



Title of meeting: Cabinet Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 1 October 2024

Subject: Portsmouth Heritage Strategy 2024-2034

Report by: Stephen Baily, Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Cabinet Member: Councillor Steve Pitt, Leader and Cabinet Member for Culture, Regeneration and Economic Development

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's approval for the Portsmouth Heritage Strategy 2024-2034.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Portsmouth Heritage Strategy 2024-2034 be adopted.

2.2 That progress reports be brought to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Regeneration and Economic Development

3. Background

3.1 The first Heritage Strategy for Portsmouth has been in development since 2020, and the consultation draft was approved by Cabinet on 27 July 2021.

3.2 We have worked closely with Historic England, who have provided feedback on several versions of the document. The Historic Places Panel visited Portsmouth in March 2023. The Panel, facilitated by Historic England, provides a broad spectrum of independent expertise and advice to help local authorities and others engage in the regeneration and revitalisation of historic places. As part of the process of developing the Strategy officers have also researched similar documents that have been produced by other local authorities.

3.3 Portsmouth has a high concentration of heritage assets for a city of this size, particularly taking into account the way that the city has evolved and changed.



Much of this heritage is a legacy of Portsmouth's history as a naval, dockyard and garrison town and many buildings associated with these roles have been preserved and protected. The city currently has 19 scheduled monuments, over 600 listed buildings (including 12 at Grade I), 3 registered parks and gardens and 25 Conservation Areas. Whilst the location of many of these is a reflection of how Portsmouth has developed around the Dockyard and how its defences evolved and grew, heritage is relevant to all parts of the city.

- 3.4 The city's biggest challenge is what we do with these assets. The Royal Society of Arts' Heritage Index published in 2020 ranks Portsmouth very highly for Heritage Assets (9th out of 316 local authorities), but lower - 124th - for activities. Other challenges to heritage include economic growth aspirations, wider socio-economic factors and environmental change.
- 3.5 Heritage is in itself a very broad concept, and even within Portsmouth City Council most of our directorates and services work with heritage in some way. This includes but is not limited to museums, archives, parks, planning and conservation, regeneration and property. We have adopted the UNESCO definition of tangible, intangible and natural heritage to reflect this broad remit.
- 3.6 Consultation has been undertaken with a wide range of stakeholder and partner organisations. We have a significant level of heritage organisations based in or working in Portsmouth, particularly for a city of this size. These include national level museums such as the National Museum of the Royal Navy and the Mary Rose, government agencies and the armed services, higher education in the University of Portsmouth and community groups and projects.
- 3.7 A number of key points emerged from the stakeholder consultation. Stakeholders wanted to see a more joined-up approach from PCC on our approach to heritage and consultees saw potential for networking and collaboration. There was a strong interest in intangible heritage, for example language, traditions and stories. Consultees also saw a clear relationship between heritage and culture, for example in how heritage inspires cultural outputs and how many of our cultural organisations work from heritage buildings. A focus on the whole city beyond Old Portsmouth and Southsea was welcomed.
- 3.8 This Strategy aims to set the city-wide and authority-wide context, form a strategic basis for more specific policy documents and provide a framework for projects and collaborations. The document will also highlight the potential for investment and support from funders.
- 3.9 The vision of the Heritage Strategy is 'to create a city where our heritage is understood, celebrated and integral to the city's life and success'. The aims of the Strategy are to: reinforce and develop Portsmouth's distinct historic identity; Invest in the fabric of historic assets and realise viable uses; and ensure that heritage is an integral part of the economic success for the city in the future.



