

Risk management

A risk assessment, which includes any corresponding measures to manage the risks has been carried out. This is revisited and re-assessed periodically in order to manage any potential risks.

Financial strategy

The Forum derives its income from a variety of sources:

- Annual Membership subscriptions
- Partners' and sponsors' contributions
- Fees from the organisation of conferences and other events
- Sale of publications
- Undertaking work on an agency basis on behalf of other organisations with related interests and when this will benefit the Membership.

The accounts for the Forum are set out in the Annual Report, which is available on the website.

Like many organisations at present, the Forum has had to face up to the recent economic downturn, which has particularly affected the development and construction industries. The Forum's income has also been affected by continuing local government reorganisation and restricted public sector budgets.

In response to these issues, the Forum has agreed a financial strategy for 2010-11 onwards that recognises the need to continue to maximise income from sponsorship and agency sources. At the same time, in order to improve its financial robustness, it is considered vital to continue to review its costs and balance its income by focusing on areas over which it has greater control.

In summary, therefore, it is proposed to adopt a strategy based on the following strands:

- Continue to seek new commercial partners, focusing on sectors that are not as keenly affected by the current economic down turn
- Ensure, via closer dialogue, that the existing partners continue to receive added value by their association with the Forum
- Seek more opportunities to sell the Forum's skills at organising events in partnership with others, in an agency capacity, and looking at ways of ensuring that any partnership submissions made are of the highest quality
- Increase efforts to boost the return on the Forum's events. These are, after all, the Forum's life blood and an area in which we are able to control the fiscal outcome to a greater extent than relying on decisions by external bodies
- Continue to invest time and effort into recruiting new members, but treat this as a secondary activity over the coming year in recognition that it is going to be less productive under the present climate, whilst preparing the ground for the 'recovery' by maintaining a good profile with potential members
- Continue to use staff resources in a flexible way that is aligned to the work demand
- Use every opportunity to seek other savings such as the temporary rent reduction which has been negotiated with UWE as part of the new contract.

Historic Towns Forum

Business Plan 2010 - 2012

Additional Information

About us

Membership

The HTF is a membership organisation, operating in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which provides a variety of services and an opportunity to campaign and influence with a collective voice on issues of concern relating to the historic environment. A wide and strong membership base is essential, not only to fully resource the Forum, but also in terms of the expertise and commitment made available to the organisation in order to pursue its aims. There are currently eight categories of membership:

- Local Authority
- Town and Parish councils
- Corporate
- Associate
- Individual
- Civic/amenity society
- Honorary
- Reciprocal

A full list of Members, the criteria for membership and the benefits are available on the website at www.historictownsforum.org

Partners

In addition to its subscribing Members, the Forum has a special relationship with selected private sector companies, each representing a particular area of expertise. These companies provide substantial support and enjoy unique benefits and a high profile within the Forum.

Regular liaison with representatives from the partner organisations facilitates an information exchange which benefits both parties. These relationships bring respected expertise on a range of topics to the Membership and facilitate information exchange between the public sector practitioners and private sector providers through joint projects and events.

A list of current partners is set out on the website.

Membership of other organisations

In addition to the Reciprocal Membership category for other organisations (see above), the HTF is also a member of a number organisations and agencies which enhances its influence and capacity to represent its Membership.

These currently include:

- Academy of Urbanism
- Historic Environment Review Executive Committee
- Institute of Historic Building Conservation
- The Heritage Alliance

Constitution

Constitutionally, the HTF is an Unincorporated Association. After lengthy discussions and legal advice in 2008/9, the decision was made to maintain this status until circumstances indicate the need for change. A copy of the Constitution is available on the website at www.historictownsforum.org

