

National Heritage Science Forum

Trustees' Annual Report

For the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

The National Heritage Science Forum is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), registered charity number (England & Wales) 1154160.

Registered office: c/o The Institute of Conservation
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London EC1N 8QS

Website: www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk

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Bankers: CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME18 4JQ

Independent Alastair Towler BFP, ACA, DChA

Examiner: Plummer Parsons (Chartered Accountants)
18 Hyde Gardens
Eastbourne
East Sussex BN21 4PT

Charity trustees: Dr Alex Ball (from 25/01/2023)
Nancy Bell (from 25/01/2023)
Sara Crofts
Dr Trevor Emmett (Honorary Secretary, until 25/01/2023)
Prof Adam Gibson
Dr Jen Heathcote
Professor Carl Heron (until 25/01/2023)
Dr Freya Horsfield
Professor Nigel Llewellyn (Chair)
Boris Pretzel

Objects, mission and strategic priorities

The stated charitable object of the National Heritage Science Forum is:

To promote the efficiency and effectiveness of charities, not-for-profit organisations and voluntary organisations and the effective use of resources for charitable purposes by charitable and non charitable bodies working to promote the understanding, preservation and conservation of the UK's material cultural heritage for the benefit of the public. Material cultural heritage is the things both natural and man-made that are valued for their meaning and significance.

For the purpose of this clause, charities are organisations which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the laws of England and Wales. Voluntary and not for profit organisations are independent organisations which are established for purposes that add value to the community as a whole, or a significant section of the community and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory authorities.

About the National Heritage Science Forum

The National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF) has its roots in the recommendations of a House of Lords Select Committee report on Science and Heritage (2006), the Science and Heritage Programme (AHRC/EPSRC 2007/12) and the National Heritage Science Strategy (published 2010).

The **mission** of the National Heritage Science Forum is to improve collaboration in heritage science by connecting communities of practice. The Forum:

- Shapes the future through strategic partnerships to build and share knowledge, data and skills across organisational boundaries.
- Connects people: researchers, conservators, curators, scientists from many disciplinary backgrounds, educators at all levels, and commercial operators.
- Co- creates the strategy for Heritage Science in the UK and coordinates its delivery.

The Forum's strategic priorities for 2022-2023 were:

- Lead the development of the successor to the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK 2018-2023 on behalf of the UK heritage science community.
- Work in partnership with AHRC (Arts & Humanities Research Council), E-RIHS.uk (European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science, UK Node), IROC (Independent Research Organisation Consortium) and others to secure investment in UK heritage science infrastructure.
- Articulate the broad relevance of heritage science and encourage the heritage science community to show how its research helps to address the issues that matter to people.
- Establish a framework to support heritage science students and Early Career Researchers with networking and skills development to reduce barriers to a career in heritage science and strengthen the identity of heritage science.

Structure, governance and management

The National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF) is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered charity number (England & Wales) 1154160. The operation of NHSF is governed by its Constitution. This reporting period covers 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

NHSF's Board of Trustees (currently eight trustees) is responsible for managing the affairs of NHSF as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation including compliance, public benefit, strategic direction, development of the organisation, risk management, financial sustainability and application of resources in the pursuit of the Forum's charitable objects. The Board of Trustees met (virtually) four times in this reporting period.

The NHSF Member Council, on which representatives of NHSF's member organisations sit, is a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees and its role is to initiate and direct the Forum's subject-specific (heritage science) activities. The Chairing arrangements for the Member Council were reviewed in 2022 and it was agreed to move from a system of rotating Chair to a fixed Chair with a term of two years. The Board of Trustees approved the appointment of the Chair and new Terms of Reference for the Member Council on 7th December 2022. The Member Council met three times in this reporting period.

NHSF's 10th Annual General Meeting took place in hybrid format (in-person at the Institute of Physics with online attendance option) on 25th January 2023. At the AGM members agreed: the minutes of the 9th AGM be signed as a correct record; to receive the annual report for the year ending 31st March 2022; to receive the statement of accounts for the year ending 31st March 2022 and to appoint or reappoint trustees.

NHSF contracts out operational and administrative support to Preservation Matters Ltd. The schedule of services and contract is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

Appointment and induction of trustees

Following the process adopted in 2021-22, a skills audit of the Board of Trustees was carried out in June 2022 with findings reported to the Board of Trustees at its meeting on 7th October 2022. The audit enabled the identification of the Board's strengths and weaknesses and the findings were used to inform an open trustee recruitment exercise which was led by two trustees. Following applications and interviews, five applicants were proposed to the Board of Trustees for appointment as trustees. The Board agreed to the proposal that three existing trustees be proposed for re-appointment (including the Chair for a term of one year and Treasurer for a further term of three years) and two new trustees be proposed for appointment by the members at the AGM on 25th January 2023. Two of the existing trustees retired from office at the AGM including the Honorary Secretary.

