



# Commission

**Final Minutes of the 340<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 29 March 2023 at Cannon Bridge House, London, EC4**

**Commissioners present:** Sir Laurie Magnus (Chairman)  
Sandie Dawe  
Ben Derbyshire  
Sandra Dinneen  
Paul Farmer  
Jane Gibson  
Professor Helena Hamerow  
David Laing  
Jonathan Marsden  
Patrick Newberry  
Robert Sackville-West  
Richard Upton

**Staff present:** Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive  
Michael Bishop, Director of Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement  
Liz Bushell, Director of Corporate Services  
Mark Harrison, Head of Heritage Crime Strategy (for part)  
Claudia Kenyatta, Director of Regions  
Ian Morrison, Director of Policy & Evidence  
Siobhan O'Donoghue, Head of Governance (notes)  
Amy Pitts, Director of Communications & Public Engagement  
Julia Ward, Head of the Chairman & Chief Executive's Office  
Andrew Wiseman, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary

**Others present:** Gerard Lemos, Chair, English Heritage Trust (for part)  
Mark Stuart-Smith, Chief Financial Officer, English Heritage Trust (for part)

## **1 Apologies, announcements and Declarations of Interest**

- 1.1 Attendees were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Commissioners Nairita Chakraborty, Julie Kenny, Susie Thornberry and Sue Wilkinson.
- 1.2 It was noted formally that, on 28 February 2023, DCMS had confirmed the appointment of Dame Julie Kenny as a Historic England Commissioner for a four-year term effective from 1 February 2023.

### *Declarations of Interest*

- 1.3 There were no declarations of interest.

## **2 Minutes of 8 February 2023 Commission meeting and matters arising**

- 2.1 The minutes of the 339<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 8 February 2023 were approved as a correct record.

## Matter Arising

- 2.2 Chief Executive's Report (Climate Change position statement): As reported to the February 2023 meeting, the timing of the Historic England Advice Note (HEAN) on climate change and the historic environment was linked to the outcome of the Government's Energy Efficiency Review. A high-level draft of the HEAN was expected within the next few weeks, with a view to consultation on the full draft in July 2023.

**2.3 Commission approved the minutes of the 339<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 8 February 2023 as a correct record.**

## 3 Chairman's Report

- 3.1 The Chairman presented his regular report, which detailed activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events. Recent highlights included the well-attended Parliamentary Reception on 21 February 2023, which had focused on Historic England's work on high streets; and the Parliamentary launch with Grosvenor and other partners, on 7 March 2023, of the *Heritage and Carbon: Addressing the Skills Gap* report. Both events had been attended by Government Ministers.
- 3.2 Culture Recovery Fund evaluation: The Culture Recovery Fund evaluation report was now expected to be published by DCMS in April 2023.
- 3.3 Appointment of a Deputy Chair: Following a recruitment exercise, overseen by a Commission sub-committee chaired by Paul Farmer, and observed by the DCMS Deputy Director for Heritage, UK City of Culture, Arts, Heritage & Tourism, Commissioner Sandra Dinneen had been invited to accept the position of Deputy Chair. Commission ratified the sub-committee's recommendation and welcomed the appointment, noting that it remained subject to DCMS approval.

*[Secretary's Note: The chair of the Commission sub-committee wrote to the DCMS Secretary of State on 30 March to request the appointment of Sandra Dinneen as Deputy Chair. The Secretary of State wrote on 12 May 2023 to confirm Sandra's appointment, effective until 31 August 2023.]*

- 3.4 Commission:**
- a **ratified the Commission sub-committee's recommendation to appoint Sandra Dinneen as Deputy Chair of Historic England; and**
  - b **noted the Chairman's report.**

## 4 English Heritage Trust performance

- 4.1 The EH Trust Chair and Chief Financial Officer were welcomed to the meeting and invited to share updates and performance highlights. Financial performance remained broadly positive at this late stage in the financial year with better than budgeted income, including from development and admissions; although commercial income and membership income were both slightly behind budget.
- 4.2 Spend against the £52 million New Model Conservation Maintenance Programme grant was forecast at £7.4 million at year end, and £2.8 million of the £10 million grant for small and free sites was forecast. This represented full expenditure of the New Model grants.

- 4.3 At its meeting on 15 March 2023, the Trust Board had approved the 2023-24 budgets, based on assumptions including a 5% increase in domestic visitors, and inbound visitors at 70% of pre- pandemic levels. The 2023-24 expenditure budget included a proposed £5.2m for pay increases, which remained subject to further consideration by the Trust's Remuneration and Appointments Committee. The Trust's medium-term financial trajectory was to be in surplus by 2026-27, this being achieved in large part through ambitious visitor numbers and membership growth.
- 4.4 The Trust's Chief Executive had announced her intention to stand down later in 2023. The Trust Board had asked the Chief Financial Officer to act as interim Chief Executive until a permanent appointment was in place. Although Historic England had no formal role in the appointment process, the Trust Chair would keep Commission informed of progress.

**4.5 Commission noted the update on the English Heritage Trust's performance.**

## **5 Chief Executive's Report**

- 5.1 The Chief Executive presented his regular report, which included a dashboard summarising organisational performance and principal updates from each Group since the last meeting.
- 5.2 Performance dashboard: Commission noted and discussed the progress updates and associated RAG-ratings for major programmes, including contested heritage, emergency funding programme closure activities, and the Hamish Ogston Foundation (HOF) Heritage Building Skills programme. Commission also noted the latest HR and Finance reports.
- 5.3 Levelling up ALB roles: Following confirmation of approx. £3 million in DLUHC funding, recruitment was underway for 20 new 18-month fixed-term posts to support local authorities awarded Levelling Up funding. On behalf of a coalition of seven cultural ALBs, fourteen of the posts would be hosted by Historic England and six by Arts Council England. MoUs and data-sharing agreements with partner ALBs were being negotiated and governance structures were being finalised. Commissioners welcomed the new posts, both as an opportunity to bring new skills and areas of expertise into the organisation, and also to work more collaboratively with partners and places.
- 5.4 Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB): Heritage and planning clauses were expected to be debated at Committee stage in the House of Lords following the Easter recess. Historic England was advising DCMS and DLUHC on proposed amendments that would remove legislative confusion around parish councils' abilities to give grants to church property for community benefit.
- 5.5 National Blue Plaque scheme: On 2 March 2023, the Heritage Minister had announced that the current London Blue Plaques scheme would be extended to cover all of England and would be run by a national body. Informed in part by the recent 'placemaker' pilot programme in the North of England, Historic England had submitted a draft business case to DCMS, setting out how a national scheme might be operated, including potential costs and funding proposals based around baseline grant in aid, philanthropic income, and additional tapering Government grant. Potential risks and challenges had also been conveyed to DCMS.
- 5.6 Commission welcomed the proposals for a national programme, noting the potential for such a scheme to be integrated with other areas of Historic England's work, and as a tool for broader engagement as well as a fundraising opportunity. Regarding the current Blue

Plaques scheme in London, which was operated by English Heritage, there were potential economies of scale, but Commissioners endorsed the quality and value of the Trust's London scheme and were keen that this was not disrupted. The importance of liaison with the EH Trust in this context was noted.

5.7 **Engine House, Swindon:** In November 2021, the Business and Finance Committee approved a Business Case for the transfer of the lease for the Engine House (Historic England's Swindon office) to the Government Property Agency (GPA). Negotiations had now concluded, and Commission was asked to authorise Historic England to enter formally into the agreement. Suitable terms and safeguard measures had been agreed, and significant savings were anticipated in the longer term. It was noted that, further to the original Heads of Terms, a clause had been introduced (around charges for managing void space in the event of low occupancy levels in future) though it was confirmed that the agreement still represented a good deal for Historic England.

5.8 Commission also noted the other matters covered in the Chief Executive's Report, including: a review of the recent Commission visit to Hastings and Dover, and the subsequent visit by the Secretary of State to the Trinity Triangle Hastings High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ); and the updates on Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings including visitor operations, letting of commercial space, and proposals for development of the wider site.

**5.9 Commission:**

- a. **approved the direction of travel with regard to a national Blue Plaque Scheme;**
- b. **authorised Historic England to enter into an agreement with the Government Property Agency with respect to the lease for the Engine House, Swindon; and**
- c. **noted the remainder of the Chief Executive's report.**

## **6 Re-appointment of an Historic England Foundation Trustee**

6.1 As the sole member of the Historic England Foundation – the charitable foundation established to support the work of Historic England and raise funds for a range of projects and programmes – Commission was responsible for the appointment and re-appointment of the Foundation's Trustees. The current appointment term of Fabian Richter, the Chair of the Trustees, was due to expire on 19 June 2023, and Commission was asked to approve his re-appointment.

**6.2 Commission approved the re-appointment of Historic England Foundation Trustee, Fabian Richter, for a two-year term, to 19 June 2025.**

## **7 Corporate Priorities for 2023-24**

7.1 At its February 2023 meeting, Commission had considered and commented on a draft outline of Historic England's 2023-24 – 2025-26 Corporate Plan, which was based around a focused suite of six strategic priorities and corresponding outcomes. Comments from that discussion had been reflected, and the new priorities and outcomes had subsequently been reviewed and tested by Historic England's Corporate Leadership Team, and shared with DCMS. The Director of Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement now presented the final proposed Corporate Plan priorities and outcomes, and set out next steps, which included finalising the underpinning activities and sharing the Corporate Plan more widely with the organisation.

7.2 Commission welcomed the revisions to the priorities and outcomes and reiterated its support for the simplified and bold approach. Reducing to six strategic priorities was a considerable achievement and a positive culture shift, and Executive Team members and the many others involved in producing the Plan were commended for their efforts. Commission was encouraged to see that the priorities were already being used to shape key business areas and programmes, including budget-setting and the ongoing Grants review.

**7.3 Commission approved the updated outcomes and noted the next steps for dissemination of the Corporate Plan.**

## **8 Financial Performance and draft 2023-24 Budget**

8.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented the draft revenue and capital budgets for 2023-24 and an update on financial performance to the end of February 2023 (P11). The budgets, which had been considered in detail by the Business & Finance Committee at its meeting on 16 March 2023, remained subject to receipt of the 2023-24 settlement letter from DCMS, which would confirm Grant in aid income. Historic England's admin. allocation and pensions funding was also still to be confirmed. Funding for the Heritage Schools programme had been confirmed for 2023-24 only.

8.2 Commission noted the main assumptions underpinning the budget and the following headlines:

- a Using the new corporate priorities, the Executive Team had carried out a cost pressures exercise to determine £5.7m support for priority areas including workforce pressures, climate change, and inclusion, diversity and equality.
- b It had not been possible to address all pressure areas, for example only a small uplift to the grants budget (reflecting some level of inflation) had been possible.
- c The draft 2023-24 revenue budget had been prepared on the basis of a £0.2m deficit, to account for historic trends for emerging underspends during the year.
- d HM Treasury's pay remit guidance for 2023-24 had not yet been issued, but the draft budget provided for a 3% pay award, with a further 2% set aside.
- e The Executive Team had also agreed the planned strategic use of reserves over 2023-24 and 2024-25 for non-recurring and strategically aligned activities.

### *2022-23 Financial Performance and risks*

8.3 At this late stage in the financial year, the forecast was for a balanced position at year end, with a £0.2m revenue underspend off-set by a £0.2m capital overspend, and a transfer of £1.5 million to reserves to off-set Digital Strategy costs that had slipped to 2023-24. As anticipated, there had been significant High Streets HAZ programme spend in Q4, and a focus on ensuring all grants would be made by 31 March 2023.

8.4 Commission noted the expected 2023-24 out-turn and the draft 2023-24 budgets, with the caveat that Historic England was yet to receive its formal delegation letter from DCMS. Noting that the HM Treasury pay remit guidance had not yet been issued, Commissioners commented that the staff pay award – and its affordability – was a key risk area. It was also noted that the continuation of Historic England's financial freedoms was still to be confirmed formally as part of the Management Agreement with DCMS.

## 8.5 Commission:

- a approved the revenue and capital budgets for 2023-24, noting that these were subject to receiving the final delegation letter from DCMS confirming Grant in aid income for 2023-24; and
- b noted the financial position for February 2023 and the year-end forecast.