Operation of the Forum

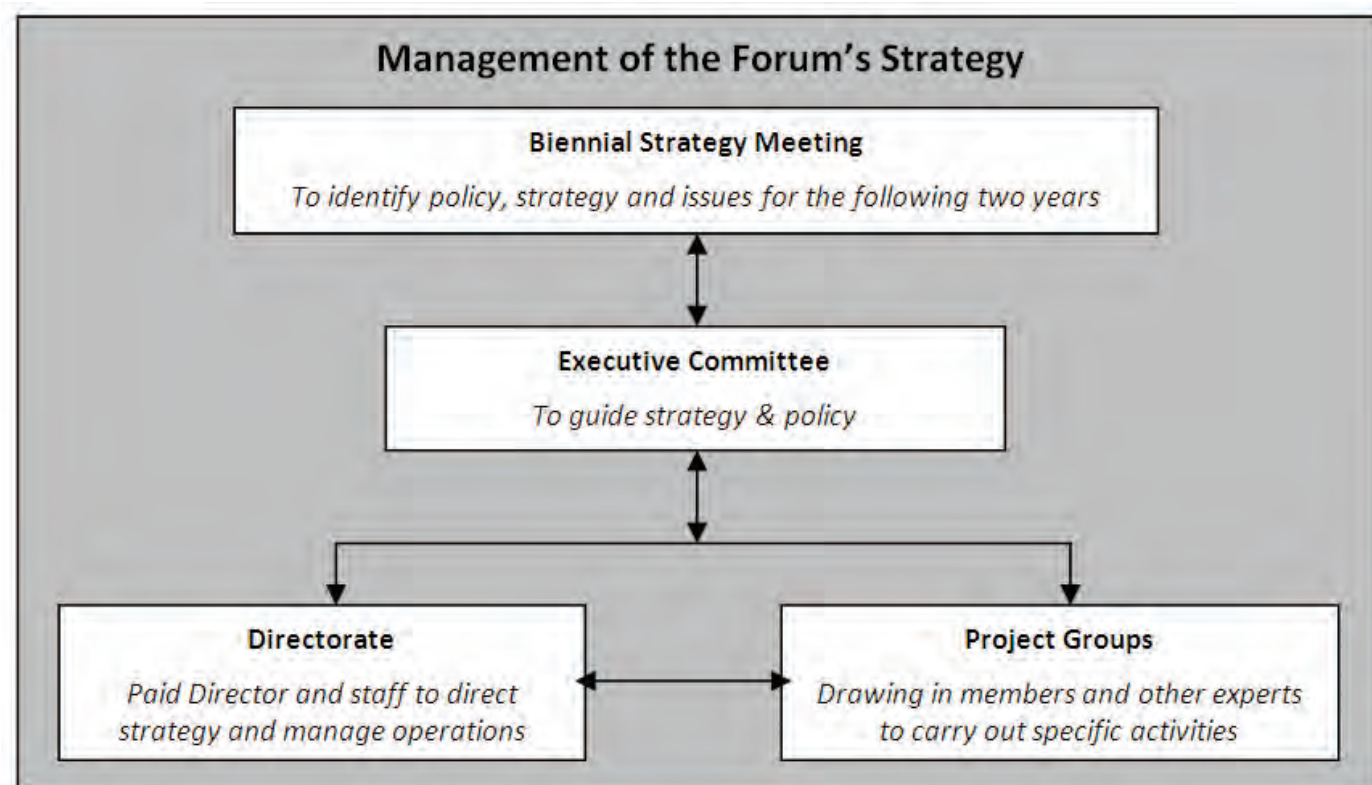
The range of issues impacting on historic towns and cities is very wide ranging and in order to maximise its effectiveness, the Forum focuses its efforts on strategic priorities on which its members can make the most significant contribution. These strategic priorities are decided by:

- A Strategy Meeting open to the full membership and invited representatives of partner organisations, held approximately every two years;
- Membership consultations;
- Executive decisions made in response to local and national issues arising.

The identified strategic priorities are then tested against the overall objectives of the Forum in order to draw together the Action Plan.

Management Structure

The outline structure is set out in the diagram below:



Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is elected by the AGM, and meets quarterly to agree work programmes based around the strategic priorities and to make other policy decisions on behalf of the Forum.

In order to maximise the inclusivity of the Executive Committee, its members are drawn from across the wider membership of the Forum within the following limits:

- **Local Authority Members – 6 Members plus Chair & 2 Vice Chairs**
- **All other categories – 3 Members**
- **Partner – 1 Member**

The Executive Committee has the power to co-opt as and when appropriate. From the Executive Committee, the AGM also elects the following officer posts:

- **Chair**
- **2 Vice-chairs**
- **Honorary Treasurer**

Officers of the Forum will normally be full-time employed staff of Local Authority Members. If the circumstances dictate, the AGM may elect as Chair / Vice Chair an ex-local authority employee of appropriate experience and standing, or a suitably experienced and senior individual from an organisation in a field of activity related to the HTF's work. Officers on the Executive should not have any conflict of interest with the HTF's objectives. The officer posts are elected for a period of one year. The out-going Chair may serve a further year as a second Vice-chair, however, there is no assumption that the in-coming Vice-chair succeeds to the Chair.

All officer posts are honorary in that the post holders receive no financial recompense. However, in the event that the Executive Committee consider that the Chair should receive an honorarium or expenses, this will be included in the nomination details to be considered and voted on by the AGM.

A full list of the present Members of the Executive Committee can be seen on the website.

Directorate

The Forum currently employs a full time Director, who has the support of one full time and two part time paid staff. All members of the Directorate are based at the University of the West of England in Bristol. The accommodation and other facilities of the Directorate are provided by the University in accordance with a Contract that is the subject of periodic review. The current contract runs until 31st July 2014. The Director liaises directly with the Chair and other officers and with the Executive Committee, and manages the delivery of the strategic objectives and policy implementation, with support from the administration team. In addition, the Directorate provides all membership and web services, design, communications and financial management, and coordinates the events, publications, partnerships and other activities.

Operational issues

As a result of the issues arising within the Executive and the consultation of the membership that took place during August 2008, the table set out in Appendix 2 shows the current operational issues and the response to them.