



# DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

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**Adrian Stuart, Town Clerk**

15 April 2020

You are invited to a virtual meeting of the **DORCHESTER HERITAGE JOINT COMMITTEE** will be held in via the **ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING PLATFORM** on **TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2020** commencing at **7.00pm**.

**You will be able to join the meeting by using the link -**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85475706897>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Stuart'.

Town Clerk and Secretary to the Committee

## **Declaration of Interests**

Members are reminded that it is their responsibility to disclose pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests where appropriate. A Member who declares a pecuniary interest must leave the room unless a suitable dispensation has been granted. A Member who declares a non-pecuniary interest may take part in the meeting and vote.

## **Membership**

Dorset Council: R. Biggs, A. Canning, L. Fry, S. Jones and D. Taylor

Dorchester Town Council: S. Biles, F. Hogwood, G. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger and R. Major

The following Members may attend and speak but not vote:

A Chisholm (Ancient and Honorary Guild of Town Criers), Mr B Murphy (Duchy of Cornwall), T. James (Dorchester Civic Society), M. Woodgate (Dorchester Chamber for Business), L. Gardner (The Keep Military Museum), (Vacancy - Dorchester Local Nature Reserve), J Murden (Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society), T Loasby (Blue Badge Tourist Guides) M Rice (Dorchester Association), Martin Stephen or Hannah Jefferson (National Trust (for Max Gate and Hardy's Cottage)), A Bright (Shire Hall)

## **AGENDA**

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. **MINUTES**

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 21 January 2020 (copy enclosed).

3. **DECLARATIONS OF PREDETERMINATION**

Members to declare if they consider that they have predetermined or may predetermine in the relation to the following items and to indicate the action they will be taking when the item is considered.

*NOTE: It is the responsibility of individual Members to decide whether they have predetermined in relation to an item. Members who make a declaration should leave the room during the discussion and voting.*

*Members who may wish to take part in the decision making process as a member of another committee, at which the item is to be considered, should decide whether they wish to participate at this stage.*

4. **THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY**

- (i) Progress report from the Heritage Tourism Project Manager (attached – Page 6)
- (ii) SWOT Analysis (attached – Page 9)
- (iii) Heritage Tourism Audit – Appointment of Consultant (attached – Page 12)

5. **THOMAS HARDY VICTORIAN FAIR 2020**

To receive an update from the Chairman on this years proposed Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair.

6. **QUESTIONS**

To receive questions submitted by Members in writing to the Dorchester Town Clerk and in respect of which the appropriate notice has been given.

7. **URGENT ITEMS**

To consider any other items that the Chairman decides are urgent.

## **DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

### **DORCHESTER JOINT HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**21 JANUARY 2020**

At a Meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee held on 21 January 2020:

#### **PRESENT:**

Dorchester Town Council	Councillors:	S. Biles F. Hogwood G. Jones (Chairman) F. Kent-Ledger R. Major
In Attendance		S. Hosford
	Officers:	S. Newman T. Hedger
Dorset Council	Councillors:	A. Canning L. Fry S. Jones
Ancient & Honorary Guild of Town Criers		A. Chisholm
Blue Badge Tourist Guides		T. Loasby
Dorchester Association		M. Rice
National Trust (for Max Gate and Hardy's Cottage)		M. Stephen

#### 16. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D. Taylor (Dorset Council), M. Woodgate (Dorchester Chamber for Business), A. Bright (Shire Hall) and L. Gardner (The Keep Military Museum).

#### 17. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2019, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

In respect of Minute No. 11 Members were informed of the proposed Town Council project to make street scape improvements to the Cornhill area of town. Specialist consultants, who would help in designing the scheme had been interviewed and it was anticipated that an appointment would be made in the near future. It was noted that

there was presently no sign giving information about the Town Pump.

In respect of Minutes No 14 it was noted that work had commenced on improvements to the Roman Town House and the Chairman confirmed that he had written to Dorset Council regarding the Committee's concerns regarding its draft Corporate Plan.

