

**Report to:** **Strategic Planning Committee**

**Date of Meeting:** Tuesday 27 November 2018

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None



**Agenda item:** 12

**Subject:** **Heritage Strategy**

**Purpose of report:** To agree a draft Heritage Strategy for public consultation. The strategy (2018 – 2031) brings together information on the heritage of East Devon and identifies the issues, challenges and opportunities for the future with a plan of recommended actions.

**Recommendation:** **That Members:**

**Agree the draft Heritage Strategy for public consultation in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement.**

**Reason for recommendation:** The NPPF (para.185) states that “Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.” The Local Plan outlines its policies and broad strategies for the district’s heritage, whilst the Heritage Strategy sets out more detailed aims, objectives and a plan of recommended actions. A public consultation on the draft strategy will ensure that we receive feedback on our proposals and that our approach is undertaken in an open and transparent way and that we have addressed the most relevant issues.

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**Financial implications:** No specific financial implications

**Legal implications:** The legal implications are as set out within the report

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact  
No particular equalities impacts are identified

**Risk:** Low Risk

The publication of a heritage strategy will help to protect, manage and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets, whilst encouraging social, economic and environmental benefits.

**Links to background information:**

- Government Policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) in 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728643/Revised\\_NPPF\\_2018.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf)

- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents> and <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents> provide specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46> provides protection for scheduled monuments.

**Link to Council Plan:**

Delivering and promoting our outstanding environment

## **Report in full**

This report introduces a draft heritage strategy for East Devon and recommends that public consultation is undertaken. On conclusion of the consultation a feedback report on comments made will be presented to this committee with recommendation for amendment to the strategy, where appropriate.

The draft strategy, in full, that is recommended for consultation is appended to this committee report.

### **1. What is Heritage?**

The term heritage embraces history in all its forms, from buildings, spaces, art and artefacts to natural heritage such as landscape, flora and fauna and cultural heritage including place names, customs and traditions.

**The Historic Environment** is described in the NPPF (2018) as “all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.”

**A Heritage Asset** is described in the NPPF (2018 para 185.) as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”

### **2. Why is a Heritage Strategy necessary?**

The National Planning Policy Framework (2018 p.185) states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. East Devon has a rich historic environment and an abundance of heritage assets that provide very significant environmental, social and economic benefits for the district. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and the strategy will help to ensure that they are protected, maintained and enhanced to the advantage of future generations.

### **3. What does the Strategy cover?**

The strategy presents a summary of the historic environment of the district, its significance and its benefits. It identifies the heritage issues in East Devon and develops objectives for the future with an action plan for the delivery of our recommendations. The strategy is proposed to cover the period until 2031, to run alongside the East Devon Local Plan 2013 – 2031.

Whilst all historic influences on the character of East Devon inform the strategy, the focus is directed towards our heritage assets where the Council has a direct role and responsibility, or influence, in the decision making or management process.

However broader designations that inform the strategy are also considered, including the two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty that have a positive influence on the enhancement and management of the District's heritage.

### **Section 1:**

Following an introduction, this sets out the purpose of the strategy, provides information on the role of the Council and other organisations, sources of information and a background of legislation and policy.

### **Section 2:**

The overall strategy for the future of our heritage is met through a range of aims and objectives. These are addressed in the three themes of:

#### **A: Understanding and appreciating our historic environment**

This theme describes our historic environment and provides information on its designated heritage assets and their significance, including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Listed Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, the World Heritage Site coastline and landscape designations and touches on undesignated assets including archaeology.

#### **B: Positively managing our historic environment**

This theme sets out our current policies and programmes relating to development management, Conservation Areas and heritage assets at risk. It identifies issues and looks at the future programme of managing these designated assets and the potential for a local list of undesignated assets, whilst providing further guidance on local distinctiveness.