## 9 Presentation: Heritage Crime

- 9.1 The Head of Heritage Crime Strategy provided an overview of Historic England's Heritage Crime programme, charting its development and successes since its establishment in 2011. The presentation detailed the scale and extent of heritage crime – defined as any offence that harmed the value of heritage assets and their settings, and which ranged from serious organised acquisitive crime to anti-social behaviour offences – and the various partnerships, networks and the strategic framework that underpinned the programme. It also included examples of initiatives, from work with Government on national anti-crime programmes and sentencing guidance, to specific operations tackling illicit metal detecting, trade in cultural property, unlawful salvage, and the theft and sale of heritage metal and stone.
- 9.2 More recent activities and successes included Cadw becoming a signatory of the Alliance to Reduce Crime against Heritage (ARCH), a joint initiative tackling heritage crime offences; and Historic England's pilot *Rejuvenate* programme, which used archaeology and heritage activities to promote the wellbeing of young people who were vulnerable to the influences of crime, anti-social behaviour and social exclusion. Current and future priority areas included work around crime recording and anti-social behaviour standards, and seeking to influence elected Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCCs) to better reflect heritage crime and its impacts in their Local Crime Plans and decision making.
- 9.3 Commission welcomed the extensive presentation and congratulated the Head of Heritage Crime Strategy on the programme's considerable achievements to date. Heritage crime was a serious issue, both in terms of damage and harm to heritage assets, but also the public's ability to enjoy and understand them. Commissioners particularly welcomed the range of training, resources and initiatives focused on education and prevention, which were key to addressing the problem. Commission also supported Historic England's work with PFCCs and noted that Historic England was hosting a delegation of PFCCs at an event on 23 May 2023.

## 9.4 Commission applauded the update on the Heritage Crime Programme.

## 10 Historic England Committee minutes and updates

- 10.1 Commission noted the minutes and updates from recent sub-committee meetings.
- 10.2 The Chair of the Historic Places Panel gave a brief overview of the Panel's recent visit to Portsmouth and reflected more broadly on some of the common issues and themes that the Panel encountered. These included local authority capacity, agency support and resourcing at a local level, and increasing large-scale redevelopment proposals. Follow-up visits were a key element of the Panel's work and, in line with experiences of other place-based programmes such as HAZ and High Streets HAZ, there were real opportunities around sharing learning and partnership working. Commissioners were

encouraged to attend future visits as part of their broader induction and education programme.

**10.3 Commission noted:**

- a **the Historic Places Panel Review Paper for Luton;**
- b **the minutes of the 16 February 2023 London Advisory Committee;**
- c **the minutes of the 16 February 2023 Historic England Advisory Committee;**  
**and**
- d **oral reports from other recent sub-committee meetings.**

**11 Casework Report and Planning Bulletin**

- 11.1 Commission received its regular update on Historic England's business critical casework and recent and forthcoming planning developments.

**11.2 Commission noted the Casework Report and Planning Bulletin.**

**12 Closed Session**

- 12.1 Commission held a closed session.
- 12.2 There were no further items of business.

**Siobhan O'Donoghue**  
**April 2023**

# Commission

Final Minutes of the 339<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 8 February 2023 at Cannon Bridge House, London, EC4

**Commissioners present:** Sir Laurie Magnus (Chairman)  
Nairita Chakraborty  
Sandie Dawe  
Sandra Dinneen  
Paul Farmer  
David Laing  
Jonathan Marsden  
Patrick Newberry  
Robert Sackville-West  
Susie Thornberry  
Richard Upton  
Sue Wilkinson

**Staff present:** Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive  
Michael Bishop, Director of Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement  
Liz Bushell, Director of Corporate Services  
Clare Charlesworth, Programme Lead for Grants Review (for part)  
Ellen Harrison, Head of Creative Programmes & Campaigns (for part)  
Claudia Kenyatta, Director of Regions  
Emily Moore, Head of Strategic Planning (for part)  
Ian Morrison, Director of Policy & Evidence  
Siobhan O'Donoghue, Head of Governance (notes)  
Amy Pitts, Director of Communications & Public Engagement  
Julia Ward, Head of the Chairman & Chief Executive's Office  
Andrew Wiseman, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary

**Others present:** Gerard Lemos, Chair, English Heritage Trust (for part)  
Radojka Miljevic, Campbell Tickell  
Mart Stuart-Smith, Chief Financial Officer, English Heritage Trust (for part)

## 1 Apologies, announcements and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 Commissioner Patrick Newberry would chair the meeting on behalf of Sir Laurie Magnus, who was attending by video-conference.
- 1.2 Attendees were welcomed to the meeting. In particular, a warm welcome was extended to Liz Bushell, attending her first meeting as Director of Corporate Services; Gerard Lemos, the new Chair of the English Heritage Trust; and Radojka Miljevic, a consultant with Campbell Tickell, who were carrying out an independent review of the Board's effectiveness.
- 1.3 Apologies had been received from Commissioners Ben Derbyshire, Jane Gibson and Professor Helena Hamerow.

### *Declarations of Interest*

- 1.4 There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 Minutes of 1 December 2022 Commission meeting and matters arising



2.1 The minutes of the 338<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 1 December 2022 were approved as a correct record.

2.2 **Commission approved the minutes of the 338<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 1 December 2022 as a correct record.**

### 3 Chairman's Report

3.1 The Chairman presented his regular report, which detailed activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events. Recent highlights included a discussion on 15 December 2022 with Lord Deben, Chair of the UK's independent Committee on Climate Change; and a meeting on 2 February 2023 with the Bishop of Ramsbury, joint lead bishop for church buildings and cathedrals.

3.2 The recruitment campaign for a new Chair of Historic England had launched on 19 January 2023 and would close on 16 February 2023. Commissioners were encouraged to promote the vacancy, which was published on the Government's Public Appointments service website. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Commissioner Paul Farmer for supporting the recruitment process as one of the four members of the Interview Panel.

3.3 Commission noted the key Government changes announced by the Prime Minister on 7 February 2023, including the creation of four new Departments and the re-focused remit (and name) for the Department for Culture Media and Sport. The Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP had been appointed as the new Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

3.4 **Commission noted the Chairman's report.**

### 4 Chief Executive's Report

4.1 The Chief Executive presented his regular report, which included a dashboard summarising organisational performance and principal updates from each Group since the last meeting.

4.2 Performance dashboard (major programmes): The IT and Digital full business case had been approved by DCMS in January 2023. Key risk areas were spend against the original forecast and within the condensed programme timeframe (due to the late confirmation of funding); and resourcing, particularly in terms of recruiting digital skills in a competitive market. The Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and the Business & Finance Committee had discussed the Digital Strategy in detail at a joint session in November 2022.

4.3 RepTrack results: Historic England was now ranked fourth (of around eighty public bodies) in the latest RepTrack scores, which measured public bodies' reputations with the general public. This was Historic England's highest ranking to date. Commission suggested that there would be value in Historic England also surveying specific stakeholders including opinion formers, leaders and decision makers, to complement the public polling.

4.4 Levelling Up: More than a quarter of the Levelling Up Round 2 funding, announced on 19 January 2023, had been allocated to projects focused on heritage; a reflection of the importance of local heritage to communities across the country.

4.5 Alongside the capital funding, DLUHC had also confirmed approx. £3m over two years for Historic England and other ALBs to advise local places on their Levelling Up projects. The funding was largely for new fixed term posts (the majority of which would be employed by Historic England, though representing the interests of all ALBs), and presented an excellent

opportunity to bring a range of new skills and areas of expertise to the organisation, as well as promoting a more strategic way of working with partners and places. A proportion of the funding was allocated for programme support, evaluation and engagement work.

- 4.6 A recent report by the think tank, Onward, *Levelling Up Locally*, acknowledged heritage as an under-appreciated foundation of levelling up. **The report, which would be shared with Commission**, made recommendations around how heritage could be better used as a lever for economic and social regeneration, quoting Historic England research and referencing the organisation's work.

***ACTION: Director of Policy & Evidence***

- 4.7 Climate Change: Historic England's position statement on climate change and the historic environment had been signed-off in December 2022. The statement would support staff and the sector in moving towards more positive climate action whilst balancing the protection of heritage significance.
- 4.8 The position statement would inform a more detailed Historic England Advice Note (HEAN) on climate change, including advice on energy generation and energy efficiency measures. The timing of the HEAN was linked closely to the outcome of Government's Energy Efficiency Review, which had been delayed. Historic England continued to work closely with BEIS, DLUHC and DCMS on the Review, providing evidence and also wording for the report. Commission agreed that, in the meantime, it was imperative that Historic England continue to progress other climate change workstreams, tools and advice to help provide important information and resources. **A timeline and communications plan for climate change work would be shared.**

***ACTION: Director of Policy & Evidence***

- 4.9 Culture and Heritage Capital (CHC): Historic England and DCMS had signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the transfer of £98k of funding to undertake two CHC research projects, with work expected to start in March 2023. Historic England had also submitted two CHC research funding bids to the joint DCMS and Arts and Heritage Research Council's £3.1m fund, with decisions on applications expected in June 2023.
- 4.10 Public Engagement and Communications forward look: Commission noted the summary of communications and engagement work for January to July 2023, which included campaigns, publication launches and activities to mark particular events and anniversaries. It was suggested that, for future iterations, the key message/headline for each campaign would be helpful.
- 4.11 Commission also noted the updates on other matters in the Chief Executive's Report, including: discussions with Hamish Ogston about potential skills and training programmes; completion of the acquisition of the central and southern Thornborough Henges; the welcome inclusion of heritage sites in the list of bodies eligible for help through the Energy Bill Relief scheme; progress in the development of the Government's Environmental Land Management programme, ongoing discussions to ensure that heritage was represented adequately in rural policy; and improvements to organisational cyber security, including the roll-out of multi-factor authentication. Commission also noted with regret the announcements of the forthcoming departure of Emily Gee, Director for London & the South East, and the retirement of Trevor Mitchell, Director for the North.

4.12 **Commission noted the Chief Executive's Report.**

## **5 English Heritage Trust performance update**

- 5.1 The EH Trust Chief Financial Officer provided a summary of recent performance. Headlines were broadly positive, with income to date ahead of forecast, which included some development income. Flash results for January 2023 showed a continuing improvement in revenue budgets and all main financial indicators were tracking ahead of budget. The full year position was expected to be better than budget and included full expenditure of the remainder of the £80m New Model conservation and maintenance grant.
- 5.2 2023-24 budgets were being finalised with an anticipated growth in visitor numbers, but steady membership rates related to cost of living pressures. Historic England and EH Trust colleagues were also seeking to establish a new baseline position for the condition of the Collection, and the future trajectory of spend on it.

5.3 **Commission noted the update on the English Heritage Trust's performance.**

## 6 Recruitment of English Heritage Trustees

- 6.1 The EH Trust Chair updated Commission on the current recruitment exercise to appoint three new Trustees with commercial and digital expertise. Recommendations on the preferred candidates would be submitted to the Trust's Board, and **a paper seeking Commission's approval of the appointments would be circulated by email.** The EH Trust Chairman thanked Commissioner (and Trustee) Sue Wilkinson, who had been on the Recruitment Panel.

### ***ACTION: EH Head of Governance / HE Head of Governance***

- 6.2 *[Secretary's Note: A report was circulated on 16 February 2023, seeking Commission's approval of the appointment of three new English Heritage Trustees. The appointments were approved.]*

- 6.3 **A report was circulated to Commission on 16 February 2023 seeking approval of the appointments of two new English Heritage Trustees. Commission approved:**
- a **the appointment of Sebastian James to the EH Trust Board for an initial term of four years from 1 March 2023 to 28 February 2027;**
  - b **the appointment of Peter Liney to the EH Trust Board for an initial term of three years from 1 March 2023 to 28 February 2026; and**
  - c **the appointment of Chris Michaels to the EHT Board for an initial term of four years from 1 March 2023 to 28 February 2027.**

## 7 Financial Performance update

- 7.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented a summary of financial performance up to the end of December 2022 (P9). The year-end forecast was for a small net surplus, taking into account a transfer of £1.5m to reserves to offset IT and Digital costs that had slipped to 2023-24, as agreed with DCMS. Year to Date income and expenditure were both above budget, resulting in a modest year to date overspend, although this was largely due to timing differences.
- 7.2 Further to the report, Commission noted that DCMS had confirmed an additional £500k for the High Streets HAZ programme; and that the £500k relating to the acquisition of Thornborough Henges had been processed and passed to the English Heritage Trust.

- 7.3 Key risk areas included that Historic England's settlement for 2023-24 had not yet been confirmed by DCMS, as well as the potential impact of the new Efficiency and Savings review announced in the Autumn Statement. The failure of third party suppliers had been identified as an increasing risk area in the medium-term.