18. **RESIGNATION FROM THE COMMITTEE**

Members were informed that Kate Hebditch has resigned from the Committee. Kate had been a long standing member of the Committee and had given much of her time for free to the Committee in respect of the town's interpretation panels, lotter bids, policy papers and more.

The Committee wished to formally record its grateful thanks for all the work that had been undertaken by Kate, over many years, for the Committee.

19. **DECLARATIONS OF PRE-DETERMINATION**

There were no declarations of pre-determination.

20. **MOULE INFORMATION BOARDS – SALISBURY FIELDS**

The Committee welcomed local resident Mark Chutter who presented a proposal to the Committee in respect of an information board about Reverend Henry Moule and the vicarage. It was proposed that the board be located in Salisbury Fields.

Members were supportive of the proposal and Mr Chutter confirmed that he would be happy to provide text and some images of which he had a selection and showed to the Committee.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that he would liaise with Mr Chutter regarding producing the board in the style of the other information boards provided by the Committee and to also look for funding opportunities.

**RESOLVED**

That the idea for an information board be supported and that progress in developing the board be reported back to the Committee in due course.

21. **THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY**

The Committee had before it a report, which appended the notes of the Steering Group meeting and a first draft Heritage Tourism Strategy prepared by the Heritage Tourism Project Manager. Background papers to the report and draft strategy had also been placed on the Town Council's website for Members to view prior to the meeting. It was noted that any reference to 'stakeholder group' should read 'steering group'.

The background papers included information on The Heritage Role in Tourism, The Impact of Tourism in Dorchester, Development and Delivery of Tourism in Dorchester

and Local Context and Issues.

The Heritage Tourism Project Manager introduced the report and gave a presentation on the draft strategy and responded to Members many detailed questions.

Members firmly stressed the importance of heritage and culture being the main thrust of the strategy and not drifting away from that, it was also felt important that the community support, and be involved in, the development of the strategy and that it be a sustainable one. It was noted that a heritage audit would be undertaken and that branding was a key part of the strategy.

#### **RESOLVED**

(1) That the terms of reference, representation and purpose and focus of the steering group, as set out in the report, be agreed subject to the strategy focusing on heritage and culture which should appeal to the widest cross section of visitors.

(2) That the engagement proposals set out in the report, to include a facilitated workshop, be agreed.

(3) That the funding proposals for visions and brand development, as set out in the report, be agreed.

#### 22. **THOMAS HARDY VICTORIAN FAIR – 7 JUNE 2020**

The Chairman updated the Committee on progress with the arrangements for the second Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair to be held on 7 June 2020 which included the appointment of an events officer and a sponsorship fundraising officer. Members were supportive of the progress made and requested that information about it be included within the next Town Council Newsletter.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the progress made in developing the 2020 Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair be welcomed and supported.

#### 23. **QUESTIONS**

The representative from the Dorchester Association asked what action could be taken with regard to the Thai Restaurant at the top of High West Street having unsightly advertising hand painted on its upper floor frontage. It was noted that the building was Listed and within the Dorchester Conservation Area.

Councillor L. Fry agreed that he would take the matter up with the Dorset Council Planning Enforcement Officers and report back to a future meeting of the Committee.

#### 24. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**DORCHESTER HERITAGE JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**21 APRIL 2020**  
**PROGRESS REPORT**

**Background**

1. In 2015 Dorchester Town Council resolved to include in its corporate plan, intent to:
  - Develop & Implement a Tourism strategy, with a strong Heritage focus
  - Carry out an informal heritage sites audit for the town

This information report updates members on progress made and the current work programme.