#### **C: Enhancing and benefitting from our heritage**

This theme looks at the value of our heritage as a part of sustainable development, and the social, economic and environmental benefits it provides for East Devon, whilst the impact and influence of other policies are considered. It identifies how we can work better with partners and communities to enhance our heritage and make the most of these benefits.

### **Section 3:**

Implementation of the strategy is considered including resources, benefits and monitoring. The objectives raised from each theme are developed into a plan of recommended actions, detailed initially for the first three years.

### **Section 4:**

Appendices include a summary description of the Conservation Areas of East Devon, information and maps for each of our historic town centres, details of partners and local history organisations.

## **4. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the draft heritage strategy is approved for the purpose of a public consultation. Following the consultation, it is recommended that a more detailed action plan is produced to incorporate feedback, to be published alongside the final Heritage Strategy.

Within the action plan, some actions will benefit from additional resources from staff and the community. This mainly relates to facilitating training for communities to help manage the assets in their local area, with supervision. Some training resources are currently available through partners and additional grant funding will be sought. It is recommended that staff within the planning policy team help to facilitate this process in order to minimise the amount of any additional work that would be needed by conservation officers.

## **5. Benefits**

The benefits that can be sustained and enhanced through delivery of the strategy are wide ranging. Theme A aims to improve knowledge and understanding of the heritage of East Devon by making information accessible to a wide audience and by promoting its value. Benefits include an increased awareness and appreciation of our heritage, active participation in heritage programmes and a feeling of identity and pride in local areas.

Theme B explores how we manage our heritage assets and aims to develop programmes and increase community involvement, building on the strong neighbourhood planning groups and historic societies in East Devon. This will increase the range of skills, knowledge and experience to help conserve our heritage.

Further, Historic England reports on growing evidence of a positive relationship between heritage participation, wellbeing and quality of life, which finds that both visiting and volunteering in heritage brings happiness.

For organisations, programmes involving the community encourage innovative ways of working, demonstrate public accountability and strengthen links with the community.

Theme C looks at how heritage can boost the economy through tourism and the attraction of our historic town centres, both directly, through the employment of specialised craftsmen and use of local materials, and indirectly through increased appeal for tourists, businesses and residents.

Our built heritage often plays a central role in the regeneration of towns, with both people and businesses being attracted to characterful places. Developing partnerships can help to maximise the economic benefits and opportunities that heritage brings.

Environmentally, the positive conservation of our heritage assets helps to reinforce local distinctiveness and encourage high quality design.

## **6. Resource Implications**

The actions recommended have been carefully considered and are either a priority due to fulfilment of a statutory duty, or are expected to produce significant beneficial outcomes and impact in the future, whilst minimising resources in the long term. Opportunities for cost effective solutions are sought including the means for securing new grant funding.

In East Devon communities have taken on ownership and accountability of their local area through neighbourhood plans, with volunteers driving the process forward. Along with specialist historic groups, this impetus may be captured and taken forward. Participation of the community in helping to deliver parts of the strategy will potentially provide a valuable resource, contributing to its progress.

The strategy plans to introduce resourceful ways for communities to help manage assets in their local areas through a small number of pilot schemes initially. These would be closely monitored to assess costs, outcomes and impact to inform the future roll-out of programmes.

The investment of staff time facilitating and advising on training will be needed especially in the early stages, but as the programme develops, capacity should build within local communities to help manage their own assets. Training is currently available for some projects and the Council is pursuing grant funding opportunities to support further work.

Some specific tasks to help manage our heritage assets have been identified that staff within the policy section may perform, with the help of the community in some cases, with a 'light touch' sign off by conservation officers.

The draft action plan has been based on the premise that such staff resources within the Council can be enlisted to carry out these duties. If this were not possible however, further resources would be needed to fully implement some priorities of the strategy during the delivery of the programme, for which external grant funding would be sought.

Cost effective ways of widening knowledge and engagement in our heritage include circulation of the strategy in an accessible format and the provision of a more comprehensive website resource. New web pages can provide a base for the exchange of information and links to other organisations, guides and training in heritage issues.

