



EUROPEAN
association
Historic Towns & Regions

Annual Report 2007

Innsbruck
3rd-5th October 2007

Report of the Secretary General



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a s s o c i a t i o n
Historic Towns & Regions

Annual Report of the European Association of Historic Towns and Regions 2007

Report of the Secretary General

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Annual Report covers the period September 2006 to September 2007. It follows on from the Annual Report presented to the last General Assembly in Dubrovnik in September 2006. This report will be distributed to members and posted on the EAHTR website

2 Dubrovnik Symposium 27th – 29th September 2006

- 2.1. The Symposium was organised jointly by EAHTR and the Council of Europe and was hosted by the City of Dubrovnik. Its theme was 'Cultural Tourism – Economic Benefit or Loss of Identity'.
- 2.2. 120 delegates from 20 European states attended the Symposium, which was extremely successful and well organised with a high quality of discussion and a varied and enjoyable social programme.
- 2.3. Its main conclusions, recommendations and undertakings are set out in the Dubrovnik Declaration at Appendix 1.

3 Verona Symposium 1st- 2nd March 2007

- 3.1. 90 delegates from 16 European countries participated in the international symposium 'Heritage Led Regeneration – Producing Good Practice' in Verona.
- 3.2. The Symposium was organized jointly by the City Council of Verona and the European Association of Historic Towns and Regions to present the case studies chosen by the six partners - Göteborg, Gdansk, Verona, Newcastle upon Tyne, Belfast and Ubeda – that will be showcased in the INHERIT Good Practice Guide.
- 3.3. The Symposium brought together politicians, practitioners, consultants and academics to share their experience of regenerating cities through investing in the city's physical heritage. The main conclusions of the symposium are set out in the Verona Declaration. This is attached as appendix 2.

4 INHERIT

- 4.1. This is the last year of the INHERIT project which must be completed by the end of 2007. Study visits have taken place in the past year in Belfast (October 2006), Verona (March 2007) and Newcastle upon Tyne (July 2007). The visits included presentations on each city's heritage strategy and focused on site visits relating to the key case studies to be included in the final report.

- 4.2. At the end of August, partner cities met in Norwich to finalise the analysis of the 19 case studies identified and to consider the final conclusions and recommendations of the good practice guide. The EAHTR Secretariat are currently finalising the guide for printing later this month, in readiness for distribution to partners, member associations of EAHTR and other interested parties in November and December.
- 4.3. The report's key conclusions and recommendations will be formally launched at the Innsbruck Symposium on Thursday 4 October and at the English Historic Towns Forum annual conference in Newcastle upon Tyne on 17-19 October.
- 4.4. The INHERIT website continues to be popular, as a source of information. There have been over 101,000 hits, an average of 5056 per month.

5 EPOCH

- 5.1. EAHTR is a partner in EPOCH – the European Research Network of Excellence in Processing Open Cultural Heritage. The project relates to the use of new technologies in the field of cultural heritage covering the full range of possibilities, from use of technology for the protection of the physical fabric, through to the use of the new technologies in interpretation of cultural heritage as a promotional tool.
- 5.2. The Secretary General has contributed on behalf of EAHTR to VAST 2006 (Cyprus, 30 October-1 November 2006) and VAST 2007 (Brighton, 21-22 June 2007), both of which included EPOCH workshops and Board meetings.
- 5.3. The next stage of the work will focus on EAHTR contributing to the development of a “city model” for use by municipalities in assessing social and economic benefits arising from heritage led regeneration, particularly where technology has contributed. This work needs to be completed by the end of 2007 as an input to the final EPOCH documentation in March 2008.

6 CULT – STRAT Specific Targeted Research Project

- 6.1. Cult – Strat stands for Assessment of Air Pollution Effects on Cultural Heritage – Management Strategies and has 9 research partners from Sweden, Norway, U.K, France, Italy, Germany, Czech Republic and Spain.
- 6.2. The project has sub -contracted to EAHTR over two years to facilitate the participation of the end user community in the evaluation of management strategies relating to air quality and its effect on cultural heritage. The final product of the project will be a reference volume summarising all the findings for the end users, which EAHTR will also help to evaluate.
- 6.3. EAHTR helped with the organisation of the CULT-STRAT workshop held in Paris on 15-17 March 2007 entitled: The Protection of Cultural Heritage from Air Pollution: The need for effective local policy, maintenance and conservation strategies. Details of the workshop's conclusions are set out in Appendix 3.
- 6.4. EAHTR have been asked to help with the preparation of a final Reference Manual on the project's findings by the end of 2007 and with its subsequent dissemination.

7 Culture 2007 European Programme

- 7.1. In December 2006 EAHTR submitted an application for the Culture 2007 programme “Support for bodies active at European level in the field of culture”. The EU grant requested was 100,000 Euros. The proposed activities included support for work on cultural tourism guidelines, historic towns visits and strengthening the capacity of the EAHTR secretariat.
- 7.2. The application was judged on four criteria: the representativity of the applying body; the European added value of the planned programme of activities; the quality of the application;

the level of distribution and promotion of the planned activities. The funding threshold was 85.3 points.

- 7.3. EAHTR scored 85.05 points, consequently narrowly failing to win funding. We propose to submit a further application under the Culture 2008 programme.

