Policy Framework being worked on and that the government has said there are concerns that the current planning policy approach to heritage focuses too much on addressing harm and does not provide sufficient positive support for the sustainable redevelopment of heritage assets to support growth - for instance, in relation to vacant listed buildings being brought back into use. The proposed changes intend to strengthen the ability to bring forward heritage-related development.

CT said that the Pavilion is getting a lot of money spent on it and asked whether it is a good idea to close the gardens at night because of anti-social behaviour, and whether charging an entry fee for the museum had an effect on visitor numbers. HS said the gardens project is costing around £6million and it is a really important historic garden. They accepted that the Council do not want to close the gardens at night. HS said the fees for the museum were changed around the time of covid so it is difficult to judge the impact, if any, on visitor numbers. They haven't had anyone turn up and then leave because there was an entry charge and £7 is very reasonable. They are trying different models to provide catering at the Pavilion.

MS asked if the admission fee was a donation or a fixed fee and that they can get gift aid if it was by donation. HS said that it is a fee but they get gift aid because they're an independent trust and provide a yearly ticket. The money that has been brought in by gift aid has been really valuable.

MS said that the museum doesn't have a coherent identity and would benefit from a contemporary art offer. HS said that they use the temporary programme to drive outside visitors. He felt that having a really good arts curator is key to bringing in a valuable arts offer. DW said that Black Rock would be a good site for an arts building and would bring people in. HS mentioned the recent visual arts survey commissioned by the council that will shortly be published.

Mayor Amanda Grimshaw talked about repurposing and the Court House. HS said that the Court House used to be used for museum offices, so they decided to repurpose it. They had offers from nightclubs and restaurants who wanted to take over the building but they felt that was too much of a risk, so they turned it into small units for creatives. There is a lot of value in finding spaces where creatives can come together. They are currently looking at the kitchen garden at Preston Manor with different ideas including a garden centre, café, events space and possibly a sauna. They are also looking at other spaces such as the King William IV Gate House for holiday lets. They are constantly thinking imaginatively about spaces.

AG asked about the Pavilion Gardens project and the 7-foot fences. HS said that it's one of the most important historic gardens in the world, planned by Nash to go with the Pavilion. It's on the 'gardens at-risk' register. There is a sense of boundary to the gardens with Victorian railings the whole way around, funded by Historic England. HS said they were going to remove the area of astro turf and the locks attached to the tree.

MS asked about disabled access to the Royal Pavilion. HS said they provide ground floor access and have one lift. They show a film in a room downstairs about the upstairs. They recognise that this is a challenge for the next project, but they need to be realistic as they can only do so much in terms of access.

Task & Finish Group Meeting 6 – 06/03/26

Members present: Cllrs Evans (Chair), Earthey, Sykes, Cattell, Theobald; Mark Strong (CVS)

Apologies: Mayor Amanda Grimshaw, Steve Tremlett, Luke Proudfoot

Witnesses/Officers supporting: Helmut Lusser (Hove Civic Society), Cllr Birgit Miller (Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Tourism), Natalie Sacks-Hammond, Giles Rossington (BHCC Overview & Scrutiny Team).

Cllr Amanda Evans (AE) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking witnesses for finding the time to attend. She reminded everyone that the meeting was not in public, but that the Task & Finish Group (TFG) would be producing a report which would be published, with evidence from witnesses referenced or quoted. A note of the meeting will be circulated to all witnesses to check for accuracy.

Helmut Lusser (HL) gave a summary of the Hove Civic Society and its work; it is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) that was set up in 1961, it currently has around 300 members and has spent over £300k on the public realm. Heritage buildings are fairly well protected by law and there's a lot of work going into planning legislation. However, what isn't protected is the space between the buildings and the society's current focus is to get the Council to improve this space. Almost 20 years ago, the Council commissioned a study by an architect (Jan Gehl, *Public Life – Public Space*, 2007) that suggested ideas of what could be done to Hove, which was approved by all parties and then forgotten about. HL said it acted as a blueprint and is worth digging out to re-visit. Hove Civic Society aims to influence policy and new developments, including the City Plan. They believe that an investment plan for all the conservation areas in the city is needed because if there is already a plan in place,

it can be implemented as soon as the investment has been found. If there is no plan, then nothing happens.