An occasional heritage themed event at the Council offices and officer presence at other events are achievable ways of networking and promoting the heritage of East Devon. Local organisations such as the East Devon AONB and Devon County Council Historic Environment Team have offered support for the strategy and these partnerships can be further developed to pool resources and deliver some common objectives effectively.

It will be important however, that expectations by communities are carefully managed, for example in respect of the local list, which will particularly need staff resources initially to consider items put forward for the list. Ample time will therefore be needed to establish a list within existing resources and this is reflected in the draft action plan (see document).

A summary of the action plan is provided in **Table 1** and a plan outlining a potential programme for the next 12 years is provided in **Table 2**.

**Table 1: Summary of recommended actions with estimate of impact and resources:**

Action	Priority, estimated impact and resources
Produce information and guidance in strategy in an accessible format. Promote strategy.	High impact / moderate cost; much of this work completed. Enhances knowledge and understanding of our heritage.
Develop improved web pages for the exchange and provision of information, including links to further guidance.	High impact / low cost, enhances knowledge and understanding of our heritage.
Organise and host a heritage themed event, officer attendance at other events	Moderate impact and cost, to promote our heritage and encourage benefits.
Establish and undertake a programme of conservation area review with management plans. This is a rolling programme for the 12 year duration of the strategy. The introduction of communities to assist with appraisals is recommended starting with a pilot scheme within the next 3 years.	High priority, statutory duty. Long term impact on protection of assets and recognised benefits for the community. Grant funding may be available to progress capacity building scheme further.
Monitor heritage assets at risk where possible, potentially including a Grade II survey involving communities in localised areas, starting with a pilot scheme within the next 3 years.	High priority. Long term impact on protection of assets. Some free training currently available through Historic England. Policy staff to facilitate.
Produce a policy document to guide communities on the process of submitting entries for a local list, including criteria for selection.  Receive submissions from communities and historic groups to create a list of local assets.	Medium priority as not a statutory duty. Document completion low resource.  Moderate input for staff to assess submitted lists initially, so phased starting with one area. Positive impact on planning process and benefits for local communities.
Provide further links and guidance on distinctiveness and design, including the sourcing of local materials.	Medium priority, moderate impact on renewal and new development. Low resource.
Increase attendance at partnership meetings. Work towards common goals, identify projects and sources of funding.	Medium priority, low cost/ minimal staff resources, potential high impact with any identified projects.
Create working group within the Council.	Medium priority, minimal staff resource. Potential high impact with identified / co-ordinated policies, projects and programmes.
Work with communities to facilitate or advise on a range of training opportunities in heritage, especially for neighbourhood planning groups and community groups with an interest in heritage.	Medium priority, minimal cost. Benefits for the community and potential long term impact on the protection of assets.

**Table 2: Draft Heritage Strategy Plan indicating potential programme for 2018 - 2031**

Objectives Theme A	Actions and tasks	Priority / Cost Impact	Financial Resources	Staff resources	Estimated time	2018-19	2019-22	2022 -25	2025-28 + 2028 - 31
<b>Enhance understanding of heritage assets and their significance</b>	<p>Provide information and guidance in the strategy and make this accessible to all.</p> <p>Produce a user friendly document, with printed copies distributed to local communities.</p> <p>Provide links to further guidance through the Council's website.</p>	High impact, moderate cost; much of this work completed	Printing and distribution of document	Policy staff, post room. Mostly completed	1 year overall, including consultation	Most tasks completed within this year, majority of work already completed		Review document	
<b>Widen knowledge of the heritage of East Devon and its assets</b>	Develop improved web pages for the exchange and provision of information on heritage issues relevant to East Devon	High priority, high impact, low cost	Website designer	Policy and conservation staff	Short term, with regular updates	Initiate this year	Regular updates	Regular updates	Regular updates
<b>Celebrate and promote the heritage of East Devon (raise the profile)</b>	<p>Promote strategy and web pages</p> <p>Host a heritage themed event / workshop for members and community representatives.</p> <p>Officer presence at other events</p>	Moderate input of staff and financial resources, medium priority and impact	Use of Council chambers, catering	<p>Policy and conservation staff, heritage champion and community officer</p> <p>Partner organisations have offered help</p>	Short term, possibly once a year	Initiate this year	Occasional event	Occasional event	Occasional event

