Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Heritage Strategy 2018 - 2023

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Background and Action Plan

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INTRODUCTION

This Background and Action Plan document aims to identify the key actions and interventions that the council will seek to facilitate and influence to deliver the aims and objectives identified within the Heritage Strategy for the borough. This document should be read in conjunction with the new Heritage Strategy 2018 - 2023.

This document highlights the council's vision for the borough's heritage, provides a national and local background and context, summarises key issues and challenges for the heritage sector and service delivery (in the form of a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis) before setting out detailed actions and initiatives to achieve the aims and objectives of the strategy.

Views from national and local heritage organisations, relevant stakeholders, borough residents, borough council members and departments informed the drafting of both documents. It is the intention that the Heritage Strategy and supporting Background and Action Plan will be endorsed by the council and be in place for the next five years to guide the work of the council's heritage resource.

THE VISION

- **To increase our understanding and awareness of the borough's heritage with increased accessibility to the historic environment**

- **To implement positive action and active management of the borough's heritage to ensure its conservation and enhancement**

- **To enable an approach of partnership and collaboration where people, groups and communities come together to care for the borough's heritage**

- **To celebrate and promote the borough's heritage and identity, allowing it to make a difference for people, groups and communities**

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

What is heritage?

The scope of heritage is very wide and can mean a variety of things to different people and organisations. As part of the public consultation exercise to inform the document the question *"What is heritage?"* was asked, which generated a breadth of responses (summarised in Appendix 1). Common themes emerged, and included the historic and natural environments, buildings, structures and spaces, places, natural and designed landscapes, archaeology, historical records, objects and collections, culture and tradition, people, communities and groups, and stories and experiences. These themes fit nicely into definitions used in the heritage sector, which includes the English Heritage (as then) definition of heritage as *"all inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility"* (Conservation Principles, 2008).

The heritage of Hinckley and Bosworth

The Borough of Hinckley and Bosworth has a rich, varied and unique history. The evolution of the borough continues to be relevant to people living within and outside of the borough and its history and heritage acts to shape people's lives and the landscape around them. As part of the public consultation exercise the question *"What is the heritage of the borough?"* was asked. Again this generated a range of responses (see Appendix 1) with common elements being identified. It is considered that the heritage of the borough includes and can be attributed to the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

- A long history of human settlement in the area with a **fine archaeological resource** providing information about past activity (dating as far back as the Palaeolithic Period with sites recorded on the Historic Environment Record). This resource is both below and above ground with many sites helping people learn about past events. One such event is the **Battle of Bosworth**, which is internationally renowned.
- The **geology** of the borough has had a defining influence on settlement distribution, form and land use. Many settlements established during Anglo-Saxon, Norman and the Medieval periods are located on ridge tops and then developed around **agriculture**, with the predominantly clay soils of the borough allowing a range of arable and pastoral practices to take place. The borough remains predominantly rural. **Mineral extraction**, from the **quarrying** of granites and slates in the Charnwood Forest, the **mining** of coal from the Leicestershire Coalfield and the digging of **clay pits** for the production of bricks has marked the landscape.
- The **hosiery industry**, introduced as a domestic industry in a number of the borough's settlements during the 17th century, then developed on an industrial scale during the 19th century which led to associated urban expansion and the establishment of associated industries including the production of **boots and shoes**.
- **Transport** routes and infrastructure constructed largely as a result of the development of the borough's industries and to transport goods, including the Ashby Canal and the Leicester to Swannington and Ashby to Nuneaton railway lines. Some have found new uses as tourism and recreational assets and remain an indelible feature of the landscape. Sites within the borough have been heavily involved with the development of motor transport, including the Hansom Cab, Triumph Motorcycles and more recently MIRA Technology Park.

- A diverse range of high quality **public and private buildings and spaces**, ranging from Medieval market places (Hinckley market was established in 1311), commercial and civic buildings constructed as a source of pride and prosperity, and fine public parks and green spaces maintain a legacy of commercial activity and leisure.
- Fine historic churches and **places of worship** are located throughout the borough and many settlements have high quality structures and spaces for commemoration, contemplation and reflection. The borough was a focal point for the formation of a number of **non-conformist movements** including Baptism and Methodism and independent religions such as the Quakers.
- The **natural landscape** of the borough offers a wide range of **biodiversity**, flora and fauna, alongside human influences which have created high quality **semi-natural landscapes**, such as Burbage Common and Woods, the remnant parklands of Gopsall and Bosworth, the creation of Thornton Reservoir and more recent initiatives as part of the National Forest.
- **People** (individuals, groups and communities) have shaped the heritage of the borough, harnessed over time as **cultural traditions**, recorded memories and stories, literature, collected objects, archives and artefacts, and demonstrations of skills and innovation. Cultural heritage can often be intangible.

Planning for our heritage

Local planning authorities already have various statutory duties under heritage legislation but have also recently been tasked to set out (in their Local Plan) a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. The presumption is to deliver sustainable development and conserving and harnessing heritage should play an important part in this process.

This process also needs to reflect changing attitudes and perspectives. Conservation planning used to be seen as seeking to preserve sites “in an unaltered state” or “in aspic” but now the focus is changing to a more positive and integrated approach where heritage is seen as an asset rather than a constraint and where conservation refers to the active and informed management of change in a way that sustains and where appropriate enhances the significance of heritage assets.

The value of heritage

The value of the historic environment is enshrined in national government policy and legislation, articulated by local government policy and practice, supported by national and local amenity groups and expressed in the popularity of heritage in the public mind. The case for heritage providing key economic, social and environmental benefits is now well evidenced via sources such as *Heritage Counts*, the annual audit of England’s heritage produced by Historic England. Consequently, the historic environment is a valuable asset which can contribute to broader strategic objectives such as economic development, urban and rural regeneration, tourism, leisure and recreation, community development, good urban design and town planning, provision of formal and informal education, development of skills, and achieving sustainable development, as demonstrated in the diagram overleaf.

Economic development and tourism Historic places, buildings, events and activities and a high quality environment, old and new, is a prerequisite to maximising economic development potential, projecting a positive image, attracting investment, jobs and tourism
Regeneration Historic buildings and areas are key elements in the regeneration of urban and rural areas, transforming them into thriving sustainable communities and creating places where people want to live, work and visit
Intrinsic and economic value The historic environment and places have intrinsic value in their own right as the fabric of human achievement. The historic environment is an attractive proposition, and historic properties and those with original features deliver consistently higher yields and values than other buildings
Leisure and recreation The historic environment is the embodiment of culture and it often accommodates a range of activities, buildings, sites and landscapes that provide a focus for exploration, visits, leisure and recreation
Local distinctiveness, pride and communities Investment in historic places and increasing understanding of the historic environment helps to support local communities, preserve local distinctiveness and identity, reinforce a sense of place, and foster local pride
Urban design quality The historic environment often provides demonstrably superior urban design, legible townscapes, mixed use, greater variety of urban forms and quality public realm. It can create a context and stimulus for creative and innovative design
Skills and education The historic environment, archives and collections, people and their knowledge and experiences provide a tangible resource for research and teaching across all ages, creating a better understanding of our past and today's society and in practice creates more skilled employment in craft-based industries
Sustainable use of resources The practices of conservation and refurbishment are environmentally friendly and an intrinsically sustainable form of development, avoiding the use and waste of scarce resources associated with demolition and redevelopment

The scope of the strategy

As demonstrated by the public consultation exercise the scope of heritage within the borough is very wide, however the ownership and management responsibilities for heritage assets are often complex and shared amongst many bodies, organisations and individuals. Therefore the emphasis of the heritage strategy will be on the heritage where the council and its partners have a direct role and responsibility and some influence in the decision making or management process. The document will also seek to positively include or make reference to private and voluntary sector owned or influenced heritage and heritage related activities and highlight the council's role in encouraging and supporting these.

The document also plays a complimentary role in informing and managing the aspects of Hinckley and Bosworth's cultural and natural heritage that contribute to the borough's historic environment as they are predominantly covered and appropriately managed via other national and local strategies and policies. Reference will be made to these where relevant.

The national context

Legislation

Local planning authorities derive their duties, responsibilities and powers in relation to the historic environment principally from the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. In delivering these functions the council must have special regard to preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses, provide advice on appeals, determine listed building consents, issue enforcement notices where appropriate, and offer grants for building repair and maintenance to prevent deterioration. For conservation areas the council must pay special attention to preserving and enhancing these areas when considering development proposals, determine worthy areas and designate them as conservation areas, formulate proposals for their preservation and enhancement, control demolition, and offer grants for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

Additional responsibilities and powers for local planning authorities and public bodies are included within the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 and the Enterprise and the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) sets out the Government's planning policies and states how the planning system should deliver sustainable development which satisfies three mutually dependant economic, social and environmental roles. One of the NPPF's 12 core principles is to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

A heritage asset is defined in the NPPF as "*a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions,*

because of its heritage interest" and includes those designated at the national and local level.