8 Historic Towns Visits

- 8.1. Two visits were scheduled during 2007. First was a visit by the English Historic Towns Forum to the Netherlands, and the second a visit by the Finnish Association of Historic Towns to England. In both cases EAHTR established, in consultation with the host associations, a draft programme and budget including identification of accommodation.
- 8.2. Unfortunately both visits were cancelled by EHTF and the Finnish Association respectively. In the case of the Finnish Association this was due to the low number of participants. EHTF decided not to proceed principally because of the cost involved and the time available to attract delegates.
- 8.3. The main lessons learnt were that the choice of country needs to be made with care in the first instance – inevitably Western Europe is more expensive than Eastern Europe – and that there needs to be a mechanism to establish ‘in principle’ interest before hotel bookings are reserved.
- 8.4. The Secretary General visited the Dutch Association in June to discuss the cancellation of this visit and other matters. As a consequence the Dutch Association agreed to host a visit in 2008 should EHTF and EAHTR wish to organise a new programme. EHTF have agreed in principle to arrange a further visit on the basis of a shorter programme to be advertised in early 2008.

9 Flooding

- 9.1. EAHTR were invited to contribute to a European meeting in Dresden on the subject of flooding and its implications for historic cities. The meeting was on the 11th September and formed part of a European Research project called CHEF that is looking at this Europe - wide challenge.
- 9.2. The project was interested in the English experience of flooding during summer 2007. Following consultation with the historic towns affected, views were submitted from the cities of Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester. A report was submitted to the EAHTR Bureau and copied to EHTF for their information.

10 Membership

- 10.1. The Municipality of Bitola (Macedonia) became a full member of EAHTR in December 2006 and was presented with a membership certificate at the Verona Symposium. The Portuguese town of Obidos also became a full member in September this year.

11 EU programme in Turkey

- 11.1. The Municipality of Elmali (Turkey) asked EAHTR to help them find a European historic town to work as a partner in a European project regarding the restoration of historic houses. EAHTR emailed its members asking to identify possible partners and had positive feedback from North Norfolk, Malta and Romania. The contacts were passed onto the Municipality of Elmali and the town of Alba Iulia in Romania is now officially a partner in the project along with Elmali and Ponte de Lima.

12 Financial Report

- 12.1. The EAHTR budget is set out at Appendices 4 and 5. Appendix 4 sets out the audited Accounts for 2006 prepared by our auditors Aston Berry and Appendix 5 sets out a revised budget for 2007 and a projected budget for 2008 based on future priorities as set out below. The financial assumptions used in compiling the budget are set out in the appendices.
- 12.2. 2007 has again seen increases in EAHTR's turnover as a consequence of securing substantial EU funding for project work but with funding available for core activities of the association (outside of project work) remaining broadly at the same level.
- 12.3. The independent auditor confirms in Appendix 4 that the financial statements give a true and fair view and have been properly prepared with information consistent with the financial statements.

13 Future Priorities

- 13.1. The financial position described in the Financial Report above will, as in previous years, determine the staff resource available and define the level of mainstream activity that can be funded during 2008 and beyond. EAHTR's turnover for 2007 is at its highest to date but this is a consequence of European projects all which finish at the end of 2007.
- 13.2. The first priority must be the completion of the current European projects namely, INHERIT, EPOCH and Cult-Strat during October, November and December. This work will include: -

INHERIT

- Final drafting, editing, design and printing of 'Investing in Heritage – A Guide to Successful Heritage Led Regeneration'
- Production of an INHERIT DVD
- Dissemination and distribution of the report and DVD
- Presentation of the findings to the EHTF Annual Conference at Newcastle on 18th & 19th October
- Production of final report and closed project accounts to Interreg in early 2008

EPOCH

- Contribution to development of 'city model' for evaluating social & economic benefit through case review of Norwich
- Review of main findings and dissemination

Cult -Strat

- Review of Reference Manual and dissemination of findings

- 13.3. It has not been possible to stagger our participation in European Projects and consequently priority will need to be given in the last quarter of 2007 and in 2008 to new submissions and to seeking opportunities to participate in projects led by others. This work will potentially include: -
 - Further participation in the CHEF project on flooding
 - Being a partner in two Turkish led projects under the EU Towns and Municipalities Grant Scheme. Decisions expected end of this year/early next year on the following projects: -
 - Improving cooperation on conservation between members of the Turkish Union of Historic Towns and EAHTR member towns – led by UHT and involving a comprehensive programme of symposia, workshops and training
 - Cultural Tourism –led by Municipality of Elmali
 - Preparing a submission to Culture 2008 – deadline 5th November 2007

- Developing a proposal and application for submission to Interreg 4 C. Projects can range from €500K - €5m. This will be a major commitment as projects have to be well developed with a deadline of approximately June 2008
- 13.4. Other priorities will include:
- Determining future symposium programme and agree venue for 2008 event. Possibilities for 2008 –2009 include Istanbul jointly with the Council of Europe and a future event in the Netherlands
 - Working with the EHTF in organising a ‘Historic Towns Visit’ to the Netherlands in 2008
 - Continuing to support the activities of member Associations, Cities and the Council of Europe in every way possible within available resources.

14 Conclusions

- 14.1. 2007 has seen significant progress on leading and participating in European projects, particularly on the development of INHERIT. This work represents an important step in EAHTR’s development producing practical guidance on heritage led regeneration –an issue central to all of Europe’s historic cities. 2008 will hopefully see progress on cities joining EAHTR and the establishment of a medium to long term work programme in association with the Council of Europe and new European projects, which should in turn lead to more opportunities for EAHTR to involve and engage with its membership.
- 14.2. The key challenge remains to increase core funding to enable the restoration of Secretariat resources to previous levels and beyond.
- 14.3. As in previous years I would like to thank all of those who have participated in the activities of EAHTR in 2006 -7 with particular thanks to the President, Bureau and Secretariat and of course for the continued support from Norwich City Council and The Council of Europe.

Brian Smith
Secretary General