

HTF
Annual
Report
2012-2013



Chair's Report

The Historic Towns Forum continues to adapt and develop in response to changing economic, policy, and legislative contexts. The rapid pace of legislative change continues with the Growth and Infrastructure Act and changes to permitted development. The first neighbourhood plans have been made this year, whilst several others are at a late stage. There have been signs of strong economic recovery in some areas, though with huge geographical variations. We have responded to members' feedback and continually developed our training, influencing and knowledge sharing activities. Our events and activities have covered the growth agenda, localism, neighbourhood planning, urban expansion and other current issues.

We continue to promote awareness to Government at all levels of the numerous ways in which historic buildings and places contribute to effective, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development, especially in areas undergoing economic restructuring. We have been keen to point out that heritage is often a catalyst for sustainable development, not a barrier. Our members are drawn from across the sectors and we disciplines, and range from local to global. This provides HTF with a unique perspective.

As always, we are indebted to our corporate sponsors and partners, who have helped us to deliver all aspects of our programme. We have changed our operational structures to ensure that we deliver this programme in the most cost-effective way possible. We also entered into a working arrangement with ASHTAV earlier in the year, which has resulted in operational benefits to both organisations. Related to this, we moved our base to Kellogg College, Oxford University. These changes have helped to consolidate our position and ability to support members in the future.

Dave Chetwyn
Chair

Director's Report

In a year that showcases eleven years of *Heritage Counts* with the topic of skills, and with public sector and Local Authority cuts reducing the number of Conservation, Archaeology and Heritage Officers still further, it has never been more important to find new ways of working, of making partnerships stronger, finding new ways to fill gaps, and maximising all new opportunities.

Again this year we have consolidated our standing within the sector by responding to the current climate with topical events, securing further sponsorship, and extending our reach into the academic sector, with new research partnerships in the offing, event collaboration with new hosts Kellogg College, and with a programme that has attracted interest in the New Towns and Garden City Agenda.

Other exciting news is our continued close working partnership with Kellogg College and with the Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages (UK). This has broadened our interest in rural issues and as a result we will be holding a Rural Tourism event at Poundbury during England Tourism week 2014.

At this time we continue to recognise the difficulties for our members and with this in mind aim to deliver a programme of training and other events in the New Year that will help to bridge identified needs and membership requirements. We always welcome membership input in this area and will be holding a strategy event early in the New Year to determine our future programme. We thank all of you, our members and partners, for your continued support, and look forward to working with you to continue progress in 2014.

Noël James
Director

1. Events

1.1 Conferences

Event	Date	Delegates	Income	Expenditure	Net profit
Rebooting historic centres: public/private engagement and post-recession success	London 09 November 2012	45	1487.00	850.00	637.00
Planning Legislation update – the NPPF, Neighbourhood Planning, Taylor Review, and the Red Tape Challenge. Where are we, exactly?	London 29 April 2013	20	1379.00	-	1379.00
Community Engagement – it's real, it's now and it's happening. Sharing good practice from within our cities, towns and Neighbourhood Areas	St. Albans 19/20 May 2013	35	1633.00	423.00	1210.00
Engaging businesses and communities with the tourism economy in historic towns – how to work with BIDs, Neighbourhood Plans, and the USP of your area	Hereford 31 July / 01 August 2013	50	4243.00	1634.00	2609.00
Development, growth and the historic environment – unholy trinity or happy necessity?	Exeter 18 November 2013	23 Joint with ASHTAV	530.00	517.00	13.00
New Towns, Garden Cities and Utopian Masterplanning – Cities of the Past, Cities of the Future	Milton Keynes 28/9 November	35	1602.00	1030.00	572.00
Historic Towns and Urban Planning – Beijing workshop	Oxford 10 December 2012	20	250.00	40.00	210.00
ICOMOS Annual Congress	June 2012	Partnership promotion (HTF speaker)	-	-	-
TMI Annual Congress	Brighton October 2012	Partnership promotion (HTF speaker)	500.00	250.00	250.00
European Walled Towns Forum	Derry / Londonderry 23-26 October 2013	Partnership promotion (HTF speaker)	-	-	-
Totals*	10 events	228	11624.00	4744.00	6880.00

* These totals may differ from those in 9.2 as some relate to previous or subsequent financial accounting years.

