Heritage Trust Network

ANNUAL REVIEW 2019-20

TRUSTEES

Liz Bates (Chair), Adam Hitchings, Brenda Turnbull, David Travis-Smith, Hopwood DePree, Jeremy Fenn, Judith Martin, Martin Hulse, Lorraine Bell, Tszwai So.

STAFF TEAM

Benjamin Parker, Development Officer
Beverley Gormley, Programme Manager
Sarah Pearce, Development Officer for Scotland
Vicki Cox, Membership Officer
Elizabeth Perkins, Interim Support

FUNDERS

Architectural Heritage Fund, Cadw, Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland, National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Trust for Scotland, Pilgrim Trust.

Cover image: the Back to the Future Walk, Newcastle © John Hipkin

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HERITAGE TRUST NETWORK

The Heritage Trust Network helps communities to rescue, restore and re-use historic buildings and places. We bring together grassroots organisations; charities and social enterprises bringing well-loved buildings, structures and spaces back to life.

To achieve this we:

- Encourage people to get involved in saving local heritage buildings and places by forming new community organisations or working through existing ones.
- Support these organisations to restore and re-use local heritage by providing information, advice, training, networking and peer-to-peer learning.
- Champion the work and raise the visibility of community heritage organisations; and highlight the range of public benefits they provide.
- Advocate for a legislative, policy and funding environment that facilitates grassroots action for heritage.

During 2019-20 our strategy was to:

- Increase the Network's membership and build more capacity for events and activities at a branch level across the UK.
- Work with a wider set of partners to deliver a quality events programme, online resources and membership benefits.
- Continue to make a strong case for financial support for the organisation and identify new sources of income.

LIZ BATES

Chair of the Trustees

As trustees of the Heritage Trust Network, we continue to be inspired and motivated by our members, who are all working to deliver challenging projects for the benefit of their communities. Often working on intractable cases of heritage at risk, our members are not for profit organisations and individuals who are determined to breathe new life into these historic places. People underestimate the skill, determination and resilience that it takes to achieve this, and the Network is there to offer support, guidance and camaraderie every step of the way.

As the impact of COVID-19 makes this challenge even greater, I would like to thank my fellow trustees, our staff, our partners and supporters for continuing to sustain the Network when it is needed the most.

The achievements of 2019-20 for our organisation and our membership are set out within this Annual Review and we look forward to working with you all to continue to strengthen the Network and its support of communities across the UK in the future.

2019-20: GROWTH, CHANGE AND CHALLENGE

During the year, we continued to grow our membership from 271 organisations and individuals at the beginning of the year to over 300 by the end. The membership continues to diversify in terms of the geographical spread across the UK and the type of organisation participating in the Network. This is important for encouraging new ideas, giving peer-to-peer support and sharing expertise and resources.