Before appointment potential trustees have access to the role description, the latest annual report and annual accounts and a meeting to discuss current strategic priorities and how the Forum operates. After appointment, trustees are provided with a copy of the Trustees and Members Handbook which covers the governance, management and operations of NHSF.

Register of related party interests and transactions

All trustees are asked to review or complete the related party interests form on appointment and thereafter, annually. All trustees are asked to complete the form for declarations of related party transactions following the end of the financial year. At each trustee meeting trustees are asked if there are any new declarations of interest to be made, or any declarations of interest in relation to the meeting's agenda. For the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 two trustees were reimbursed expense payments totalling £100. No trustees' remuneration was paid in the year. Six trustees were

connected to organisations who paid membership fees totalling £10,875 to the National Heritage Science Forum. There are no other related party transactions.

Risk management

NHSF maintains a risk register for the purpose of identifying and managing risks to the organisation. The risk register is reviewed by trustees at each trustee meeting. In the last year, the key risk was that NHSF would be unable to deliver against key objectives or charitable aims due to a lack of operational/trustee resource, resulting in a loss of confidence in NHSF and a loss of member support. A number of mitigating controls have been agreed by trustees amongst which are the operation of the Member Council and ensuring good communication between the Board and members.

Activities and achievements

The trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing NHSF's aims and objectives and when agreeing the activities of the charity.

NHSF brings together organisations active in the field of heritage science so that knowledge and innovation can be shared to improve the understanding and preservation of cultural heritage as well as methods of engagement with it, for the benefit of the public. It aims to support the strategic development of heritage science in terms of research, capacity building, application, collaboration and infrastructure.

For the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 NHSF's agreed strategic priorities were to:

- Lead the development of the successor to the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK 2018-2023 on behalf of the UK heritage science community.
- Work in partnership with AHRC (Arts & Humanities Research Council), E-RIHS.uk (European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science, UK Node), IROC (Independent Research Organisation Consortium) and others to secure investment in UK heritage science infrastructure.
- Articulate the broad relevance of heritage science and encourage the heritage science community to show how its research helps to address the issues that matter to people.
- Establish a framework to support heritage science students and Early Career Researchers with networking and skills development to reduce barriers to a career in heritage science and strengthen the identity of heritage science.

1. Lead the development of the successor to the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK 2018-2023 on behalf of the UK heritage science community

NHSF supports the delivery of the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK through the activities of its three working groups and by encouraging contributions to the framework goals from beyond its membership. Each of the three working groups is aligned to a strand of the strategic framework and their activities are targeted towards the outcomes of the framework. Input from the wider heritage science community is sought via invited participation at NHSF meetings, through the newsletter and through direct contribution to online platforms.

In 2022, the Member Council agreed to lead the development of a successor strategic framework, to cover the period 2024-2027. It has agreed to review and refresh the current framework, examining the current strategic drivers for heritage science in the UK and proposing adjusted outcomes that reflect current needs. The Member Council has agreed an outline process and timeline which

includes contributions from the three NHSF working groups, a period of external engagement and consultation, and drafting of the refreshed framework towards the end of 2023.

NHSF's newsletter, blog, social media channels and strategic framework padlets have all been used throughout the year to raise awareness of the current Strategic Framework goals and invite organisations from beyond NHSF's members to show how their work contributes to the goals.

2. Work in partnership with AHRC (Arts & Humanities Research Council), E-RIHS.uk (European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science, UK Node), IROC (Independent Research Organisation Consortium) and others to secure investment in UK heritage science infrastructure.

Over the past year, NHSF has supported AHRC's work to make the case for investment in RICHeS (Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science and Conservation).

NHSF has provided support in communicating the goals of RICHeS to the wider heritage science community through its website, newsletter and social media, including promotion of the call for Expressions of Interest in the infrastructure and related communication events held over the summer of 2022. The Member Council and Board of Trustees have actively engaged with AHRC throughout the development of RICHeS to ensure it will serve the research and innovation sector well. The Forum has also promoted the need for good evidence of the wider public value that infrastructure investment will bring. In January 2023 the Forum held a hybrid (in-person and online) event that explored aspects of the practical delivery of a research and innovation infrastructure. The event included presentations about RICHeS and E-RIHS as well as other examples of distributed infrastructures. Presentations and an event summary have been published online.