It is recognised that heritage assets are irreplaceable resources whose significance should be identified, assessed and considered in determining any planning application. The different types of heritage asset, potential harm, securing its optimum viable use and public benefits should be weighed to produce a balanced judgement. Local planning authorities should also look for opportunities to better reveal the significance of heritage assets and take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets whilst putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Reference is also made to the importance of having an up-to-date historic environment evidence base and maintaining or having access to such a record.

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides information on the practical application of the NPPF and includes guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

National heritage "stakeholder" organisations

Historic England is the execute non-departmental body sponsored by the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) to look after England's historic environment by championing historic places, identifying and protecting heritage, supporting change, understanding historic places and providing expertise at the local level. National Amenity Societies also provide knowledge and expertise on particular aspects of the historic environment and they are a statutory consultee on relevant planning and listed building applications. The societies are listed in Appendix 2.

Different bodies have different responsibilities and remits for the historic environment. The DCMS are responsible for statutory listing and scheduled monuments with the guidance of Historic England. Local planning authorities are responsible for designating and reviewing conservation areas, local listing, and determining planning applications that affect all heritage assets although Historic England is also a statutory consultee in some cases. Expertise for archaeology and the management of the Historic Environment Record (HER) lies with Leicestershire County Council.

Practical and professional advice on specific elements of the historic environment is also provided by a wide range of organisations and professional associations and institutes. In addition a great number of organisations from across the historic environment sector are working together as part of the Heritage 2020 Framework as an initiative to strengthen partnership and collaborative working in order to sustain and promote the historic environment of England.

The local context

Hinckley and Bosworth has a number of historic towns and villages set within a diverse landscape. The borough's attractive environment, geographic location at the centre of the country, being close to the major urban centres of Leicester, Coventry and Birmingham and served by an extensive transport network, makes it a highly desirable place to live and work.

This desirability means there is pressure for development with the challenge to ensure any future development will sustain a rich and varied historic environment.

Hinckley and Bosworth's heritage assets include:

340 statutory listed buildings, designated by the DCMS on the advice of Historic England to mark and celebrate a building's special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded according to their quality and interest and within the borough 8 are listed at grade I, 36 are listed at grade II* and 296 are listed at grade II. There is a wide range of buildings and structures on the list including churches, farm houses and farm buildings, cottages and manor houses, war memorials and commemorative structures, former hosiery industry buildings, public houses, walled gardens, bridges, railings, telephone boxes and village pumps.

Church of St Edith, Orton on the Hill. A C14 grade I listed building

Hinckley Water Tower, constructed 1889. A likely inclusion within a local heritage list

A list of **local heritage assets** is being developed by the council with assistance from local stakeholders. The local heritage list will identify heritage assets that merit protection due to their contribution to local character and distinctiveness but do not meet the criteria to be statutory listed.

28 Conservation Areas which have been designated as an area of special architectural or historic interest. Such areas include the length of the Ashby Canal within the borough, centres of the hosiery and boot and shoe industries, historic town and village centres, and areas around historic parks.

The market place at the centre of Market Bosworth Conservation Area

Remains of the motte and bailey castle in Hinckley, a scheduled monument

22 Scheduled Monuments, designated by the DCMS on the advice of Historic England to recognise the national importance of these archaeological sites. Types of monuments in the borough include Neolithic bowl barrows, an Iron Age hill fort, Roman villas and settlements, Saxon burial mounds, Norman motte and bailey castles, Medieval moats and fishponds, farmsteads, manorial complexes and deserted villages. A great number of local archaeological sites are also recorded on the Historic Environment Record.

1 Registered Battlefield, identified by Historic England to offer protection through the planning system due to its national significance. The Battle of Bosworth in 1485 marked the end of the Plantagenet dynasty as King Richard III was killed in the battle leading to the crowning of Henry Tudor and the ascension of the Tudor dynasty. King Richard III's reinternment took place at Leicester Cathedral in 2015 following the discovery of his remains in a car park, with his cortege procession passing through key locations across the battlefield and through Market Bosworth and associated villages.

Panoramic view of Crown Hill at Stoke Golding, location of the crowning of Henry Tudor in 1485

Strategic documents

The Heritage Strategy seeks to address conservation and heritage issues more widely across the borough by according with the council's priorities for people, places and prosperity as part of the Corporate Plan 2017 - 2021, and interacting with and supporting the following strategic documents:

- **Core Strategy (2009)** in respect of providing the vision and spatial strategy for the borough with the objective of enhancing the identity and distinctiveness of the built and natural environment.
- **Hinckley Town Centre Area Action Plan (2009)** in respect of providing the strategy for the future of the town centre with the objectives of developing new cultural facilities, promoting the town centre as part of wider tourism initiatives and enhancing the historic character of the town centre through heritage-led regeneration.
- **Cultural Strategy (2012)** in respect of providing the strategy to support the council's cultural offer by acknowledging our heritage and museums and promoting tourism.

- **The Bosworth Battlefield Conservation Plan (2013)** in respect of providing a framework for landowners and other stakeholders to work towards developing a shared understanding of the battlefield, its values and significance.
- **Tourism Strategy (2013) and the North Warwickshire and Hinckley & Bosworth Destination Management Plan 2017-2022 (2017)** in respect of increasing the tourism offer in the borough based on its heritage and supporting current and developing new visitor destinations.
- **Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (2014)** in respect of providing the strategy for future development across the two settlements including seeking the regeneration of their historic centres.
- **Town Centre's Vision (2015)** in respect of providing master plans to guide the regeneration and redevelopment of historic town centre sites across the borough.
- **Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016)** in respect of providing a framework for development across the borough and the policy base on which to manage change to heritage assets and ensure adequate controls.
- **Economic Regeneration Strategy (2017)** in respect of providing the strategy for economic regeneration in the borough with the objectives of local investment in places, business and people.

The council and Neighbourhood Planning Forums/Groups have produced supplementary planning and guidance documents to guide the management of the historic environment, including the following:

- **Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans**: for each designated conservation area in the borough there is an accompanying appraisal which defines the significance of the area and a management plan which sets out suggested actions for preservation and enhancement.
- **Shopping & Shop Fronts Supplementary Planning Document (2007)**: this provides supplementary guidance on shop fronts, security and advertisements located in conservation areas.
- **Village Design Statements**: for the settlements of Burbage and Ratby Village Design Statements have been adopted which sets out design principles for the area
- **Neighbourhood Plans**: A Neighbourhood Plan can be used to identify what makes an area locally distinctive, influence design and protect the historic and natural environment. A plan for Market Bosworth has been adopted and further plans for other areas within the borough are being developed.

Local heritage "stakeholder" organisations

The borough benefits from a number of highly knowledgeable and committed stakeholder groups who share a passion for local history, heritage and the historic environment. Although complete coverage of the borough is not yet in place, local knowledge is often provided where there is no stakeholder group by the relevant Parish Council. A list of known local heritage groups and societies is included in Appendix 2.

In many cases these groups have produced educational material on their area of interest that is presented in a number of ways including interpretation boards, the installation of blue

plaques, information contained in publications and web sites, and publicising heritage on social media.

Hinckley & District Museum has been open to the public since 1995 and hosts a diverse mix of collections, displays and activities that provide an invaluable representation of Hinckley and its environs, the borough, its people and history. These collections are an irreplaceable learning resource for present and future generations and the museum provides opportunities for people to engage with heritage. Extensive collections on the history and culture of the borough are also held in the Leicestershire Records Office and the libraries located throughout the borough contain material on the local history of the area.

There a number of attractions (both physical and natural) located throughout the borough that celebrate its heritage and provide a focus for tourism and recreation. These are managed and maintained by both public authorities and private or charitable organisations, and include the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

- The Battlefield Line steam railway
- Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre
- Market Bosworth Hall and Country Park
- Burbage Common and Woods
- Ashby Canal
- Groby Pool
- Thornton Reservoir
- Mallory Park motor racing circuit
- Triumph Motorcycles visitor centre
- Various buildings and sites that opened for public access (via Heritage Open Days weekends etc.)

There is also a Hinckley Business Improvement District (BID) which effectively promotes and develops projects to benefit local businesses in the town centre.

What does the council do?