The society has introduced the idea of a policy of planting one new street tree for every new flat built in the city, compensating more concrete for more greenery. 100+ extra trees per year would make a huge difference. The policy is already adopted in the Hove Station Neighbourhood Plan, and they would like to see the City Plan adopt this policy. The society is working on a big project in Poets Corner at the moment with councillors, council officers and residents where 15 streets have got involved in a plan to plant up all the junctions in the area. They have bought a scanner to do ground preparatory work themselves and have already scanned 27 junctions. They have been advised to introduce a hedge planting scheme which has a lot of support from the residents.

The society is working on a project called 'sculpture in the city' and have started an arts trail in Hove. They introduced the Hove Plinth in 2018 and have invested £300k into it; it is meant to emulate the construction of the 4th plinth at Trafalgar Square and serves to take different sculpture over time. It is the proposed starting point for an open-air sculpture gallery, which could initially stretch along the seafront from the Peace statue to the Lagoon. Another project they are working on is bringing neglected corners back to life; they have identified areas in Hove for this and are starting on the St Aubyns/Kingsway junction looking at introducing pocket parks. They are setting up a "Friends of" group with a trustee of the society taking the lead; this will give it a strong link with the society which has the facilities already set up in terms of Gift Aid etc which smaller organisations can't use.

The society is also seeking to take over responsibility for the Hove Heritage Boards which were set up 30 years ago and are out of date. If they get funding of £40k, they will take this project on in partnership with local societies, historians and the museum. They run a "tree angel" scheme where members donate towards the planting of trees, which allows them to subsidise their projects. Other than a £2.5k start-up fund from the Council a few years ago, everything else has been funded through donations. They got a £10k Arts Council grant, money from the Sainsburys Trust, private contributions and CIL money.

The society would like to create synergies with the Council and are pleased to have two liaison councillors on their committee. With the example of the Hove Plinth, they were lucky that the assistant CEO at the time was in favour of it. Once she had left the organisation, they felt less supported and as if they were stepping on council officer's toes. This is something that needs to be resolved if the Council wants more involvement from the local community. The society has skilled professionals in their group and if the Council want to utilise this, it needs to be a real partnership and not a "friend's slave" level. They need to see the potential in what the community can offer. An example of this was when the society wanted to plant trees, they used to walk with the arboriculturist to the street, scan and mark the pavement, then dig and plant a tree 5 minutes later. Now there are 150 rules they have to follow such as catering for the width of the pavement for accessibility reasons, which means they can't really plant anymore. There's no willingness to depart from rigorous policy rules and a lack of understanding that this needs to be done in respect to heritage. The work of the society is making a difference although they can't replace the lack of resources around at the moment, and the Council needs to really think about how it responds and makes the best out of a very poor situation.

Mark Strong (MS) agreed that there does feel like a “them” and “us” situation between Council officers and members of community groups. It’s a historic issue with Council officers controlling the agenda that seems to be inherent in how the Council operates. AE said that members of these groups feel that they all deserve officer time and officers have lots of groups to deal with. They aren’t always aware of the expertise held within each particular group. MS said community groups would like to do more and gave the example of Madeira Drive where officers were forced to work with community groups and got a much better outcome. Trust needs to be built on all sides.

MS talked about wayfinding in the city not being up to date and that any art trail needs to link Brighton and Hove. HL said they are working with the Regency Society, Kemptown Society, Western Road Group and the West Hove Forum on the art trail, they need half a million pounds for the next 2 sculptures.

Cllr Julie Cattell (JC) said that the group should come up with a recommendation of a strategy for the Council when working in partnership with community groups to enhance the public realm. It would be a good idea to involve Cllr Allen as the relevant Cabinet member. He has started work on looking at street signs.

Cllr Ollie Sykes (OS) said the Hove Civic Society need to include the statue on Waterloo Street in their art trail. It was apparently found hiding behind trees in Stanmer Park and is about 200 years old. OS agreed about needing to find a new way of working with community groups; that their role, contribution and expertise is valuable, and they are motivated and resourced. He doesn’t want to see the motivation dissipating due to unnecessary barriers. AE said that there probably will be a recommendation based on this and that community groups need to see things as a city-wide as there are pockets of extreme deprivation in some areas where there aren’t engaged professionals with time to put towards this or pay a membership fee. We need to encourage groups that can, to share with other groups. HL said it depends on people wanting to make change and that things like watering trees doesn’t require resources, only a willingness from locals. They would need more resources before expanding projects into Brighton and they try to link up with other community groups to achieve this.

Cllr Carol Theobald (CT) asked what types of trees were being planted in the streets and whereabouts at the junctions. HL said they ask the arboriculturist about the best type of trees to plant and they would like to see large trees planted at the junctions. AE asked about investment plans for conservation areas. HL said they wanted to use neighbourhood CIL for street furniture, pavements, bollards, and curbs.