1.2 Executive Committee Meetings

Meetings were held in November, February, May, and September. We are grateful to Land Securities Group PLC, Bircham Dyson Bell for hosting these meetings. Joint Historic Towns Forum and Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages meetings were held in February, August and October. We are grateful to Kellogg College for their support in hosting these meetings.

2. Publications

2.1 Newsletters

e-news and e-updates have ensured regular communication with Members and other contacts, in a cost effective way. The development of the current website gives us a facility to do this efficiently and we hope effectively. We have listened to membership feedback and have continued to develop our newsletters in a way that suits our main member contacts. Feedback has also shown that our newsletters are also popular beyond our traditional membership.

We are still able to offer the opportunity to members to advertise in e-news, which is now circulated to over 11 000 contacts. This service helps to generate income to offset overhead costs.

This year newsletters have been produced quarterly; we had received feedback that this was more enjoyed than bi-monthly; please do let us know if a return to bi-monthly is required.

We have continued our use of social media as a communications tool, with a renewed presence on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. We now have over 5000 twitter followers between the two HTF accounts (@HTF & @Director_HTF) and over 3000 LinkedIn contacts between both accounts. This has made a noticeable difference to our means for communicating events and publications.

2.2 Published guidance

Income from sales of publications for the year ending 31/12/13 totalled £62.00.

Although paper publications still sell and the principles of good practice they offer remain as relevant today as when they were first written, guidance is now being developed more as a web-based facility in the future. Because publications will become out of date, as well as selling publications at discounted prices, we have continued to ensure that all publications will be made available electronically - free to download - for HTF Members. Charges will still be made for paper and cd versions as a contribution to costs.

Work continues to update key publications and provide new guidance. In particular this year we have helped English Heritage with the new retail publication *The Changing Face of the High Street: Decline and Revival*, again contributed to the 2012 and 2013 versions of *Heritage Counts*, while our Chair produced the DCLG-approved Locality Neighbourhood Planning *Roadmap*.

In 2014 the proceedings of the joint HTF/Kellogg Historic Environment Seminars will be published as occasional papers, and this activity will continue on an annual basis.

2.3 On-line guidance

The HTF website (www.historictownsforum.org) has been developed to include topic areas which relate to the work of the Forum and to bring together expert presentations, conference reports, case studies and examples of good practice.

Work continues to update the existing areas of interest (Heritage Protection, Managing Growth, Public realm, Regeneration, Retail Development, Sustainable Tourism, Transport &

Traffic Management) as well as other areas to do with Localism, the NPPF, Neighbourhood Planning and the changing political landscape.

In particular 4 guidance papers have been produced this year on updates in heritage legislation (2), community engagement; and tourism. More are planned for 2014.

The English Heritage-funded planning toolkit project will also be available online in 2014.

The facility to add to these pages and develop ideas offers members the opportunity to share good practice and to obtain up to date guidance. Links to other organisations are also provided.

3. Projects

3.1 Retail development

As a result of our response to the BIS High Street Review in 2011/2 we were invited to help English Heritage to shape the brief for the now published *The Changing Face of the High Street: Decline and Revival*. We were also invited to a partner in the innovative, independent Revive & Thrive High Street Challenge, a retail partnership offering £150, 000 worth of in-kind support to the winning town in their high street revival challenge. HTF sat on the project shaping and judging panel and will contribute in-kind help to the winning town, to be announced in 2014.

3.2 Heritage Counts

Once again the HTF has been actively involved through the Historic Environment Forum with *Heritage Counts 2012*, contributing to content, overall suggestions and editorial help. The theme of *Heritage Counts 2013* is the Historic Environment and Skills. It is also the eleventh edition of *Heritage Counts*.

3.3. Historic Environment Forum

Once again the HTF has been actively involved with the Historic Environment Forum with executive members sitting on the Spatial Policy Awareness Group, which is helping currently to shape the National Planning Policy Guidance. This activity will continue into 2014.