The council has a full-time Conservation Officer who is based in Planning & Development Services. The main purpose of the officer is to provide specialist support for the council on matters relating to the historic environment and thus fulfilling the statutory duties of its preservation and enhancement. The role has a range of accountabilities including:

- Providing advice to elected members, officers and members of the public on all elements of the historic environment
- Analysing and defining the special interest of the historic environment
- Providing professional advice on statutory applications and assessing impacts
- Preparing applications for funding and assisting with administering council funding streams
- Contributing to and writing plans, planning policies and evidence bases
- Completing building and area surveys and providing repair specifications
- Preparing, reviewing and appraising advice on existing and new designations including conservation areas and local listings
- Providing design analysis

- Engaging with communities and stakeholders

The council currently administers an Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) which provides funding to deliver schemes that improve the physical environment within conservation areas or historic areas. Since its establishment over 20 years ago the programme has delivered a number of high quality capital schemes either independently or in partnership with other organisations and by providing contributions to the private sector. Council grants are also available for parish and town councils and community groups for capital projects in the historic environment via the Parish Community Initiative Fund and the Hinckley Community Initiative Fund. Other occasional council funding streams do also become available.

Alternative opportunities to obtain funding for the historic environment are provided via organisations including the Arts Council, the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP), the Heritage Lottery Fund, and Historic England, however the availability and suitability of funding from such sources does depend on the nature of the particular project and the application process can be very competitive. The council direct individuals and organisations to alternative funding streams but often for the private individual looking to maintain or invest in the historic environment obtaining financial assistance can be challenging.

Case studies showing successful project work:

Below are a number of case studies demonstrating successful heritage work delivered by the council.

1. The Atkins Building, Hinckley

With the aid of funding from East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) and English Heritage the council purchased the grade II listed former Atkins hosiery factory and it has been redeveloped and converted to provide creative studios, serviced office space, an art gallery, café, and meeting and function rooms. It is currently thriving and a positive example of the constructive conservation of the borough's hosiery manufacturing heritage.

Atkins building exterior

Atkins building interior

2. Heritage style street name plates and street lights, borough wide

A great number of heritage style street name plates and street lights have been installed within conservation areas and the historic environment across the borough, funded by the Environmental Improvement Programme. The name plate provides the opportunity for each

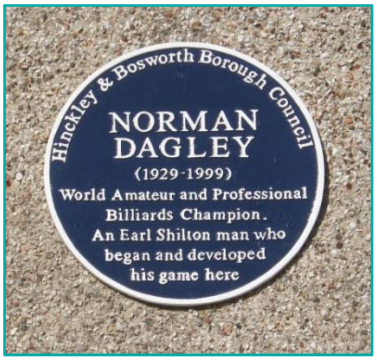
parish to utilise their existing or design an appropriate image that represents their area and to contribute to local distinctiveness. The lights consist of an ornate cast iron lighting column and lantern which complements and enhances each area, being far more aesthetically pleasing than modern lighting equivalents.

Street name plate, Dadlington

Street light, Sibson

3. Blue plaque scheme, borough wide

The council funds and implements a blue plaque scheme to commemorate the link between notable figures of the past and the buildings or sites in which they lived or worked. 20 distinctive plaques have now been erected across the borough. Each unveiling allows for a celebration of the figure's achievements and their legacy.



Blue plaque for Norman Dagley, world champion billiards player

Unveiling of William Butler (brewer) blue plaque, The Greyhound, Hinckley

4. The return of the Hansom Cab, Hinckley

The Hansom Cab was developed and tested by Joseph Hansom in Hinckley and patented in 1834, and went on to become one of the most popular forms of transport during the 1800s. A cab, owned by the council, has been restored and returned to Hinckley town centre streets for the first time in 100 years as part of the Heritage Open Days celebration in September 2017. It is hoped that the cab will soon be on permanent display at the Museum and be out on the streets as part of future events.

The restored cab on Station Road, Hinckley

A cab near to Hinckley railway station, late-19th century

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The current issues and challenges affecting heritage and the delivery of heritage services in Hinckley and Bosworth are identified through a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis below. The analysis takes into account challenges from both the national and local level and includes comments received and gathered during the public consultation exercises. In some cases an issue has multiple components and be demonstrated as both a strength and a weakness, or provide an opportunity or a threat.

STRENGTHS

- Increasing levels of awareness and recognition of the importance of heritage and the historic environment as demonstrated by central and local government
- An established events calendar (including Heritage Open Days) where heritage assets are accessible and open to the public
- A committed Planning Enforcement Team providing an effective tool to control and ensure the pro-active management of the historic environment
- A considerable number of extremely knowledgeable local stakeholders who support heritage and have influence within their community
- An extremely interesting and thriving local Museum with aspirations for future growth
- Council membership of a Conservation Officers Forum for Leicestershire & Rutland which allows for the sharing of best practice in the management of the historic environment
- The council's experience in delivering an exemplar heritage-led regeneration project at the Atkins building

WEAKNESSES

- Constraints on heritage resources can create a focus on short term reactive work
- The need for up-to-date, accurate and accessible information on heritage assets which confirm to all audiences why the asset is of significance and value
- A lack of guidance and advice to assist with the management of the historic environment
- The need for accessible information for interested stakeholders and heritage asset owners on skilled craftsmen operating within the borough
- The need for an expanded Heritage at Risk Register to identify buildings and sites within the historic environment that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development
- Limited sources and amounts of funding available to support heritage projects and deliver enhancements to the historic environment
- Heritage can sometimes be seen as academic, re-active and elitist and it is particularly difficult to engage with certain sections of the community

OPPORTUNITIES

- To use this strategy to identify and agree objectives, priorities and actions to ensure the council deliver effective and efficient management of its heritage and the historic environment
- To increase the number and types of heritage assets that are accessible and open to a wide range of people
- To support and develop means of training and learning to develop heritage skills and knowledge to those who need it
- To have a shared understanding of local character and distinctiveness and provide protection and management through appropriate means
- To explore and grasp funding opportunities to deliver heritage projects, heritage-led

regeneration and enhancements to the public realm (with improved connectivity between key and strategic sites)
- Use voluntary sector expertise and resources to assist the council in delivery of projects and services
- Develop and expand partnership working with existing and new stakeholders
- To improve and provide effective engagement with local communities through different and innovative methods of communication
- Build on the existing and explore the potential of expanding the borough's heritage-led tourism offer
- To celebrate and promote achievement and best practice for exemplar projects within the historic environment that positively influences others

THREATS

- The potential conflict between development pressure and ensuring the significance of the historic environment is preserved and enhanced
- A continued shortage of skilled quality craftspeople which has the effect of increasing the cost of conservation works or reducing the quality of works
- An inability to effectively address Heritage at Risk through management techniques leading to the threat of heritage being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development
- Continued limitations on available funding for maintenance and improvements to public and privately owned heritage assets which can perpetuate a lack of investment
- Loss of staff or resource at key stakeholder organisations which includes accumulated knowledge
- Ensure that proposals for the voluntary sector to assist in the delivery of the council's heritage services are realistic, appropriate, rewarding for participants and that there is not an overreliance on this sector

KEY AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

Four key aims with a number of objectives have been devised to address the identified issues and challenges and deliver the vision of the strategy. The Action Plan identifies actions and initiatives to achieve each objective, to be developed and delivered over the next five years.

Many of the objectives are complimentary and ensure that the aims of the document will be achieved through a number of positive actions and initiatives, for example promotion of the historic environment will increase understanding and awareness.

KEY AIM 1
Increase understanding and awareness of heritage with improved accessibility

The historic environment is where we live, work and visit on a daily basis so it is personal to us all. In order to protect and enhance it, we need to ensure the management of change is based on a shared understanding of its value and importance. The council has a key role in enhancing the public's understanding, awareness and appreciation of the borough's historic environment and increasing physical accessibility to heritage. It has a responsibility to make sure expertise, knowledge, skills and resources are accessible to those who need it, and to develop new approaches and support existing means that assist improved understanding and management of historic assets.

The objectives to achieve this aim are:

- To ensure **information** on heritage assets is up-to-date, accurate and accessible
- To increase **accessibility** to the historic environment
- To support the development of **learning, skills and training**
- To support existing **educational resources**

KEY AIM 2
Implement positive action to manage and enhance heritage

Active management of the historic environment is an essential element in the protection and enhancement of heritage assets. There is a considerable range of positive action and intervention that the council can and has taken, ranging from heritage-led regeneration projects, offering grants for improvements to the historic environment, and enhancements to the public realm. Positive action is often essential to secure the future of heritage at risk and undertake planning enforcement to control unauthorised works to heritage assets. Often the council has a statutory duty or responsibility to take a lead role in these initiatives but does require the cooperation and support from others for a successful outcome.