**7.4 Commission noted the financial year to date position and the forecast to year-end.**

## **8 Corporate Priorities for 2023-24**

- 8.1 The Director of Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement and the Head of Strategic Planning presented proposals for the 2023-24 Corporate Plan, including a simplified and more focused suite of six strategic priorities (compared to twelve for 2022-23), each with corresponding outcomes setting out what good would look like in each area. Commission noted the relationship between the proposed corporate priorities, the Future Strategy and the three thematic areas of focus (Active Participation, Connected Communities and Thriving Places). Although the Corporate Plan (including the priorities) had a three-year horizon, the Plan would be subject to review, and the expectation was that the corporate activities sitting beneath the priorities would be updated annually. Corporate KPIs would also be reviewed to ensure close alignment and to help measure delivery.
- 8.2 Commission welcomed the move toward a more focused Corporate Plan and the reduction in the number of strategic priorities, which had already been used to inform the current budget-setting process. A number of comments and drafting points on specific priorities and outcomes, presentation and language were suggested, including in relation to education, energy efficiency and the adaptation and re-use of historic buildings, training and resources for local authorities, localism and devolution, leadership, and stewardship of the National Collection. A number of these suggestions would be picked-up during the next stage of the corporate planning process, which would include consideration of the specific activities and workstreams underpinning the priorities, including which current activities would need to be de-prioritised or reduced.

**8.3 Commission commented on the proposed strategic priorities and outcomes.**

## **9 Grants Review: strategic approach**

- 9.1 The Director of Regions and the Programme Lead for the Grants Review introduced the item, which sought Commission's views on potential changes to Historic England's grant-making strategy and processes.
- 9.2 The report and accompanying presentation set out the rationale for the Grants Review; Historic England's current approach and the wider grant-making landscape; and the potential benefits of refreshing Historic England's approach to grant-making (in terms of simplified eligibility criteria; a focus on 'upstream' activity, which stakeholders considered to be of greatest value; closer alignment to corporate priorities including improved accessibility and wider reach; and streamlined application and grant management processes, which would also help to measure and evaluate impact).
- 9.3 Commission welcomed the presentation and gave its broad support to the proposals and direction of travel. In particular, there was support for focusing the relatively modest grant budget to where it would have the greatest impact and value, noting that Historic England's intervention and expertise could often help leverage additional capital funding. There was also support for the closer alignment to strategic priorities, and the efforts to streamline and

simplify grant-making processes. The success of the recent Everyday Heritage grants call-out was an endorsement of these proposals.

- 9.4 Commission also noted and discussed the risks - and the potential for failure - associated with a change in approach. Risks would need to be documented and monitored closely. A strong evidence-base, including ongoing analysis and evaluation of impact, would be essential.
- 9.5 In light of Commission's steer, next steps would include the development of more detailed proposals, prior to consultation with staff and external stakeholders. Work on the Grants Management System (as part of the Digital Strategy) and a training and implementation plan would also be progressed. The Business & Finance Committee would continue to oversee design and implementation, and **Commission would receive an update in twelve months' time.**

***ACTION: Director of Regions / Director of Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement***

- 9.6 **Commission:**
- a **agreed changes to the focus of Historic England's grant-making; and**
  - b **agreed that the Business and Finance Committee continue to oversee the subsequent detailed design and implementation.**

**10 Presentation: High Streets Heritage Action Zones – Cultural Programme**

- 10.1 The Head of Creative Programmes & Campaigns provided an overview of High Streets HAZ Cultural Programme headlines and activity to date, and a forward look at plans for 2023-24, the final year of the High Streets HAZ programme. The £7.4m four-year Cultural Programme was funded in partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England, with £6m allocated to local programmes and individual schemes.
- 10.2 To date, more than 180,000 people had attended the Cultural Programme's public facing events and activities. Over 2,000 artists in residence days had generated nearly 300 new artworks and installations, and Cultural Programme activities had been supported by more than 8,000 volunteer hours. Current and upcoming campaigns included Picturing High Streets, a public photography commission, with images shared on advertising space, outdoor exhibition panels, window vinyl and projections on High Streets, and a pop-up exhibition at the Photographers' Gallery in London. In summer 2023, the Hi! Street Fest would include outdoor art productions, puppets and festival activities across six High Street HAZ schemes, bespoke to each individual place.
- 10.3 Commission welcomed the presentation, commenting on the inspiring and engaging activities, and the potential for the Cultural Programme to reach a wide audience. The headline statistics were even more impressive when considered in context, and it was noted that the more formal analysis and evaluation - to be carried out at the conclusion of the Programme later in 2023-24 - would help capture wider impacts, and generate more extensive and robust data, including around the cultural diversity of audience engagement.

- 10.4 **Commission noted the update on the High Streets Heritage Action Zone Cultural Programme.**

## **11 Historic England Committee minutes and updates**

11.1 Commission noted the minutes and updates from recent sub-committee meetings.

### **11.2 Commission noted:**

- a **the minutes of the 16 November Audit & Risk Assurance Committee;**
- b **the minutes of the 16 November Business & Finance Committee;**
- c **the minutes of the 17 November London Advisory Committee;**
- d **the minutes of the 17 November Historic England Advisory Committee; and**
- e **oral reports from other recent sub-committee meetings**

## **12 Casework Report and Planning Bulletin**

12.1 Commission received its regular update on Historic England's business critical casework and recent and forthcoming planning developments.

### **12.2 Commission noted the Casework Report and Planning Bulletin.**

## **13 Closed Session**

### *Historic England representation on the English Heritage Trust Board*

13.1 Commission noted Sir Laurie Magnus's intention to step down as a Trustee of English Heritage with effect from 8 February 2023, and approved the recommendation that Commissioner Sir Jonathan Marsden be appointed to the Trust Board. The appointment would be coterminous with that of his Commission appointment (his current term ending on 31 May 2026).

13.2 It was also noted that there would be a reciprocal arrangement whereby the Chairs and Chief Executives of Historic England and the English Heritage Trust would have a standing invitation to attend the other organisation's Board meetings and would receive meeting papers.

### *Historic England Deputy Chair*

13.3 Commission agreed to seek to appoint a Deputy Chair from amongst its membership and that a sub-committee comprising Sir Laurie Magnus, Susie Thornberry and Paul Farmer (as chair) should oversee the process. The Deputy Chair appointment would be subject to approval by Ministers and review upon on the successful appointment of a new Chair of Historic England.

### **13.4 Commission:**

- a **approved the appointment of Commissioner Sir Jonathan Marsden as an English Heritage Trustee, his appointment being coterminous with that of his Commission appointment (the current term ending 31 May 2026); and**
- b **agreed that a sub-committee comprising Sir Laurie Magnus, Susie Thornberry and Paul Farmer (as chair) oversee the recruitment of a Deputy Chair; the appointment being subject to approval by Ministers and review upon on the successful appointment of a new Chair of Historic England.**

## **14 Any Other Business**

14.1 There were no further items of business.

**Siobhan O'Donoghue**  
**February 2023**

# Commission

Final Minutes of the 338<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 1 December 2022 at Cannon Bridge House, London, EC4

**Commissioners present:** Sir Laurie Magnus (Chairman)  
Sandie Dawe  
Ben Derbyshire  
Sandra Dinneen  
Paul Farmer  
Jane Gibson  
Professor Helena Hamerow  
Jonathan Marsden  
Patrick Newberry  
Robert Sackville-West  
Susie Thornberry  
Richard Upton

**Staff present:** Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive  
Michael Bishop, Director of Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement  
Catherine Dewar, Climate Change Programme Director (for part)  
Claudia Kenyatta, Director of Regions  
Tom Godbehere, Head of Human Resources (for part)  
Meryl Hayward, Director of Corporate Services  
Adala Leeson, Head of Socio-economic Analysis & Evaluation (for part)  
Ian Morrison, Director of Policy & Evidence  
Siobhan O'Donoghue, Head of Governance (notes)  
Amy Pitts, Director of Communications & Public Engagement  
Sandra Stancliffe, Head of Learning, Volunteering & Inclusion (for part)  
Julia Ward, Head of the Chairman & Chief Executive's Office  
Andrew Wiseman, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary

**Others present:** Sir Tim Laurence, Chairman, English Heritage Trust (for part)

## 1 Apologies, announcements and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Commissioners Nairita Chakraborty, David Laing and Sue Wilkinson.
- 1.2 Commission noted with regret that this was Meryl Hayward's last meeting as Director of Corporate Services, in advance of her retirement on 8 December 2022. On behalf of Commissioners and staff, the Chairman thanked Meryl for her significant contribution to Historic England; in particular her role in overseeing the finance function, wider corporate services, and Shared Services to the EH Trust and DCMS. Meryl would be greatly missed, and Commissioners conveyed their very best wishes for the future.
- 1.3 Commission also noted that this would be the last meeting attended by Sir Tim Laurence, Chairman of the English Heritage Trust, who was also retiring in December 2022. Sir Tim Laurence would be joining the meeting at a later stage.

### *Declarations of Interest*

- 1.4 There were no declarations of interest.



## 2 Minutes of 19 October 2022 Commission meeting and matters arising

2.1 The minutes of the 337<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 19 October 2022 were approved as a correct record.

2.2 **Commission approved the minutes of the 337<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 19 October 2022 as a correct record.**

## 3 Chairman's Report

3.1 The Chairman presented his regular report, which detailed activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events. Recent highlights included the regional Commission visit to Bristol and Bath on 2 & 3 November 2022, and the positive meeting with Lord Parkinson, the Minister for Arts & Heritage, on 18 November 2022 at Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings. The Chairman had also attended a meeting of the Contested Heritage Advisory Board on 24 November 2022.

3.2 Commission noted the ongoing discussions with Defra regarding the inclusion and integration of heritage into the Environmental Land Management scheme, and recent engagement with the Country Land & Business Association around climate change and advice on retrofitting.

3.3 A get-together with English Heritage Trustees would follow the Commission meeting, with presentations from both organisations' Chief Executives. The Trust's Chair Designate, Gerard Lemos, was also due to attend.

3.4 **Commission noted the Chairman's report.**

## 4 Chief Executive's Report

4.1 The Chief Executive presented his regular report, which included the latest performance dashboard and principal updates from each Group since the last meeting.

4.2 Digital Strategy: The Digital Strategy had been launched internally on 30 November 2022. The Strategy was underpinned by DCMS funding of approx. £7m and, although a letter of comfort had been received, which enabled Historic England to begin delivery against the Strategy (including recruitment), approval of the full Business Case had not yet been confirmed.

4.3 Autumn Statement: The 17 November 2022 Autumn Statement had indicated that Departmental budgets would be maintained at least in line with the budgets set at the 2021 Spending Review. Historic England was proceeding on existing assumptions, but mindful of potential cuts and efficiency savings.

4.4 2022 Staff Engagement Survey results: Commission welcomed the positive results and findings of the most recent staff engagement survey, which included an overall staff engagement score of 80% (+4% from 2020), improved scores across five key engagement areas and for all Historic England Groups. The 2022 results and trend of ongoing improvement compared favourably with external benchmark data, where there were decreases in staff engagement of around 4%.

4.5 The improvements in scores for Organisational Integrity and Compelling Leadership were particularly welcomed. They were likely to be - at least in part - a reflection of the

leadership shown, and approach taken, during the pandemic. Lowest scores were around pay, workload and work-related stress. As part of Historic England's established and ongoing approach to improving staff engagement, these areas would be a focus for the organisation-wide and local actions in response to the survey findings.

- 4.6 Commission welcomed the results and applauded the positive commitment and organisational culture that underpinned the improved scores. Promoting the results, for example as part of recruitment campaigns, and also sharing staff engagement insights with sector partners, was encouraged.
- 4.7 Appointment of Commissioner David Laing as a Trustee of the Historic England Foundation: At its meeting on 1 November 2022, the Historic England Foundation agreed to recommend to Commission the appointment of David Laing as a Trustee. Commission welcomed and approved the proposal.
- 4.8 Commission also noted the updates on other matters, including: Emergency Funding programme closedown and evaluation activities; discussions with the Hamish Ogston Foundation around future skills and training programmes; progress of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill through parliament and ongoing work around planning reforms; and the welcome news that Historic England had reached its £1m funding target for Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings.

- 4.9 **Commission:**
- a **approved the appointment of Commissioner David Laing as a Trustee of the Historic England Foundation for a term of four years, with effect from 1 January 2023; and**
  - b **noted the Chief Executive's Report.**

## 5 Financial Performance update

- 5.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented a summary of financial performance up to the end of October 2022 (P7). The year-end forecast was for a small net deficit, taking into account a transfer of £1.5m to reserves to offset IT and Digital costs that had slipped to 2023/24, as agreed with DCMS.
- 5.2 Other Income was expected to increase to £3.0m above budget by year end, largely as a result of Independent Research Organisation programme funding. Cross-charging to the EH Trust was forecast to end the year £1.0m above budget as a result of recharges for Windows 10 migration support. Commission also noted various steps in place to help ensure tight controls around payroll, including a split between budgeted and unbudgeted payroll, and increased recruitment controls.
- 5.3 Risk areas included DCMS's annual budget review and the announcement in the Autumn Statement of a new Efficiency and Savings review. There were increasing risks around the failure of third party suppliers and Historic England was carrying out additional due diligence on some higher-risk suppliers.

