



Heritage Link

- > Influencing policy
- > Underpinning advocacy
- > Building capacity

# Heritage Link Strategic Plan 2006-9



## Heritage Link's Vision

### A society which

- recognises the contemporary role of its heritage
- values its significant contribution to current social, educational, environmental and economic needs
- supports the voluntary sector in delivering this.

## Heritage Link

Heritage Link was set up in 2002 by national heritage groups to promote the central role of the voluntary movement in the sector and to make their voice heard collectively and coherently.

Heritage Link brings together some 80 voluntary organisations concerned with heritage in England representing interests from volunteers to owners, specialist advisers, practitioners and managers to national funding bodies and local building preservation trusts. Much of the historic environment is cared for – supported, managed or owned – by these organisations. They are supported by some 4 million members making it the biggest alliance of heritage interests in England.

## Heritage Link's remit

- Influencing policy
- Underpinning advocacy
- Increasing capacity

Heritage Link provides a forum for members to formulate and promote policy on core issues as well as a support and information network.

## Heritage Link's Strengths

Heritage Link is independent

Heritage Link's strength is in its members,

- the high proportion of the heritage sector they represent
- the range of activities they encompass
- their knowledge, experience and skills.

## The Way Forward 2006-9

After Heritage Link's first three years 2002-5, a formal consultation from May to December 2005 enabled members to discuss focus and future direction 2006-9. Members wished to see more emphasis on lobbying, advocacy and consensus building together with more interaction with other stakeholders and a greater awareness of Heritage Link, its members and their shared concerns. In response to members' higher expectations the Trustees have already put in hand fund raising activities to support an enhanced level of activity.

During 2006-9 Heritage Link will continue to act as a focus for strategic issues, encourage constructive dialogue within the membership, share information, champion issues of common interest, represent views to decision makers and influencers and build up its own organisational capacity.

This plan confirms the key strategic themes that Heritage Link will focus on over the next three years. Identifying these themes will enable Heritage Link to optimise its resources to deliver services and other actions in line with members' wishes.

**Heritage Link's Key Strategic themes remain**

- 1 To promote the interests of members**
  - Identify and address the shared concerns of members
  - Build capacity within the organisation's structure to enable members to work collaboratively
  - Represent the collective views of members on policy and practice to decision makers and influencers
  - Promote the voluntary heritage community at national and regional level.
- 2 To promote recognition of members' activities**
  - Demonstrate the contribution made by voluntary heritage organisations to contemporary society
  - Facilitate access to members as a research and information resource.
- 3 To build capacity in the voluntary heritage sector**
  - Identify and address common barriers to operational effectiveness and efficiency
  - Promote skills and information sharing between members
  - Develop strategic partnerships to underpin advocacy
  - Consolidate and promote the voice of the voluntary heritage community at national and regional level
  - Consolidate Heritage Link's own organisational structure and funding to achieve agreed strategic aims.

**In 2006-9 emphasis will be given to the following areas**

**Collaborative Working Culture and Consensus Building**

- 1 Strengthen and focus the Working Groups**
  - Confirm the Working Groups 2006–9
  - Develop the annual work plan process to reflect shared interests
  - Develop and facilitate members' participation in Working Groups and Task Groups
  - Monitor and maintain a reactive capacity.
- 2 Deepen relationships with and between members**
  - Set up twinning arrangements between membership organisations and Trustees
  - Continue development of membership base
  - Provide discussion fora for members nationally and regionally.

**Lobbying, Campaigning and Strategic Liaison**

- 3 Enhanced interaction with Government and key stakeholders**
  - Lobby Government on shared concerns of members
  - Monitor and campaign for better funding for heritage and heritage agencies
  - Strengthen links with Government Departments, Ministers and parliamentarians
  - Represent members' interests in sectoral fora
  - Develop collaborative partnerships with stakeholders inside and outside the heritage sector
  - Co-operate with similar heritage groupings in Europe and the Home Countries.



#### 4 Develop sectoral communication

- Maintain and develop Heritage Link Update as an effective means of sharing information throughout the sector
- Deploy Heritage Link Update as a means to profile the voluntary heritage sector
- Through Heritage Link Update, promote active engagement and good practice in heritage and related issues at national, regional and local level
- Maintain and develop the Heritage Link website as a sectoral resource
- Access and disseminate regional opinion on heritage policy and practice.

#### Organisational development

##### 5 Consolidate and increase resources

- Increase organisational capacity by expanding secretariat and deploying volunteers/interns effectively
- Develop partnerships to support regional activities
- Increase and diversify funding sources to support projects and organisational development.

#### Resources

The strategic themes are translated to reflect members' shared interests into an Annual Work Plan through the Working Groups and Board of Trustees in consultation with members before being approved at each Annual General Meeting.

The Annual Work Plan identifies core activities for the current year that can be funded through Heritage Link's resources which come from membership subscriptions, donations, events, income from the e-bulletin *Heritage Link Update* and an English Heritage National Capacity Building Grant 2006-9. Tasks and Projects for the year are funded separately with a separate management and budgetary protocol to ensure proper control.

**In addition to financial support, donations from members in kind and in terms of their time and skills are the essential - and fundamental - resource in delivering Heritage Link's objectives.**

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