Objectives Theme B	Actions and tasks	Priority / Cost Impact	Financial Resources	Staff resources	Estimated time	2018-19	2019-22	2022 -25	2025-28 + 2018 - 31
<p><b>Positively manage the heritage assets of East Devon:</b></p> <p><b>Undertake a programme of conservation area review</b></p>	<p>Develop a programme to prioritise reviews over 12 years.</p> <p>Conservation areas last subject to a full or interim review 2007 -2010. Not all areas will need a review.</p> <p>Start with areas within our historic towns then other areas within BUABs most subject to change.</p> <p>Priority to also be given to areas with active Neighbourhood Planning and historic interest groups.</p>	<p>High priority - statutory duty.</p> <p>Considerable input of staff and community but a long term activity and assistance from Historic England, especially if able to secure capacity building grant.</p>	<p>Facilitate community training and capacity building, help and /or grant is available from at least 2 organisations to help deliver programme.</p> <p>Roll out according to available resources.</p> <p>The capacity building programme has potential to reduce resources in the long term whilst achieving many benefits for the community.</p>	<p>Programme of priorities developed by conservation and policy staff.</p> <p>Programme managed by policy and technical staff, working with communities with some input and sign-off by conservation officers to suit available time.</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout duration of strategy, programme rolled out over 12 years</p>	<p>Develop programme of priorities to review areas with timescales, including those for full, interim or 'rapid' review.</p> <p>Consider areas suitable for a pilot scheme.</p> <p>Set up process for monitoring progress and impact.</p>	<p>Set up process for training community and carry out a pilot review working with community groups.</p> <p>Develop capacity building following pilot scheme</p> <p>Carry out any other reviews as set out in programme</p> <p>Adoption of Lympstone extension</p>	<p>Ongoing reviews</p> <p>For each 3 year period aim for average of 3 reviews per year, including community assisted appraisals</p> <p>This gives a total of 36 reviews over 12 years but potential for more reviews depending on success of capacity building and availability of grant funding.</p>	<p>Ongoing reviews</p> <p>Average of 3 reviews per year including community assisted appraisals</p>
	<p>Prepare bespoke methods of reviewing different types of conservation area, for example a rapid review for some conservation areas without BUABs to minimise time taken.</p> <p>Set up process for communities to help deliver reviews through a pilot scheme.</p> <p>Prepare appraisals, reviews and management plans.</p> <p>Designate new areas where boundary change needed including consultation</p>	<p>Include rapid review and previous work as well as bespoke methods to minimise programme and resources</p> <p>Recognised benefits for the community</p> <p>Long term impact on protection of assets</p>							