3.4 VisitEngland

The HTF has again been actively involved with VisitEngland this year, particularly through sitting on the Strategic Industry Advisory group for the third year running, and contributing to their Action Plans. There has also been collaboration for the second HTF National Tourism Conference, which is planned for England tourism Week, in April. This event will be held at Poundbury with support by VisitEngland.

3.5 Universities Project

In partnership with English Heritage, a project to develop more heritage awareness content for undergraduates in relevant degree courses has been established. The final phase of this project was carried out this year, with our built environment professionals providing the content based on the survey results. This is now with English Heritage and the online toolkit should be available for download in the New Year.

3.6 Universities Research Projects

The HTF has been approached by 3 different Universities to be involved with AHRC-funded research projects to do with Localism, Heritage and Culture, and the New Towns and Garden Cities Agenda. More information on these respective projects will be available in the New Year when they are in the public domain.

3.7 Joint HTF/ASHTAV/Kellogg Seminars

This year the HTF has arranged to hold joint Historic Environment Seminars with Kellogg College and HTF Partners, ASHTAV. These will be held in the New Year on 25 February, 03 June and 14 October. The topic for 2014 will be New Towns and Garden Cities, and will result in published proceedings available the following year. The Seminar Series is intended to be an annual event.

3.7 HTF Interns

This year we invited three willing HTF volunteers (Dennis Stevenson, Neil Monaghan and Rebecca Payne) to work for us in an informal intern capacity. Dennis and Rebecca are currently undertaking planning and built environment MAs while Neil was Head of Property at Oxfordshire County Council and also volunteers for the Oxford Preservation Trust. Dennis is also a qualified planner and worked as such for a Local authority in London for many years. Dennis has produced useful HTF guidance this year on heritage legislation (which has been lauded by a notable London QC!) while Neil has been working on our newsletter and will next year take on our consultation co-ordination. Rebecca will be working with us on events and marketing. All three will continue with us next year. We have had other requests for internships and are always happy to help out. If you would like to volunteer with us in 2014 please do get in touch. We are especially keen for people with web design, funding experience and educational interests.

4. Sponsorship

4.1 Despite the difficult times I am delighted to report that this year we continued to receive invaluable support from our Corporate Partners Bircham Dyson Bell, Land Securities Group PLC, and new University of Oxford hosting partner, Kellogg College, where the HTF office is now based. In addition to financial contributions and hosting London meetings, one of this year's conferences was hosted by Partners Bircham Dyson Bell. In addition BDB, Land Securities, and CgMs offered their expertise as speakers at various conferences, while Kellogg is hosting our 2014 Seminar Series and has been integral in its planning. We are always looking for new sponsors and it is hoped there will be more news in this front in 2014.

4.2 Partners' Dinner

A very successful Partners' dinner was hosted by Bircham Dyson Bell in December offering the opportunity for Members of the HTF Executive and representatives of the sponsor / partners to exchange ideas.

4.3 Sponsorship for individual events has helped to make them viable, offered direct engagement for private and public sector Members and meant that delegates' fees can be kept low – thus encouraging attendance.

This year sponsorship was received from:

Bircham Dyson Bell
St Alban's City & District Council
Hereford City Council
Herefordshire County Council
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce
Herefordshire College of Technology
Pop up Power
Rentalite

5. Membership

5.1 Losses had been expected in view of the financial conditions and the creation of Unitary Authorities, but new Members continue to join and overall this year we are pleased to report a slight increase in membership from last year. It was agreed by the Executive Committee and the Director that efforts in the coming year should be concentrated on delivering services and maintaining a good profile with a view to recruiting more Members when the fiscal climate improves.

