



Committee report

Committee	Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Regeneration, Planning, Housing and the Environment
Date	1 February 2018
Title	Partnership working: Isle of Wight Heritage Service
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment and Heritage

SUMMARY

The increasing importance of partnership working to the work of the Isle of Wight Heritage Service is set out, and examples of current practice and future plans given.

BACKGROUND

The only Cultural Strategy produced for the Isle of Wight covered the period 2004-08, and was given the title "Adding the Sparkle". This document was facilitated by the Isle of Wight Council and, in line with DCMS recommendations, embraced the widest definition of culture, including the performing and visual arts, heritage, libraries, the built heritage, sports, parks and open places, tourism and informal leisure pursuits. The aim was to develop a strategic framework to sustain and develop the Island's cultural assets and values for the benefit of residents and visitors. The strategy referred to the need to develop partnerships, raise and target resources and increase cultural opportunities.

In 2013 a Heritage Conference was held at Osborne. This, too, was facilitated by the Isle of Wight Council in the hope of encouraging a wide range of organisations to take a share in developing the heritage offer on the Island. There were sessions on Heritage Tourism, the creation of a virtual Heritage Hub, and on making collections more accessible.

Although both of these initiatives were successful, and useful for ideas, evidence suggests that neither made a step-change to the position on the Isle of Wight. However throughout this period there has been good co-operation at a curatorial level between the accredited museums which sit in the Isle of Wight Museums Forum. This has included offering advice, mentoring, and joining together in small scale shared projects such as access audit training.

Resilience Partnership:

In 2016 the Isle of Wight Council's Heritage Service, in partnership with Carisbrooke Castle Museum, Classic Boat Museum, Dimbola Museum and Galleries, and Quay Arts, was successful in obtaining an Arts Council England (ACE) grant of 100k to improve sector resilience. These organisations wanted to improve their reach, efficiency and inventiveness.

In early 2017 this consortium commissioned reports setting out the impact of the heritage sector on the Island economy. It audited where those organisations were, and how this fitted into developments nationally. One of the reports was described as a cultural strategy, but did not seek to replicate the breadth of the 2004 report. It focussed on the needs of the partners in the Resilience bid, and of a number of heritage and arts organisations who were invited to contribute their thoughts about what the sector needed. An action plan to deliver these improvements was drawn up, and a copy of this key document is attached to this report. The current Hidden Heroes campaign, celebrating a range of figures who have made a significant impact on the Island or their local community, or who stand for a value which is central to our how we see ourselves, is a small element of this work. A leadership summit for those in the sector and a range of their colleagues was arranged for the 29th January 2017.

Leadership summit and Mendoza Report:

The recent Mendoza review of the English Museum Sector, commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport emphasizes the importance of museums working in partnership to improve efficiency, and so that their own work can be aligned to wider priorities that their governing bodies may have. The report highlighted the work of the Cornwall Museum Partnership. This is a body which supports museums in the area and promotes collaborative projects and programmes; it is able to draw in funders from bodies like Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the local authority through an investment board which has made a significant impact. Emmie Kell who is the Chief Executive of this partnership will speak at the Leadership Conference about the Cornish example, as a starting point for considering a possible model for partnership here.

The aim is to make the case for a joined up / collaborative and strategic approach to the arts and heritage sector on the Isle of Wight, and to see how a model for future co-operation, appropriate to the Isle of Wight can be achieved. This is in keeping with national funders' clear preference for bids which demonstrate evidence of partnership working.

Examples of partnerships and co-operative project work

- Cultural Education Partnership (CEP)
- Great Place scheme, with the AONB.
- Time and Tide with Independent Arts.
- "Time" theme at Portsmouth Cathedral. Loan of material by Dinosaur Isle.

- Isle of Wight Family History Society. Volunteer projects at the Record Office supervised by other members of the Society.
- The Curator of Human History is the Vice Chair of the Hampshire Solent Museum Development advisory panel and is museum mentor for the Classic Boat Museum.
- The Record Office part of a consortium of 11 local authority archives in the south, co-operating on digital preservation and cataloguing to improve accessibility.
- Heritage Service Manager provides support to a range of projects and funding bids, and advice where appropriate, most recently to the Wight Aviation Museum.
- Loan of items for display where conditions are appropriate in terms of environmental and security conditions: examples include the Royal Yacht Britannia Trust, Southampton Art Gallery, Quay Arts, Ventnor Botanic Garden, Isle of Wight Steam Railway, St Marys Hospital and the Historic Ryde Society.
- Event participation: includes: the Festival of British Archaeology, Heritage Open Days, Hullabaloo, and the Cultural Expo.
- Conservation advice and work. Restoration of the original Blue Jenny statue at Carisbrooke Castle Museum. Treatment of algae growth through ultra-violet light at Newport Roman Villa. Pioneering work on reburial techniques for archaeological material through reburial.
- Isle of Wight Local History Forum where local heritage organisations can exchange information and knowledge. This can also be a vehicle for training where there is sufficient interest in the topic.
- Heritage Education works with schools and other organisations on the delivery of education and projects. Includes the Annual Evacuee Living History Week at Havenstreet, a Memories Matter project funded by the Heritage Lottery alongside Carisbrooke Castle Museum and the Island Free School , and the delivery of Heritage Lottery project at Northwood Cemetery, with five local schools.
- International co-operation includes: Dinosaur Isle working alongside the Fukui Prefecture Dinosaur Museum, Japan to produce models based on items in our collections

Records and Archives

I understand that the committee wants to consider the options for the Islands archives, which has been the subject of considerable debate over the years. It is timely that the committee have asked to consider this as on the 13th February the Council is meeting with senior representatives of the National Archives service to consider the future options. With that in mind it is felt that this should be deferred to allow the outcomes of that meeting to be considered by scrutiny and it is recommended that this be included in the agenda for the 3rd of May 2018

APPENDICES ATTACHED

[Appendix 1](#): Cultural Strategy Delivery Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Adding the Sparkle: <https://www.iwight.com/azservices/documents/2782-D3-IW-Cultural-Strategy-2004-08.pdf>

Mendoza Report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-mendoza-review-an-independent-review-of-museums-in-england>

Hidden Heroes: <https://iwhiddenheroes.org.uk/>

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