MS gave the example of Oxford where they have a code of conduct between the Council and community groups that sets expectations for both parties to sign up to. This helps to build trust and a positive ongoing relationship. In Craven Vale, which is a more deprived area, there is a very committed community group who are very willing but have no money. In some areas, there is often only one or two key people running these groups with no succession planning, which raises the question of what happens when they leave. HL added that most trustees or leaders of these groups are much older as those who are working are very busy and it takes a lot of time to dedicate to this.

Cllr Birgit Miller (BM) said that heritage is not just the built environment, but that it also includes the natural environment such as the UNESCO Living Coast Biosphere, historic

gardens, farms, parklands and the public realm. It also includes cultural heritage such as recognising the importance of LGBTQ+ identity in the city, grass roots music venues and forgotten histories; like the multiethnic history of Brighthelmstone where the first Jewish settler was recorded in 1766. These are the things that frame the historic buildings and make the city what it is. Preserving heritage sites should not stop high quality architecture or garden design, it should be seen as a benchmark or a baseline. The strategy should act as a driver for quality but not an end to itself; we don't want the city to be a museum but a thriving, changing city. BM gave the example of the Eiffel Tower which was loathed by the locals when it was first built, and how peoples' views change over time. We need to improve the environment of the city and be better for future generations; the Council and the community groups need to start thinking as one. BM agreed with the blockages that HL had expressed. BM said that the heritage societies might have a stronger voice if they were working as one, which would make it easier to speak to Council officers and not be ignored. It would be helpful to have subgroups to work on specific projects but not continue to reflect historical boundaries in the city. We don't want a "them" and "us" situation and need to consider the city as a whole. The seafront is a good example where people only see the central beach area; the lagoon to the marina, when it actually starts from Shoreham.

BM said that there should be some long-term work done with bodies like Historic England to feed into lobbying. Facadism is important; this is when the external appearance of a building is protected and a new structure is built behind it that is more fit for purpose. There are some examples where the interior is important and needs to be preserved but others need a more robust, sustainable structure that can withstand climate change and last for the next 400 years. Facadism allows the use of new materials that are more appropriate for the location, for example, cast-iron was mass produced in the 19th century but ended up being unsuitable for the sea air. It would make more sense if we weren't trying to restore everything and could replace the parts of the seafront that have to be recast with a more robust material that looks the same but will last longer. Those bits that can be restored, should be. BM said that national funding needs to be focused on the regular inspection of the state of buildings or structures and that there needs to be much more preventative funding available. We shouldn't be letting buildings get to such poor states of decay and then spend vast amounts of money to rescue them. It is cheaper to be preventative.

JC said that if the interior of a building has been ruined, there isn't much that can be done. They can be modernised with a careful demolition inside and can show where a wall might have been to preserve that part of it. They need to make sure alterations to buildings fit in with its surroundings. JC said she wasn't a fan of facadism and that we need to allow room for new modern buildings with high quality materials that can cope with the climate. It's a delicate balance to look at having affordable housing or a really attractive building. JC said that societies like the Brighton Society and Regency Society very rarely support anything new in planning. Historic England would be happy with a dramatic change of use for a listed building if it meant it kept it going. In some cases, they can keep historic features intact such as a staircase or the roof.

Cllr Mark Earthey (ME) said the city does need a tasteful balance of new and old but it does risk the heritage looking mismatched. ME asked what the group thought the definition was of "neighbourhood" when referring to the "neighbourhood plan", and asked why heritage assets that are recognised nationally, like the Royal Pavilion, isn't funded centrally. AE said she

liked the mismatch of new and old and agreed with BM about societies wanting to preserve everything and that the city doesn't want to become a pastiche of what it once was. At the point the Pavilion was built, it wasn't liked by locals and there are examples of this all over the world, not just the Eiffel Tower but the Sydney Opera House, the Guggenheim in Bilbao etc and these buildings completely revitalised the area. AE gave the example of the Frank Gehry design for the new King Alfred Leisure Centre that was opposed by local societies who didn't think it was in keeping with the Regency seafront. The design was watered down so much because of the objections that Frank Gehry asked to have his name taken off it, which was a shame as it could have been city changing.

BM said that when a building's interior is completely stripped out, it's an opportunity to create an exciting new space inside while still keeping the historic exterior intact. Facadism preserves the front of buildings in conservation areas where the appearance of the streetscape matters most. The parts of the building at the back or inside, are generally considered less important from a conservation perspective. The quality of architecture is very important and the city has suffered from modern buildings of very low standards. They need to set sufficiently high standards for developers. However, high quality architecture costs money.