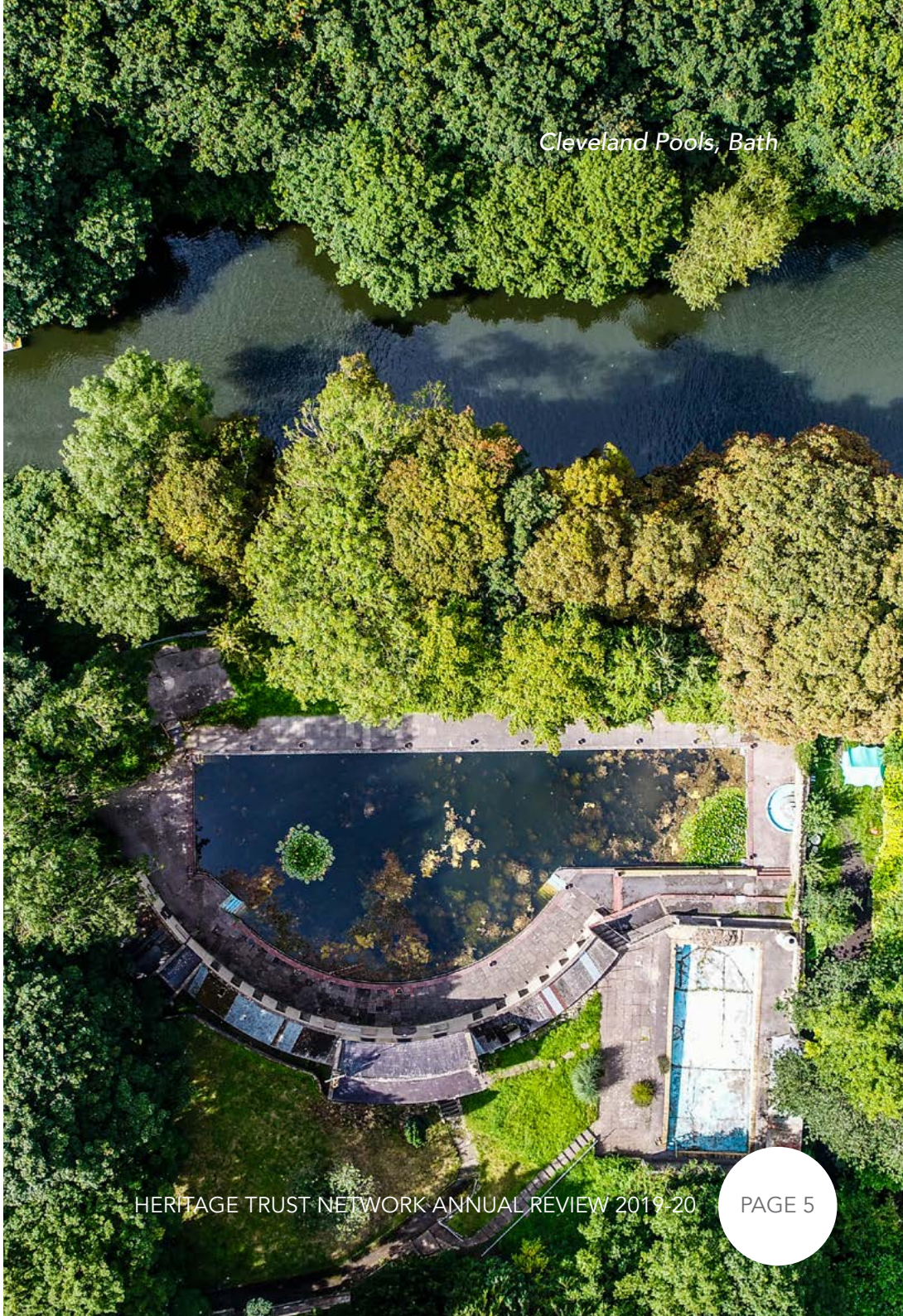
The Network exists for the benefit of our membership, and our primary aim is to support our members in achieving their ambitions for heritage-led regeneration. This year, we provided support to our members by:

- Providing advice and mentoring support through a referral system, matching start-up members with experienced full members. Towards the end of this year, a formal mentoring programme was created to help members in urgent need of help because of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Developing the members' section of the website, which includes our Toolkit of resources to support members at all stages of their projects and our Talent Bank of recommended professional experts.
- Working with our branches in the UK's nations and regions to organise networking and peer-learning events. Ten such events were held in Bristol, Edinburgh, Inverurie, Inverness, Llanelli, Llanfyllin, Nottingham, Suffolk, Stirling and Taunton involving over 400 participants.
- Representing members' interests to the UK's central and devolved governments, funders and other stakeholders.
- Growing the Network's social media presence. We have widened our social media platforms to include Instagram and LinkedIn to connect with new audiences.
- Further expanding the website with new content from our conference on high street regeneration. There were over 22,000 views of our website.
- Holding discussions with a range of arts and heritage groups, such as the Community Land Trusts, Historic Religious Buildings Alliance and museum development teams, and establishing links to youth organisations to bring young people into the heart of the Network's decision making.
- Continuing to enhance our partnerships with other significant organisations in the sector and signing memorandums of understanding with Historic England and the Charity Finance Group. We formed a working partnership with Locality and Stir to Action. Close partnership working with the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) and its staff has ensured that the Network's members with eligible projects are seriously considered for AHF grants and loans.

Funding success meant that our staff team could grow and in February we appointed Beverley Gormley as Programme Manager for the National Lottery Heritage Fund project *Unlocking the Power of Communities*. Bev joined Membership Officer, Vicki Cox and Development Officer for Scotland, Sarah Pearce on the staff team. Benjamin Parker, our Development Officer moved on at the end of 2019, and we were grateful to Elizabeth Perkins who provided interim support. Further funding from Historic England has enabled the appointment of the Network's first Chief Executive in May 2020.