- 5.4 **Commission noted the financial year to date position and the forecast to year-end.**

## 7 Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and High Streets HAZ update

- 7.1 The Director of Regions presented the six-monthly update on the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) portfolio, which included overviews of HAZ Rounds 1-3, the High Streets HAZ programme, a look ahead to future work, and key data and illustrative examples.
- a All ten Round 1 HAZ schemes had concluded and celebrations had taken place over summer 2022. Round 1 headlines included: over £25m total spend; 82 heritage buildings repaired or restored (80% of target); 16 assets removed from the Heritage at Risk register (89% of target); and over 9,800 sqm commercial floorspace brought back into use (92% of target).
  - b Round 2 schemes were showing some improvement in spend and other performance indicators after a relatively slow start. Round 3 schemes were performing well.
  - c External consultants had been commissioned to assess impact and value for money of the HAZ programme, with Round 1 schemes due to be reviewed shortly. The intention was for the evaluation work to capture broader social impacts, for example civic pride and place attachment, as well as economic and environmental outputs.
  - d The four-year High Streets HAZ programme was now in Year 3. Work was on-site at all schemes and, overall, delivery against forecast was on track. There were, however, emerging issues around increasing costs and external partners' willingness to spend. The High Streets HAZ team was exploring the issue further.
  - e The Cultural Programme continued to be a valuable element of the High Streets HAZ programme with local and national commissions. Recent highlights included the *Picturing High Streets* digital photography campaign.
  - f Looking ahead, focus was turning to the effective wind-down and close of the High Streets HAZ programme, legacy planning and post-programme evaluation. There was a very compelling story at scheme- and policy- level around the potential of place-based schemes, using relatively modest investment but maximising expertise- and knowledge-sharing, community engagement and partnership working.
  - g Historic England was considering its own potential role in place-based initiatives beyond the HAZ and High Streets HAZ programmes, and also how the experiences, tools and learning from HAZs might help leverage funding and support others involved in future schemes.
- 7.2 Commission welcomed the update and expressed its support for the overall aims and approach of the HAZ programme, in particular the Cultural Programme and the important work around communications and engagement.

**7.3 Commission noted the update on the HAZ portfolio including HAZ Rounds 1-3, the High Streets HAZ programme, and HAZ portfolio look ahead.**

## 8 Culture and Heritage Capital

- 8.1 The Head of Socio-economic Analysis & Evaluation was welcomed to the meeting to present an overview of Historic England's involvement in the development of the Culture and Heritage Capital Framework.
- 8.2 The presentation was broad-ranging, including the established 'Green Book' approach to measuring value and impact; the rationale for, and benefits of, capturing non-use values of heritage in business cases (including archaeological, architectural, aesthetic, historical, social and spiritual values) to inform decision-making; and the need for an agreed method for valuing and monetising cultural and heritage assets and the benefits they provided.

- 8.3 With others, Historic England was looking to use both established and new economic techniques to capture the value of heritage, and develop a Culture and Heritage Capital approach, as part of a five-year Culture and Heritage Capital Programme. Phase 1 had included the publication of a Framework and a review of existing research. Phase 2, currently underway, focused on building an evidence base including methodologies, valuation studies, accounting principles and guidance. Phase 3 outputs would include a toolkit and supplementary Green Book guidance. Historic England had also recently submitted two funding bids to the £3million Arts & Humanities Research Council and DCMS fund for Culture and Heritage Capital research.
- 8.4 Commission welcomed the insightful presentation and members expressed their interest in, and support of, Historic England's pioneering work in this important area, and the potential of establishing a common approach to measuring and articulating the value of heritage assets. Commissioners raised a number of questions and put forward a range of suggestions, including around promoting the environmental value of historic buildings (for example embodied carbon); capturing improved social impact and outcomes; and the extent to which Culture and Heritage Capital could influence private development, including the housing sector.

**8.5 Commission noted the presentation on Culture and Heritage Capital.**

**9 Strategy for Inclusion, Diversity and Equality update**

- 9.1 The Head of Human Resources and Head of Learning, Volunteering & Inclusion were welcomed to the meeting, to present an update on delivery against Historic England's Strategy for Inclusion, Diversity & Equality, and an overview of the intended focus for the next stage of work. The update summarised progress across three key strands: our people, our work, and our role in the wider sector, as well as supporting activities. All strands had short- and longer-term aims and activities, with the intention that some would become 'business as usual' and others would continue beyond the lifespan of the Strategy. The following points were highlighted:
- a Actions to improve workforce diversity, including a refreshed employer brand and changes to recruitment processes and systems to help attract a greater diversity of candidates. Early Careers programmes had provided over 30 apprenticeships and Historic England had hosted 23 Kickstart placements. Culture and policy changes were also helping ensure inclusion and diversity were embedded across Historic England.
  - b The development and launch of the Everyday Heritage Grants programme, which had been significantly over-subscribed with more than £7m worth of applications against an initial fund of £300,000 extended to £700,000. Over 90% of the successful applicants were new to Historic England. In addition, the Grants Review included work on the design and delivery of grant programmes to make them more accessible and able to support a greater diversity of organisations.
  - c A pilot Placemaker scheme, working with young people across the North East to create markers in places significant to them; and the continuing success of the Heritage Schools programme, now in its ninth year, which had reached two-million children and generated consistently positive evaluation data.
  - d Progress against the ambition to make the National Heritage List for England more inclusive and representative, which had involved external consultation with focus groups to inform a new work programme, including revisions to the language and content of selection guides and an audit of List entries.
  - e The development of a diversity and equality hub, bringing together resources such as templates, advice and guidance for organisations across the wider sector. Historic

England was also working with an external partner to research barriers and enablers for diverse boards.

- f The Strategy would conclude formally in March 2023, and three areas of focus had been identified for the next phase of work, summarised as: creating a more diverse sector; engaging more widely so that heritage was seen as for everyone; and creating audiences for the future.

9.2 Commission welcomed the progress report and presentation highlights. As well as specific achievements, the organisation's approach to inclusion and diversity was a great example of working collaboratively, building on existing research and resources, and of knowledge sharing within and beyond the sector.

9.3 In terms of next steps, Commission welcomed the ambition and there was support for the three focus areas. The framework and delivery mechanisms for the next stage were still being considered, but Commission encouraged an approach that would ensure that the work initiated by the Strategy could continue to develop, be supported, monitored and evaluated.

**9.4 Commission noted:**

- a **the progress to date in delivering the Strategy for Inclusion, Diversity & Equality; and**
- b **the focus of Historic England's ambition for the next stage of work.**

## **10 Climate Change Programme update and Position Statements**

10.1 The Climate Change Programme Director was welcomed to the meeting to provide an update on Phase I of the Climate Change Programme. The Programme, launched in May 2022, was progressing well overall, and the twelve projects were on track for delivery by the end of 2022/23, with the exception of the 'HE to Net Zero' strand. Although this year's linear carbon reduction target would be achieved, there were some ongoing risks relating to prioritisation and resourcing. Project governance had been reviewed and additional programme support had been identified to help drive activities during the remainder of 2022/23, which would significantly advance the project.

10.2 The Director of Policy & Evidence also updated Commission on the development of Climate Change Position Statements to help address the current lack of consensus around balancing climate action with the protection of heritage significance, and the lack of consistency in the application of planning policies. The draft overarching Position Statement, underpinned by more specific position statements around energy efficiency interventions on listed buildings, etc., had been informed by a series of workshops and focus groups, which had included members of the Historic England Advisory Committee and Commissioners. As well as providing much needed clarity for Historic England staff, owners and planning authorities, the statements would also help to inform discussions with Government on the reform of planning policy and other measures as part of the Energy Efficiency Review.

10.3 Commission welcomed the Climate Change Programme progress report and noted the key Phase I milestones and achievements. Regarding the draft Position Statements, Commission appreciated that there was a tension between a need for simplicity and a desire for sensitivity but agreed that it was vital that Historic England be seen to be on the front foot. **Commission supported the finalisation and sign-off of the Position Statements before the Christmas break.**

### ***ACTION: Director of Policy & Evidence***

#### **10.4 Commission noted:**

- a **the update on the Climate Change programme, in particular the risk associated with the HE to Net Zero project; and**
- b **the preparation of a Climate Change Position Statement to inform Historic England's work.**

### **11 Historic England Committee minutes and updates**

11.1 Commission noted the minutes and updates from recent sub-committee meetings.

#### **11.2 Commission noted:**

- a **the minutes of the 29 September 2022 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee**
- b **the minutes of the 1 November 2022 Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings Strategic Programme Board; and**
- c **various oral reports from recent sub-committee meetings**

### **12 Casework Report and Planning Bulletin**

12.1 Commission received its regular update on Historic England's business critical casework and recent and forthcoming planning developments.

**12.2 Commission noted the Casework Report and Planning Bulletin.**

### **13 Acquisition of land for transfer to the National Heritage Collection**

13.1 Commission was asked to approve consent for the English Heritage Trust to acquire a plot of land adjacent to Kenilworth Castle. The land would be paid for by the Trust but owned by Historic England and form part of the National Heritage Collection. Benefits of the acquisition included additional car parking for peak periods, and the provision of safe pedestrian access between the town centre and the castle. The current owner had accepted an offer and the acquisition had been approved by the Trust's Senior Management Team.

**13.2 Commission approved the acquisition of the land adjacent to Kenilworth Castle, subject to DCMS approval.**

### **14 English Heritage Trust performance update**

14.1 The EH Trust Chairman was welcomed to the meeting. Commission received its regular report on EH Trust performance, including financial reporting to September 2022. Performance to date was positive, with income ahead of budget, a positive surplus trend for the year, and a strong unrestricted cash balance. Membership income and visitor numbers remained slightly below budget, likely to be caused in part by the current operating environment. Tight cost controls remained in place.

**14.2 Commission noted the update on the English Heritage Trust's performance.**

## 15 Recruitment of English Heritage Trustees

- 15.1 The EH Trust Chairman updated Commission on the current recruitment exercise to appoint four new Trustees in coming months. Recommendations on the preferred candidates for the Finance and Historian Trustee roles were due to be considered by the Trust's Board at its meeting on 6 December 2022. **A paper seeking Commission's approval of these appointments would then be circulated for decision by email.** The EH Trust Chairman thanked Commissioner Professor Helena Hamerow, who had sat on the Recruitment Panel.

### ***ACTION: EH Head of Governance / HE Head of Governance***

*[Secretary's Note: A report was circulated on 7 December 2022, seeking Commission's approval of the appointment of two new English Heritage Trustees – Tony Cates and Professor William Whyte – for an initial term of four years from 1 January 2023. The appointments were approved.]*

- 15.2 **A report was circulated to Commission on 7 December 2022 seeking approval of the appointments of two new English Heritage Trustees. Commission:**
- a **approved the appointment to the EHT Board of Trustees of Tony Cates for an initial term of four years from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026; and**
  - b **approved the appointment to the EHT Board of Trustees of Professor William Whyte for an initial term of four years from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026.**

## 16 Any Other Business

- 16.1 On behalf of Commission, the Chairman paid tribute to the departing EH Trust Chairman, Sir Tim Laurence, whose term concluded later in December 2022. On behalf of Commissioners and Historic England colleagues, the Chairman thanked him for his considerable contribution to English Heritage over the previous ten years, particularly his role in developing and championing the New Model, and for leading the Trust as its inaugural Chairman.
- 16.2 There were no further items of business.

**Siobhan O'Donoghue  
December 2022**

# Commission

Final Minutes of the 337<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 19 October 2022 at Cannon Bridge House, London EC4

**Commissioners present:** Sir Laurie Magnus, Chairman  
Nairita Chakraborty  
Sandie Dawe  
Ben Derbyshire  
Sandra Dinneen  
Jane Gibson  
Prof. Helena Hamerow  
David Laing  
Jonathan Marsden  
Patrick Newberry

**Staff present:** Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive  
Michael Bishop, Director of Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement  
Clare Charlesworth, HAR Review Programme Lead  
Meryl Hayward, Director of Corporate Services  
Claudia Kenyatta, Director of Regions  
Ian Morrison, Director of Policy & Evidence  
Siobhan O'Donoghue, Head of Governance (notes)  
Amy Pitts, Director of Communications & Public Engagement  
Andrew Wiseman, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary

**Others present:** Sir Tim Laurence, Chair, English Heritage Trust (for part)  
Kate Mavor, Chief Executive, English Heritage Trust (for part)

## 1 Apologies, announcements and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Commissioners Paul Farmer, Robert Sackville West, Susie Thornberry, Richard Upton and Sue Wilkinson.