CT gave the example of the Richmond Terrace conservation area that she had voted against at Planning Committee because change would have set a precedence for other owners to build dormers and change the windows etc, this would change the character of the whole area. The shelters on the seafront let the city down and they should be able to find paint that actually works on the railings and enable them to last longer.

BM said the Seafront Maintenance Plan had been delayed due to funding issues but was being brought back. They must strip all the paint back to the cast-iron to ensure all the rust is removed and not left under the paint because it re-emerges very quickly. There are stretches of railing on the seafront that have had to be removed entirely that were beyond repair and it is these which it should be possible to replace with a more sustainable material. The cast-iron foundry is able to repair much but it seems counterproductive to recast missing sections with the same material when we know it doesn't last.

JC said there is a lot going on in Conservation Areas and that there are old buildings at the rear of others that used to be used for light industry such as a milkman's yard and repair garages, which could be used as housing. It is important to consider the use of these buildings because they express the character and history of the area. In relation to Madeira Terraces, they thought that it was impossible to mend the cast-iron or get paint that would last for years. The company who resolved this also repaired the Victoria Fountain through stripping it right back to the iron and then fusing any parts that needed repairing together. All the pieces now have an undercoat of paint, a colour coat and a top coat that should last for a very long time. However, this process was very expensive and replacing them with cast aluminium or a similar material that won't rust would be much better.

OS said that he disagreed with BM when she said the community groups should work as one and that they need to allow the groups to operate as it best fits them. It would be wrong to impose a model on them as it would undermine how the groups work. HL said that in the 60s, the Hove Civic Society were a protest organisation and then morphed into something that actually has an attitude of “yes... but” whereas other groups in the city are very much “no, no no”. They are the only organisation that is making physical changes and the other groups have a different purpose and focus.

MS said that in Oxford, community groups have a confederation of groups who do their own thing but join together on larger projects at county level. There is a generational issue with community groups and it would be good to get more younger people involved. MS thinks that the Council needs to stand up to developers and be more brave. He raised the issue of green spaces and events that some community groups are unhappy about. BM said that green spaces are assets in the city that belong to everyone, not just those in the immediate area. Places like Valley Gardens provide a value to people who don't live near to any green space and have just as much right to enjoy that space. Events bring people to these spaces which is a benefit to the city as a whole.

Addition after the meeting: Cllr Miller's answers to specific questions

How well do you think the Council manages heritage in the city?

- o Previous history of heritage asset management not good – Home Farm, Stanmer Park restoration and management plan to be developed in 2016, but buildings have been empty for at least 15 years

Is there anything specific that you would like to see?

- o Seafront maintenance plan is being brought back – had to be suspended due to budgetary constraints caused by demand led council statutory duties
- o Will be looking at ways that empty, decaying sites such as Home Farm, Stanmer Park can be repurposed and restored

What are your ideas about how to better support heritage in private ownership?

- o Central government – more access to funding for restoration – heritage assets are part of country's history not just private owners. Eg, level of grant funding could be linked to level of public access
- o Duty of care for owners of heritage assets
- o Both for sustainability purposes and protection of heritage – restoration and preventative building maintenance could have lower rates of VAT
- o *What needs to be improved?*
 - ♣ Reduce burden on private owners and public owners, so that listing is viewed as a privilege not a burden

What is your vision for heritage in the city?

- o A city where heritage assets and buildings are in good shape, preventative maintenance is undertaken regularly, but also an understanding that there is space for the new and imaginative. We don't want to be a museum, but a living, breathing, vibrant city – protecting heritage assets should not be about keeping everything the same, but about ensuring that the new is of a sufficiently high artistic quality that it enhances not diminishes a heritage site

Are there any specific lesser-known heritage assets that you think should be prioritised?

Stanmer Home Farm

Middle Street synagogue

Marlborough House & Steine House

Whitehawk Camp

Not a heritage asset in itself, but frames heritage assets – Regency Square garden

How are you ensuring sustainable financial models for heritage buildings, especially those requiring significant maintenance?