The objectives to achieve this aim are:

- To ensure **conservation areas** are adequately protected and thoroughly understood
- To develop and adopt a **list of local heritage assets**
- To support and promote the development of **characterisation studies**
- To maximise opportunities to **deliver heritage-led regeneration** projects
- To implement high quality **public realm improvements**

- To regularly review **planning policy** relating to heritage matters to ensure the appropriate tools are available to guide **decision taking**
- To provide **pro-active enforcement** to secure improvements to the historic environment
- To address **heritage at risk** through appropriate management techniques
- To maximise **funding** opportunities for heritage projects and delivery of enhancements to the historic environment

KEY AIM 3
Ensure a partnership approach to care for our heritage

The borough's heritage resource is by its nature very fragmented and involves a wide ranging and diverse group of organisations, agencies, individuals and volunteer groups. The value of a partnership approach and collaborations to delivering the aims and objectives of this strategy is recognised and is vital to its success. It has been clear through the consultation process that the council is seen as an organisation that should play a central role in pulling together the interests of the heritage community.

The objectives to achieve this aim are:

- To maintain and develop **positive working practices** with heritage stakeholders
- To increase **community engagement** about heritage matters
- To ensure **integrated and joined-up working** within the council and between relevant local government partners

KEY AIM 4
The promotion and enjoyment of heritage

To complement the aims of increased understanding, improved management and collaboration the council has a fundamental role in promotion and developing a strong identity for the borough rooted in its history and heritage. The consultation process and evidence bases have suggested that the tourism market has the potential for future growth, incorporating heritage assets at a range of scales and interests. Coordination of initiatives to allow for discovery and exploration, advertising best practice and celebrating achievements in the historic environment will ensure for a high quality and enjoyable experience for people, groups and communities when interacting with the borough's heritage.

The objectives to achieve this aim are:

- To promote a positive image and identity of the borough to **increase heritage related tourism**
- To support the **discovery and exploration** of heritage
- To advertise **best practice** in dealing with heritage
- To **celebrate and promote achievement** in the historic environment

ACTION PLAN

Timeframe for development and delivery of actions - Key
S – Short Term: Ongoing / 1 Year
M – Medium Term: 3 Years
L – Long Term: 3 – 5 Years

Aim 1. Increasing understanding and awareness of heritage with improved accessibility

Objective: To ensure information on heritage assets is up-to-date, accurate and accessible			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Support the development of the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) as the primary source of information for the historic environment	• Determine how the borough council and other interested stakeholders can assist Leicestershire County Council in the development and accessibility of the record • Promote the HER as the primary source of information to all interested stakeholders	• Number of HER visits • User feedback	S/M
Determine the need for improvements to the Conservation section of the council's website	• Ensure an appropriate level of information about each type of heritage asset is available and accurate • Increase level of signposting to alternative sources of information on the historic environment (including the HER, information from local amenity societies etc.)	• Number of website visits • User feedback	S/M
Ensure the full range of heritage across the borough is satisfactorily identified	• Approach each Parish Council and relevant local stakeholder group to produce and publish an audit of all types of heritage assets within their area • Ensure an audit compliments rather than conflicts with the HER • Where appropriate this may lead to suggestions for asset protection (local listing, conservation area designation, statutory listing etc. (also see aim 2: Implement positive action to manage and enhance heritage)	• Development of audit • Publishing of audit	S/M

Ensure information on heritage assets is accurate	• Approach and work with asset owners and interested stakeholders to ensure information on the borough's heritage assets is accurate and determine whether the level of information could be increased • Approach Historic England with new and/or amended information to enrich the statutory list of heritage assets	• Audit of heritage asset record accuracy • Number of records improved	S
Improve awareness of heritage with increased accessibility to information	• Provide means of further information, with the development or instigation of council schemes or support of schemes proposed by other stakeholders (projects include development of heritage trails, installation of interpretation boards, blue plaque schemes, oral recording etc.)	• Development and delivery of schemes and projects	S/M

Objective: To increase accessibility to the historic environment			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Increase the number of heritage assets that are accessible and open to the public	• Approach interested stakeholders to identify sites they would like to see open • Determine the feasibility of increased accessibility with asset owners and managers • Create new initiatives and expand existing events (including Heritage Open Days) that allow public access to heritage assets and the historic environment • Promote all external (not borough council organised) events across the borough that provide access to heritage (e.g. Hinckley Museum, Archaeology digs etc.)	• Number of sites open and accessible • Number of events • Number of visits • Visitor feedback	S/M
Explore the potential of increasing access to council owned collections and sites	• Audit the current collection and determine feasibility of providing access without comprising significance • Audit current sites and determine feasibility of providing access without comprising significance • Determine whether accessibility improvements are required or can be made to sites that are already open to the public	• Number of collections and sites open and accessible • Number of visits • Visitor feedback	S/M

Objective: To support the development of learning, skills and training			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Develop links with the employment sector and appropriate training and educational centres to increase the level of skilled craftspeople	• Determine the feasibility of introducing the understanding of traditional construction methods and crafts to be delivered (as part of the curriculum or singular training events) at local training and educational centres (including North Warwickshire and Hinckley College) • Determine whether local contractors are willing to develop apprenticeship schemes or offer similar professional development opportunities • External funding bodies, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, require projects to make a difference to people so if funding is secured training will be provided when key projects are being implemented (likely delivered by a combination of heritage training providers, the borough council, local contractors etc.)	• Development of curriculum or singular training events • Number of apprenticeships and professional development opportunities • Delivery of activities as part of successful funding schemes	M/L
Offer opportunities for vocational training, placements and work experience at the borough council and associated partners	• Offer training placements and work experience in key service areas within the council • Develop an internal training programme for related professionals as part of a wider continued professional development programme. Similar could be offered to members of the public and elected members	• Number of placements created • Number of training events delivered	M/L
Encourage further capacity building in the voluntary sector and in the community through heritage activities and projects	• Assist voluntary organisations and local societies in developing the skills to enable heritage activities and projects to the delivered	• Number of successful activities and projects delivered • Capacity building	S/M

Objective: To support existing educational resources			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Build upon good practice and excellence in educational provision	• Direct interest to and support excellent existing educational resources including local libraries, Hinckley Museum, Leicestershire Records Office etc. • Support any events and activities undertaken by local stakeholders that increase educational awareness of the historic environment	• Increased access to education resource • Number of events and activities delivered	M/L

Aim 2. Implement positive action to manage and enhance heritage

Objective: To ensure conservation areas are adequately protected and thoroughly understood			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Undertake reviews of existing conservation area appraisals and management plans meeting recommendation of a completed review every 5 years	• The borough council will take the lead with resource assistance sought from relevant Parish Councils, local amenity groups and interested parties. Ensure all appraisals and management plans have a consistent format • Training on completing area assessments can be provided by the borough council or Historic England (and associated consultants) as undertaken elsewhere	• Number of reviews completed meeting recommendation	S
Consider whether new conservation area designations are appropriate	• Identify potential areas for designation and complete surveys and assessment with relevant Parish Councils, local amenity groups and interested parties	• Completion of surveys and assessments	M

Objective: To develop and adopt a list of local heritage assets			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Develop and adopt the list of local heritage assets	• Identify potential assets for the list based on the selection criteria with relevant Parish Councils, local amenity groups and interested parties. Produce list and guidance and seek adoption • Seek collaboration with Neighbourhood Planning Groups to identify local heritage assets in plans complimented by relevant policies to provide management	• Adoption of list with regular review • Number of Neighbourhood Plans including identification of assets	S

Objective: To support and promote the development of characterisation studies			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Utilise and promote existing characterisation studies to inform the positive management and long term planning of the wider historic environment	• Existing studies include the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Historic Landscape Characterisation Study (developed by Leicestershire County Council) and relevant character assessments included within adopted Neighbourhood Plans (currently Market Bosworth)	• Use of studies and assessments to inform positive management and long term planning	S

Assist with the development of new characterisation studies at different spatial levels	• Studies currently being developed include an updated Landscape Character Assessment for Hinckley and Bosworth and a new Extensive Urban Survey (coordinated by Leicestershire County Council) which will include historic centres within the borough • Seek collaboration with Neighbourhood Planning Groups to ensure local character is assessed and articulated when plans are being drafted	• Adoption of studies with use to inform positive management and long term planning • Number of Neighbourhood Plans including assessment of character	S/M

Objective: To maximise opportunities to deliver heritage-led regeneration projects			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Explore and grasp opportunities to regenerate historic sites and areas in both an urban and rural context	• Working with all interested stakeholders to formally identify priorities for investment and regeneration across the borough • Grasp opportunities should they be presented by market forces • Explore funding opportunities to deliver regeneration when they are available, this can be from both council sources (such as the Developing Communities Fund) and external sources (Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, LLEP etc.) • Assist with the delivery of relevant key actions within the Economic Regeneration Strategy • Determine demand and feasibility of particular growth industries being located within historic buildings, such as creative industries etc.	• Formal identification of opportunity sites • Number of sites coming forward • Inward investment • Determine demand for creative industries	S/M
Assist with the implementation of heritage-led regeneration sites within the Town Centres' Vision document	• Working with landowners and developers, town centre businesses and business groups, Hinckley Business Improvements District (BID), Parish and Town Councils, Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP), Leicestershire County Council etc.	• Number of sites coming forward • Inward investment	M

Submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver a Townscape Heritage scheme within Hinckley town centre	• The borough council will take the lead on the application with support from partners including Hinckley and District Museum, local history societies, Hinckley Concordia Theatre, local educational establishments, LLEP, Hinckley BID etc. • Use the scheme to improve connectivity between key and strategic town centre sites	• Successful first-round application • Development of second-round application • Delivery of Townscape Heritage scheme	S
Explore and grasp opportunities to improve shop fronts across the borough	• Working with all interested stakeholders to formally identify priorities for improvements across the borough, likely to be a focus on town and district centres • Provide guidance for particular centres to promote positive shop front design • Explore funding opportunities to deliver improvement schemes when available, this can be from both council sources and external sources (Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, LLEP, Leicestershire County Council, developer contributions etc.)	• Formal identification of improvements • Number of improvements implemented	M

Objective: To implement high quality public realm improvements			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Explore and grasp opportunities to deliver public realm schemes across the borough	• Working with all interested stakeholders to formally identify potential schemes across the borough, there is likely to be a focus on town and district centres. Determine feasibility of schemes • Explore funding opportunities to deliver improvement scheme when available, this can be from both council sources and external sources (Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, LLEP, Leicestershire County Council, developer contributions etc.)	• Formal identification of public realm schemes • Number of schemes implemented	M
Establish working group(s) to assist with public realm scheme delivery	• Current focus on Hinckley town centre but this remit could be widened • Likely partners include Leicestershire County Council, Hinckley BID, and funders including developers	• Formal establishment of working group and identification of schemes • Number of schemes implemented	S

Objective: To regularly review planning policy relating to heritage matters to ensure the appropriate tools are available to guide decision taking.			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Ensure heritage and the historic environment is given full consideration when developing the Local Plan, planning policies and evidence bases	• Early engagement with Planning Policy department and the local community to identify potential issues during the development of the Plan. Engagement with consultants to ensure the historic environment is considered fully during the completion of relevant evidence bases • Identify if further guidance is required on particular elements of the historic environment and develop documents at an appropriate level	• Progress of Local Plan • Endorsement of evidence bases • Development and endorsement of guidance	S/M
Provide clear and timely professional advice on statutory applications to allow for effective decision taking	• Establish a clear protocol for consultation and monitoring to ensure specialist advice is delivered during the Development Management process within the required timeframe • Negotiation with Development Management, applicants and consultees to attempt to ensure planning applications (at pre or submitted stage) are of an appropriate standard to obtain approval	• Advice given within timeframe • Sound decisions issued	S
Encourage further capacity building in existing borough council resources	• Establish a programme of capacity building and training for relevant departmental staff and local members	• Number of training events delivered • Capacity building	S/M
Produce supplementary guidance and advice to assist with the positive management of the historic environment	• Determine where new, additional or updated guidance and advice is required, informed by relevant council departments, stakeholders and the general public • Determine appropriate level of guidance, Supplementary Planning Document, advice note etc. • Signpost and promote existing effective guidance documents and advice produced by other relevant stakeholders	• Number of guidance and advice documents produced • User feedback	M

Objective: To provide pro-active enforcement to secure improvements to the historic environment			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Establish priorities for pro-active enforcement action	• Working with all interested stakeholders to identify key problem buildings and sites considered a priority for action. • Determine if and what type of enforcement action will be appropriate and produce a formal priority list	• Identification of priorities building and sites for action	S/M

Ensure appropriate and timely enforcement action is pursued	• Enacting of the borough council's Enforcement Protocol working with the Planning Enforcement Team • Focus on addressing priority list and ongoing cases • Promotion of successful outcomes and negotiations	• Number of successful outcomes • Reduction in enforcement cases	S/M

Objective: To address heritage at risk through appropriate management techniques			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Identify buildings and sites within the historic environment that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development	• Support Historic England with the survey and identification of grade I and grade II* listed buildings and other heritage assets that fall within their remit of survey • Borough Council to complete annual survey of grade II listed buildings. Determine level of support that can be provided from local stakeholders to complete surveys based on standard methodology. Provide training if required • Continue to complete annual surveys of conservation areas • Determine if any further heritage assets require surveying at the local level • Publish a local risk register that identifies all buildings and sites considered to be at risk and in most need for action	• Survey to be completed annually • Publication of Local Risk Register	S
Determine appropriate actions and management techniques to address heritage at risk	• Determine effective management techniques for each site and type of heritage asset (Article 4 directions, enforcement action etc.). Provide training or advice for particular issues • Instigate positive discussion and negotiation with those responsible for each heritage asset to address particular issues • Signpost and promote existing effective guidance documents and advice to ensure that heritage is effectively managed and does not become at risk in the first place • Provide recognition and promote positive action where buildings have been removed from the Risk Registers	• Number of sites removed from the Local Risk Register • Instigation of management techniques (Article 4 Directions made etc.)	S/M

Objective: To maximise funding opportunities for heritage projects and delivery of enhancements to the historic environment			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Explore and grasp opportunities for external funding to delivery heritage projects (including regeneration, shop fronts and public realm schemes as identified above)	• Working with all interested stakeholders to formally identify potential heritage projects across the borough. Determine feasibility of schemes • Grasp opportunities should they be presented by market forces • Explore funding opportunities from external sources to deliver schemes when available (Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, LLEP, Leicestershire County Council, developer contributions etc.). Determine whether small amounts of council funding could unlock the potential for such streams • Signpost and advertise sources of funding for all works (from major to minor) on the council website and through other sources	• Formal identification of opportunity sites / improvements / public realm schemes • Number of sites coming forward • Inward investment	M
Continue to deliver enhancements to the historic environment via the Environmental Improvement Programme	• Continue to work with Parish Councils and interested stakeholders to identify and deliver a wide range of projects • Explore opportunities for an increased number of projects that could be delivered by the programme, particular using potential works identified in Conservation Area Management Plans • Determine feasibility of increasing the EIP budget and potential extra resource required to deliver an expanded programme	• Successful delivery of programme on existing budget • Successful delivery of expanded scheme via and increased budget	S
Support delivery of enhancements to the historic environment via other council funding streams	• Continue to support other council departments in the development and delivery of projects via specific funding streams, which currently include the Parish Community Initiative Fund, the Hinckley Community Initiative Fund, and the Developing Communities Fund. Support other streams if and when they are made available	• Successful delivery of relevant schemes	M

Aim 3. Ensure a partnership approach to care for our heritage

Objective: To maintain and develop positive working practices with heritage stakeholders			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Maintain a positive working relationship with heritage bodies during the plan-making and decision-taking processes	• Ensure all local and national consultees feel their input into the plan-making and decision-taking process is worthwhile • Determine if the council are required to make changes to the process to improve the experience of consultees	• Consultee feedback	S
Maintain a positive working relationship with heritage bodies to ensure the successful management of the historic environment	• Conservation Officer to continue to provide professional support and advice to heritage bodies on general issues with the management of the historic environment • Determine the interest and feasibility of relevant local stakeholders assisting in the delivery of the council's duties to manage the historic environment • Continue to seek support and advice from relevant local heritage groups on matters within their area of interest	• Stakeholder feedback • Effective service delivery	S/M
Ensure there is a positive working relationship with local and national heritage bodies to provide enhancements to the historic environment	• Continue to work with Parish Councils and interested local stakeholders to identify and deliver a wide range of projects to enhance the historic environment • Provide appropriate means of support for local stakeholders to assist with delivery of their projects (explore council funding, letters of support, providing professional advice etc.) • Determine priorities of national heritage bodies and provide support to enable delivery of their aims and objectives to ensure the enhancement of the borough's historic environment	• Delivery of projects • Stakeholder feedback	S/M
Ensure the council retains active representation on the Leicestershire & Rutland Conservation Officers Forum and as part of other relevant professional associations	• Continue to have active participation in the Forum as a means of positive interaction with conservation professionals across the county and region • The Conservation Officer is currently the County Representative for the East Midlands Branch of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) so can ensure there is a relationship between the IHBC and county practitioners	• Continued involvement with Forum • Number of meetings attended and instigated • Continued officer membership and involvement with IHBC	S/M

