

How can government help to increase the impact of civil society?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/civil-society-strategy-have-your-say>

Key to this is increasing funding to allow transformation into more sustainable models whether that is supporting transitioning to a more commercial footing or investing in digital to make existing resources go further. The Government can help reduce the administrative burden on charities by making information more streamlined e.g. sharing information between companies house and the charities commission. Or encouraging funders to use more standardise metric s where possible to reduce the administrative burden.

The Government can ensure it maintains or increases funding for arms length bodies such as Historic England. Reduced funding for such organisations has led to reduced grants for key organisations.

How can civil society be supported to have a stronger role in shaping government policy now and/or in the future?

In terms of the heritage sector we very much welcome the new Heritage Council and the opportunities this brings for interaction with Government. However, there is still more scope for earlier discussions with civil society while policies are being formulated to identify any unintended impacts.

We interpret civil society as inclusive of all those outside of the public sector, who share the mission of building a stronger society and improving lives, regardless of traditional sector boundaries such as charity or private and for profit or not. What are the advantages of using this interpretation in developing this Strategy?

It brings in companies that care about more than just profit and potential helps develop this way of thinking within the private sector. This may encourage closer working with and support of charities etc.

What are the disadvantages of using this interpretation in developing this Strategy?

This is a very broad definition and therefore understanding the issues faced become less clear. Charities or not for profit are already very broad definitions with many different situations. Large multinational corporations with a CSR desire will not need any support from Government, but may have time and resources to engage. Small charities may need lots of support but have little time to engage due to stretched capacity.

Enabling more people to play an active role in society Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how have people successfully taken action to improve things for themselves and their communities? Please tell us why it has worked well.

There are numerous examples of communities taking over local assets of community value and bring back into use. However, the asset of community value legislation has numerous flaws which means it does little to support communities.

Which of the following changes are the most important in enabling more people to take action on issues that matter to them? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

_____ **Developing more opportunities for individuals to get involved**

_____**1_ Give citizens more opportunities to be part of the decision-making processes on local and national issues**

_____**3_ Increasing awareness of the range of opportunities for individuals to get involved in civil society**

_____ **Empowering people or giving them permission so that they think that they do have a say and are able to take action**

_____ **Developing a better understanding of how social action* can build the networks and relationships among people as well as the confidence and skills of the disadvantaged and disengaged**

_____**2_ Supporting employers and businesses to promote active citizenship, such as volunteering, becoming a school governor or charity trusteeship**

Are there any additional changes that would enable more people to take action on issues that matter to them?

A key interaction in terms of heritage is between people and the planning system. Yet that system is not geared up to give people's views due weight and as a result many people don't see the point in getting involved. Different local authorities have different rules meaning that there is a postcode lottery in terms of public rights. Key steps for improvement are:

- 1) Allow at least one objector to speak at planning committees for say 5 minutes
- 2) Allow community right to appeal not just applicant. To not slow down development generally this could be limited to assets of community value and or listed buildings/ locally listed buildings. I.e the most important buildings in a community.
- 3) A set number of objections will result in an application being heard by a planning committee rather than case officer

A separate issue is better publicising opportunities for volunteering in the heritage sector to a wider and more diverse audience. The NCS for example could be better engaged with the heritage sector.

Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others. In relation to the planning changes above these would be actions for central Government to provide a

more uniform basis to getting involved around the country. The current situation where different planning authorities have different systems is off putting.

Youth social action

Youth social action* including activities such as campaigning, fundraising and volunteering creates a double benefit both to young people and their communities.

Which of the following things are the most important in further growing involvement in youth social action? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

_____ **Enabling more disadvantaged and disengaged young people to participate**

___3___ **Integrating young people into wider social action activities bringing families and communities together**

___2___ **Introducing young people to social action from a younger age (e.g. at primary school)**

_____ **Further integrating youth social action with other personal and social development activities**

_____ **Further building the evidence for the longer term benefits for young people of participation in social action.**

___1___ **Offering more support to private, public and voluntary sector organisations to create sustained opportunities for youth social action**

_____ **Supporting young people to develop the skills and confidence they need to lead action on issues that matter to them**

_____ **Increasing recognition of youth social action in young people's wider journeys, for example in university or job applications**

_____ **Increasing recognition of the positive outcomes that young people can deliver for communities and wider society through social action**

Are there any additional things that are important to further grow involvement in youth social action? Better understanding of the opportunities in the heritage sector available as set out above.

Considering all of the things you have discussed in this section, how could these be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, education, funders, yourself / your organisation and others.

OCS should work with NCS to ensure that it is encouraging volunteering across the full spectrum of civil society.

Working in partnership Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how are partnerships across sectors improving outcomes or realising new potential?

We are aware of work on the value of heritage to health. Heritage volunteering is being used as social prescribing for example.

Which of the following factors are the most important to enable more impactful partnership working across sectors? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

_____ Better knowledge of potential partners

_____ Better understanding of the benefits of partnerships

___1___ Better knowledge of opportunities to work in partnership

_____ Better understanding of other sectors

_____ Greater leadership around partnership working

_____ Ability to prove impact of partnership working

___2___ Making it easier to identify and access funding opportunities to support partnership working

_____ A common agenda / shared vision and strategy

_____ Shared values

_____ Shared measurement practice

___3___ Better skills (e.g. commercial skills, collaborative commissioning practice and social value*) and capacity (e.g. time, resource) to form partnerships

Are there any additional factors that would enable more impactful partnerships across sectors?