Towards the end of this year, the COVID-19 pandemic started to affect the Network and its members, and the team adapted quickly to provide member benefits through digital resources. This included the delivery of online events early in 2020-21, re-focusing our mentoring programme towards COVID-19 support, and creating a dedicated COVID-19 section of Toolkit that brings together relevant information on funding, support and strategies for re-opening.

> ***A formal mentoring programme was created to help members in urgent need of help because of the COVID-19 crisis.***



Cleveland Pools, Bath

CONFERENCE, DERRY/LONDONDERRY

A highlight of the Network calendar each year is our Annual Conference, and in 2019 it was held in Derry/Londonderry in partnership with the Inner City Trust, Derry City & Strabane Council and the Architectural Heritage Fund. The theme of the conference was the community-led regeneration of high streets and the event highlighted the important role of our members in the new initiatives developing across the UK.

The conference was well attended with over 130 people taking part. Our keynote speakers were Patrice Frey and Ed McMahon from Main Street America. The movement, based on heritage-led regeneration that harnesses the ingenuity and entrepreneurialism of the local community, was inspiring for delegates. Other speakers provided a range of insights into how high streets could be reimagined. Attendees commented on the excellent opportunity the conference offered for networking, and the availability of student bursaries ensured that the event was accessible for those looking to begin a career in the sector. One of these students has since joined the Northern Ireland branch committee.

More than 130 people attended the Network's 2019 conference

Our thanks go to the partners for their financial contributions, their help with the organisation of the event, and the fantastic hospitality shown during the conference. We would also like to thank our sponsors for their contributions:

- Architectural Heritage Fund
- Buttress Architects
- Chiene + Tait
- Derry City and & Strabane District Council
- Hayes Parsons Insurance Brokers
- Inner City Trust
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Northern Ireland Department for Communities
- Rodney Melville + Partners
- Ulster University

SCOTLAND

Report by Sarah Pearce, Development Officer for Scotland and Lorraine Bell, Branch Chair and Scotland Trustee.

During 2019-20 the Network's Scotland branch held four events, in Edinburgh, Stirling, Inverurie and Inverness. A fifth event was planned for March 2020 in Glasgow but had to be postponed due to COVID-19. The Scotland committee met at intervals during the year, to stay up to date with Network news and to direct the work of the Development Officer for Scotland.

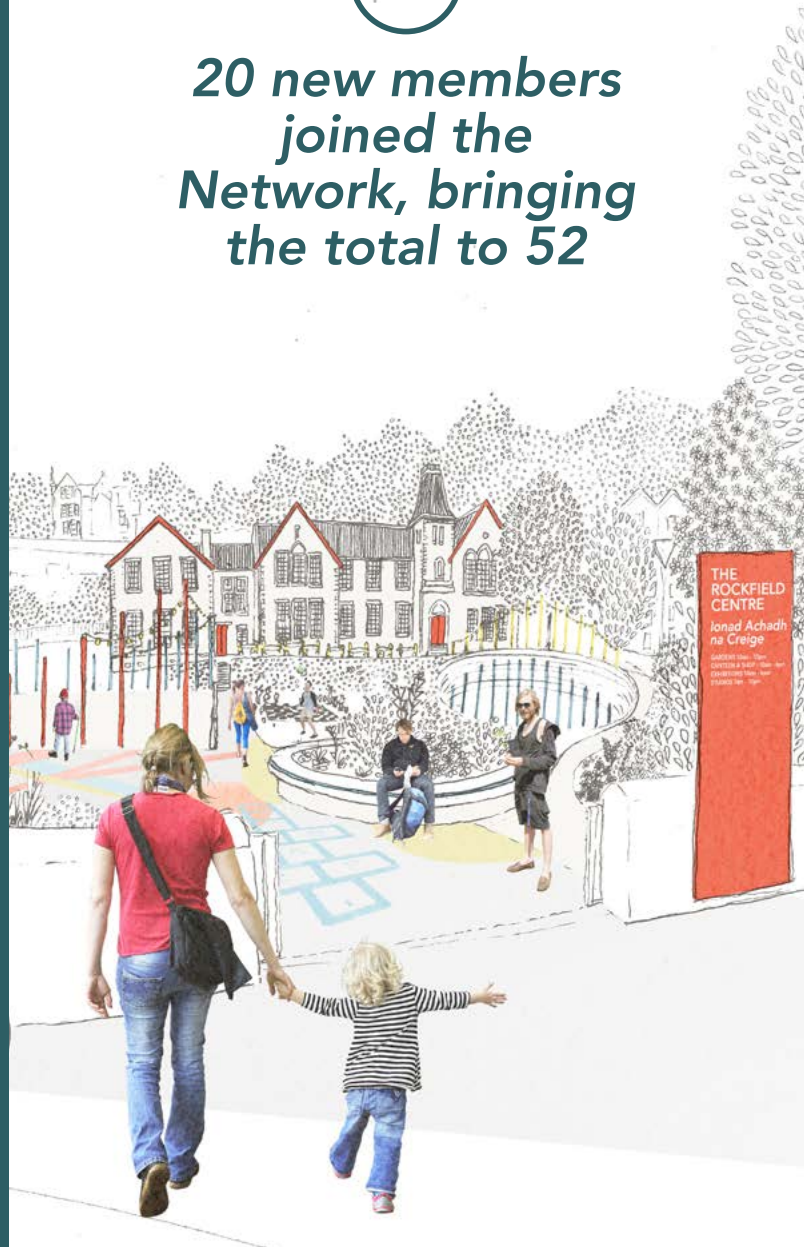
We attracted 20 new Network members in Scotland, bringing the total to 52; a great indicator of the need for the Network in Scotland. This influx was fairly consistent throughout the year and mainly consisted of community organisations.