Objective: To increase community engagement about heritage matters			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Determine community interest in heritage and formalise methods of engagement	• Audit public interest in heritage beyond identified stakeholders (follow up interest shown during public consultation etc.) • Determine the interest and feasibility of a forum or other means of formal engagement between the council, local stakeholders and members of public to identify how they would like to be involved with heritage	• Development of effective means of communication • Development of formal method of engagement	S/M
Explore and support initiatives to get more people and communities involved in heritage	• Support all existing heritage events delivered by the council and external groups and consider how their appeal could be widened to more people and groups • Identify particular non-heritage events which could be utilised to showcase the rich and diverse heritage of the borough. Initiative could include “pop-up” heritage stalls and displays, etc. • Consider a range of engagement methods (social media, physical displays etc.) to encourage involvement • Consider focussing methods of engagement on underrepresented groups within the community	• Number of participants in events • Interest shown by individuals and groups • Website visits etc.	S/M
Ensure the conservation of the historic environment is reflected within Neighbourhood Planning	• Explain how the historic environment is often a fundamental component of local character and that it should be incorporated in Neighbourhood Plans, providing a means of effective engagement with communities in planning for their area • Continue to support the positive role of the historic environment in adopted plans and through development of new plans	• Successful engagement during the Neighbourhood Planning process	S

Objective: To ensure integrated and joined-up working within the council and between relevant local government partners			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Ensure that the value and benefits of heritage are understood as a corporate asset and responsibility and establish clear and appropriate roles and responsibilities	• Ensure heritage and the historic environment is reflected when enacting the objectives of the Corporate Plan • Continue to brief relevant members of the Council Executive of the benefits and values of heritage. The council has a Heritage Champion and relevant Executive members to ensure integrated corporate working	• Successful functioning of the Executive • Heritage Champion ensuring integration	S

Ensure that appropriate communication networks and consultation protocols are established and maintained in order that heritage is dealt with in a collaborative way	• Ensure the role of the heritage and the historic environment is promoted and understood when strategic decisions are being made. Officer involvement in relevant steering groups etc. • Follow internal consultation protocol during development management process. External consultation protocol is in place to work with Leicestershire County Council departments (highways, archaeology, ecology etc.) • Continue practice of informal discussion between officers where relevant to effectively manage heritage	• Satisfactory representation in steering groups etc. • Following of consultation protocol	S/M
Ensure that council owned and managed heritage assets have appropriate conservation and management plans in place	• Provide advice and assistance to Asset Management team to ensure these plans are in place and to an appropriate standard • Recognise any resource implications to implement the plans	• Production of plans • Implementation of plan recommendations	M/L
Support the development of the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) (see aim 1)	• Determine how the borough council and other interested stakeholders can assist Leicestershire County Council in the development of the record to ensure information on heritage assets is up-to-date, accurate and accessible	• Number of HER visits • User feedback	S/M

Aim 4. The promotion and enjoyment of heritage

Objective: To promote a positive image and identity of the borough to increase heritage related tourism			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Promote and support the existing tourism offer of key heritage assets	• Promote all council and external heritage events and sites across the borough which provide access to heritage (e.g. Hinckley Museum etc.) through appropriate publicity. Provide officer support where possible to all sites/events • Follow and support the recommendations of the Tourism Strategy and the Destination Management Plan, including the potential for cross border heritage links with North Warwickshire Borough Council (and other authorities) • Determine whether the tourism offer of existing sites can be improved or expanded and support the development of associated infrastructure and projects	• Number of sites open and accessible • Number of events • Number of visits • Visitor feedback	S/M
Explore new and innovative tourism initiatives from key heritage assets	• Determine whether existing heritage assets could be developed as a destination in their own right or positioned in a way to offer a unique product. Determine the feasibility of product development (use of relevant baseline economic/tourism data (e.g. ONS/STEAM etc.) • Follow and support the recommendations of the Tourism Strategy and the Destination Management Plan, including the potential for cross border heritage links with North Warwickshire Borough Council (and other authorities)	• Relevant data outputs etc. • New sites open and accessible • Visitor feedback	S/M
Promote and publicise a positive image of the borough's historic identity	• Promote a positive image of the borough and its heritage assets through publications, media, supporting events etc. • Develop heritage specific events such as a "Year of Heritage", WW1 centenary etc. • Utilise the role of Heritage Champion to provide a positive image of the council's and promote heritage • Determine interest and feasibility of promoting a different image of the borough or particular settlements within the borough based on its heritage, essentially a "place-branding" exercise. Work with stakeholders such as Hinckley BID and Leicestershire County Council etc.	• Number of publications (etc.) developed and produced • Development of events • Feedback on image and identity	S/M

Objective: To support the discovery and exploration of heritage			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Increase accessibility to the historic environment to allow for discovery and exploration (see the actions for aim 1: objective – to increase accessibility to the historic environment)	• Increase the number of heritage assets that are accessible and open to the public (see aim 1) • Support new and innovative events that provide access for a wide range of people, groups and communities • Support the infrastructure requirements around existing and new events • Explore the potential of increasing access to council owned collections and sites (see aim 1) • Develop digital technology and on line solutions to increase access and support discovery • Support researchers and historians with means of discovery and exploration	• Number of collections and sites open and accessible • Number of events • Number of visits • Visitor feedback • Development of on line solutions	S/M
Improve awareness of heritage with improved accessibility to information to allow for discovery and exploration (also see the actions for aim 1: objective – to ensure information on heritage assets is up-to-date, accurate and accessible)	• Provide means of further information, with the development or instigation of council schemes or support of schemes proposed by other stakeholders (projects include development of heritage trails, installation of interpretation boards, blue plaque schemes, oral recording etc.) • Promote all schemes and projects and ensure that the content and information is accessible to all people, groups and communities • Develop digital technology and on line solutions to increase awareness and support discovery • Support researchers and historians with means of discovery and exploration	• Development and delivery of schemes and projects • Development of on line solutions	S/M
Develop the councils collection and support the collections development of heritage partners	• Determine the feasibility of displaying items of the councils heritage collection accompanied with interpretation and promotion • Provide support to Hinckley and District Museum with their bid to expand their collection and construct an extension • Determine the feasibility of increased levels of council commitment to the Museum • Grasp opportunities to acquire heritage items to be added to collections (displayed at the council owned sites, the Museum or other relevant sites) and compile and advertise an inventory of associated heritage items located outside of the borough	• Compilation of inventory • Collections development • Progression of Museum funding application	S

Objective: To advertise best practice in dealing with heritage			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Promote best practice in dealing with heritage in the borough	• Advertise and publicise the development and delivery of works, projects and schemes within the borough that have been carried out to a high standard as an exemplar to others • Publicise the achievements of the Environmental Improvement Programme and other relevant funding schemes	• Regular publications	S/M
Develop and publicise a local craftsman and skills register	• Identify craftsmen who have undertaken works to heritage assets within the borough that have been completed to a high standard • Determine the geographical scope of their works and seek references from elsewhere • Publish and maintain a register for use by interested stakeholders and heritage asset owners	• Development, publication and maintenance of register	M/L
Ensure accessibility to existing skills registers	• Provide accessibility through appropriate means to existing databases and skills registers for use by interested stakeholders and heritage asset owners	• Identification and monitoring of registers and databases	S

Objective: To celebrate and promote achievement in the historic environment			
Action	**Potential initiatives/partners**	**Monitoring**	**Timeframe**
Develop a Conservation and Design Awards scheme to provide recognition for exemplar projects	• Determine feasibility and interest in an annual awards scheme that demonstrates best practice in conservation and design • Entries could include conversions, restorations, new build categories etc. • Determine make up of a judging panel, likely to consist of representatives from Historic England, the borough council, local amenity societies, architectural practices etc. • Promote achievements through appropriate means	• Establishment of awards scheme	M
Continue to promote the regeneration of the Atkins building as an exemplar of council-led redevelopment	• Promote achievements through appropriate means • Utilise it as an example of successful project delivery to assist in the development of funding bids etc. • Utilise the building as a priority to host conferences and events, particularly those with a heritage focus	• Promotion of project • Number of events held at the building	S

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN

Delivery of the Action Plan will be dependent upon a strong relationship between the borough council and its key partners, alongside the ongoing and continued delivery of actions and statutory functions by the council's existing resource. Where appropriate working and steering groups will be instigated to develop and guide actions and initiatives. It is likely in some cases that extra council funding or resources may be required to fully realise and deliver actions and initiatives, and where this the case requests will be made to the relevant council committee.

There will be the need for regular monitoring of the Action Plan to determine the progress of the development and delivery of actions, therefore progress reports will be provided on a regular basis. Where actions are not being delivered or timescales are not being met there will be the need to adapt accordingly.

CONCLUSION

There is a clear steer from national legislation and guidance for local authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The council's Heritage Strategy provides the framework for how we understand, manage, enhance, care, integrate, promote and enjoy the borough's rich and diverse heritage in the immediate and long term future. It has reviewed the national and local heritage context, identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the service before identifying key aims and objectives to be achieved through the delivery of a detailed Action Plan. The strategy establishes the council's direction of travel to form the basis for scoping and prioritising the future work of the council's heritage resource, whilst ensuring that the service delivers the council's corporate ambitions of providing opportunities for people, places, and prosperity.

