

Hampshire 2050

The importance of Our heritage

Heritage is an essential contributor to quality of life. It is valued by the majority of people and as such deserves consideration in how we continue to appreciate it in our future. As an essential aspect of quality of life it needs to be measured against considerations which illuminate this role;

- Local identity,
- Sense of place,
- Sense of community,
- Recreation,
- Well being,
- Economy

Hampshire in 2050 should still be a place with a rich heritage, that has a sustainable future and that continues to contribute to the quality of Hampshire as place to live, work and visit. To achieve this, the heritage, along with all aspects of the environment in which we live, needs to be a consideration in the aims, ambitions, objectives, strategies and policies of government, local government, and communities.

This Common Inheritance White Paper 1990

John Stuart Mill "Is there not the earth itself, its forest and waters, above and below the surface? These are the inheritance of the human race..., this common inheritance. No function of government is less optional than the regulation of these things, or more completely involved in the idea of a civilised society"

This Common Inheritance is the title of the Government's environmental strategy issued in 1990 espousing the principles of environment protection, conservation and merit that continues to act on policy today. It recognises the first principle as 'an aspiration for quality of life'; that is healthier living, protecting our surroundings and passing on what we value most to our children. Economic growth is not an end in itself but provides us with the means to live better fuller lives. It also recognises that as we cannot calibrate with precision the effect of environmental policies so political judgement has a central role.

Heritage is in the common place of our lives as well as in the icons of the past. It is the buildings and monuments, the cities, towns and villages, the landscape, archaeological sites, road patterns, paths and vegetation. It is as great and notable as Winchester Cathedral and as local and lowly as a sash window in a cottage. It is both the tourist honey pot and the subtle patina of the past found everywhere.

As far as possible we should work with these inheritances, including the heritage, to conserve and enhance them, and in doing so not only protect that which we value but wherever we can improve them through influencing change.

Our heritage is an irreplaceable resource, and should not be needlessly or thoughtlessly damaged or removed.

National Planning Policy Framework 2018 para 184 Heritage assets ...“are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.” Para 185 recognises the need to seek viable uses consistent with conservation; the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place. Continued viable use will be an important objective through the economic, technological and environmental changes that can be anticipated.

Heritage of Hampshire 2050

The heritage of Hampshire in 2050 should be as rich, varied and vibrant as it is now and more effectively used to support an increasing quality of life. As far as possible it shouldn't be eroded (certainly not needlessly or thoughtlessly, only by necessity and appropriate to importance) and where possible it should have been enhanced, in physical fabric, setting, access or understanding. It should continue to contribute to what makes Hampshire unique and makes it a place, landscape and community in which people wish to live, work and visit.

This will require policies which protect, enhance and utilise the heritage, as exist in the planning system and which should be extended to other areas of local government influence. Hampshire County Council should be an advocate to government for the importance of policies to conserve and enhance our sense of place and identity to include an understanding of the role of heritage, and means to grasp opportunities for the heritage to play a positive part in our lives.

This will require the continued maintenance of an 'evidence base', the data and understanding that underpins decisions.

It would require access to expert advice within policy making and decision making, whether within planning, agri-environmental, economic or social contexts.

Opportunities of change through time

It is likely that the definition of heritage will evolve during this period, for example Cold War archaeology might acquire a heritage status, or the archaeology of other social, military, transport or landscape infrastructure might emerge as valued by future generations just as the things from our past were once the present era without reference to heritage. The Castle, the Abbey, the canal, the steam train, the Second World War have each in turn transitioned from one generation's everyday to another generation's heritage. It is important to allow the heritage to evolve to meet the needs and expectations of the community.

It would be nice to see a greater emphasis on the practical harnessing of the power of heritage in sense of place and sense of community. It is currently under utilised and only weakly articulated. Its potential role in health and well being issues is largely overlooked and unrealised. Greater emphasis on community awareness and access to their heritage, the greater use of heritage in social initiatives and the greater use of heritage in education and recreation opportunities would all be welcome evolutions and might be greatly enhanced by coming technologies.

This may enable a counterbalance between the inevitable physical change of context and the emerging technological opportunities of access and presentation. Enable, promote or extend the use of the heritage within;

- the community, Education, Recreation,
- Volunteer roles that promote social inclusion/integration and Volunteer roles that promote physical and mental health and well being.
- An understanding, appreciation and pride in sense of place and community heritage, cohesiveness
- Physical access to promote physical activity, such as walking (destination, incentive, inspiration) and in physical and mental recovery (eg operation nightingale)

Our heritage has more potential and capacity to 'serve' the community than is currently harnessed. This, in my opinion, arises from the need in the current political and economic context to promote heritage only in confined and defined contexts; heritage as recreation, heritage as tourism, heritage as destination. But if between now and 2050 the role of heritage in quality of life is released it can address a wider set of outcomes. How people will enjoy..., how it gives satisfaction,... pleasure, ...consolation,... equal access.... support ... inspiration.... community.... Reassurance,... perspective. The things that allow heritage to assist in quality of life, and physical and mental well being rather than being constrained to a role that expresses itself as economic, educational and recreational activity.