NHSF has participated in the RICHeS UNNE working group (United Kingdom National Node of E-RIHS (European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science) which focused on how the UK national node of E-RIHS could be delivered as part of the RICHeS infrastructure. Elsewhere, a presentation was delivered to colleagues at the Heritage Science Sweden Forum (2022) on the evolution of UK heritage science infrastructure as part of an international knowledge-sharing event.

NHSF has engaged with members of the Independent Research Organisation Consortium (IROC) by presenting to IROC on the activities of the Forum in June and by inviting IROC members to NHSF events in January and May.

3. Articulate the broad relevance of heritage science and encourage the heritage science community to show how its research helps to address the issues that matter to people.

The Research working group has continued to build on work initiated in 2020-21 to connect heritage science research to five societal challenges of climate emergency, health & wellbeing, digital society, equality and inclusivity, and sustainable development. Case studies have been collected from the heritage science community to show how heritage science research and practice can address the five challenges. The case studies have been published on the NHSF website.

As a next step, in-depth sessions are planned from 2023 to examine each of the societal challenges in greater detail starting with the 'Digital Society' challenge of 'Integrating technological innovation and data science into heritage science research and practise to transform the way that collections, buildings and archaeology are managed, accessed and understood' in late Spring 2023.

In parallel, the Impact working group has focused on understanding the ways in which evidence of the impact of heritage science is collected so that the Forum can provide the support and tools needed to improve the collection and demonstration of impact.

4. Establish a framework to support heritage science students and Early Career Researchers with networking and skills development to reduce barriers to a career in heritage science and strengthen the identity of heritage science.

The Communities working group launched a pilot mentoring programme in May 2022 which resulted in 8 mentor-mentee pairings. The programme ran between July 2022 and January 2023. It aimed to provide career development (rather than research) support. Evaluation feedback showed the scheme was well-received by mentors and mentees and as a result, the programme will be offered again in 2023.

Between May-September 2022 NHSF ran four online events in partnership with the Icon Heritage Science Group which gave students and emerging researchers the opportunity to present their research and discuss it with peers. Each event also included a reflection from a more established member of the heritage science community on their own career path, with an open discussion session aimed at supporting emerging professionals to understand the range of opportunities open to them as well as offer tips on overcoming barriers to progress in the field.

At the other end of the educational spectrum, we worked with The National Archives on a project to show how heritage science can support STEM in UK primary curricula. Research was commissioned into how heritage science maps to the different science curricula and a report was produced, accompanied by a matrix which provides a simple tool to map how heritage science can support key areas of the curricula. These outputs were backed-up with a workshop at the Group for Education in Museum's conference in September 2022 and a presentation at the NHSF Member Meeting (led by the Communities working group), also in September 2022.

Communication and events

The Forum continues to use its communication channels to increase engagement within and beyond the heritage science community. As part of an on-going assessment of where its communications have greatest impact, the Forum no longer posts on Facebook and focuses on Twitter and the e-newsletter. The Forum benefited from free Communications Consultancy support in January 2023 and this is being used to re-evaluate how to prioritise audiences, language and messages.

The e-newsletter continues to be published monthly and shares information on NHSF's work, the activities of its members, as well as news, policy developments, events and jobs from across the sector. Subscribers have grown from 280 in March 2022 to 320 at the beginning of March 2023. During 2022-23 Twitter followers have increased from 1,816 to 2,001 (8th March).

The Forum's policy and advocacy activity took the form of participation in the Heritage Alliance's 'Funding and Investment Advocacy Group' and the publication of a briefing note on Scotland's Museum and Galleries Strategy 2023-2030 which was launched in February 2023.

Over the course of the year the Forum has organised a range of events for members and non-members to deliver its mission of connecting communities of practice and increasing collaboration. Events in 2022-23 included:

25th April 2022 – Member Council Meeting

5th May – NHSF and Icon Heritage Science group ECR and student seminar

26th May – NHSF Communities working group meeting

8th June – Research working group meeting

9th June – NHSF and Icon Heritage Science group ECR and student seminar

19th June – Meeting of Board of Trustees

7th July – NHSF and Icon Heritage Science group ECR and student seminar

8th September – NHSF and Icon Heritage Science group ECR and student seminar

22nd September – Member Meeting (communities working group) Aligning heritage science to UK science curricula

26th September – Member Council Meeting

7th October – Board of Trustees

23rd November – Communities working group meeting

2nd December – Impact working group meeting

5th December – Research working group meeting

7th December – Meeting of Board of Trustees

16th January 2023 – Member Council meeting

25th January – Distributed infrastructure event and AGM

17th February – Research working group meeting

23rd February – Communities working group meeting

20th March – Impact working group meeting

Planning and development

The strategic framework for heritage science in the UK has continued to guide NHSF's activities. Each of the three working groups carries out regular reviews of how its work aligns to the framework and monitors progress against an agreed action plan. At the Member Council meeting in April 2022, members also discussed how to approach the updating of the strategic framework itself, beyond its current lifespan of 2018-2023. It was agreed that the Member Council will lead this work on behalf of NHSF and the wider heritage science community, working in consultation with that community to establish changes to the strategic and operating landscape, and to prioritise the goals of the framework for the next period.