**Progress**

2. Context - Several pieces of contextual research have concluded and have been summarised as reference documents. These reports were presented to this Committee at the January meeting :
  - why the town council is looking at Heritage Tourism - click [here](#) to view
  - what data is and there about tourism locally, - click [here](#) to view
  - who does what in tourism from national to local levels - click [here](#) to view
3. Business - Meetings have been held with almost all the businesses and organisations involved in tourism in the town, apart from one or two who are part of national chains where attempts are still being made to meet. A short summary (anonymised) of the key and consistent messages from those meetings was presented to this Committee in January – click [here](#) to view. Discussion at subsequent meetings have to date been confirmed the initial findings.
4. Delivery & Governance - Discussions have been had with many town and parish councils cross the country in similar sized or historic locations to discover how their town or parish is approaching the promotion and development of tourism in their town – if at all. Every location has approached tourism differently but there are some emerging common principles. Proposals for the future delivery of the tourism strategy will be included within the strategy and brought to a future meeting of this Committee.
5. Visitor – Following comments from members made at the January meeting of this Committee, a short questionnaire has been developed jointly with Dorchester TIC, the TIC will be using it, with its customers, to provide some factual information about where visitors to Dorchester are coming from and why they are visiting, the TIC will issue the survey with visitors for five two week periods across the year for the Town Council to subsequently analyse.

6. Heritage -The Dorchester offer - An audit of the heritage of the town was initially prepared as an internal exercise for the Heritage Tourism project, and shared with Heritage Committee members, some of whom have suggested some additions. With the encouragement of the Chairman, heritage and tourism specialists have been invited to submit quotations to properly review the offer and recommend which heritage assets (places, people, events) have potential to become a greater part of the visitor experience to Dorchester. Proposals received are considered in a report elsewhere on this agenda.

Once this review is concluded, it is intended to conduct both the visioning and branding exercises, agreed by this Committee in January, both of which will be informed and influenced by the outcomes of the heritage audit.

7. Marketing - Also recently concluded is an audit of where and how “destination” Dorchester and its offer is being promoted to potential visitors on websites and in social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).

National websites feature Dorset but not Dorchester, there are no regional websites identified, Dorset websites lack strong Dorchester content, local websites are either out of date or no longer supported, have content hidden, and very few local tourism business websites feature any of the Dorchester offer for visitors.

Social media activity by many, while claimed to be active, is not current with several last posting in early 2019.

Contact has been made with several website operators to enquire how to influence the Dorchester content (or lack of content) on their respective websites.

8. Funding - Project funding to support development of this strategy has been explored from the Rural Development Programme for England tourism strand (advised not an appropriate fund for this project) and also through a highly speculative enquiry to the Architectural Heritage Fund (unsuccessful as not focussed on one building).

9. Communication - Progress and early findings from the Heritage Tourism Project were presented to the Dorchester Chamber for Business breakfast in February. The Heritage Committee Chairman has recently spoken about the project at the Humphries Kirk Business Breakfast and Keep FM. There is also a reference to the project in the town councils March newsletter.

10. Next Steps - If agreed, appoint Heritage Tourism Specialists to fulfil Heritage Tourism brief

Continue the business and delivery discussions

Conclude the marketing review, and cost options to improve the awareness of destination Dorchester

On completion of the heritage audit, commission and commence both the vision and the branding work.

Conclude drafting the strategy and present this to Committee prior to a period of consultation. This will include delivery and governance, marketing, product development and relationship with key partner options.

11. Members are invited to note the progress made.

Trevor Hedger  
Heritage Tourism Project Manager

**DORCHESTER HERITAGE JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**21 APRIL 2020**  
**Dorchester Heritage Tourism Strategy – SWOT Analysis**

**Report**

1. In 2015 Dorchester Town Council resolved to include in its corporate plan, intent to:
  - Develop & Implement a Tourism strategy, with a strong Heritage focus
  - Carry out an Informal heritage sites audit for the town

This report focusses on the development of a strategy.

2. The current Coronavirus pandemic and enforced lockdown has brought changes to the work programme to develop the strategy for consultation, bringing forward elements of the strategy preparation and resulting currently in a more desk-based programme.
3. As a result, a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) has been prepared and is attached. It has been shared with members of the project steering group and updated with comments received.
4. This committee is invited to propose additions for inclusion in the SWOT analysis.