Great success was had by a number of members, including the Rockfield Centre in Oban, who after years of hard work and fundraising, completed the major capital works stage of their project to regenerate a Victorian former school in the centre of town. Fife Employment Access Trust, working with another the Network member Fife Historic Buildings Trust (FHBT), secured £374,600 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to develop their proposals for Silverburn Flax Mill. FHBT also helped secure £2.25 million from NLHF and Historic Environment Scotland for its latest Townscape Heritage Initiative and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme in partnership with Fife Council, for Inverkeithing.

The Development Officer for Scotland continued to promote the Network through social media, events, conferences and meetings, both within and outwith the heritage sector. Sarah Pearce was invited to join the Our Place in Time (heritage strategy for Scotland) volunteer working group, a positive recognition of the contribution the Network makes to the voluntary sector.

Right: artist's impression of the Rockfield Centre, Oban.
© Page\Park www.pagepark.co.uk

> ***20 new members joined the Network, bringing the total to 52***



FORRES TOWN HALL

Forres Area Community Trust, Moray, Scotland

Prominently located on the High Street of the historic burgh of Forres and within the town's Conservation Area, the importance of Forres Town Hall is reflected in its listing under Category B by Historic Environment Scotland. It has played a significant role at the heart of the local community for nearly two centuries since it was built in 1829.

When Moray Council took the decision to close Forres Town Hall completely in 2017, the Forres Area Community Trust stepped in to lease and manage the building on behalf of the community. The Trust have worked with user groups to increase occupancy. Use of the building doubled in the first 12 months. A wide range of groups including Forres & District Pipe Band, the Varis Players, Film Forres and the Forres branch of the Royal Scottish County Dance Society have been able to continue using this space. During lockdown the Town Hall has served as a hub for the Forres & Kinloss community food project which has allocated over 1,000 meals since May of this year.

In February 2020 the Trust was awarded £116,365 by the Scottish Land Fund to purchase the hall. The asset transfer should be completed by the end of 2020. In November 2020 the Trust received planning permission and listed building consent for a proposal to transform the hall, creating a multi-purpose performance area and a smaller event space, improved, more welcoming access, and flexible spaces for the community and social enterprises.

Forres Area Community Trust joined the Network in March 2019 and have been supported by our Development Officer for Scotland.

WALES

Report from Adam Hitchings, Wales Trustee and interim Wales branch representative.

This year has seen the collaboration between the Network and the Architectural Heritage Fund in Wales continue to strengthen. The Architectural Heritage Fund's Support Officer, Adam Hitchings, was appointed as the Network's Wales Trustee in December 2019 and organised events as the interim Wales branch representative.

In May, Adam made a presentation to the South Wales Funding Advisors Network attended by staff from the voluntary service councils. This talk raised awareness of the support and advice available to community-led organisations through the Network's membership. This was followed in January 2020 by a presentation to the Wales Heritage Group on Network activities and priorities for the coming years.