Each year the NHSF Board of Trustees agrees strategic priorities for the year ahead, in consultation with the Member Council. The strategic priorities that have been agreed by the Board of Trustees for 2023-24 are:

- A successor to the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK 2018-2023 is developed.
- AHRC is provided with sector data and insight to support investment in, and successful launch of, RICHeS (Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science).
- The broad relevance and importance of heritage science is well articulated, demonstrating how heritage science helps to address the issues that matter to people.
- A vibrant and sustainable NHSF is able to champion heritage science and support its members.

The strategic outcomes have been agreed by the Board of Trustees and endorsed by the Member Council. NHSF will now develop an action plan against which progress can be measured.

Policy on reserves

The trustees of the National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF) have considered the charity's budget and future plans in determining its need for reserves. The trustees have agreed a reserves policy to safeguard NHSF's activities in line with its charitable objects against uncertain income streams.

The trustees have agreed to retain unrestricted free reserves equivalent to a minimum of nine months of operational expenditure to meet these needs. This is calculated as an average of the past 3 years' operating budgets, and estimated for 2023-24 as approximately £32,560. At 31 March 2023, NHSF's unrestricted reserves were £53,868. The trustees will monitor reserves through the year as part of budget reporting and will review this policy annually. Planned expenditure in the forthcoming year is expected to draw minimally on free reserves.

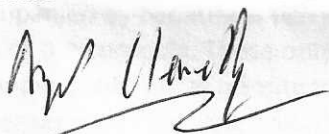
The Trustees confirm that there is no material uncertainty as to whether the charity can continue as a Going Concern.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

Signature




Print full name
Prof. Nigel Llewellyn

Position
Chair, Board of Trustees

Date 3rd October 2023

Signature




Print full name
Dr Jen Heathcote

Position
Treasurer

Date 3rd October 2023

Accounts

Accounts for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 are presented using the receipts and payments accounts template provided by the Charity Commission.

 CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES	National Heritage Science Forum		1154160	CC16a
	Receipts and payments accounts			
For the period from	01/04/2022	To	31/03/2023	

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Membership subscriptions	42,875	-	-	42,875	40,500
Fee income	1,600	-	-	1,600	500
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-
Bank interest	87	-	-	87	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	44,562	-	-	44,562	41,000

A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	44,562	-	-	44,562	41,000

A3 Payments					
Consultancy services	36,446	-	-	36,446	37,298
Board meetings	-	-	-	-	-
Trustee expenses	100	-	-	100	-
Website	952	-	-	952	915
Telephone, print, post, stationery	9	-	-	9	-
Events	611	-	-	611	-
Travel and subsistence	-	-	-	-	-
Subscriptions	773	-	-	773	650
Commissioned research/services	200	-	-	200	-
Independent examination	864	-	-	864	810
Awards	-	-	-	-	-
Bank charges	72	-	-	72	96
Sub total	40,026	-	-	40,026	39,769

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	40,026	-	-	40,026	39,769

Net of receipts/(payments)	4,536	-	-	4,536	1,231
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	51,332	-	-	51,332	50,101
Cash funds this year end	55,868	-	-	55,868	51,332

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at bank	55,868	-	-
Other cash funds (SS)	1	-	-	-

	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Total cash funds	55,868	-	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
Independent examiner fee 2022-23 accounts	Unrestricted	860	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature



Print Name

Nigel Llewellyn
Jen Heathcote

Date of approval

3/10/23
3/10/23

CCXX R2 accounts (SS)

NATIONAL HERITAGE SCIENCE FORUM

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF NATIONAL HERITAGE SCIENCE FORUM

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of National Heritage Science Forum (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

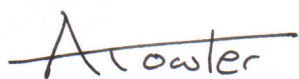
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- 2 the accounts do not accord with those records.
- 3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Alastair Towler BFP ACA DChA

18 Hyde Gardens
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 4PT

Dated: 20 November 2023