We have been examining different models used across the country, including visits and engagement with specialist providers and other local authorities. E.g:

- Someday Studios – Commercial activation of heritage assets around Oxford Street with Westminster Council
- [Proposition Studios](#) (Bethnal Green) – Occupation of a former London Electricity Board HQ the building now features three galleries, a 450-capacity performance venue, a lecture hall and cinema room, and a dedicated Physical Arts block offering classes in dance, gymnastics, aerial, martial arts, and boxing - alongside a sauna and ice baths.
- [Peabody Trust](#) – Thamesmead Arts & Culture initiatives, including partnership with Bow Arts Trust on long lease community arts centre and artists embedded in property guardian type-roles in unlettable buildings.
- [Art Hub Studios](#) (Lewisham) – studio provider partnering with council to occupy a school as artist studios.
- Somerset House (London) – studio provision within a large heritage complex, building on successful community collaborations.

Officers are also in contact with counterparts at local authorities across East and West Sussex facing similar challenges, as well as comparable urban centres such as Bristol and Glasgow.

Can you outline any external funding streams or partnerships being pursued?

- Ongoing conversations with partners at Heritage England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England are taking place.
- The recent DCMS announcement of further funding through the 'Arts Everywhere' programme has a particular focus on heritage and capital. Officers are already

assessing where funding streams might align to heritage projects, and coordinating applications across services to avoid potential internal competition. This work requires strategic prioritisation as discussed.

How are you supporting community groups and volunteers who look after heritage-related spaces or archives?

- Officers are in contact with and open to approaches to a range of groups relating to heritage spaces and archives. Recent work has included the Culture & Creative Industries Manager arranging for images from the James Gray archive of the Regency Society to be displayed at the Seafront Gallery over December and January.
- Other conversations about responsibility transfers and maintenance agreements of smaller heritage assets have also been progressed. For example, the opportunity for Hove Civic Society to adopt and refresh the Hove History Boards was agreed in principle in 2024, subject to the group securing funding. Officers would welcome approaches on similar projects and are happy to support.

Task & Finish Group Meeting 7 – 31/03/26

Members present: Cllrs Evans (Chair), Earthey, Sykes, Cattell, Grimshaw, Theobald; Mark Strong (CVS)

Witnesses/Officers supporting: Davinder Dhillon, (Chair of the Chattri Memorial Group and a trustee of the Royal Pavilion & Museums Trust), David Anderson, (Royal Pavilion & Museums Trust, Cardiff University), Steve Tremlett (BHCC Planning Policy and Heritage Manager), Natalie Sacks-Hammond, Giles Rossington, Luke Proudfoot (BHCC Overview & Scrutiny Team).

Cllr Amanda Evans (AE) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking witnesses for finding the time to attend. She reminded everyone that the meeting was not in public, but that the Task & Finish Group (TFG) would be producing a report which would be published, with evidence from witnesses referenced or quoted. A note of the meeting will be circulated to all witnesses to check for accuracy.

Davinder Dhillon (DD) talked about how he first took over responsibility for the Chattri service; it initially had around 30 people attending and it increased to around 500 including various dignitaries such as the mayor, councillors, representatives from the Indian army and the High Commissioner of India who has visited several times. In the first few years, they would offer tea and samosas after the service at the University, and it gradually built up and moved to Patcham School for refreshments with food that was donated. This year they will be hosted by the AMEX stadium with the Punjab Restaurant in London, Covent Garden supplying the refreshments. DD has raised awareness through giving talks to schools, historical groups, walking groups, on black history, and has organised various heritage conferences in Brighton and was invited to attend one in India. He was also involved in the Indian Gate at the Royal Pavilion which was donated by the people of India to the people of Brighton and has organised a few commemorations over the years with the Mayors taking a

leading role. It was originally the mayor who sold the idea to the British Army to use Brighton as a venue for hospitals during the First World War.

AE asked about the idea for a sculpture in the Royal Pavilion gardens to commemorate the Indian soldiers.

DD shared some photos and a drawing which were the inspiration for the sculpture with the idea of it being on a bench where people can sit next to it. In the picture, the soldiers have different turbans reflecting the three main religions of India during the war: Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. The Royal Pavilion was the main hospital and they would like to put the sculpture in the grounds. They would like the Council to help commemorate and recognise these things from the past as they are important to the city's heritage. At the start of the First World War, the British Army realised it didn't have enough soldiers, and the subsequent recruitment drive was from India. They were the first ones to encounter the Germans and if it wasn't for them, the Germans would have been able to reach the English Channel ready to invade Britain. In 1915, there were two other hospitals in Brighton, one at the General Hospital on Elm Grove and the other on what was called School Road which has been demolished now and is near the Brighton Metropolitan College.

Mark Strong (MS) asked about the status of the Chattri; whether it is a military monument or a religious centre as it is difficult to function as both and he asked about repairs and upkeep. DD said it is a military monument rather than a religious site although there is a religious element in that they hold services there and people pray; it is a spiritual place and more of a temple of homage than a proper consecrated temple.