Two branch meetings were arranged; one in the south (Llanelli) and another in the north (Llanfyllin). These were scheduled to take place in the middle of March and were able to be delivered as in-person events. However, the number of delegates were lower than expected as a result of COVID-19 in the lead up to the formal lockdown. In spite of this, feedback was positive and two new members joined following the meeting.

> ***Following well-received branch meetings, two new members joined.***

CIRCUS ERUPTION

Swansea, Wales

Circus Eruption was founded in 1991 as the first integrated youth circus in the UK. It provides a safe and supportive space for young people to learn circus skills. In April 2019 they completed the purchase of the former St Luke's Church on Stepney Street, Cwmbwrla.

Circus Eruption's tenancy was coming to an end in summer 2018 and they risked becoming homeless. Fortunately, a supporter offered an informal loan and St Luke's, which they already had their eye on, came up for auction. They got in touch with the owner who agreed to take it off the market to allow them time to explore how they could purchase it.

Circus Eruption needed a big, high room to run circus activities and the former church was perfect for that purpose. However, they had to ensure that the building was sound and could be renovated to meet their needs, that they would be able to look after a Grade II listed building, and that local people wanted them there. These were not easy questions for a small inclusion charity to answer. Buying a building was a huge step but numerous visits to the site with construction and heritage experts, joining Heritage Trust Network and meetings with local community leaders convinced them to go ahead. They hope have the building ready for use by spring 2021.

Circus Eruption joined the Network in April 2019 and has benefited from using our online Toolkit.

ENGLAND

Report from Benjamin Parker, Development Officer and Elizabeth Perkins, Interim Support.

With support from Historic England, the team continued to support members throughout England with advice, queries and referrals for mentoring.

Benjamin Parker actively represented the Network at a range of meetings across England, sharing member learning and exhibiting at events. Following his departure others picked up the work: Sarah McLeod and Elizabeth Perkins both gave talks to post-graduate heritage management students about our work at the universities of Reading, Birmingham and Cambridge; and Beverley Gormley promoted us at a heritage conference in Lincolnshire. Trustees have also taken up every opportunity to speak about the Network and the benefits of membership at events across the UK. The team has continued to help develop the branch network, including recruiting new volunteers to lead the branches in the North West and South East.

Branch events:

- **East of England**
  What's the Plan? Finding Your End Use (May 2019 – 80 attendees)
  Venue: Ickworth House
  In partnership with the National Trust & East of England Historic Environment Forum
- **Midlands**
  Meanwhile: Temporary Use and Protecting Vacant Historic Buildings
  (July 2019 – 28 attendees) Venue: Cathedral Hall, Nottingham
- **South West**
  What's the Plan? Finding Your End Use (April 2019)
  Venue: Somerset Rural Life Museum – South West Heritage Trust
  Re-imagining Buildings for Sustainable Futures (September 2019)
  Venue: The Station, Bristol

Right: © Historic England Archives: James O Davies

CLEVELAND POOLS

Bath, England

Cleveland Pools, opened in 1817, is a crescent-shaped lido in Bath and is believed to be the oldest public outdoor swimming pool in the UK. It had a colourful history through to its heyday in the 1970s but was closed to swimming in 1984.