### *Declarations of Interest*

- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 Minutes of 16 June 2022 Commission meeting and matters arising

- 2.1 The minutes of the 336<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 16 June 2022 were approved as a correct record, subject to amending para 5.1a to remove “*and comparable with pre-pandemic levels.*”

- 2.2 **Commission approved the minutes of the 336<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 16 June 2022 as a correct record.**



### 3 Chairman's Report

- 3.1 The Chairman presented his regular report, which detailed activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events.
- 3.2 The Chairman had attended the State Funeral of Her Late Majesty the Queen on 19 September 2022. He paid tribute to Historic England staff in the Government Historic Estates Unit for their advice on the preparations at key sites and to other teams involved in associated arrangements.
- 3.3 Although the planned Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings opening events had been impacted as a result of the death of the Queen, Commission was pleased to note that the site was now open to the public. Commissioners were encouraged to attend the private view event on 18 November 2022.
- 3.4 Following the changes to Government, the Chairman had written to the new Secretaries of State at DCMS, DLUHC, Defra and DfE, and to the new Heritage Minister. It was not yet clear whether there would be changes to policy areas related to Historic England's work, such as growth, planning regulations and environmental legislation. Historic England continued to make representations regarding the Environmental Land Management (ELM) Scheme to ensure that the value and potential of heritage continued to be fully recognised.

3.5 <b>Commission noted the Chairman's report.</b>
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### 4 Chief Executive's Report

- 4.1 The Chief Executive presented his regular report, which included principal updates from each Group. The report also included the first iteration of a new 'performance dashboard' and Commissioners were invited to provide feedback on the revised format.
- 4.2 Work with Government: As reported earlier, introductory letters had been sent to Michelle Donelan, MP, the new Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, as well as new Ministers and Secretaries of State in other key Departments. The Chairman and Chief Executive had held a positive meeting with Lord Kamal, Minister for Civil Society, Heritage, Tourism and Growth, on 17 October 2022. Issues discussed included the importance of Historic England having positive and effective working relationships with other Departments, including DLUHC and Defra.
- 4.3 ALB Collaboration: As reported to the June 2022 Commission meeting, Historic England and six other national cultural bodies had submitted proposals for £2.89m of funding, to support local authorities in their delivery of the Levelling Up Fund and the development of UK Shared Prosperity Fund bids. Historic England was hopeful of receiving positive news about the bid shortly.
- 4.4 Sector Intelligence: The Analytics Department had revived the intelligence desk to gather information about the impact of the cost of living crisis on the non-museum heritage sector. The analysis was being shared with DCMS to help inform decisions on sector support.
- 4.5 Historic Chapels Trust (HCT): Exacerbated by the pandemic, the Historic Chapels Trust was no longer in a financially sustainable position, and Historic England had offered a grant to help the HCT fund the orderly disposal of its portfolio. The HE grant would be used alongside an award from the Cultural Assets Fund to address the most urgent repairs, which would be managed by the Churches Conservation Trust.

- 4.6 Culture and Heritage Capital: In its capacity as an Independent Research Organisation, Historic England was considering potential funding bids to the Arts and Humanities Research Council / DCMS fund for further research in this important area.
- 4.7 Heritage Skills Forum: A Heritage Skills Forum (focused on specialist heritage skills) had been established to help coordinate various sub-sector initiatives, strengthen links between organisations and interest groups, and help facilitate collaborative working in order to maximise funding opportunities and impacts. Commissioners suggested that the Forum's focus might helpfully encompass volunteering and placement opportunities and also partnerships with Skills Colleges.
- 4.8 Levelling Up: Commission noted the updates on the Government's Growth Plan 2022, and ongoing discussions around the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill. Historic England teams continued to meet regularly with DLUHC officials to discuss heritage-related planning policy matters and to support progress of the Bill.

#### *Principal Updates from Group Directors*

- 4.9 Corporate Services updates: Historic England had received permission from DCMS to use its 2022-23 Recognition Awards allocation to provide an exceptional one-off non-consolidated payment of c.£350 to all staff (except Directors and those serving a notice period) to help toward cost of living pressures. The Recognition Awards scheme would be reintroduced from November 2023.
- 4.10 Communications & Public Engagement: The report included a forward look of headline public engagement activity, covering October 2022 to June 2023. Future iterations of the plan would reflect the outcomes of planning discussions currently underway. The High Streets HAZ programme remained a priority focus for 2023.
- 4.11 Regions: Commission noted the various updates on high profile casework, including funding for the Grade II\* listed Birnbeck Pier in Weston-super-Mare, and Historic England's robust public position statement in relation to the London Liverpool Street station redevelopment proposals.
- 4.12 Corporate Strategy & Business Improvement updates: The Outline Business Case for the IT & Digital Investment funding had been approved in Summer, and a 'letter of comfort' for programme expenditure had been received from DCMS on 25 August 2022. The Full Business Case would be submitted in October 2022. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Business and Finance Committee would receive more detailed updates on the associated Digital Strategy at their November 2022 meetings.
- 4.13 Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings: Commissioners had received a separate overview of the successful opening weekend (10-11 September 2022). There remained some outstanding work to be completed within the Kiln and on the upper floors in advance of the commercial tenants moving in (due to complete late October), with five of the six office units on the first floor to be let at that point.

4.14 **Commission noted the Chief Executive's report.**

## **5 Acquisition of Thornborough Henges**

- 5.1 Commission's approval was sought for the acquisition and subsequent transfer to the National Heritage Collection of the central and southern henges within the Thornborough Henges site, one of the most significant concentrations of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments in Northern England. Negotiations with the current owners (Tarmac) and the

neighbouring landowner had drawn to a successful conclusion, with Tarmac offering to gift the henges to become part of the National Heritage Collection, as well as an endowment to cover the costs of public access and maintenance for an initial ten year period. The proposed addition to the Collection had been approved by the English Heritage Trust Board at its 13 October 2022 meeting.

**5.2 Commission approved the acquisition of Thornborough Henges to become part of the National Heritage Collection, subject to DCMS approval.**

**6 English Heritage Trust performance update**

6.1 The EH Trust Chief Executive and Chairman reported the following headlines:

- a Figures for the first six months of 2022-23 showed positive performance. Although mindful of the potential impact of the cost of living crisis, the forecast remained to end the year on (or ahead of) target. In terms of the impact of inflation and other cost pressures, this was expected to have a greater impact from 2023-24 with the start of new contracts.
- b Commercial income was below budget, driven primarily by a shortfall in catering income. Membership income was also below budget due to a recruitment shortfall. Membership retention was performing well.
- c As at September 2022, visitor numbers were tracking slightly behind budget and tight cost controls remained in place to help address the impact of this. Education visit numbers were showing improvements.
- d Recent conservation project highlights included Hardwick Old Hall, Orford Castle and Sibsey Trader Windmill. The remaining £10.2million of the £80million New Model funding for capital investment would be spent by 31 March 2023.
- e There continued to be a focus on income. Development Income was better than budget due to recent grants including a £0.5million grant for Hurst Castle, £0.25million for Berwick, and £0.21million for Furness Abbey. Airbnb had made a £1.25million donation to support heritage tourism.

6.2 Commission welcomed the update.

**6.3 Commission noted the update on the English Heritage Trust's performance.**

**7 English Heritage Trust 2021-22 Review**

7.1 Commission received Historic England's Review of the English Heritage Trust for 2021-22, which provided a snapshot of how the Trust had performed in its operation and care of the National Heritage Collection during the seventh year of the Operating Licence. The Chairman reminded Commission of its vital role in holding the Trust to account for the performance of the National Heritage Collection and the conservation of the properties, and for the Trust's plans for achieving financial self-sufficiency.

7.2 Despite Covid-19 restrictions remaining in place for the first quarter, the Trust's performance had recovered well, with 4.2million visitors and a record high of 1.2million members. The Trust had ended the year with a net unrestricted surplus before depreciation of £1.1million and unrestricted cash of £53.6million, as well as robust financial projections showing the Trust achieving financial sustainability without the need for further Government support.

- 7.3 2021-22 had also seen the highest volume of conservation and maintenance work during the Operating Licence period, including £12.2million spent on the conservation backlog and £14.4million on maintenance from the £80million New Model funding. Expenditure across all categories had been higher than in previous years with sites reopening, although tight discretionary cost controls remained in place. Payroll had increased as the furlough scheme had ended, though overall headcount had not change significantly.
- 7.4 Commission welcomed the Review, noting that next year's report would reflect an assessment of the Trust's performance during the original New Model and Operating Licence period. Presenting a clear picture of performance and a compelling narrative around how the £80million New Model funding had been spent, and the extent to which this had addressed the conservation deficit, would be vital.
- 7.5 In response to a Commissioner's query about future acquisitions to the National Heritage Collection, the EH Trust Chairman reported that there were gaps in the Collection - both in terms of regional spread and also timeline - and that work was in development to identify sites that could improve the Collection and help present a more holistic 'Nation's Story'.

#### *Annual Report of the Historic Estate Conservation Committee 2020/21*

- 7.6 Commission also noted the Annual Report of the Historic Estate Conservation Committee (HECC), which summarised the Committee's work during 2021-22. It had held three meetings during the year and an overview of the business considered at each of these was included. The programme of site visits had re-commenced with the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, and 14 visits had taken place.
- 7.7 The Committee's overall conclusion was that the EH Trust was performing well in its role of caring for the National Heritage Collection. There was a clear understanding of the condition of the estate as a whole, and well-ordered priorities for the conservation required. Conservation and maintenance budgets were being spent properly and effectively.
- 7.8 On behalf of Commission, the Chairman recorded his thanks to former Commissioner, Michael Morrison, who had chaired the Committee until 31 May 2022, and to Katy Lithgow, who had taken on the role subsequently. He also expressed his thanks to the other members, including a number of Commissioners, for their contributions to the Committee.

**7.9 Commission noted the 2021-22 Annual Review of the English Heritage Trust, including the annual report of the Historic Estate Conservation Committee.**

## **8 Financial Performance update**

- 8.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented the financial results to September 2022. The current forecast was for a balanced position at year end, assuming a transfer to reserves of £1.5million to offset various project costs that had slipped to 2023-24.
- 8.2 Year to Date income was currently £2.1million above budget and expenditure was £500k above budget, resulting in a net underspend of £1.6million, although this was largely due to timing differences. 'Other Income' was forecast to be £3.1million above budget by year end; around £1.5million of this was from various Independent Research Organisation programmes, including £888k for the [Unpath'd Waters](#) project and £188k for the [Outreach to Ownership](#) research pilot.

**8.3 Commission noted the financial position to September 2022 and the year-end forecast.**

## 9 2021-22 draft Annual Report & Accounts

- 9.1 The Director of Corporate Services and Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) presented the draft 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts (ARA). ARAC had considered several iterations of the Report & Accounts since year-end and had approved the current version for recommendation to Commission at its 29 September 2022 meeting. There were no significant matters to flag.
- 9.2 The 2021-22 finalisation and audit process had been smoother than in the previous two years, which had been affected adversely by the pandemic. Planning for 2022-23 was already in train, and there was a commitment from all parties to return to a pre- Summer Recess laying date.
- 9.3 In terms of next steps, the 2021-22 ARA would be submitted to DCMS for Ministerial approval, followed by certification by the NAO Comptroller & Auditor General. Laying before Parliament was expected late November 2022.