Agents of Change

Just as an appreciation of what is heritage and what is valued will change, so will the context in which heritage is managed. These are likely to be the economic context, impacts of climate change and food and fuel security.

Climate Change

The impacts of climate change on heritage are difficult to anticipate. Sea level rise might imperil low lying historic towns, such as Portsmouth. The value of the heritage should be accommodated within the calculation of cost/value when considering coastal protection.

It is likely that historic buildings will need to be adapted to 21st century use, both in terms of being sustainable and habitable. It is important to ensure that the process of adaptation, no matter how inevitable, is sympathetic. Adaptation to modern needs and climate should be possible but may not be easy and understanding how adaptation might take place is important. By 2050 it should be possible to adapt a building to 21st century needs whilst retaining its essential historic character. (flexibility of design, combining new and old materials, utilising new technologies, flexibility of conservation objectives).

Historic buildings or their setting might need to be adapted to flood risk. Traditional building and roofing materials might struggle in warmer wetter stormier climates and might need to be revisited with new materials, coatings or embedded technologies. It is important to ensure that all care and effort is taken to ensure that the quality and value of the historic buildings is not compromised by the necessary works to adapt them.

Fuel Security

It is likely that climate change will impact the historic landscape in a number of ways. Agricultural crops chosen for farming and native vegetation may change through time. The need for sustainable fuels and issues of fuel security are likely to increase the degree of fuel generation from within the landscape (wind turbines, solar farms, energy crops, digesters) and a proportion of the landscape will be set aside from food production (or indeed conservation) for energy production. This is inevitable and will bring changes. Consideration should be given to retaining as far as possible the essentials of the historic (and natural biodiversity and habitats) of the landscape whilst embracing the necessity of inevitable change.

Food Security

Likewise the issue of food security is also likely to change the way the landscape looks. It will be a 21st century landscape for the needs of the 21st century. Changing climate may change the food crops selected; the need for self sufficiency in food production may increase the importance of food production from the landscape. Changing agricultural techniques (soil protection, water shortage, crop adaptation) and the structure of farming might also change, with more emphasis on seasonal production and extending seasonal availability through infrastructure (e.g. poly tunnels or buildings). We may see increased small scale market gardening around key population centres. This will change the character of the countryside, the capacity of the countryside to carry 'set aside' monuments and impact on the setting of important assets. These changes will be irresistible and large scale, and in will in most cases need to be embraced. However care should be taken where possible to protect the most important sites and their settings and to adapt sensitively and sympathetically. Inevitability should not be used to undermine the determination to adapt sympathetically.

Technology

Just as changing technologies will be reflected and harnessed in the adaption to climate change and agriculture, so we should anticipate that changing technologies will improve our ability to understand and enjoy our heritage. We should anticipate that there will inevitable changes that must be adapted to, but it might also be anticipated that new technology such as in the fields of remote sensing will allow more rapid analysis and thereby mitigation, or better access or understanding.

Technologies might change the way in which the heritage is accessed, on site or remotely, or indeed sites that have been lost. Part of the mitigation of inevitable change might be through new ways of appreciating (e.g. sharing and visiting) the heritage digitally, perhaps remotely, or perhaps through virtual reality and augmented reality.

Summary

In 2050 the heritage will exist in a different context, with different pressures. Inevitable change must be carefully guided to ensure that heritage remains rich and varied. Greater opportunity should be taken to use the heritage for the positive contribution it can make to community, place and life. Emerging and developing technologies will undoubtedly change and enhance those opportunities.

My Credentials

My name is David Hopkins and I am currently the archaeological advisor to Hampshire County Council and many of the district authorities in Hampshire and am based in the ETE Department. I have been part of the archaeology team at Hampshire County Council since 1992 and I have been the County Archaeologist since 1998.

I am responsible for ensuring that the Historic Environment Record is available as an evidence base for decisions, and with my team provide archaeological advice to 12 planning authorities, Hampshire County Council as a land owner, and response to consultation on agri environment schemes such as Countryside Stewardship and forestry works. I have experience and expertise in archaeology and planning, archaeological site management, the archaeology of Hampshire, and the historic landscape of Hampshire.

Prior to working for Hampshire County Council I fulfilled similar roles in Berkshire between 1987 and 1992, and prior to that was a field archaeologist.