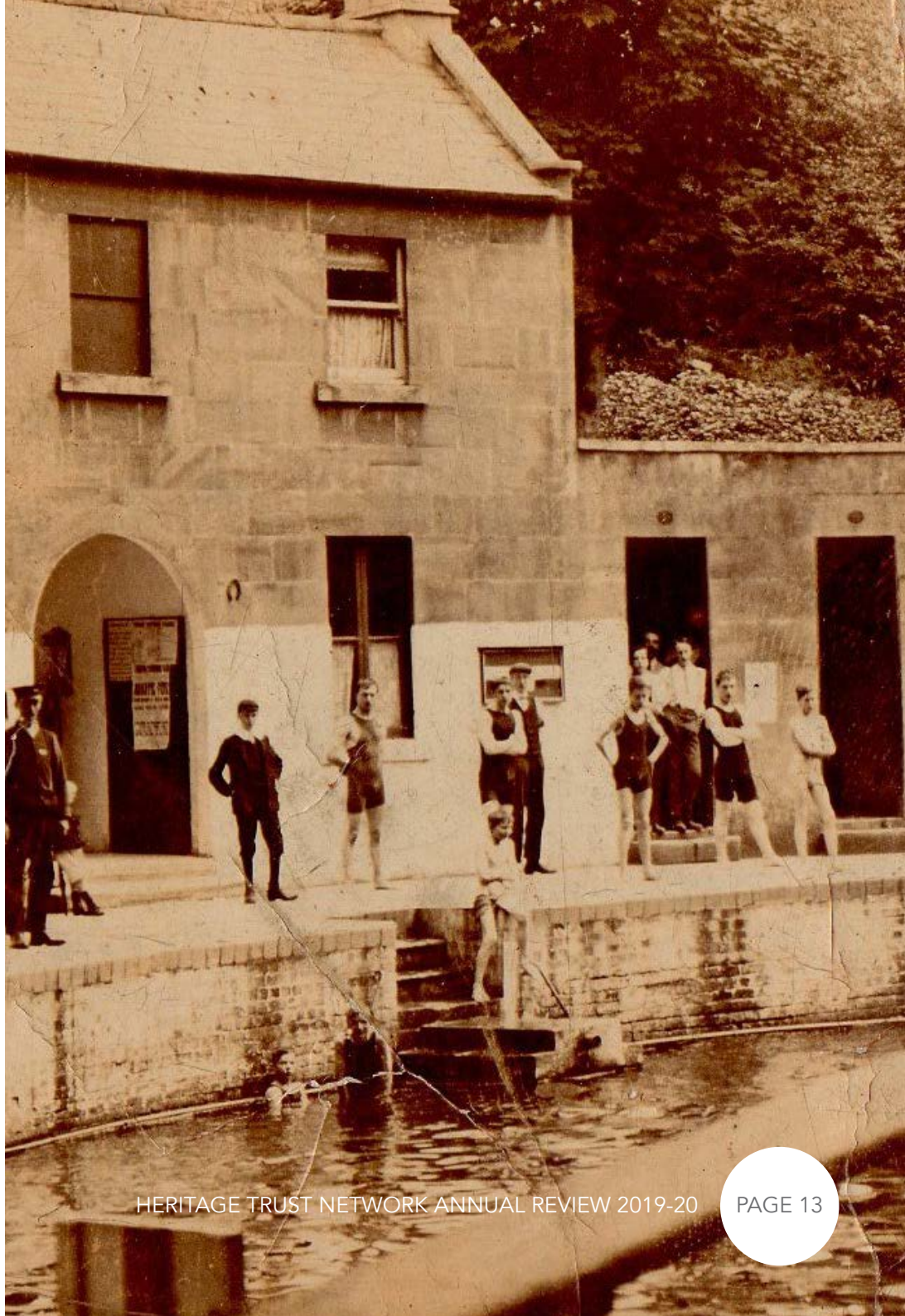
The Cleveland Pools Trust was formed in 2005 to rescue the pools from dilapidation. In 2006 its listed building status was raised from II to II*.

With £4.7 million funding secured from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and a loan from the Architectural Heritage Fund, the Trust appointed a full-time director in June 2019 to manage and deliver the project, which is scheduled to open to the public in summer 2022.

Plans include the restoration of the main pool and the largely unaltered listed buildings. The central cottage will be restored as the main entrance and pay-point, and there will be new facilities and improved access. A new river pontoon will allow visitors to arrive by boat. A heritage exhibition and learning space will allow for education programmes in partnership with local museums.

An extensive programme of community involvement including walks and tours had been planned for the duration of the delivery period and beyond. Some of these activities had to be put on hold due to COVID-19, but many have been progressed using virtual technology and creative adaptation of ideas.

Cleveland Pools Trust is a long-standing member of the Network.



NORTHERN IRELAND

Report from Brenda Turnbull, Branch Chair and Northern Ireland Trustee.

The focus in Northern Ireland was hosting the Network's Annual Conference which involved recruiting sponsors, core funders and speakers for the event.
Much of the work in the Northern Ireland branch, which has direct access to Government departments, involves lobbying on behalf of our membership for the inclusion of support for the heritage sector in the Draft Programme for Government for Northern Ireland. Brenda Turnbull and Helen Quigley represented the Network on many Government stakeholder forums.