Cllr Carol Theobald (CT) asked about the plans for the Chattri service this year. DD said they received grants from Changing Chalk and the South Downs National Park Authority which have contributed to a new information board, 6 new benches and a new gate. The event will be taking place on the 14th June, there will a service for around 45 minutes and everyone is invited to the AMEX stadium for refreshments which will be a vegetarian curry.

Mayor Amanda Grimshaw (AG) said that the Indian soldiers were at the Pavilion for one year and that their commitment needs to be acknowledged, but it is overlooked. There are displays up at the Royal Pavilion but they gloss over the real story and don't represent the true nature of what happened. There was a rotten underbelly with soldiers being accused of faking their injuries and so on. The idea of reflecting the contribution of the three religions on a replica bench in the grounds would be very fitting. When Davinder first came up with the idea, it coincided with the Mary Clarke's statue and the decision that the Royal Pavilion needed to restore the gardens to its original Georgian/Regency design. This didn't include the Mary Clarke statue because it didn't fit the concept, and neither did Davinder's suggestion so it wasn't taken forward. Davinder has done a lot of work but is unable to progress. AG felt it was doing the memory a disservice by not representing the true history of the Royal Pavilion and just focusing on one period.

AE explained that the group had previously spoken with an officer from Bristol City Council about the city's colonial history and involvement in slavery, and how Bristol is working to acknowledge this past. They referred to the difficulties that arose following the removal of the Colston statue, and the ongoing efforts there to recognise both the city's heritage and the harms associated with it. AE noted that similar tensions exist locally, particularly around the

idea of preserving heritage sites in aspic and that only allowing regency architecture doesn't acknowledge the city's part in the First World War, which is hugely important.

DD said it wouldn't be possible to replicate the whole gardens as they were because there are now 300 year old trees in place, which they are unlikely to be chopped down, and the gardens are now a place for people to congregate rather than be kept out by fences in the past. AG added that the weeping Wych tree is still there.

Cllr Mark Earthey (ME) asked who made the decision to focus solely on the regency period and to whom are they accountable. AG said that the gardens were deemed "at risk" and put on the register because of the incidents there; it was then granted funding to take it off the register and to restore the natural boundary from the regency period. However, the gardens have retained a lot of the regency features such as beautiful views, the winding paths and long grass, and it has state of the art CCTV covering the whole gardens. The main aim of the regency status was to fence the garden in; however, it was also fenced in at the time the soldiers were at the Pavilion. The funding application could easily have covered all periods when the gardens were fenced in, not just the regency. David Anderson (DA) added that it creates a false time structure as the Pavilion has a significant living history that shouldn't be forgotten. This part of history shouldn't be excluded because it doesn't fit in with the arbitrary definition of what should be within the boundaries.

MS said that in the mid 90s, a garden designer called Virginia Hinze recreated the original regency design of the Pavilion gardens. This included erecting fences to stop people being able to walk through as they were able to do previously. The walkway doesn't meet current accessibility standards which excludes some people such as those with buggies or wheelchairs. It was an active decision to make the gardens what they are, and it is technically a modernist attempt to redesign an area to how they think it looked, more "faux regency" than actual regency.

DD said they have been looking at different local artists for the sculpture, and they will have to raise around £300 - £350k. He hopes to gain support from local people, the Council, even people abroad; anyone who is interested and wants to help raise money. When they apply for funding, they can demonstrate that they have support from the council and the local community. AG said it would be pointless to raise lots of money when the sculpture isn't allowed to go in the garden, it would be insulting to insist it goes outside the gates. The Mary Clarke statue is being moved to New Road.

MS said that this subject links to the Council's Memorial Policy that was discussed at committee earlier that week. AE said that this way of thinking needs to stop and one of the recommendations might be based on this. The recommendations can be specific, but they need to remember that Place O&S Committee is not a decision-making committee and cannot enforce anything.

DD said that Brighton is a diverse city and it's about making the community aware of this. For example, the first soldier to have the Victoria Cross conferred to him at the Royal Pavilion and to demonstrate the diversity of Brighton, there are blue plaques across the city such as that of Sake Dean Mohammed at the Queen's hotel and Rabindranath Tagore's on Hotel du Vin.