Some kind of brokering to support partnerships across sectors.

Considering all of the factors you have discussed in this section, how could these be addressed now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.

It seems sensible to have a central resource hosted by Government to explore partnerships.

Reflecting on your own experience, or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, what does an effective pool of funding and financing as well as income opportunities for the voluntary and community sector look like?

Longer term grants could help to give a greater sense of security to charities and minimise work in reapplication for organisations which are funded over the long term.

Where is there the potential for changes to the funding and financing environment to better support the work of the voluntary and community sector, for example increasing the use of new models of funding, use of technology and/or changes to current funding practice?

There is scope within the heritage sector for use of new technology or funding models. However, moving to these is difficult without support as this requires a lot of staff resource and in terms of digital significant investment. This is difficult in the context of a declining grant.

Simplification of reporting by funders to ensure similar metrics as far as possible would help reduce the administrative burden.

Which of the following factors are the most important in strengthening the funding and financing environment in the future? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

1 Making it easier to bring together civil society with potential funders

More skills training for civil society

Raising awareness of new funding models

3 Stronger collaboration between funders

2 Improved funding practices by funders

Increased use of technology to support fundraising

Are there any additional changes that would improve the funding and financing environment for the voluntary and community sector?

Increased understanding of funders for these groups. Many small groups struggle to find less obvious sources of funding.

Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these changes be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, independent funders, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others

The Government could host independent funders to discuss how they can streamline application and reporting requirements to minimise burden. The Government could consider supporting programmes such as the Heritage Alliance's project Giving to Heritage. An independent evaluation on the Giving to Heritage (GTH) programme has reported that heritage projects have raised £3.15m directly attributable to participation in GTH's affordable fundraising training. GTH funding has had a transformative effect for the heritage sector – many of the organisations that took part could not have afforded fundraising training otherwise.

The Heritage Alliance (THA) and Institute of Fundraising (IoF) created the Giving to Heritage programme thanks to generous 'Catalyst initiative' funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England and DCMS. The c£750,000 of grant funding has enabled over 1,700 individuals representing over 800 heritage organisations to access fundraising training and capacity building opportunities which included workshops, executive coaching, one-to-one support and webinars. The scheme has now closed due to lack of funding but The Heritage Alliance and Institute of Fundraising are keen to hear from funders and donors who can help continue this important work.

New investment models

Over recent years, a range of new and innovative models have developed to fund investment into addressing social challenges. These have included the rise of venture philanthropy*, social investment, and the development of social enterprises* and mission-led businesses that are able to fund their activities through revenue generation. Increasingly, there has been growing interest in social impact in the mainstream financial services industry.

Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how are new investment models unlocking new potential and partnerships?

Where is there the greatest potential for the future development of investment models for civil society?

Which of the following factors are the most important in enabling more businesses to have a social purpose or positively increase their social impact in the future? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

_____ Celebration of best practice

1_____ The legal and regulatory framework for businesses

_____ Consideration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

2_____ Improved data on the "business case" for social purpose

3_____ The legal and regulatory framework for investors

_____ Advice or tools to help businesses adopt, show and set value on social purpose

_____ Increasing demand for products, services, businesses that have a social purpose or a positive social impact

Are there any additional factors that could enable more businesses to have a social purpose in the future?

The legal framework for businesses and investors should be closely examined by Government. In terms of the social purpose of looking after our heritage the Government in effect incentivises the loss of built heritage with a zero VAT rate on new build construction. This means business are incentives to demolished rather than pay 20% VAT on restoration or maintenance of historic properties.

Reflecting on your own experience or examples in the UK or abroad, how have local people, businesses, voluntary and community organisations, and decision makers worked together successfully to break down barriers in our communities and build a common sense of shared identity, belonging and purpose?

Many heritage sector organisations work with local communities to save the buildings which are important to them. Local authorities having a local list of locally important buildings helps support this work.

What are the most important changes that need to be made to enable more people to work together locally to break down barriers and build a common sense of shared identity, belonging and purpose in general? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

___3___ Communities having a greater ability to set their own priorities

_____ Communities being more aware of issues facing them collectively

_____ Workers in local public services taking greater control over how they operate

___2___ People being more aware of physical assets, resources, skills and relevant organisations the community holds

_____ Communities having more or better support on how to mobilise themselves and take action

_____ Greater understanding of community shares

___1___ Institutions and organisations delivering public services involving communities in decision-making

_____ Institutions devolving more power to their local communities

_____ People having better skills, and access to learning opportunities to obtain the skills needed to mobilise themselves

_____ **More opportunity for diverse groups of local people to meet to discuss local issues and what they think they could do to improve things**

Are there any additional changes that would enable more people working together to break down barriers in our communities and build a common sense of shared identity, belonging and purpose?

Communities should be given extra powers to protect what is important to them through the planning system. This could be done through giving ACV more strength. This would mean that the community has more say over the places that matter to it. However, there are numerous issues with the ACV legislation at present. We can provide more information on request.

Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these changes be addressed now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.

Central Government should strengthen ACV legislation to empower people to have more say in their communities. DCMS should take forward the new community heritage plaque scheme announced in the 2017 Heritage Statement.