T Hedger  
Heritage Tourism Project Manager

**DORCHESTER HERITAGE TOURISM  
SWOT ANALYSIS**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Breadth of Heritage Offer with some unique and special assets (M Castle, Roman Town House, Hardy...)	Low number of accommodation providers and bed spaces in the town
Accessible town centre area	General lack of awareness of the towns visitor offer
E-W and N-S rail connections	Heritage offer is often “hidden” or not known about locally
National Express Destination	Not a destination of choice
Proximity to London and SE concentrations of population	The town generally, and its heritage offer for visitors not well represented if at all on sub regional, regional and national websites
Proximity to Exeter, Bristol, Bournemouth, Southampton, LHR and LGW airports	No active maintained promotional website exclusively for the town
Events in general and THVF, & HoD in particular,	Limited or no town related visitor experience content on local tourism businesses websites
Volunteer Centre Dorset resource for volunteers working in visitor economy	Slow, infrequent and expensive rail connections - especially to London
Proximity of main concentrations of bed spaces along Jurassic Coast particularly at Weymouth and Bridport	Chain hotels not engaging
Nearness of BCP resident population and also visitors staying in BCP	Limited electric car charge points
	Demand for volunteers greater than supply
	Visitor economy not joined up in the town.
	Absence of regular local social media content and activity from many local tourism related businesses
	Traffic flow along HE and HW streets
	State and condition of some heritage properties in the town centre
	Town centre retail offer lacks the distinctiveness to be a must visit destination

<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>The new Dorset County Museum</p> <p>The new Kings Arms Hotel</p> <p>Development at the Roman Town House</p> <p>Development of this Heritage Tourism Strategy</p> <p>Volunteer Centre Dorset resource for volunteers working in visitor economy</p> <p>Development of new heritage “products” to increase reasons for visiting the town</p> <p>Bringing together of the visitor economy in Dorchester</p> <p>Dorchester BID – both remit (business plan) and resource</p> <p>Heritage – growing in value in the tourism economy</p> <p>End of Covid 19 and potential appetite for staycationing</p> <p>Cruise ship visits to and cruise ship visitors from Portland Harbour and Port of Poole</p> <p>Improved volume and common threads in social media feeds from across the sector in the town</p> <p>Collaborative working with other Dorset Destinations and Visit Dorset to strengthen Dorchester’s appeal as part of the Dorset offer</p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <p>Jurassic coast and coast in general</p> <p>Current and future competition from local Dorset and other destinations in the South West and in particular from Salisbury, Winchester, Stonehenge, Exeter, Bristol &amp; Bath as established Heritage Tourist destinations</p> <p>COVID19 specifically</p> <p>COVID19 economic fall out longer term</p> <p>Hot summers, wet cold winters</p> <p>Lack of engagement by Dorchester businesses engaged in the wider visitor economy</p> <p>Dorset Council intentions not known with regards TIC and or Visit-Dorset activity</p> <p>Lack of funds or support to develop new marketing and product and experience development for the visitor economy development activity</p> <p>Dorchester BID do not engage</p> <p>Dorchester BID not successful at rebalot</p>

**DORCHESTER HERITAGE JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**21 APRIL 2020**  
**DORCHESTER HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY – HERITAGE TOURISM AUDIT FOR**  
**DORCHESTER**

**Background**

1. At the meeting of this Committee on 21st January 2020, the committee agreed to fund and commission both a visioning exercise and a branding exercise to inform the development of the Heritage Tourism Strategy. During members debate, reference was made to an informal Heritage Audit carried out by the Heritage Tourism Project Manager. Also noted in the meeting were the very diverse views amongst local businesses working in the visitor economy about the most important elements of heritage offer of the town.
2. Subsequent to the meeting, and in discussion with the Chairman of the Dorchester Heritage Joint Committee, it was agreed to seek quotations from Heritage Tourism Specialists to both review the offer and suggest opportunities for improving the contribution of heritage assets to the overall the visitor experience, with any appointment being subject to this Committee agreeing to both any final appointment, and budget availability at its April meeting.