The Network lobbies for issues such as:

- updating the Buildings At Risk Register, which has now been achieved
- giving communities a steer as to where there are opportunities in their areas
- Community Asset Transfer (a new initiative in Northern Ireland) and how to make the case for asset transfers. The branch held a workshop on this subject with a strong turnout from organisations, communities, property owners and government departments
- enforcement in conservation areas
- training, recognition and accreditation of heritage skills
- promoting, managing and accrediting volunteering
- the potential to restore, retrofit and find sustainable uses for pre-1919 housing
- new uses for former military bases and land

Towards the end of the year, attention turned to post-COVID-19 recovery plans for the sector.

Right: participants in the Network's 2019 Annual Conference, which was held in Derry/Londonderry.

GRACEHILL OLD SCHOOL TRUST

Gracehill, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

Gracehill Old School Trust has been working on a project to restore a listed shop dating from 1787. Funding has come via the Department of Agriculture Village Catalyst Fund with the support of the Architectural Heritage Fund.

The shop is part of the historic purpose-built Moravian Church settlement of Gracehill which was Northern Ireland's first conservation area. It ceased trading during the 1970s and had lain vacant since the demise of its last owners. Added to the heritage at risk register in 2016, work towards its long-term restoration and reuse is nearly complete. This is an innovative community and social enterprise project, led by Gracehill Old School Trust in partnership with the NOW Group, a social enterprise supporting people with learning difficulties and autism by providing training and jobs in the catering and hospitality industry. The project will soon see the building reused as a small-scale visitor attraction, tearoom and holiday accommodation.

The project is just one of a number of successful projects led by Gracehill Old School Trust including, as its name suggests, the restoration of the village's old school and the village square.

Gracehill Old School Trust is a long-standing member of the Network.

Right: © David Bunting Images NI

Image © John Hipkin

THE BACK TO THE FUTURE WALK

Ouseburn Trust, Newcastle, England

The Ouseburn Trust is an independent charity, committed to working with others to achieve a vibrant, diverse and sustainable future for the Ouseburn Valley, often considered the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution in Newcastle upon Tyne. The Trust manages several properties in Ouseburn, providing space for a diverse range of businesses as well as affordable housing. They preserve and celebrate the area's heritage, protect the natural environment and public spaces and act as a hub for the community.

This year the Trust developed a new type of guided walk for visitors and local people. The Back to the Future Walk is a 90-minute exploration of Ouseburn's past, present and future, which discusses the challenge of balancing heritage and regeneration in the Valley. The walks grew in popularity throughout the year.

Ouseburn Trust is a longstanding member of the Network and participates in our North East branch.

Right: © John Hipkin

BURGES REGENERATION

Historic Coventry Trust, Coventry, England

Historic Coventry Trust is an energetic charity that was launched in 2015 to acquire, restore and reuse Coventry's heritage buildings, preserving them for future generations and contributing to Coventry's economic, social and cultural enhancement. In a uniquely ambitious asset transfer initiative, the Trust is taking over 22 historic buildings from the City Council, restoring and managing them. They aim to have the buildings functioning as shops, offices, education facilities, visitor attractions and holiday accommodation by the time Coventry becomes UK City of Culture in May 2021.

In 2019 the Department for Digital, Culture Media & Sport announced funding of £2 million for the regeneration of one of Coventry's oldest shopping streets as a demonstrator project for its High Streets Heritage Action Zone programme led by Historic England and supported by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

Plans for The Burges, Hale Street and Palmer Lane include the restoration of existing building frontages and the reinstatement of historic shopfronts, as well as creating a new public square to the rear of the shops with the previously hidden river Sherbourne as its centrepiece. Historic Coventry Trust is leading the project, working closely with Coventry City Council and Coventry Business Improvement District.

Historic Coventry Trust joined the Network in 2017. We have supported their staff with queries about company structures and they have spoken at some of our events.

ALLIANCE @ THE LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE

Valley Heritage, Bacup, Lancashire, England

In November 2019, the former Lancashire & Yorkshire Bank on the corner of Market Street and Union Street was acquired by Valley Heritage. The aim, with the community's support, is to breathe new life into this iconic building.

The purchase was made possible thanks to a £195,000 loan from the Architectural Heritage Fund. Valley Heritage has also received some support from Rossendale Borough Council and drawn on their own reserves in order to realise a new future for the Lancashire & Yorkshire.

Offering some housing, temporary accommodation and co-working space for local businesses, the bank will operate as "Alliance." The name has multiple meanings; looking to the past and to the future. Historically, the Lancashire & Yorkshire Bank evolved out of the Alliance Bank, and the aim is that in the future, Alliance will be a key focal point for the community, supporting Bacup's growth and development as a dynamic town, and creating connections between local people.

Since securing the building, Valley Heritage has raised £400,000 of grant funding and gifts in kind to enable the refurbishment. They hope to have contractors on site in May 2021 and complete the restoration by November of that year.

Valley Heritage joined the Network in July 2017. The organisation has used the Network for advertising jobs and has helped other members with their queries.

OLD YEW TREE COTTAGE

Farnham Building Preservation Trust, Farnham, Hampshire, England

Farnham Building Preservation Trust is a long-established small local trust. The Trust started an important project in 2015 when they were able to buy Old Yew Tree Cottage, Wrecclesham, a 16th century listed house which had been in the same ownership for 50 years and had fallen into disrepair. The process of appointing an architect, obtaining planning and listed building consent, and choosing a suitable builder took two years. The work was complex and specialised, and at a late stage it was unexpectedly found that they would have to take the roof off. However, the Trust put the beautifully renovated and extended property on the market in 2019.

The market for this special kind of house is not large, and with the uncertainty caused by Brexit and a general election, the Trust could not find a buyer or tenant. However, in March 2020 they found a family in urgent need of a house to rent because theirs had burnt down. The Trust was quickly able to make the house suitable for letting, and the tenant family moved in just before the lockdown started. This meant that during 2020 the house was occupied, and the Trust had a small income.

Farnham Building Preservation Trust joined the Network in July 2019 and has supported other members with their queries.

SECURING RESOURCES

This has been an outstanding year for securing new funding for the Network. We were successful with two significant grant funding proposals and in securing one major contract:

- *Unlocking the Power of Communities (£248,998)*
  Our bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund was matched by the Pilgrim Trust (£25,000) for a three-year project which will transform our capacity to support and organise our members. This includes facilitating extensive digital engagement, such as webinars and support for crowdfunding and improving diversity. The project enabled the employment of a dedicated Programme Manager.
- *Heritage Trust Network: Growth and Resilience (£49,200)*
  This project was funded by Historic England to employ a Chief Executive Officer. It was a successor to our Historic England National Capacity Building project which supported the employment of a Development Officer and came to an end during this year.
- *Open High Streets, Transforming Places Through Heritage (£89,960)*
  A contract from the Architectural Heritage Fund delivered jointly with Locality which, through a series of training and networking events, will increase our members' capacity to engage in the transformation of high streets and town centres.

We continued to receive funding from Historic Environment Scotland (£20,000) and National Trust for Scotland (£20,000) to support our work in Scotland and from Cadw to support our work in Wales (£5,000). We are grateful for all of this funding, and the continued support of our partners as this allows us to provide additional benefit to our membership.

Corporate sponsorship for the conference has increased significantly this year up from £14,200 in 2018 to £18,600. These figures represent cash contributions, but this year also saw in-kind support (the equivalent of several thousand pounds) from the local trust and the local authority.

Right: © Historic England Archives: James O Davies

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	2019-20	*2018-19*
Income	£144,171	*£103,512*
Expenditure	£128,795	*£115,212*
Surplus/deficit	£15,376	*(£11,700)*
Reserves at 31st March	£38,411	*£23,035*
Sources of income		
Member subscriptions	£25,138	*£20,063*
Conference Income	£29,413	*£25,013*
Other earned income	£9,750	*£1,651*
Grant funding	£76,870	*£56,785*
Expenditure		
Staff costs	£77,078	*£74,258*
Events and activities	£33,460	*£22,976*
Digital	£1,476	*£3,155*
Trustees expenses	£1,053	*£1,369*
Office and professional costs	£15,668	*£13,454*

A full set of accounts can be downloaded from the website:
www.heritagetrustnetwork.org.uk/2020accounts

Opposite (page 23): Cleveland Pools, Bath

Thanks to the continued growth of our membership and the generosity of funders and sponsors, the Network was able to make a modest surplus, helping to build up reserves after the deficit of the previous year.

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