### 9.4 Commission:

- a **noted that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reviewed the ARA (and the related National Audit Office (NAO) report) on 29 September 2022 prior to the Commission meeting;**
- b **approved the ARA for the year ended 31 March 2022; and**
- c **authorised the Chairman and the Chief Executive to sign the ARA for the year ended 31 March 2022 on behalf of the Commission, noting that the use of electronic signatures has been agreed with the NAO.**

## 10 The Future of the Heritage at Risk Programme

- 10.1 The Director of Regions and Programme Lead for the Heritage at Risk (HAR) Review presented a discussion paper, which sought Commission's views on potential reforms to Historic England's Heritage at Risk programme. The report and presentation set out the background to the HAR programme and its key components; the rationale for the review; the potential benefits of refreshing the HAR programme (both in terms of more effective operation, and closer alignment to Historic England's Strategy, corporate priorities and objectives); a summary of key review findings; and a range of proposed objectives that would underpin any reforms.
- 10.2 Commissioners enjoyed an open and detailed discussion, sharing views, posing questions and also drawing on their own experiences of the HAR programme, both as practitioners and owners.
- 10.3 Commission was mindful that the HAR 'brand' was well recognised and respected, and that HAR grants were of great value as a funding stream of last resort. The annual HAR Register launch was also a powerful engagement tool and call to action. Nevertheless, the current limitations of the HAR programme were acknowledged, and Commission was supportive of progressing the review with clear objectives and actions to increase benefits including, *inter alia*: wider engagement; more effective partnership working; enabling and equipping others; assessing and addressing threats more effectively; and being able to demonstrate more clearly the value of Historic England's intervention and funding. Mindful of the reputational risks, clear messaging at each stage would be essential.
- 10.4 In light of Commission's steer, next steps would be to discuss the proposed approach with DCMS alongside a further period of staff engagement and external insight gathering. Work

would also begin on scoping the gradual implementation of any potential reforms from 2023-24.

**10.5 Commission considered the arguments for the proposed reforms to the Heritage at Risk programme, and the potential risks and benefits of any major reforms.**

**11 Historic England Committee minutes and updates**

11.1 Commission noted the minutes and updates from recent sub-committee meetings.

11.2 The Chair of the Historic Places Panel drew attention to the Panel's 2019-2021 Review and reflected on the range of issues and themes that the Panel encountered on its visits. These included local authority capacity, and the mixed picture in terms of ALB and agency support and resourcing available at a local level. The Panel Chair proposed to bring a more detailed report on the Panel to Commission in early 2023.

**11.3 Commission noted:**

- a **the Historic Places Panel 2019-2021 Review;**
- b **the Historic Places Panel Accrington Review Paper;**
- c **the minutes of the 8 June Audit & Risk Assurance Committee;**
- d **the minutes of the 8 June Business & Finance Committee;**
- e **the minutes of the 30 June and 15 September Historic England Advisory Committee;**
- f **the minutes of the 30 June and 15 September 30 June and 15 September London Advisory Committee; and**
- g **oral updates from other recent meetings.**

**12 Casework Report and Planning Bulletin**

12.1 Commission received its regular update on Historic England's business critical casework and recent and forthcoming planning developments.

**12.2 Commission noted the Casework Report and Planning Bulletin.**

**13 Any Other Business**

13.1 The next business meeting would be held on 1 December 2022. The Regional visit to Bristol and Bath would take place on 2 and 3 November 2022.

13.2 There were no further items of business.

**14 Closed Session**

14.1 Commission held a closed session with the Chief Executive.

**Siobhan O'Donoghue  
October 2022**

# Commission

Final Minutes of the 336<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 16 June 2022 at Cannon Bridge House, London EC4 and via video-conference

**Commissioners present:** Sir Laurie Magnus, Chairman  
Sandie Dawe  
Sandra Dinneen  
Paul Farmer  
Professor Helena Hamerow  
Patrick Newberry  
Susie Thornberry  
Richard Upton  
Sue Wilkinson

**Staff present:** Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive  
Michael Bishop, Director of Business Improvement  
Meryl Hayward, Director of Corporate Services  
Claudia Kenyatta, Director of Regions  
Ian Morrison, Director of Policy & Evidence  
Siobhan O'Donoghue, Head of Governance (notes)  
Amy Pitts, Director of Communications & Public Engagement  
Simon Ramsden, Head of Planning Strategy (for part)  
Julia Ward, Head of the Chairman & Chief Executive's Office  
Andrew Wiseman, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary

**Others present:** Nairita Chakraborty  
Jane Gibson  
David Laing  
Jonathan Marsden  
Kate Mavor, Chief Executive, English Heritage Trust (for part)  
Fazima Osborn, Deputy Director of Heritage & Cultural Analysis, DCMS  
Robert Sackville-West

## 1 Apologies, announcements and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting. A warm welcome was extended to Fazima Osborn, Deputy Director of Heritage & Cultural Analysis, DCMS, who was attending as an observer; and to new Commissioners Nairita Chakraborty, Jane Gibson, David Laing, Jonathan Marsden and Robert Sackville-West, whose four-year terms started formally on 1 July 2022.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence had been received from Commissioners Ben Derbyshire and Richard Upton.

### *Declarations of Interest*

- 1.3 There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 Minutes of 10 March 2022 Commission meeting and matters arising

2.1 The minutes of the 335<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 10 March 2022 were approved as a correct record.

2.2 **Commission approved the minutes of the 335<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 10 March 2022 as a correct record.**

## 3 Chairman's Report

3.1 The Chairman presented his regular report, which detailed activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events. Highlights included the productive meetings on 23 March 2022 with Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, and Lord Mendoza; and with Robert Jenrick MP, on 17 May 2022, in his new role as Chair of the Arts and Heritage All-Party Parliamentary Group. On 7 June 2022, the Chairman had visited the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) in Harlesden, North West London.

3.2 **Commission noted the Chairman's report.**

## 4 Chief Executive's Report

4.1 The Chief Executive presented his regular report, which included the latest performance dashboard and principal updates from each Group.

4.2 Office Estate: The freehold of the Brooklands office in Cambridge had been transferred to the Government Property Agency (GPA) on 31 March 2022. The GPA was carrying out due diligence on the Swindon lease and regular liaison meetings were taking place.

4.3 It was expected that an agreement would be reached with the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for it to sub-let space at Cannon Bridge House, bringing in additional income and helping with more efficient use of the office estate as permanent hybrid working arrangements were implemented. Discussions between both parties were ongoing; robust protocols around confidentiality, behaviours, and fair use of space, etc. would need to be in place.

4.4 Our People: Within the scope of this year's HM Treasury pay remit guidance, pay review proposals had been developed around the maximum permitted 3% envelope, but with higher percentage increases (or minimum value of award) for lower paid staff. The proposals would be shared with Prospect for it to ballot its members.

4.5 Levelling Up: Recently published HE-commissioned research on heritage and civic pride had produced insightful findings on 'pride in place' (one of the Government's twelve levelling up missions) as well as an endorsement for the approach of programmes such as High Street HAZs. Historic England was feeding in to DLUHC's development work around the pride in place mission via the DCMS Analysis Team.

4.6 Sector partnership working: Historic England and six other DCMS Arm's Length Bodies had submitted a collective £3million bid to DLUHC for capacity funding, to support local authorities with their delivery of Levelling Up Fund projects and with the development of UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment plans. DCMS had signalled its commitment to greater collaborative working between its ALBs, and a more place-based approach to ways of working. Partnership working with other agencies, such as Homes England, was also desirable.



- 4.7 Spending Review (SR): The Chief Executive reported that Historic England had been asked to model 5% and 10% admin. cuts from Year 3 of the SR period. Noting that Historic England had been subject to a series of cuts in recent years, and given that actions were underway already to drive efficiencies (for example sub-letting space), further cuts would have a profound impact on Historic England's ability to deliver key work programmes. The increasing demand, as well as the associated costs, around compliance with Government standards and frameworks were also a concern.
- 4.8 Ironbridge Trust: Commission noted the decision to wind-up the Ironbridge Heritage Foundation (IHF) charity and merge it with the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust (IGMT). Benefits of the merger included the opportunity for the Museum Trust to use a £4m endowment (held by the IHF) as match-funding for a National Heritage Memorial Fund grant, which would help put the Trust on a sound financial footing.

#### *Principal Updates from Group Directors*

- 4.9 Policy & Evidence updates: As a result of the planned industrial action across the rail network on 21 June 2022, the Ministerial roundtable on Heritage Skills would be a virtual event. Elsewhere, Catherine Dewar (previously Regional Director, North West) had been appointed as Climate Change Strategy Programme Director, and existing recourses had been reallocated to fund the range of Phase I climate change activities during 2022. Commission noted that written evidence provided by Historic England had been cited in the Environmental Audit Committee's recent report on the Sustainability of the Built Environment.
- 4.10 Regions updates: Commission noted the high rate of Development Advice cases and the impressive response rate (99.4% responded to within the deadline or agreed extension). The number of cases received in April 2022 had been 4% above the monthly average for 2021 and 12% above the monthly average for the last five years. The level of Listing application cases in recent months was back to pre-pandemic levels; March and April had seen an increase as a result of internal applications focused on Platinum Jubilee celebrations and High Street HAZ work. Commission asked that its acknowledgement and appreciation be conveyed to the teams involved.
- 4.11 Communications & Public Engagement: Recent highlights included the positive and widespread media coverage of the Aerial Photograph Explorer (APEX) project. Lessons were being captured to inform future stories and campaigns. More than 550 applications had been received in response to the Everyday Heritage grants programme; the biggest response to any Historic England grants call. **Commission would welcome more detail on the Everyday Heritage grants programme in due course.**

#### ***ACTION: Dir. of Business Improvement / Dir. Of Communications & Public Engagement***

- 4.12 To help Commissioners advocate forthcoming public engagement campaigns and stories, it was suggested that **a Public Engagement and Communications forward programme be shared with Commission at the next meeting. Information on the Audience Segmentation work would also be shared.**

#### ***ACTION: Dir. of Communications & Public Engagement***

- 4.13 Business Improvement updates: Work on the Digital Strategy, a key transformational programme, was entering its final phase and business systems improvements were continuing in parallel. The Digital Strategy would be considered in detail by the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and Business & Finance Committee in autumn.

- 4.14 Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings: Work on-site continued in advance of the planned summer 2022 opening, although there were some minor delays. Discussions with key tenants were ongoing. **Dates for potential Commissioner site visits would be circulated.**

***ACTION: Director of Business Improvement***

**4.15 Commission noted the Chief Executive's report.**

**5 English Heritage Trust performance update**

- 5.1 The EH Trust Chief Executive was welcomed to the meeting and reported the following headlines:
- a The Trust had ended 2021-22 with a stronger than anticipated income position (9.6% better than budget). Visitor numbers were also above budget (4.2 million against a budget of 4.1 million). With more than a third of the Trust's income coming from membership, a key challenge would be retaining members.
  - b More than £12m had been spent on Conservation Maintenance Programme projects. Spend against the £52m 'New Model' grant in the year had been the second-highest since 2015; there remained £7.4m to spend in 2022-23, together with £2.8m of the £10m allocated for small and free sites.
  - c Volunteers were at their highest level, including maintenance volunteers, who played an essential role in de-vegetation, etc.
  - d Recent highlights across the estate included the opening of the Clifford's Tower visitor experience and Marble Hill House, both of which had proved exceptionally popular with local audiences.
  - e Looking ahead, challenges included the impact of fuel cost increases, other cost of living pressures, and the slow recovery of educational visits and organised visits from overseas (although independent international tourism numbers were picking up).
  - f In terms of future capital projects, there was a pipeline of works including a number of smaller scale projects (eg. Belsay Hall). At its last Board meeting, Trustees had considered a Capital Improvement Programme. Project funding would be, in part, reliant on improved fundraising performance.
- 5.2 Commission welcomed the update. In terms of progress with the Shared Service Agreement renewal and Operating Licence extension, final elements of the paperwork were still outstanding, but close to completion. Focus would then turn to the post-2025 licence.
- 5.3 On behalf of Commission, the Chair congratulated the Trust's Chief Executive and staff on the achievements during the year, particularly the improved membership levels.

**5.4 Commission noted the update on the English Heritage Trust's performance.**

**6 Financial Performance and 2021-22 Out-turn**

- 6.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented the draft 2021-22 out-turn, the finalised 2022-23 budget, and financial results to May 2022.

## 2021-22 Out-turn

- 6.2 Commission was pleased to note that the draft 2021-22 Group accounts showed an overspend of just £13k against a budget of more than £160m. The position had been reviewed in more detail by the Business & Finance Committee at its recent meeting and the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee was in the process of reviewing the draft 2021-22 Financial Statements and Notes as part of the year-end process. Final approval of the Annual Report & Accounts would be sought from Commission at its October 2022 meeting before laying in Parliament in November 2022. The intention was to return to a pre-summer recess laying date for the 2022-23 Report & Accounts.

## 2022-23 Financial Performance

- 6.3 Commission had approved the draft 2022-23 capital and revenue budgets at its March 2022 meeting, subject to receipt of the formal DCMS Spending Review Settlement Letter. The budgets were now re-presented and the key changes summarised, including confirmation of £1.1m for pensions and cover for the National Insurance increase. The final 2022-23 budget reflected use of c.£1.3m reserves for cost pressures, as agreed by the Executive Team, including for Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings and priority work programmes.