APPENDIX 1. CONSULTATIONS SUMMARY

BOROUGH BULLETIN SUMMARY

An article was placed in the summer edition of the Borough Bulletin asking for views on the drafting of a Heritage Strategy. The questions below were asked to generate thought. Replies were received from residents of the borough answering the questions in addition to providing general comments:

What do you consider to be Hinckley and Bosworth's heritage?

- Hosiery industry
- Ashby Canal
- Burbage rose and nursery gardens
- Bosworth Battlefield
- Hansom Cab
- Historic Spa Town
- Burbage Common and Woods
- Historic settlement of Burbage
- Argents Mead and moat
- Green wedge between Barwell and Hinckley

What aspects of the borough's heritage do you value, care for and enjoy?

- Older buildings
- Parks
- Surrounding countryside
- Burbage Common and Woods
- Victorian buildings
- Old hosiery factory's
- Building of interest and with historical interest to the borough
- Access to open countryside for wellbeing
- Important historical and cultural vistas towards the hilltop village of Burbage
- Public houses of character and interest
- Bosworth Battlefield
- Source of the River Soar in Burbage - early iron age site
- Ashby Canal

What do you consider to be the issues affecting the heritage of the borough?

- Unsympathetic building - new buildings not in keeping with the surroundings
- Keep the old buildings and factories (unless they are unsightly)
- The towns heritage is being lost to new shops and industrial estates etc. all looking very modern
- Housing developers
- Neglect from lack of investment
- Poor management of building conservation / restoration by developers
- Loss of the local heritage
- Impoverished natural environment , historical and cultural
- Cluttered signage, street and shop fronts

How could the borough's heritage be better managed and improved?

- More considerate building
- Change to planning laws to give locals more say
- Conservation of historical sites and water courses
- Preserve and enhance historical buildings
- Attractive, appropriate signage and street furniture (classic style)
- Public realm improvements within Groby village centre
- Standard signage policy for the borough
- Information boards to share town's history e.g. Pugh's Paddock in Burbage
- Create small and beautiful spaces for sitting in or just enjoying e.g. Plot by St Mary's school opposite HSBC, create open green spaces; green corridors; 'nature corridors' for a diverse collection of native species; footpaths; and cycle paths
- Retain and sympathetically restore traditional factory sites
- Increased interpretation
- Support the Museum
- Grants should be made available for rural areas to display their knowledge by promoting the appropriate information to schools and children in their learning programmes and visitors and interested people now and in the future. More involvement with schools could help support curriculum work

General comments

There is a recognised need to develop the community and facilities in a sustainable way in order to provide improved services, access and opportunities for current and future generations. The identification, preservation and enhancement of heritage rich areas should not be undermined; it is significant in developing the wellbeing of the community and provides a valuable asset for education. In addition to this the natural environment provides a landscape for all members of the community to understand the past, present and future of the area in which they live, work and play. A shared positive understanding and experience of the local heritage supports the development of a healthy and united community across the generations.

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

Two stakeholder workshops were held over the summer of 2017, one at the Atkins building in Hinckley and one at Bagworth Community Centre. A range of stakeholders were invited, including Borough Councillors, Parish Council representatives, Neighbourhood Planning Group Representatives, local amenity and history societies, relevant borough and county council officers, and the members of the public who responded to the Borough Bulletin article. There were a total of 26 attendees at the Hinckley event and 19 attendees at the Bagworth event.

The workshops allowed discussion between all attendees (divided into groups) focused around a number of exercises, as summarised below:

Exercise 1. What is heritage?

Open question straight to the groups. Answers to this question are given below:

- Access to information and compiling of information historically

- Anything different in an area - local distinctiveness
- Anything from the past and present we want to take forward to the future
- Anything worth preserving
- Archaeological investigation and interpretation and material evidence
- Artefacts
- Buildings, structures, places that define what an area is
- Churches and the communities
- Cultural history
- Custodians and guardians
- Defines the character of an area or parish (its history)
- Definition of previous usage
- Doesn't have to be a physical thing
- Doesn't have to be aesthetically pleasing
- Don't need to go too far back in history to find heritage
- Heritage is always evolving
- Historic events
- Historic trades
- Historical features - architecture, industry
- Historical value and significance
- It is a living thing
- Landscapes - manmade and natural
- Landscapes telling a story
- Legacy
- Looking at events/structures that impact our lives today
- Material inheritance
- Memories (childhood and adult)
- More important the older you get
- Natural heritage - landscapes, beauty, forests, views and vistas
- Natural heritage (trees, open spaces etc.) are as important as buildings
- Need for preservation
- Not always evident
- Not only buildings - spaces, features, intangibles, views, landscapes, hand-me-downs, folklore
- Notable people
- Preserved sympathetically
- Recognises all aspects of the past - even negative things
- Reflection of an area - examples of its time
- Schools
- Something people value
- Something that is communal, social, physical, and historical
- Something that is educational
- Something that is valued by the community
- Something you want to preserve for the future
- Tradesman, workers
- Uncovering the past and its interpretation

- Understanding how a place has evolved
- Value of areas - danger of being lost
- Walking and recreation - need to be able to appreciate the landscape
- Working landscape - canals and railways etc.

Presentation given which identified two varying definitions of heritage – a concise one from Historic England and a complex one from ICOMOS.

Exercise 2. What is the heritage of the borough?

Open question straight to the groups. Answers to this question are given below and have been grouped into common themes.

General:

- Agricultural heritage
- Archaeological sites
- Baptist Movement
- Boot and shoe industries
- Conservation areas
- Coal mining
- Diversity
- Domestic home working
- Each village offers something to the overall heritage of the borough
- Former wind and water mills
- History and heritage groups
- Historical village and town centres
- Hosiery industry
- Infrastructure - canal, train lines, roman roads
- Methodist Movement
- Names of old lanes and roads
- Quakers
- Quarrying
- Steam Whistle development
- Transport development - MIRA, Triumph, Hansom Cab, Mallory Park
- Transport feeding coal industry
- Treaty of Wedmore

Sites/buildings/spaces etc.:

- Argents Mead
- Ashby Canal and wharfs/buildings
- Atkins building
- Barton Baptist Chapel
- Barwell Meteorite
- Battlefield Centre
- Battlefield Railway
- Bilstone Gibbet Post
- Bosworth Battlefield
- Bosworth Country Park
- Bosworth Hall
- Bosworth Water Trust
- Bradgate House and Stables
- Brascote ponds
- Brascote windmill
- Burbage Common - ancient woodland
- Bury Camp
- Centre of England at Fenny Drayton
- Highcross building in Hinckley
- Hinckley Castle
- Hinckley Golf Course
- Hinckley Medieval Priory
- Hinckley Museum
- Hollycroft Park
- Ivanhoe way
- Kirkby Hall
- Land at Home Farm
- Leicester to Swannington railway
- Leicestershire Round footpath
- Lindley Lodge
- Mallory Park
- Market Bosworth as predominantly Georgian market town
- Martinshaw Wood
- Medieval deer parks around Bosworth
- Moat near tropical bird land
- National Forest

- Chaplin's butchers, Groby
- Charnwood Forest
- Churches within all parishes
- Cliffe Hill Quarries
- Cock Inn
- Crown field Stoke Golding
- Danish history of Groby and Ratby
- Deserted and abandoned villages - Sketchley, Brascote, Far Coton, Ambion, Wykin etc.
- Earl Shilton mound
- Fenn Lanes
- Fenn Lane tumulus
- Former railway infrastructure
- Gopsall Park and Temple
- Groby and Swithland Slate
- Groby Blacksmiths Cottage
- Groby Chapel
- Groby Old Hall
- Groby Pool
- Groby Village Hall
- Hansom Cab
- Newbold Verdon Hall
- Newhouse Grange Tithe Barn - built by the Knights Templar?
- Old Airfields – Nuneaton and Desford
- Old Salt Lanes
- Queens Head in Barwell
- Ratby Burroughs
- Roman camp at Witherley
- Shackerstone railway station
- Spoil heaps
- Stamford Arms, Groby
- Stanton Under Bardon charity
- Stoke Golding nuclear bunker
- Sutton Cheney Church associated with Richard III
- The Big Pit
- Tigers Wood
- Thornton Reservoir
- Twycross Hall
- Twycross Zoo
- War memorials
- Watling Street

People:

- Ada Lovelace
- Bishop of Burnham
- Bonnie Prince Charlie
- Brewers - Bass, Butler, Worthington, Everards in Groby
- Chamberlain Hurst
- Charlotte Brame
- Davey Graham
- Dick Turpin
- Elizabeth Coxhead
- Elizabeth Woodville
- Geoffrey Fisher
- George Canning
- George Fox
- George Ward
- John Cleveland
- Joseph Hansom
- Lady Jane Grey
- Norman Dagley
- Robert Chessher
- Roger Coles
- Samuel Deacon
- Teddy Boston

Presentation given on recognised heritage (i.e. designated) within the borough, the groups identified this and much more.