- 3.10 Portsmouth City Council's work in recent years to develop the cultural and creative sectors, including the establishment of Portsmouth Creates and continuous dialogue with Arts Council England, is a template for what could be achieved working similarly with the heritage sector in the city and further afield. This work has also highlighted the importance of considering the local ecosystem of different types and sizes of heritage, and the relationship between heritage and culture.
- 3.11 The Heritage Strategy is part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. In particular the Strategy supports Chapter 11 (Heritage) and PLP 53 (Historic Environment) and PLP 54 (Listed Buildings).
- 3.12 The recent Levelling Up Bill made the maintenance of a Historic Environment Record a statutory responsibility, and a capital allocation was made in the 2024/25 budget for making the HER accessible online. It is anticipated that this will enhance understanding of the city's heritage.
- 3.13 Whilst the Strategy expresses an aspiration to review the Local List and to introduce an At Risk Register, these are not statutory duties and would require additional funding to deliver.
- 3.14 Portsmouth City Council has undertaken a number of key heritage projects recently. The Victoria Park National Lottery Heritage Fund project has recently completed its capital phase. Victoria Park is one of our three registered parks - the equivalent of listing - and the project has delivered a new community hub building, a refurbished aviary, repairs to a number of listed memorials and new interpretation and signage. Other successful heritage projects in the city include the Mary Rose Museum, the Hotwalls Studios, The D-Day Story and LCT 7074. The National Museum of the Royal Navy has also recently been awarded a first round pass by the NLHF for a new Royal Marines Museum in the Historic Dockyard.
- 3.15 Portsmouth City Council owns a high number of heritage assets throughout the city, from Southsea Castle to Forts Widley and Purbrook on Portsdown Hill. The City Council supports the care of these buildings through landlord maintenance and capital allocations.
- 3.16 As a result of the consultation process we have already established an informal Heritage Network within Portsmouth City Council. This enables colleagues in different directorates and services to meet and share information on projects, events and discuss potential collaborations. This network could in the future be extended to a city-wide initiative.
- 3.17 The Strategy includes a 'Portsmouth Formula', which it is proposed will be used to prioritise potential heritage projects. This will consider the status of heritage assets (for example if they are a scheduled monument, listed or in a conservation area), their condition (if they are considered to be at risk and/or have a condition survey completed) and the potential social, economic, cultural



and environmental impact of any funding or project. It is recognised that there is scope to consider how to better incorporate intangible heritage into the formula.

- 3.18 The Heritage Open Days offer in the city has been developing in recent years, from 37 separate events in 2021 to 75 in 2023. Heritage Open Days is a nationally recognised programme of free events, aimed at giving visitors access to venues or experiences that they might not normally be able to. Portsmouth City Council will continue to work with our partners to develop the offer in the city.
- 3.19 The Strategy will be published as a public-facing document and will be shared with key stakeholders. Reports will be brought to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Regeneration and Economic Development to outline progress, challenges and opportunities in delivering the Strategy.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 Portsmouth has a significant level of heritage assets, and a significant challenge faced by the City Council and our partners is developing sustainable uses that safeguard the future of buildings and sites. Other challenges to heritage include economic growth aspirations, wider socio-economic factors and environmental change.
- 4.2 Heritage matters a great deal to our residents and communities and visitors to the city. It can play an important role in fostering civic pride, a sense of togetherness and community cohesion, as well as delivering significant health and wellbeing benefits.
- 4.3 This Strategy advocates for Portsmouth's heritage and provide a basis for networking and relationship development with partners, stakeholders and funders. It will also provide a framework for other strategies and policies.

5. Integrated impact assessment

The Integrated Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 1.

6. Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications to this report. A Heritage Strategy is not a legal requirement. Although this report describes some statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority, such as the Local Plan and the Historic Environment Record, the Strategy does not make any changes to them.

7. Director of Finance's comments

Some of the activities proposed within this report are expected to be funded from the existing service portfolio budgets, as approved by Full Council. Others, particularly the reviewing the Local List and introducing an At Risk Register, would require additional funding. CIL money is also a potential avenue for



supporting heritage work in wards. The strategy aims to provide a sound basis for attracting external investment to support the city's heritage, and to provide a basis for targeting the city council's resources.

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Signed by:

Appendices

- 1. Portsmouth Heritage Strategy 2024-2034
- 2. Integrated Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: