



Connecting people with place  
HTF, Lincoln, 14-15 July 2010

## The value of local distinctiveness and characterisation

Graham Fairclough



[www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation)

## Places connect people with people



People are already connected to place, just as heritage exists even before expert define it and as landscape was always in people's minds even before it was named



- Characterisation
- Changing world
- Place-making
- The Faro Convention
- The Landscape Convention



## Characterisation



- A way of seeing
- Looking at the whole
- Looking at places
- Place means people
- Place as inheritance and legacy
- Seeing buildings (for ex.) in their place instead of compared to national criteria
- A tool for managing change



## The social landscape changes around us



- Changes in inherited definitions of heritage (national and expert criteria); caused by differences in ethnicity, mobility, class, wealth, gender, race, religion.
- Ever-shifting balance between public/private and state/market



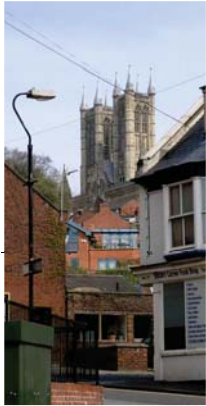
## Place-making, place-shaping



'character' embedded throughout all the PPS (more prevalent than 'heritage') as context and as inspiration for development and design



## The Faro Convention, 2005: The Value of Cultural Heritage for Society



Concerned with:

- the 'why' not the 'how' of heritage
- people and their values, less concerned with 'things'
- heritage's benefits and uses for society



## Faro and Society:



Users and viewpoints

Aspirations and objectives

Attitudes

Living Issues



## Faro and Heritage:



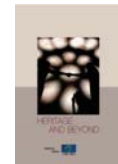
- action and process
- multiple values
- the totality of our inheritance
- expanding definitions



## Faro: 'heritage and beyond'



- intangible as well as tangible,
- perceptual as well as physical,
- action and performance; custom, behaviour, identity.



## Heritage as central to 'real life'



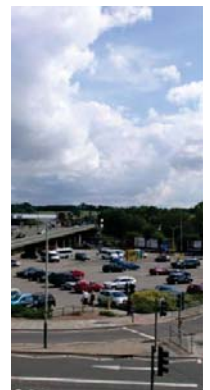
It's where people live, a mainstream contribution to the economy, not just through tourism, but a fundamental resource like any other we have inherited



## Florence, 2000: European Landscape Convention



- Starts with people
- Landscape is 'an area as perceived by people ...'
- No landscape without people seeing and thinking



## Landscape in the ELC, an all-encompassing definition



- Everywhere
- More than scenery or nature to protect
- Our own mental habitat, our '*cadre de vie*'



## Landscape Quality Objectives



- Aspirations of the public
- Quality of life and of place for people.
- But everyone has their own perceptions and priorities
- Personal landscapes / social consensus



## Florence & Faro, heritage and place: small-p political, big-P People:



- Aligned with politics, human rights, managing the world
- Public benefit / private rights
- Link to governance, social equity



## landscape and heritage; place

- new paradigms, changed mentalities,
- start with people not with things,
- behaviour and human values
- heritage as resource, landscape as resilience



## Faro & Florence



- Faro turns 'heritage into a verb: process not product
- Both emphasise the human rights aspects of heritage, the right to participate in cultural life.



## Faro & Florence



Heritage is often defined as 'that which we have inherited and wish to pass one to the next generations'



## Faro & Florence



Instead, we might say heritage is 'that which we have inherited and wish to ... (what, use?)

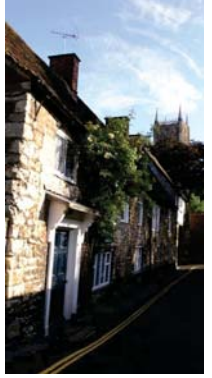
*(a wide range of options: protection or preservation but also celebration, modification, replacement, destruction; it's all heritage)*



## Characterisation and public engagement



- Most characterisation so far has tended to be done by experts, professionally, technically, with GIS, for planning purposes.
- There's been outreach, and some local projects, but.....



## How to engage?



- Who engages with whom?
- Can existing characterisations provide a 'net' to capture public perceptions
- Or is the very idea contradictory?
- Nimby minefields?



## Places; are the streets always empty?



Thanks for listening