**The Brief**

3. A brief was subsequently prepared for consultants to submit a quotation for the creation of a Heritage Tourism Audit for Dorchester to:
  - Act as a reference that will benchmark the scope of Dorchester’s History and Heritage pertinent to the visitor economy
  - Determine the appropriate Heritage “assets” to support the development of Heritage Tourism in Dorchester
  - Identify “assets” from which future visitor experiences can be developed
  - Be used by local businesses and organisations associated directly and indirectly with Heritage Tourism specifically and Tourism generally in Dorchester to develop visitor experiences.
4. The brief specified work required as follows:

*“1) The Audit*

  - a) Review the audit (informal audit referred to in paragraph 1 above) and suggest appropriate additions under each of the four themes (general history, people, places, events).*
  - b) Identify the assets currently most likely to be attractors to potential visitors to our town.*

*You should allow for conducting one or more focus groups involving the heritage and history groups and interested parties, and tourism industry in the town at this part of the audit and review.*

## 2) Product Offer and Product Development

- c) *Recommend current story lines that will link together heritage assets from across the town, both paid to enter and not, and encourage the visitor to stay longer and/or return to our town.*
- d) *Recommend areas where new story lines may be developed but which may require some initial preparatory work.*

## 3) Presentation

- e) *Recommend best means of presentation and publication (on line) of the audit from its current raw form in order to be of benefit to those interested in promoting and developing Heritage Tourism in the town.*

*For the purpose of this study, a visitor may be a relatively local resident (living in the county of Dorset) who may be attracted to our town by its offer, or a staying visitor attracted from further afield and staying in or close to Dorset.”*

- 5. From an initial shortlist of 20 specialists identified from Association for Heritage Interpretation, the Tourism Society Tourism Consultants Network, general searches on LinkedIn and Google, and through recommendation locally, invitations to quote were issued to 9 consultancies who seemed to best meet the requirements . This included two local organisations and several who reported as having worked in Heritage projects and or general tourism commissions in Dorset.
- 6. As the briefs were issued just prior to lockdown, all consultancies invited were subsequently advised that “ the council will take a pragmatic and flexible approach to the timescales in the brief given the current uncertainties about public gatherings and Coronavirus and the health and wellbeing of all”.

## Submissions received

- 7. Several consultancies declined to submit a proposal (Not their area of expertise x1, no because of current uncertainty x2, no x2, no due to other commitments x1).
- 8. Two Consultancies submitted a brief for consideration within the deadline.

## Assessment

- 9. The Invitation to quote determined that applications would be assessed 40% on price and 60% on quality. The quality appraisal, including criteria from the brief, is set out in the following table. There is almost no difference in the ex VAT prices quoted – Submission A quotation was for £4400 ex VAT and 16 working days, while submission B quotation was for £4500 ex VAT and 12 working days.

The following table compares the submissions received against the criteria identified in the brief.

Criteria	Marks Available	Weighting %	Submission A	Score	Submission B	Score
Depth and breadth of experience, competence and commitment of resources and personnel in carrying out the services required;	0-4	15	<p>Experience identified seems focussed on Museums, historic houses and outdoor sites, individually or collectively (Bath)  Site specific interpretation (acoustiguide), Roman Baths, Chatsworth, Tate, Guggenheim etc  Site specific work - Shire Hall, Brownsea, DWT</p> <p>CONCLUSION- GOOD LOCAL SITE SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SINGLE SITE INTERPRETATION EXPERIENCES, BUT LIMITED DESTINATION WORKING</p>	2	<p>Experience identified in submission is in interpretation audits &amp; plans, heritage audits, heritage management and audience development, visitor centres, community consultation, events programmes, design concepts for specific sites, landscapes and wider areas, towns</p> <p>CONCLUSION - EXTENSIVE RANGE OF EXPERIENCE IN BOTH SITE, TOWN AND WIDER AREA INTERPRETATION AND DEVELOPMENT</p>	3
Ability to demonstrate successful delivery of similar projects;	0-4	15	<p>Museum interpretation strategies, HLF bidding, exhibition design and interpretation in museum, Museums audience development including linking to other attractions</p> <p>CONCLUSION - EXPERIENCE IS VERY MUSEUM EXHIBITION FOCUSED</p>	2	<p>Heritage Reviews for a national park; a geographical, historical and cultural region in central England - which included a comprehensive audit of towns attractions and heritage sites and proposed ways to use the heritage to encourage locals and visitors to get more involved in heritage; Visitor experience audits and how to improve visitor experience and promote tourism; Welsh project to improve area appeal to visitors and residents. East of England project promoting towns and villages; local rail project promoting towns/villages along the line; digital media interpretation projects in several towns</p> <p>CONCLUSION - BROAD RANGE OF PROJECTS DELIVERED WITH SUITABLE COMPARISON TO THE DORCHESTER NEED</p>	4

