

APPENDIX B Island Heritage Strategic Framework

The Isle of Wight has a rich and diverse heritage. The many organisations which record, protect, celebrate and publicise this heritage together represent a thriving industrial sector on the Island, with hundreds of thousands of people working in and visiting heritage sites each year. Heritage has the potential to support regeneration, improve people's quality of life, underpin the Island's tourism industry, bring people together in stronger communities, and offer everyone an opportunity to learn something new. This makes it valuable to the Island's economy, but even more importantly, it helps to define the sense of place for people who live on the Isle of Wight.

The Island's heritage organisations have come together as partners, because it is in everyone's interest to build on this strong and successful sector. This strategic framework reflects that partnership, because it describes the elements which are most important to the sector, and the outcomes that the sector wishes to see. The framework will operate on a case-by-case project basis, always linking back to the agreed core principles.

There is a broad and changing policy context, in which this framework has to sit. National and local changes to guidance on heritage mean that the framework has to link with planning, tourism, arts and economic requirements. These are not set out fully here, but the expectation is clear, that this framework will support, comply with and promote all relevant legislation and national policy guidelines.

This framework does not provide rigid boundaries, which keep organisations within a limited area of work. Instead, it offers some simple key principles, and some shared issues which partners have agreed are important, and allows all the partners to work together to achieve new and exciting historical projects. By establishing a set of shared founding ideas, and agreeing to approach partnerships on a case-by-case basis, the Isle of Wight's heritage sector is taking a brave and innovative step. Partnership working can be challenging, but it has the potential to bring rewards to the individuals and organisations involved and, most importantly, it will enhance the experience of every visitor to every attraction, event or display which the strategic framework enables.

What is important

The heritage of the Isle of Wight is integral to what makes it a special place. This framework seeks to preserve that special identity, and to reinforce residents' feelings of wellbeing, belonging and local pride, whilst offering visitors fun and interesting things to see and do.

Each partner organisation has its own identity as well as working in a strategic partnership with others. That identity will not be hidden by the partnership working, to ensure that the accountabilities and the credit for every partnership project are clear.

All partners in each project are equal, recognising the different contributions to each project that the partners will make. However, to ensure project focus and delivery, there will be an agreed lead partner for each project.

The partners to this framework want even more people to enjoy the Island's heritage. This means more people need to be able to have access to that heritage, in ways which are helpful to them. For some, a website may provide the information in the way they want to receive it; for others, they may wish to discuss an object, document or even landscape with peers and professionals. This means that partners need to bear in mind their audience, when developing partnership projects, so that as many people as possible may benefit from each project.

It is vital that the heritage is preserved for future generations. This means that some objects or documents may not be suitable for general display. There are professional standards for displays and data and document handling, and these need to be observed by all partners in all projects, even if this means that some items may not be made publicly available for fear of damage or loss.

It is a fundamental assumption of this framework that children and young people will be included in projects not only as the audience, but as participants where possible. This is to develop and build on their understanding and enjoyment of history, and of the importance of the place that they live or are visiting.

It is a similarly fundamental assumption that people of all ages and backgrounds will have a contribution to make to preserving and celebrating the Island's history, and that all efforts should be made to include personal experiences and expertise to celebrate people's history too.

Projects need to bring together a range of people and organisations, so that new cross-sector partnerships can bring new ideas and potential income streams to the sector and the Island.

The Isle of Wight Council will be a facilitator and enabler for this framework, but as a partner, rather than as a lead organisation, working with others to put the partnership working into practice.

The framework is a living document and, if partners need to agree amendments, to reflect better the changing sector, they will be able to do this within the framework. The emphasis will be on partnership agreement, retaining shared goals and outcomes.

The outcomes partners want to see

- Even more people finding out something interesting about the Island's history
- Even more visitors coming to the Isle of Wight, because of its heritage
- Easy ways for visitors to find out about places on the Island which might interest them
- Easy ways for people to get involved in looking after their local history, in whatever form they want.
- Sustainable heritage groups, with income streams which match their needs
- A "hub" for heritage, featuring Isle of Wight Council experts working with partners to broaden and develop professional heritage skills.
- A vibrant and exciting heritage sector, working together as supportive partners, to celebrate the Island at home and abroad.
- A heritage sector which contributes to the Island's economy by attracting visitors, resulting in sustainable jobs in the sector and healthy cultural tourism.
- People of all ages and backgrounds taking part in looking after the Island's heritage, and ensuring it is still enjoyed by as many people as possible.
- Quality of life improves for groups of people as a result of heritage projects.
- Local regeneration projects with heritage at their heart.

How we will know we have succeeded

The partners will contribute project ideas to an Action Plan, which the Isle of Wight Council will develop in the first instance, but which partners will populate and update through a shared online "portal". The Action Plan will be owned by Isle of Wight Council, to ensure it remains focused and co-ordinated, but a sense of ownership will be needed in all partners, for this to work. The Plan will

set out a rolling series of projects, with timescales, resource implications and potential benefits clearly stated and shared, so that progress can be seen and recognised. It will be important to review the successes and promote them, to make clear the contribution that heritage makes to the Island as a whole.

- Partners will be able to share ideas, opportunities and learning through the online portal, which will further the development of the sector.
- Visitor numbers at heritage sites will increase.
- The number of people able to find out about heritage sites easily on the Island will increase, as a result of the mutual signposting which partners will undertake.
- Projects which are long-term will have sustainable funding streams, or a clear exit strategy for their end point.
- New sources of external funding will have been brought to the Island, as a result of heritage projects.
- Residents will be able to say their wellbeing has improved as a result of heritage projects.
- Key Island heritage sites and collections will have a sustainable future.

The Island Heritage Strategic Framework Action Plan (draft for illustration only)

Key Principle	Project idea	Timeframe	Audience	Resources	Benefits
Finding practical ways in which partners will work together to protect the Island's heritage for future generations	Joint events Exhibitions (on and off-Island) Shared accommodation				
Finding practical ways in which the Island's heritage can be interpreted more widely, to allow more people to enjoy more exhibits, stories and experiences	Exhibitions in new places Name Plaques History trails Websites				
Taking every practical opportunity for closer joint-working between Island heritage organisations	Online portal Joint ticketing				
Taking every real opportunity for cost-reduction in the sector	Shared accommodation Shared purchasing				
Taking every real opportunity for income generation, to support heritage in a sympathetic way	Sponsorship Social enterprises				
Linking with non-heritage visitor attractions and accommodation providers, to attract more to the Isle of Wight's cultural tourism "offer" sympathetically	Cultural passport Off-season tours Specialist interest tours				
Sharing information about external funding bids and sources and joining	Funding information via portal				

forces in the development of bids for grants					
All organisations which participate in the Strategy would have a role in its implementation.	Shared ownership of Action Plan to populate, update and monitor				