Exercise 3. What do you value about the heritage of the borough?

Presentation given with four categories of heritage value explained (evidential, historical, aesthetic, communal) and applied to the Atkins building as an example.

The groups then chose the following sites/buildings/heritage and attempted to apply the categories of value:

- Ashby Canal - three groups identified relevant values from all four categories
- Bosworth Hall Hotel - group identified all four categories of value
- Cock Inn - group identified all four categories of value
- Dixie Grammar School - group identified relevant categories
- Manor Farm, Desford - group identified all four categories of value
- Mining heritage - interesting choice as this industry is not particular evident anymore. Consideration of negatives associations with the industry and whether it should be heritage we seek to preserve
- One group briefly considered Ashby Canal and the Treaty of Wedmore. Four relevant categories identified for the canal, more difficult for the Treaty using this framework
- Queens Head, Barwell - group identified all four categories of value

Exercise 4. What are the issues and challenges for the heritage of the borough?

Presentation given on potential issues and challenges including identification and recognition, development pressure, lack of knowledge and awareness, lack of resource and lack of investment.

Each group identified issues and challenges for heritage, including:

- asset may fall into disrepair if funding is not available
- Borough Bulletin is too Hinckley focused, should include borough wide heritage stories
- challenges of statutory and legal protection measures applied to buildings
- changes in national considerations of what is considered special and warranting of protection
- conservation area appraisals out of date
- cuts to funding
- enforcement and planning challenges
- funding situation may be limited, e.g. Canal & River Trust
- heritage buildings are often community buildings, tied in to the social and economic structure of a settlement. This is lost with the building
- history of disasters in Hinckley, e.g. Regent Theatre - once an asset has gone it's gone
- identify those sites under threat
- keeping sites open and well used
- lack of intervention and enforcement
- lack of money and resources means heritage is under threat
- lack of parking for visiting or use, may conflict with the asset
- literature and guidance on assets is weak
- little control over agricultural practices having an impact on the landscape
- local voices can often be overlooked
- loss of community and social structure with loss of mining and quarrying heritage - multi-disciplinary issue?
- loss of heritage when sites are developed
- maintenance costs of assets (at all scales)

- many bodies that manage assets are public or charitable bodies, they rely on donations or government funding
- marketing of assets is weak
- much heritage has already been lost and it remains under threat
- names of areas and fields are rarely retained as a basic mitigation
- needs of an asset may have changed or evolved beyond its original use - not all buildings are adaptable or capable of change
- new development in proximity
- not everybody recognises statutory protection - needs to be valued by all. Threat of vandalism etc.
- owners are custodians, not all owners are aware of their responsibilities
- ownership of an asset by a large company who may not have heritage significance at forefront of business plan
- people are not given information about heritage easily or readily in the borough
- physical changes alter the landscape
- physical threats, e.g. traffic in Desford
- population growth may be a threat or an opportunity as more people may visit or become aware
- population growth, threat of development is not going to go away
- protection of places against development pressures
- some sites do not feel well protected due to ownership (e.g. Bosworth Hall)
- tourism and visitors is good but brings challenges, e.g. footpath erosion along the canal
- under appreciation of assets - recognise what is unique
- unlisted buildings and sites are vulnerable
- use of the building often follows national trends, e.g. pub closures

Exercise 5. How could the borough's heritage be better managed and enhanced?

Each group was asked to consider how the borough's heritage could be better managed and identify projects that would enhance and improve the historic environment. The following was identified and suggested:

- involve schools and provide access to history outside of the curriculum
- education in schools, engage children so they have a long-standing knowledge and interest that can be passed on
- inform young people - need to attract young and old
- record the memories of old and make them public
- utilise a range of media sources to make stories accessible - social media and Facebook
- make better use of volunteers
- encourage Parish Councils to employ or get volunteers and work together to share resources
- Use community activities as a resource - publications, local festivals, local events
- Heritage Groups, involving local people, heritage wardens
- make better use of the Borough Bulletin. Include all areas within the bulletin

- ask for more funding from a range of sources - Council (all departments such as Cultural Services), Hinckley BID, private sponsorship
- increase funding from local authority, grants, county council, lottery, DCF
- utilise full range of planning controls and enforcement, e.g. CPO of Bradgate Stables
- attempt to change attitudes
- seek better quality design
- rectify systematic errors in identifying and recognising
- maintain and keep a record of what is heritage
- Historic England and archaeological surveys do not always match - better communication between bodies
- neighbourhood plans can address the importance of heritage
- developers should engage the community to provide benefits
- traffic generated can be detrimental to historic areas
- work with parishes and local groups through the development process to acquire local knowledge which informs
- development should create or retain a sense of identity
- too relaxed "pro-development" has resulted in loss of heritage
- tell the story of the borough - link the assets
- additional control of agricultural processes
- recognise that tourism and heritage is a key opportunity for the borough
- raise awareness and encourage people to come to the borough
- increase publicity in areas of high footfall such as Hinckley town centre
- make use of banners
- improve public realm within centres so the environment is more attractive
- advertising and promotion
- get owners to give tours of their buildings to increase awareness and knowledge
- limited maintenance could focus on facades
- tours linked to the assets
- make more of Heritage Open Days
- sell merchandise across all historic venues
- increase marketing and literature
- develop local list
- co-ordination of groups
- Means of identifying and recognising - photographs, local historical information, trails
- put together an asset register of all aspects of heritage
- voluntary organisations assisting to ease resource burden
- use voluntary sector to carry out surveys audits and assessments (following training)
- devolve responsibilities to PC
- lack of resource means County/LPA/HE cannot always visit sites - use local groups to carry out this function
- better communication between tiers - LPA/PC/voluntary groups
- create neighbourhood areas to manage the borough's heritage
- embrace community projects to increase awareness, e.g. Bosworth links
- continual engagement to keep the ball rolling
- ensure new development does not threaten settlement identity through coalescence

- identify how an asset can form part of a new development - heritage can aid development as it is an attractive resource
- give priority to sites at risk and under threat
- have more dialogue with owners regarding their responsibilities. Help them understand their building
- refresh conservation area appraisals to a timetable
- provide a toolkit for history societies to identify local sites
- provide links to other organisations who hold records
- constructive and adaptive conservation - ensure buildings can be used but maintain their important features
- identify community assets
- ensure investment goes back into the community via section 106 monies
- develop a project that allows you to report issues with a heritage asset e.g. via a phone app or website
- have a feature village from the area in the Borough Bulletin
- Create a heritage sub-committee of the planning committee

Site specific enhancements and improvements:

- Ashby Canal
  - dealing with litter and dog mess
  - information boards, better information provision
  - ensuring towpath is visible and accessible
  - get the word out in schools
  - volunteer staffing, volunteer parties, use local skills
  - cycling accessibility
  - link with other paths and routes
  - make most of tourism in the urban area
- Ensure the EIP budget includes Hinckley and traditionally this has been seen as a Parish only budget
- Re-open Shackerstone to Nuneaton line (beyond Shenton)
- Provide a blue plaque trail

APPENDIX 2. NATIONAL AND LOCAL AMENITY SOCIETIES

NATIONAL AMENITY SOCIETIES

- The Ancient Monuments Society (http://www.ancientmonumentssociety.org.uk/)
- The Council for British Archaeology (http://new.archaeologyuk.org/)
- The Georgian Group (https://georgiangroup.org.uk/)
- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (https://www.spab.org.uk/)
- The Victorian Society (http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/)
- The Twentieth Century Society (https://c20society.org.uk/)

LOCAL HISTORY AND CIVIC SOCIETIES

- Ashby Canal Association (http://www.ashbycanal.org.uk/)
- Atherstone Civic Society (also covers Witherley Parish) (http://atherstonecivicsociety.co.uk/)
- Burbage Heritage Group (http://www.burbageheritage.co.uk/)
- Desford & District Local Heritage Society
- Earl Shilton Local History Group
- Groby History Society
- Groby Village Society
- Hinckley & District Museum (http://www.hinckleydistrictmuseum.org.uk/)
- Hinckley Archaeological Society (http://www.fieldwalking.org.uk/)
- Hinckley District Past and Present
- Hinckley Past and Present
- Market Bosworth Society (http://marketbosworthsociety.com/)
- Markfield Local History Group (http://www.markfieldhistory.btck.co.uk/)
- Ratby Local History Group
- Sheepy Local History Society
- Stoke Golding Heritage Group