David Anderson (DA) gave an overview of his work in the museums, culture and heritage sector. He was Director General at Amgueddfa Cymru Museum Wales from 2010 until he moved to Cardiff University in 2023. He is currently an Honorary Professor of Cultural Policy at Cardiff University, researching Governance and Corruption. He was also a member of the Welsh Government's working group on 'The Slave Trade and the British Empire: an audit of commemoration in Wales' (published in 2021) which led to an in-depth analysis of hundreds of statues, streets and other memorials named after slave owners from the 17th century onwards in Wales

As President of the UK Museums Association from 2013 to 2015, he led the development of radically different policies than before, including the key publication for the sector, 'Museums Change Lives'. This proposed that people, not collections, are the ethical purpose of museums. In 1997, DA also wrote a research-based report on museum learning for the UK Government called "A Common Wealth - Museums in the Learning Age" (1997, second edition 1999). This proposed that it is the responsibility of all cultural and heritage bodies to support informal as well as formal learning by people and communities, whatever their background or class.

There are many museums that have managed to radically change their relationship with their communities, schools and kids. One mechanism is by providing opportunities for community-based volunteers. For example, St Fagans Museum of History, one of the seven museums that are part of Amgueddfa Cymru, offered opportunities for around a thousand volunteers per year, coordinated by two members of staff, who worked with homeless and other street level charities in Wales to provide their clients with experience of getting back into work. The £37 million redevelopment of St Fagans was in part funded by £12 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. In 2018, after its completion, the St Fagans Museum redevelopment won the Art Fund 'UK Museum of the Year' award.

DA spoke about growing social fragmentation and the loss of shared values in communities, in part as a consequence of digital media. He emphasised the increased importance of free, inclusive public spaces where people can still come together - such as museums, libraries, gardens and other cultural venues. Museums have a responsibility not to simply curate and display collections in isolation, but to actively engage communities, including children and under-represented groups, in the process of interpretation and reinterpretation of immaterial as well as material culture.

DA talked about working from 2010 with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation on a research project with 20 other museums and galleries that they funded. They gradually built up a good, trusting relationship and, after 10 years, and, out of the blue, one day in 2020 the Foundation offered Amgueddfa Cymru an additional one-off £3 million of unrestricted funding as a gift.

There are foundations out there who have a lot of money, but they are smart. They are aware that museums that are not genuinely focused on community social research and

practice may try to mimic those who are, to get the money. They want to see that organisations they fund have also done their research over a sustained period, are willing to work hard and with genuine community agency, have the right kind of leadership and can demonstrate that they have built trust over years with their community partners.

He gave the example of Paisley Museum where Renfrewshire Council decided to rethink the historic centre of the town. The museum ended up getting tens of millions of pounds from various sources, including the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Birmingham Museum and Galleries are doing similar deep, community-based work, and have invited members of the public to form a Citizens Assembly to guide them on what they should be doing.

DA said that if a museum was simply deciding what people are going to see and not structurally listening to and being guided by their communities, it can block potential funding opportunities. However, the leaders and senior staff of many museums - most notably the national museums in London - are ideologically convinced of the exclusive importance of their own knowledge, and that of people like them, without community guidance, and decide to continue their traditional model on principle. Any democratically inspired projects they run are usually isolated and performative, for presentation purposes.

The key requirement to get funding is not to see heritage in isolation, and instead work with other communities in the area, including those with lived experience, with respect and over a sustained period; to involve schools and young people and see what they can contribute to the service; having the right leadership who really understand the civic role and responsibilities of culture in society; and backing from key funding organisations including local authorities, to work in ways that are deeply rooted in, and respectful of their communities.

MS said that the Brighton Museum seems a bit isolated and doesn't have one particular focus. It doesn't have the local history gallery anymore and the entrance is quite hidden away and not very visible.

DA said the location next to the Royal Pavilion at a transport hub at the centre of the city is beneficial, but it is also critically important that it is visibly welcoming to people.

AG said that much of the city's built environment dates from the Georgian period, with George IV funding the seafront, and that wealth derived from the slave trade went into the royal privy purse and was subsequently used to finance developments and buildings in Brighton. This is not acknowledged in any way.

DA said the Royal Pavilion was built by the UK's biggest beneficiary of slavery - George IV - and this should be fully and publicly acknowledged and addressed. The critical reinterpretation of the statues of slave traders and slave holders shows one way of addressing how the past is represented, which has been used successfully in Bristol. Rather than removing monuments, they aim to acknowledge their origins and meanings, going

beyond simply changing labels to provide proper context. In Brighton, there has been limited reflection on this issue, particularly in how histories linked to slavery remain largely unacknowledged.