- 6.4 Commission noted the draft financial position for 2021-22; the 2022-23 budget changes, and the year-end forecast.**

## 7 2021-22 Year-end Corporate Performance and Risk

- 7.1 The Director of Business Improvement presented the full-year results of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) agreed with DCMS as per the 2021-22 Framework Agreement. This was the first round of reporting in a new format - a one-page high-level summary supplemented by a suite of more detailed reporting, case studies and statistics. The change in format was part of ongoing improvements to reporting performance information across the organisation, including to Commission. Overall, there had been good performance across most priority outcome areas, particularly within the context of additional delivery pressures during the year.
- 7.2 In response to a Commissioner's query, it was confirmed that the intention was to apply a more structured and consistent approach to mapping Historic England's activity to Levelling Up priority areas as part of future developments.
- 7.3 Commission also received the current risk register, noting that it was reviewed by risk owners on a monthly basis, by Executive Team quarterly, and by the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee at each full business meeting. Iterative improvements continued to be made to risk management arrangements and reporting, which had been welcomed by the Committee. The Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee reported that the Committee had considered the Register risks in detail at its June 2022 meeting, and had discussed potential financial and staff risks around cost pressures (Spending Review, inflation, cost of living, and staff pay, etc.).

- 7.4 Commission noted:**
- a the year-end summary of corporate performance during 2021-22; and**
  - b the current Corporate Risk Register.**

## 8 Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and High Street HAZ programme update

8.1 The Director of Regions presented the year-end update on the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and High Street HAZ programmes. The appendices contained a large amount of detailed information, and Commissioners were invited to raise follow-up questions directly outside the meeting. Briefings and site visits would be arranged for the newly appointed Commissioners as part of their induction programme. The following headlines were discussed:

- a Eight Round 1 HAZ schemes had concluded formally in March 2022 (two others had completed in late 2020 and March 2021). Overall, Round 1 performance was encouraging with an increase in spend in the final year and good KPI results, particularly around training, volunteering and listing activity.
- b The Round 1 pilot evaluation exercise had provided some useful learning and recommendations for the remaining HAZ Rounds and High Street HAZ schemes, and also the final evaluation framework. The focus was now on celebrating the achievements of the Round 1 schemes, with national and local activities planned for the coming months.
- c The conclusion and evaluation of the Round 1 schemes was also an opportunity to consider the success of the HAZ model (modest investment combined with expertise and a partnership approach) and how it might be used – including by others, for example local authorities – as the basis for future place-based programmes, and as a means to access other funding sources.
- d Round 2 schemes were progressing in terms of spend and other performance indicators. An internal audit review of Round 2 schemes had not identified any particular issues to explain the relatively modest progress, although the impact of the pandemic, as well as the complexity, scale and ambition of some of the schemes, were likely factors. Round 3 schemes were performing well.
- e The four-year High Street HAZ programme was at the halfway stage. It had ended Year 2 on budget with some schemes making particularly good progress on site and taking on additional projects. The success of the High Street HAZ Cultural Programme continued and had played a vital role in keeping momentum and engaging communities whilst on-site capital works were affected by pandemic restrictions.
- f There was a campaign approach to communications, with a recent focus on promoting the Hi! brand, raising awareness and highlighting local success stories through social media, videos and other content.

8.2 Commission welcomed the update. In terms of the broader HAZ and High Street HAZ evaluation and legacy, this included considering Historic England's role as a sector thought-leader on place-based, heritage-led regeneration programmes, and our evidence and learning was being shared with DLUHC officials at policy level. Advocacy at scheme level was also a powerful tool for promoting the HAZ model, and site visits were being arranged for Ministers and others across Government.

**8.3 Commission noted the update on the HAZ portfolio, including HAZ Rounds 1-3, the High Streets HAZ programme, and the forward look.**

## **9 Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill**

- 9.1 The Director of Policy & Evidence introduced the paper, which provided Commission with an update on the recently published Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, including some of the most pertinent details, likely implications for Historic England and the sector, and next steps.
- 9.2 The Bill was wide in scope, covering levelling up and devolution, but also planning-related matters. Since publication of the Planning White Paper in 2020, Historic England had been working closely with DLUHC and DCMS on the heritage elements of the Bill, and there was much to be welcomed by the sector, including a number of new measures designed to strengthen heritage protection. These included a new statutory duty to have special regard to the significance of all heritage assets and their settings; temporary Stop Notices for listed buildings; extending the scope of Urgent Works Notices; and a statutory requirement to maintain a Historic Environment Record (HER). A number of other planning reforms set out originally in the White Paper had been scaled back. Historic England staff would continue to work constructively with DLUHC and DCMS colleagues on the significant detail to be added through secondary legislation and guidance over the coming months. Changes to planning system were expected to be implemented from 2024.
- 9.3 Commission welcomed the comprehensive overview, noting in particular those elements of the Bill that boosted heritage protection. In terms of implementing the Bill, there would be resource implications for Historic England. Opening up further funding routes (in addition to Grant in Aid) through increased flexibility for statutory bodies to charge for services would be a key element of this.
- 9.4 Regarding the disparity of VAT rates for new build and repairs, Commission noted that one of the recommendations in the Environmental Audit Committee's report on Sustainability of the Built Environment was for Government to consider harmonising the VAT rates of new build and repair work. Historic England was supportive of delivering a pilot programme to help provide evidence to Government that VAT changes could help drive behaviour and retention of valuable buildings, which also locked in carbon.

**9.5 Commission noted the update on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.**

## **10 Contested Heritage update**

- 10.1 Commission was presented with an overview of Contested Heritage work, which had been a particular focus for Historic England in recent years. A working group had been established to help provide programme support to contested heritage activity across five key areas: staff guidance, support and training; policy, tools and guidance for external use; external engagement; research; and casework.
- 10.2 Commission noted the update and welcomed in particular the development of resources to support staff dealing with contested heritage matters. It was noted that, although the number of live planning and listing cases was small, the cases were complex and resource-intensive.
- 10.3 DCMS was developing a draft contested heritage policy and guidelines, and a small number of Historic England staff had reviewed and provided comments on the drafts as part of this process. The policy and guidelines would be shared with the Contested Heritage Advisory Board (CHAB) before publication.
- 10.4 Historic England had commissioned a suite of domestic and international case studies, focused on reinterpreting heritage as examples of 'retain and explain' in practice. The

intention was to make the case studies available on Historic England's webpages in due course, once a publication date had been agreed with DCMS.

## **10.5 Commission noted the update on Contested Heritage**

### **11 Historic England Committee minutes and updates**

11.1 Commission noted the minutes and updates from recent sub-committee meetings.

#### **11.2 Commission noted:**

- a **the minutes of the 17 February and 28 April 2022 Historic England Advisory Committee;**
- b **the minutes of the 17 February and 28 April 2022 London Advisory Committee;**
- c **the minutes of the 19 May 2022 Historic Estate Conservation Committee;**
- d **the minutes of the 3 March 2022 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee;**
- e **the minutes of the 3 March 2022 Business & Finance Committee; and**
- f **oral updates from other recent meetings.**

### **12 Casework Report and Planning Bulletin**

12.1 Commission received its regular update on Historic England's business critical casework and recent and forthcoming planning developments.

#### **12.2 Commission noted the Casework Report and Planning Bulletin.**

### **13 Any Other Business**

13.1 The next business meeting would be held on 19 October 2022; a catch-up video-call had been scheduled for 7 September 2022. The Regional visit to Stoke-on-Trent would take place on 12 and 13 July 2022.

13.2 There were no further items of business.

### **14 Closed Session**

14.1 Commission held a closed session with the Chief Executive.

**Siobhan O'Donoghue**  
**June 2022**

# Commission

Final Minutes of the 335<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 10 March 2022 at 1 America Square, London, EC3 and via video-conference

**Commissioners present:** Sir Laurie Magnus, Chairman  
Professor Martin Daunton  
Sandie Dawe  
Ben Derbyshire  
Sandra Dinneen  
Paul Farmer  
Professor Helena Hamerow  
Michael Morrison  
Patrick Newberry  
Susie Thornberry  
Richard Upton  
Sue Wilkinson

**Staff present:** Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive  
Michael Bishop, Director of Business Improvement  
Katie Bole, Carbon Manager (for part)  
Claudia Kenyatta, Director of Regions  
Meryl Hayward, Director of Corporate Services  
Linda Monckton, Head of Wellbeing & Inclusion Strategy (for part)  
Ian Morrison, Director of Policy & Evidence  
Siobhan O'Donoghue, Head of Governance (notes)  
Amy Pitts, Director of Communications & Public Engagement  
Philip Pollard, Heritage Apprenticeships Manager (for part)  
Julia Ward, Head of the Chairman & Chief Executive's Office  
Andrew Wiseman, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary

**Others present:** Sir Tim Laurence, Chairman, English Heritage Trust (for part)  
Kate Mavor, Chief Executive, English Heritage Trust (for part)

## 1 Apologies, announcements and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.

### *Declarations of Interest*

1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 Minutes of 8 December 2021 Commission meeting and matters arising

2.1 The minutes of the 334<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 8 December 2021 were approved as a correct record.

2.2 **Commission approved the minutes of the 334<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 8 December 2021 as a correct record.**

### 3 Chairman's Report

- 3.1 The Chairman presented his regular report, which detailed activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events. Highlights included the final meetings of the Culture Recovery Fund Board and its Investment Sub-Committee, and a productive visit to Coventry on 4 March 2022 with Neil O'Brien, MP, Minister for Levelling Up, which had included the Coventry High Street Heritage Action Zone.
- 3.2 Interviews with short-listed Commissioner candidates had taken place in January 2022. The Assessment Panel's recommendations were now with Ministers.
- 3.3 The Chairman would be speaking at the Valuing Culture and Heritage Capital conference on 11 March 2022. Joining details for the event would be shared with Commissioners.

3.4 <b>Commission noted the Chairman's report.</b>
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### 4 Chief Executive's Report

- 4.1 The Chief Executive presented his regular report, which included the latest performance dashboard and principal updates from each Group.
- 4.2 Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings: Proposed Heads of Terms for a 10-year lease for the upper floors of the Mill had been circulated by email and approved by Commission on 31 January 2022. Commission was now asked to approve revised Heads of Terms - reflecting an adjustment to the clause relating to service charge uplift - and agree to proceed with the Agreement for Lease at the earliest opportunity. The revised arrangements were still considered to be a good deal for Historic England and Commission approved the proposals.
- 4.3 Brooklands (Cambridge office) and Government Property Agency (GPA): Negotiations continued with the GPA regarding the transfer of the Brooklands freehold. Discussions regarding the Engine House (Swindon) were also ongoing. Following consideration by the Business & Finance Committee at its 3 March 2022 meeting, the recommendation was that, subject to the GPA's agreement of a side letter (which aimed to ensure protection for Historic England, should the lease be terminated), Commission should approve the transfer of the Brooklands office to the GPA by 31 March 2022.
- 4.4 Levelling Up and UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Commission noted the update on Historic England's work with other Arm's Length Bodies on an initiative to support the delivery of levelling up capital investment programmes. The Director of Policy & Evidence also provided an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the pre-launch guidance having been published alongside the Levelling Up White Paper on 2 February 2022.
- 4.5 Contested Heritage: The Government's Contested Heritage Advisory Board meetings continued to focus on the development of policy and guidance to support the 'retain and explain' position. Historic England was also drawing together a suite of Contested Heritage reinterpretation case studies.
- 4.6 Response to events in Ukraine: Historic England was a member of the European Heritage Heads Forum, and a declaration regarding the ongoing situation in Ukraine, and commitment to supporting Ukraine's cultural heritage institutions, would be made through that body.



- 4.7 Other matters discussed included an update on the Spending Review (SR21); the lifting of the remaining Covid-19 restrictions from 14 March 2022; and major casework, including the Stonehenge A303 proposals and UNESCO's position.