Criteria	Marks Available	Weighting %	Submission A	Score	Submission B	Score
<p>Ability and overall approach to delivering the Contract and meeting the scope requirements (i.e. method statement); and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience completing reviews of heritage assets in other towns with a focus on growth in the visitor economy</li> <li>• Experience and examples developing new heritage story lines to increase visitor dwell time and spend in historic town centres</li> </ul>	0-4	20	<p>Approach - Working in close collaboration will conduct Desk research, existing assets and from research using material identified by DTC Familiarisation and site visits, two workshops - one heritage stakeholders &amp; one tourism stakeholders. Identification of new storylines and key heritage assets, recommendations for publication Light touch visitor evaluation of storylines- method dependant on local discussions Reports interim and final</p> <p>CONCLUSION - LIMITED DETAIL IN METHOD STATEMENT, FURTHER RESEARCH SEEMS TO NEED GUIDANCE OT SOURCES BY DTC</p>	2	<p>Approach - Initial start-up conference call - establish details, information sources, scheduling outputs, background and context. Research - review existing and research additional assets using online archives, local national and history organisations to build database of storylines Consultation - agree list consultees and contact each (email, phone, conference call) because of coronavirus situation (would normally prefer focus groups). Also survey-monkey questionnaire on town council website and others, promoted via social media. Heritage Audit - identify additions, identify assets likely to attract visitors, recommend storylines that link assets into heritage narrative for the town, also opportunities for linked themed events, new storylines needing more research, recommend best means of presenting findings for use by people/organisations wishing to promote/develop heritage in the town.</p> <p>CONCLUSION - COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH, HOWEVER SURVEY APPROACH AS OPPOSED TO WORKSHOPS/FORA DISPPPOINTING GIVEN SUBSEQUENT EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT BEING PRAGMATIC WITH TIMESCALES</p>	3
<p>Ability to meet the indicative timescales of the project.</p>	0-4	10	<p>16 days work, meeting deadlines expressed in brief but with lockdown proviso</p> <p>CONCLUSION - CLAIMED DELIVERY WITHIN TIMESCALES</p>	4	<p>12 days. Delivery to schedule will need to be assessed because of Coronavirus, but would aim to complete to timescale if no delays because of lockdown</p> <p>CONCLUSION - CLAIMED DELIVERY WITHIN TIMESCALES</p>	4

Criteria	Marks Available	Weighting	Submission A	Score	Submission B	Score
		%				
Total Quality	16	60%		<b>10</b>		<b>14</b>

## Budget

10. The Heritage Tourism Project has available a budget of £50,000 for appropriate activities to support the development and delivery of the Dorchester Heritage Tourism Strategy. To date, no spend has been incurred, and the committee has made commitments as follows at its January 2020 meeting:

Vision Exercise	£1200
Brand exercise	£3000
Design and Print Summary	£900
Total	£5100
Balance remaining	£44900

## Recommendation

11. From the submissions received, the applicant for submission B seems very capable of fulfilling the brief and has an appropriate and extensive portfolio of similar projects completed. It is proposed therefore that applicant for submission B is invited to fulfil the brief provided that timescales are adjusted and agreed mutually to allow for workshops to take place after lock down is ended, as opposed to the survey and email approach. Members are asked to agree the proposal.

T Hedger  
Heritage Tourism Project Manager.