Objectives Theme B	Actions and tasks	Priority / Cost Impact	Financial Resources	Staff resources	Estimated time	2018-19	2019-22	2022 -25	2025-28 + 2018 - 31
	Provide information and a link to Historic England heritage assets at risk on the Council webpage.	Statutory duty, high priority. Will help with monitoring assets at risk	none	Policy or conservation staff	Minimal input with occasional updates	Add link to Council webpage	Occasional updates	Occasional updates	Occasional updates
<b>Monitor Heritage Assets at Risk</b>	<p>Monitor heritage assets at risk where possible, including a survey of Grade II assets in selected conservation areas. Develop a programme, with priorities.</p> <p>The programme can start with a training facility which has been set up by Historic England, potentially starting in the eastern part of the District not surveyed previously. A pilot scheme involving the community could be set up for a conservation area where there is an active neighbourhood planning / historic interest group, and linked to the pilot conservation area appraisal.</p>	<p>High priority through the NPPF.</p> <p>Awareness of assets at risk can help focus action and inform programmes.</p> <p>Recognised benefits for the community</p> <p>Potential for long term impact on protection of assets</p>	<p>Current Grade II training material available on line through Historic England.</p> <p>Also some localised projects with training for monitoring other grades / scheduled monuments, in partnership with HE and the AONBs</p>	<p>Policy staff to facilitate, some input from Historic England and conservation team (on priorities).</p> <p>Potential grant from Historic England through the capacity building programme</p>	<p>Main contribution from local community, with training initially.</p> <p>Trained groups to take projects forward in longer term</p>	<p>Develop programme of priorities.</p> <p>Establish processes to facilitate training and process data.</p> <p>Consider a suitable pilot scheme</p>	<p>Run pilot scheme, monitor full range of criteria on input, output, outcomes and impact to measure success and inform future schemes.</p>	<p>Roll out programme depending on success and within available resources</p>	<p>Continue programme within available resources</p>
<b>Establish a local list of non-designated assets</b>	<p>Produce a draft policy document advising communities on procedures for a Local List, with guidance on selection criteria, for public consultation.</p> <p>Receive submissions from communities and historic groups.</p> <p>Develop a programme starting with specific areas to be manageable for staff.</p>	<p>Medium priority as not a statutory duty. However positive impact on planning process and benefits for local communities</p>		<p>Policy staff, input from conservation team</p> <p>Much of the work by community prior to submission of entries.</p>	<p>Considerable input to set up list but less time needed for annual maintenance</p>	<p>Public consultation on the Local List guide.</p> <p>Set up process and pilot for first areas.</p>	<p>Roll out to other areas along with available staff resources</p>	<p>Roll out programme if needed and maintain list</p>	<p>Roll out programme if needed and maintain list</p>
<b>Encourage development which enhances distinctiveness</b>	<p>Provide further guidance which address the most common issues, much from Historic England.</p> <p>Provide information on the sourcing of local materials.</p>	<p>Medium priority, moderate impact on renewal and new development.</p>		<p>Conservation and policy staff</p>	<p>Short term staff input with occasional review</p>				

Objectives Theme C	Action and tasks	Priority / notes	Financial resources	Staff resources	Estimated time	2018-19	2019-22	2022 -25	2025-28 and 2018 - 31
Promote a better understanding of the value of heritage	Provide information through the strategy and website.	Medium priority		Policy and conservation staff	Moderate, short term, with occasional updates	Ongoing, updates	Ongoing, updates	Ongoing, updates	Ongoing, updates
Work with partners and corporately to identify joint projects and maximise funding	Increase attendance at partnership meetings to work towards common goals	Medium priority, potential high impact with identified projects	Pool any resources with partners for maximum benefit	Policy staff	Regular meetings	Regular meetings	Regular meetings	Regular meetings	Regular meetings
	Create Council working group to work towards joint objectives and co-ordinate projects and programmes. Provide website links to regeneration, economy and tourism sectors.	Medium priority, potential high impact with identified projects and programmes		Environmental health, economic development conservation and policy staff.	Regular meetings to suit staff availability	Regular meetings	Regular meetings	Regular meetings	Regular meetings
	Work with others to identify projects and sources of funding	Medium	Potential to attract grant aid	Policy staff	Moderate, depending on success of project	Ongoing depending on project	Ongoing depending on project	Ongoing depending on project	Ongoing depending on project
Work with communities	Facilitate, or advise on, a range of training opportunities especially for neighbourhood planning / community groups with an interest in heritage	Medium	Included in theme B training	Policy staff	Included in theme B training	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Produce a template to guide neighbourhood planning groups in site assessments in relation to heritage	Medium		Policy staff	Minimal, short term				