*Principal Updates from Group Directors*

- 4.8 Cyber Security: The National Cyber Security Centre had highlighted a potential increased risk of cyber-attacks in light of Russia's violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity. Historic England was accelerating some planned security enhancements (including two-factor authentication). Commission noted that the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee had discussed cyber security issues more broadly at its 3 March 2022 meeting.
- 4.9 Cost Pressures: Historic England's final SR21 settlement was still to be confirmed, and Commission noted the range of pressures that could potentially impact on delivery of workstreams and performance. These included inflation, increased utility costs, other cost increases (for example construction materials and labour), the increase in National Insurance contributions, and limitations of the public sector staff pay remit. Regarding the latter, formal HM Treasury pay remit guidance had not yet been issued, but Historic England had budgeted for a 2% uplift in staff pay.
- 4.10 Historic Places Panel: Commissioner Ben Derbyshire, who had taken over the role of Panel chair from 1 January 2022, reported on the Panel's recent AGM, where it had considered proposals for sharing the Panel's knowledge and learning with internal and external audiences. The programme of 2022 site visits was in development.
- 4.11 Communications and Public Engagement activity: The first of the three pillars of the Future Strategy - Active Participation - had been launched in January 2022, supported by a range of resources including a video, discussion guide and toolkit. Activity planned to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee included new Heritage Schools programme resources and new Listings. The Everyday Heritage grants scheme, which celebrated working class histories, had been launched in February 2022 and had been well received.
- 4.12 Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings (SFM): Following a partner meeting in February 2022 between Historic England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Friends, Historic England had taken the decision to take on temporarily the direct management of visitor operations. The intention was to transfer responsibility back to the Friends or a third party at a future point. Work on-site was progressing with a view to opening in summer 2022.

4.13 **Commission:**

- a **approved the amended Heads of Terms for a 10-year lease for the upper three floors of the Main Mill at Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings;**
- b **agreed that Historic England should proceed with the drafting of the Agreement to Lease / the Lease at the earliest opportunity to secure the tenant;**
- c **subject to the agreement of the side letter to ensure necessary protections for Historic England, approved the transfer of the Brooklands office to the Government Property Agency by 31 March 2022; and**
- d **noted the remainder of the report.**

## **5 English Heritage Trust performance update**

- 5.1 The EH Trust Chairman and Chief Executive were welcomed to the meeting, and Commission congratulated Kate Mavor on her CBE, announced in the 2022 New Year Honours. The following updates on the EH Trust's performance were provided:
- a The Trust was in a good position and forecasting a modest year-end surplus. The 2021-22 visitor target of 4.1million was expected to be achieved.
  - b The 2021-22 membership target had already been achieved; the year-end position was likely to exceed pre-pandemic levels.
  - c Fundraising income had been boosted by a number of recent pledges.
  - d 2021-22 educational visits were down 99% compared to pre-pandemic levels, although a recent campaign promoting the wellbeing benefits of educational visits was starting to have an impact.
  - e The new visitor experience at Clifford's Tower would open on 2 April 2022, and the restored Marble Hill House and gardens would also re-open shortly. Hurst Castle had been added to the World Monuments Fund Watch for 2022 and had become a positive story of cross-sector collaboration.
  - f The Trust Board had signed off the three-year Strategic Plan and provisional 2022-23 budget at its March 2022 meeting. The range of global and domestic factors that could impact on the Trust's financial certainty had been noted.

<b>5.2 Commission noted the update on the English Heritage Trust's performance.</b>
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## **6 English Heritage Trust Shared Services update and English Heritage Trust Operation Licence extension**

- 6.1 Discussions had been ongoing with the EH Trust and DCMS over the possible renewal or extension of the Trust's current eight-year operating licence (to manage the National Collection on behalf of Historic England), which was due to expire on 31 March 2023. Commission was asked to consider the approval of a two-year extension to the licence to 31 May 2025, subject to a satisfactory agreement being reached on the extension of shared services between the two organisations, also to 31 March 2025.
- 6.2 Agreement had been reached on all but a handful of issues relating to shared services. The Chief Executive reported that discussions on the provision of shared services continued, and that both parties were hopeful of reaching a satisfactory conclusion shortly.
- 6.3 Commission agreed that a sub-committee (comprising the Chairman and Chair of the Business & Finance Committee) should be appointed to finalise the extension of the licence in advance of 28 March 2022. The sub-committee would be provided with suitable summaries and assurances about renewed shared service agreements and should also receive a three-year cost plan and proposals for performance monitoring and Key Performance Indicators.
- 6.4 It was noted that the licence extension was subject to formal Ministerial sign-off; however, DCMS did not anticipate any issues.
- 6.5 Work was underway to investigate the most cost-effective and legally compliant way to grant a longer-term licence, post-2025. The issue of the future management of Apsley House

would not be resolved with Ministers within the preferred timeframe; therefore, the aim was to resolve the matter in advance of the post-2025 arrangements.

#### 6.6 **Commission:**

- a **noted the update on negotiations with the EH Trust regarding shared services;**
- b **approved a two-year extension to the existing licence, subject to agreement on shared services; and**
- c **agreed to appoint a sub-committee (comprising the Chairman and Chair of the Business & Finance Committee) to finalise the extension of the licence in advance of 28 March 2022.**

## 7 **2022-23 Budget and 2021-22 Financial Overview**

7.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented the draft revenue and capital budgets for 2022-23 and an update on financial performance to the end of January 2022 (P10).

### *Draft 2022-23 Budget*

7.2 The draft 2022-23 budget had been prepared as a balanced budget. As the budget was subject to confirmation of the final SR21 settlement, it had been based on current assessments of income, cost pressures, business priorities, and utilisation of reserves. The draft budget, including the use of reserves, had been considered in detail by the Business & Finance Committee at its meeting on 3 March 2022.

### *2021-22 Financial Performance and risks*

7.3 As at P10, the 2021-22 year-end forecast was for a small underspend of approx. £240k. Key risks at this stage of the year included delivery of grant expenditure by year-end, and the potential impact of delays to supply chains for key workstreams and expenditure areas, such as construction materials and delivery of IT hardware. The impact of inflation, public sector pay restraint, and the challenging recruitment market were also risk areas.

#### 7.4 **Commission:**

- a **approved the final draft revenue and capital budgets for 2022-23, noting that Historic England had yet to receive its final Spending Review settlement; and**
- b **noted the financial position to date and the year-end forecast.**

## 8 **Corporate Plan 2022-23**

8.1 Historic England's Future Strategy and Corporate Plan 2021-22 had been approved by Commission in April 2021. Tier 1 and Tier 2 Corporate Plan activities had been reviewed in advance of 2022-23, and a number of proposed adjustments were presented to Commission for approval. Changes included adjustments to activity wording and new Tier 2 activities, which had been added to better reflect corporate priorities (such as Climate Change and Inclusion, Diversity & Equality) and to align activities more closely to the Future Strategy themes.

8.2 Commission welcomed the proposed changes, noting that the relatively small adjustments to language were likely to have a big impact in terms of how the Corporate Plan was received

and understood by internal and external audiences. Commission also welcomed the direction of travel in terms of corporate planning, in particular the closer alignment of resources to activities. A small number of drafting suggestions were provided.

- 8.3 A summary of year-end performance against 2021-22 corporate priorities and Key Performance Indicators would be presented to Commission at its June 2022 meeting.

**8.4 Subject to the minor drafting suggestions made, Commission approved the revisions to the draft Corporate Plan activities for 2022-23.**

## **9 Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy**

- 9.1 The Head of Wellbeing & Inclusion Strategy was welcomed to the meeting. Commission had received the Executive Summary of Historic England's Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy, which had been in development over the previous two years through research, consultation and sector intelligence. Publication of the full Strategy would follow in the coming weeks and would mark the start of the next phase of Historic England's work in this important area. The Strategy would be focused on delivery across three areas: our work, our people, and the potential of the wider heritage sector.

- 9.2 Commission welcomed the Executive Summary and the update on the forthcoming Strategy. The partnerships with social prescribing networks were particularly welcomed. Wellbeing was recognised increasingly as a key indicator and outcome for measuring policy success; and the development of specific objectives to help explain Historic England's work in relation to wellbeing, and the development of more outcome-focused performance indicators, was encouraged.

- 9.3 Commission also noted the cross-overs and opportunities relating to Historic England's Strategy for Inclusion, Diversity & Equality, the three Future Strategy themes, and the Culture and Heritage Capital framework.

**9.4 Commission noted the Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy Executive summary and the timetable for publication of the full version.**

## **10 Heritage and Climate Change Strategy**

- 10.1 The Director of Policy & Evidence presented the draft Heritage and Climate Change Strategy, which set out Historic England's approach to the climate crisis in terms of vision and aims, our own work and activities, and proposals for working with others. The Strategy was structured around three themes: mitigation, managing risk and adaptation.

- 10.2 A Climate Change Programme had also been developed to ensure a clear, consistent and measurable delivery approach. This would be kept under review in order to respond to emerging findings, priorities and issues. It was noted that, whilst some resources for delivering the programme had been identified from existing budgets, some programme activities would require additional funding, and these would need to be considered alongside wider budget pressures.

- 10.3 Commission welcomed the draft Climate Change Strategy. Commissioners encouraged the inclusion of 'heroic' goals, and the use of the Strategy to encourage others to do the same.

Separating out some specific actions for delivery in the immediate-term, however, could help convey the scale of ambition, help to further engage and energise staff, and could be attractive to prospective employees and partners.

- 10.4 Commission noted that the Strategy needed to reach the widest possible audience. It would need to bring together the sector, influence it, and challenge assumptions, but also recognise the sector's differing positions and priorities. It was suggested that the Strategy could more clearly promote the practical guidance, help and advice that owners and practitioners would be looking for. A small number of other drafting and design suggestions were also made.

**10.5 Commission noted the draft Heritage and Climate Change Strategy.**

**11 Net Zero Target and Carbon Reduction Plan**

- 11.1 Historic England's Carbon Manager introduced Historic England's Carbon Reduction Plan. The Plan set out the organisation's approach to achieving Net Zero by 2040 by reducing at least 90% of emissions, and neutralising the ~10% residual emissions through verified offsetting schemes within the UK. Achieving the target would require a reduction of 5.75% each year until 2030, followed by reductions of 5.4% up to 2040. The proposed target date of 2040 was felt to be achievable and credible, yet ambitious.
- 11.2 Commission welcomed the clear and helpful presentation and endorsed the net zero target date of 2040 and the Carbon Reduction Plan. It was noted that, as well as practical actions, there would need to be cultural and behavioural changes within Historic England to help deliver the Carbon Reduction Plan, for example encouraging virtual site visits and video-conference meetings. Sharing information and practical suggestions with staff (for example around reducing the organisation's digital carbon footprint, which was not included the baseline) could help some quick wins.
- 11.3 It was confirmed that Historic England's grant-giving was not in scope and had not been included in the baseline data. However, the Carbon Reduction Plan included an acknowledgement that this was an area to be explored.

**11.4 Commission:**

- a **agreed and approved the target year 2040 for the delivery of Historic England's net zero plan; and**
- b **noted the Carbon Reduction Plan, which would be published alongside the Climate Change Strategy.**

**12 Apprenticeships and Vocational Training update**

- 12.1 The Heritage Apprenticeships Manager provided an update on recent achievements across Historic England's three-tier approach to apprenticeships and vocational training. These included the success of the first cohort of Historic Environment Advice Assistant apprentice scheme, with the second cohort due to start in October 2022; recruitment of the first placements to the Hamish Ogston Foundation (HOF) Building Skills programme; and the positive outcomes from the Kickstart scheme.

- 12.2 With current financial uncertainties and competing budget pressures, resourcing programmes from existing budgets was challenging, and the Sector Resilience & Skills team was working with Partnerships & Philanthropy colleagues to explore additional funding streams.
- 12.3 Commission welcomed the news that, in May 2022, the Heritage Minister would convene a Sector Skills Roundtable to discuss existing skills challenges and priorities for action within the sector. In advance of this, Historic England was looking to establish a sector-wide Skills Steering Group with key partners to help set direction, galvanise collaboration, and position the sector in the best possible place to take forward initiatives, should funding opportunities arise. Commission endorsed this approach, noting that a coordinated and collaborative approach was essential for achieving the best possible outcomes.

**12.4 Commission noted the update on sector skills and apprenticeships and endorsed the creation of a sector-wide Skills Steering Group led by Historic England.**

### **13 Historic England Committee minutes and updates**

13.1 Commission noted the minutes and updates from recent sub-committee meetings.

#### **13.2 Commission noted:**

- a **the minutes of the 18 November Historic England Advisory Committee;**
- b **the minutes of the 25 November Audit & Risk Assurance Committee;**
- c **the minutes of the 25 November Business & Finance Committee**
- d **the minutes of the 3 February Historic Estate Conservation Committee; and**
- e **oral updates from other recent meetings.**

### **14 Casework Report and Planning Bulletin**

14.1 Commission received its regular update on Historic England's business critical casework and recent and forthcoming planning developments.

**14.2 Commission noted the Casework Report and Planning Bulletin.**

### **15 Any Other Business**

15.1 The next business meeting would be held on 16 June 2022. Dates for regional visits would be confirmed by email.

15.2 There were no further items of business.

### **16 Closed Session**

16.1 Commission held a closed session with the Chief Executive.

**Siobhan O'Donoghue**  
**March 2022**