The Membership is currently made up of the following categories:

Local Authority	40
Associate	5
Civic & Amenity	26
Corporate	75
Honorary	4
Individual	27
Reciprocal	13
Town & Parish	10
Total	<u>200</u>

6. Partnership working

6.1 HTF continues to work in partnership with other organisations to strengthen its position and to contribute on behalf of its Membership to policy debates. Partnerships also add value and make best use of limited resources within the sector. During the past year HTF has worked with many of the Local Authority Members and the following organisations, among many others:

- ATCM
- Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages
- BDB
- Blue Sail
- British Parking Association
- British Parking Forum
- BRH Associates
- CBRE
- CgMs
- Department of Communities and Local Government
- DJC1 Planning
- David Lock Associates
- Donald Insall Associates
- Duchy of Cornwall

- English Heritage
- Exeter Town Council
- European Walled Towns Network
- Herefordshire County Council
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce
- Herefordshire College of Technology
- Hereford City Council
- Heritage Alliance
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Homes & Communities Agency
- Historic Environment Forum
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Historic Scotland
- ICON
- ICOMOS
- IHBC
- Kellogg College
- Land Securities Group PLC
- Listed Property Owners Club
- Local Government Association
- Locality
- Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre
- Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners
- National Retail Planning Forum
- National Trust
- New Anglia LEP
- PAS
- Pop up Power
- Prince's Foundation
- Prince's Regeneration Trust
- RTPi
- Rentalite
- Revive & Thrive
- St Albans district & City Council
- Steven Bee Urban Counsel
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council
- TCPA
- The Tourism Alliance
- Tourism Management Institute
- University of Oxford
- Urban Vision Enterprise CIC
- VisitEngland
- Winchester City Council
- +Plus Urban Design Ltd

6.2 Partnership with ASHTAV

This year we have further cemented our working relationship with the Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages by entering into a Memorandum of Understanding and a Service Level Agreement with them. This has produced quality joint events and potential research projects, and we aim to continue the partnership in 2014.

6.3 Speaking Places at other events

This year HTF spoke by invitation at 8 additional events to our own: the Planning Advisory Service event in Cambridge in February (2 speakers); a BPA event in August; the ICON Congress in Glasgow in April; the TMI Annual Congress in October; The European Walled Towns Network event in Derry/Londonderry in October; The BPA Big Debate in October; and at the ASHTAV AGM in November. Where appropriate we will continue to speak at

partner events in order to advocate for the HTF and to share good practice. The HTF also provided speakers for all of our own events this year.

6.4 Consultations

The Forum responds to consultations relevant to its Members, in order to highlight the special concerns of managing historic towns and cities.

Consultations responded to this year include:

- VisitBritain Golden Legacy
- National Heritage Protection
- The Taylor Review
- Streamlining Planning
- DCMS Broadband
- Red Tape Challenge
- Draft BS79B: guide to the conservation of heritage assets
- RTPI Large Scale Housing Development
- Farrell Review
- Giving to Heritage – making it work for you
- BIDs Consultation
- New Report presenting the business case for investing in better streets and places
- Colchester Transport Review
- Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act
- Cut the VAT Campaign Revival
- Flexibility in Change of Use
- Response to NPPG Beta Version
- Tourism Society Update: Turning the Tide

6.5 Through Reciprocal Membership HTF maintain formal links with 13 organisations; it is also a member of the Heritage Alliance, the IHBC, and the Academy of Urbanism.

6.6 Revive & Thrive. This year the HTF were invited to a partner in the innovative, independent Revive & Thrive High Street Challenge, a retail partnership offering £150, 000 worth of in-kind support to the winning town in their high street revival challenge. HTF sat on the project shaping and judging panel and will contribute in-kind help to the winning town, to be announced in 2014.

6.7 Donald Insall Library

Our close working partnership with Donald Insall and Associates has led to Sir Donald Insall giving the DIA technical library to the HTF on permanent loan, where it will be available to students, practitioners and members. It will be housed in the Kellogg Library, in the Herbert Lane Room, funded by ASHTAV. We will be housing it at Kellogg in 2014.

6.8 China and other overseas links. Through previous links with the British Council, the HTF has continued our programme of maintaining our Oxford links with visiting heritage delegations from China. This year Director Noël James of HTF and Director John Shaw of spoke to 20 delegates from Beijing about the importance of the work of the Forum within the Historic Built Environment, with another event planned for January 2014. More events with overseas delegates from other countries are planned for 2014.

7. Executive Committee

7.1 Position of Chair

Dave Chetwyn was voted in as Chair. This was agreed by the AGM. Dave Chetwyn is prepared to stand for another year.

7.2 Election of the Executive Committee

Prepared to stand for another year:

Tony Wyatt
Richard Tuffrey
Steve Tilbury

Corporate representative & Vice Chair
High Peak Borough Council & Hon Treasurer
Winchester City Council

David Warburton

York City Council

Prepared to be co-opted for a further year:

Steven Bee
Prue Smith

Independent
Independent

The Forum is very grateful for the support of these Members who stood down:

Brian Human
Jim Blackwell

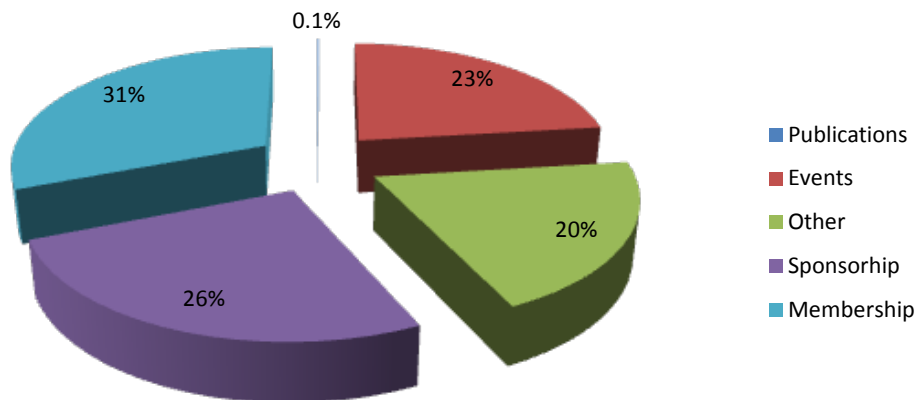
Independent / former Chair & Vice Chair
Worcester City Council

8. Financial Report

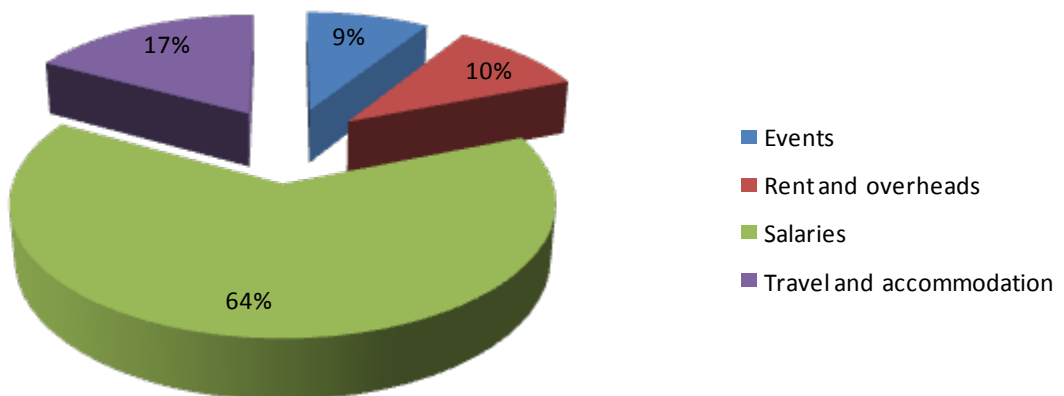
8.1 While this year has been one of transition as we adjust to our new circumstances we have worked hard to find a sound strategy to allow us to approach further financial stability in the New Year. It has been a difficult year for the sector in financial terms, and while the HTF has not been unaffected we have managed this year to break even, to source potential new funding streams, and to develop a more robust business model and financial strategy. Things look extremely positive for the New Year and we remain grateful to our Members and Partners for their continued support.

8.2 Accounts summary

Income - January - December 2013



Expenditure - January - December 2013



A full copy of our accounts is available on request.

Richard Tuffrey.

Noël James, Director
December 2013