In Cardiff, the National Museum worked with multiple communities to review the collections and develop meaningful responses to this history. DA said that following the murder of George Floyd, the Museum recognised a need to better examine histories of slavery and colonialism. Work was escalated with many organisations that the Museum had already worked with for a decade or more. One of these was the Sub-Saharan African Group, a community organisation, who were invited by the Museum to lead review of its collections relating to General Picton, the Welsh former Governor of Trinidad. The SSAG commissioned artists from Trinidad or of Trinidadian heritage to respond to a painting of General Picton, the first British Governor of Trinidad, in the Museum's collections.

This one historic portrait generated multiple artistic responses across three galleries in the Museum. One artist, Gesiye, created photos of symbolic tattoos on a dozen people's skins that, when played as a video in sequence, showed a Trinidadian bird rise and fly. Another installation by the women's artist collective Culture directly addressed the Governor's documented brutal torture over several days of a 14 year old girl, Luis Calderon. She was the abused 'mistress' from the age of 11 of one of the Governor's closest friends, who had accused her of theft and which she denied. It was noted that the involvement of artists with cultural connections to the history resulted in particularly moving, impactful outcomes, beyond anything the Museum had exhibited before.

DD asked what the next steps are in relation to the sculpture of the Indian soldiers. He is aware that he needs to raise funds, get planning permission, and create a committee of some sort. He noted that it took nearly a year to get permission for the benches at the Chattri. AE said that the group will work on its recommendations which will reflect a lot of this discussion. AE and AG said they were happy to take this forward outside of the group.

Further information supplied by witnesses

- The Heritage Fund has developed a directory of alternative funders which is a valuable resource: [Directory | Heritage Funding Directory](#)
- As described by Helmut Lusser: Jan Gehl, Public Life – Public Space, 2007: [4. pspl Local Scale analysis spaces p57-73.pdf](#)
- Extra information supplied by Alfie Stroud, Historic England:

Our [Community Advice Hub](#) contains resources aimed at helping communities look after their historic environment.

Our [Grants](#) pages describe our priorities and areas of focus. Our recent and current funding in Brighton & Hove has been under our [Places](#) grants strand, but we also fund engagement, community capacity building and skills projects under our [People](#) strand.

The competitive [Heritage At Risk Capital Fund](#), which we deliver for the UK Government, has recently been announced for a further four years following this year's first round.

Our [Heritage Counts](#) and research programme commissions and disseminates cutting-edge research on the social and economic impacts of heritage.

You may be particularly interested in our current work on the capacity of vacant historic buildings to provide more than [600,000 new homes](#) nationwide.

Our website contains huge amounts of free to access [expert advice and technical guidance](#) on the historic built environment for audiences from councils to private homeowners.

In 2024 we published a new advice note on [Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency](#).

We have a variety of resources on accessibility in heritage, including on [barriers to engagement for disabled people](#) and [accessibility adaptations](#) to buildings.

'[Stopping the Rot](#)' sets out local authorities' powers to enforce care and maintenance of the historic built environment.

You might enjoy dipping into the enormous amount of archival information available through our website about [Brighton & Hove](#) in our Local Heritage Hub.

- Extra information supplied by Peter Insole, Bristol Council:

Below are some of the links I mentioned;

Our art in the public realm resource that connects to our Story of Place approach and has a link to the Cultural Strategy [Art and the Public Realm Bristol](#)

The Know Your Place historic web mapping resource that includes the Transatlantic slavery economy layer I mentioned [Know Your Place - Bristol](#)

The Our Place toolkit is available as a pdf <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/files/documents/9845-our-place-report>. We have developed this further recently by combining the approach with the National Trust's Spirit of Place where we work with communities to produce an Our Spirit of Place document for their historic park.

Information about the Bristol Legacy Foundation established by our previous Mayor is available on their web pages [Bristol Legacy Foundation](#).

- Extra information supplied by Mark Strong (CVS):

Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency

Historic England has revised Historic England Advice Note 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency following its publication in 2024. A key aim of the HEAN is to provide local planning authorities with information to support greater consistency in decision-making for proposals seeking to improve the energy and carbon efficiency of historic buildings in relation to their significance, enabling positive climate action.

The 2026 update has focused on targeted improvements to provide greater clarity in areas such as applying relevant legislation and policy, the positive role of tools such as conservation area management plans in outlining and supporting energy efficiency policies, and technical considerations for works such as insulation. The landing page also provides links to six case climate change historic building adaptation case studies."

The full document can be found here <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-historic-buildings-energy-carbon-efficiency-advice-note-18/> . It looks like Section 4 "*Climate action through adapting historic buildings: common interventions*" is particularly relevant.

