



EUROPEAN
association
Historic Towns & Regions

Annual Report 2008

**Targoviste
8- 9 September 2008**

Report of the Secretary General





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Annual Report of the European Association of Historic Towns and Regions 2008

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Annual Report covers the period from September 2007 to September 2008. It follows on from the Annual Report presented to the last General Assembly in Innsbruck in October 2007 and highlights priorities and actions proposed for 2009. This report will be distributed to members and posted on the EAHTR website.

2 The Innsbruck Symposium 3rd – 5th October 2007

- 2.1 The Symposium was organised jointly by the Council of Europe and EAHTR and was hosted by the City of Innsbruck. The theme was 'Heritage and Modernity'.
- 2.2 140 delegates from 17 European countries attended the Symposium, which included a detailed presentation of INHERIT project's conclusions and recommendations. The programme also included presentations about Vorarlberg, Vienna and Amsterdam plus study excursions in Innsbruck.
- 2.3 The conclusions and recommendations of the Symposium are set out in the Innsbruck Declaration attached as Appendix 1. This includes an invitation by all the delegates to: 'Local authorities to support and develop heritage projects that promote the sustainable development of their communities, in line with the INHERIT guidelines on investing in heritage'

3 The EHTF Annual Conference 17th – 19th October 2007

- 3.1 This conference was hosted by Newcastle upon Tyne and had the theme of 'maximising the value of industrial heritage in historic towns'. It was attended by 80 people from the UK and included a joint presentation by EAHTR and Göteborg about INHERIT- outlining the project's recommendations and highlighting a case study from Göteborg on the conversion of a former industrial area to new business, leisure and residential uses.

4 INHERIT

- 4.1 Although 2007 was the final year of the 3-year Interreg 3C funded project, INHERIT significant aspects of the project were end loaded during September – December 2007 and have run over into 2008 – although funding ceased at the end of 2007. These particularly related to the completion of all the final reports for INTERREG, the drafting, printing and distribution of the report and DVD, updating the website, and matters relating to financial closure. The final report was submitted by the deadline of June 2008. We currently await Interreg approval following which final payments will be made to the partner cities and EAHTR.
- 4.2 To date, a total of 2050 copies of the INHERIT Guide have been distributed to 32 European countries - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and UK. A few copies have also been sent on request to Australia, Canada, China and South Africa.
- 4.3 This distribution included the EAHTR Bureau, member associations of EAHTR, the Council of Europe, the project's partners, other major associations of cities e.g. the Union of Baltic Cities. The Guide has been given the status of 'recommended reading' in the Europa Nostra newsletter of July 2008. Requests have also been subsequently received from a number of libraries e.g. The Boekman Foundation in Amsterdam.
- 4.4 INHERIT was submitted by the East of England Development Agency's regional office in Brussels, to the Regio Stars 2009 competition in July 2008. The aim is to identify good innovative practices in regional development and to highlight innovative projects, which could be attractive and inspiring to other regions. The winners of this competition will be announced at the Regions for Economic Change conference in March 2009.

Future Action

- 4.5 Further work is planned to promote and facilitate the application of the INHERIT guidelines to historic cities by producing a short guidance note/checklist to encourage historic cities to assess whether they are realising the full potential of their heritage in terms of regeneration. See Appendix 2 attached.

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 final stage of the work focused 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 and tourism development, particularly where technology has contributed. A detailed case study was prepared using Norwich to illustrate the effectiveness of the initial model and presented to the EPOCH final conference in Rome in February 2008.

Future Action

5.3 Further work is planned to develop this initial work into short guidelines for historic cities funded by the Culture 2008 programme set out below.

6 CULT-STRAT

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. 2008 is the final year of this European project and EAHTR has been helping with the preparation of the final Reference Manual on the project's findings from the point of view of historic cities. The report is a major technical document some 400 pages in length dealing with the issues of air quality and cultural heritage with a detailed analysis of the ways air quality has changed and the risks associated with erosion and staining of heritage buildings and monuments.

Future Action

6.2 We have identified a need to develop this work further in terms of producing simplified guidance for European historic cities. Work has begun on this and an initial presentation of the proposed guideline will be made at the English Historic Towns Annual conference 'Townscape in Focus' in Litchfield, 8th –10th October 2008.

7 EU Programme in Turkey

7.1 In August 2007 an application by the Union of Historical Towns (UHT) of Turkey was submitted to the EU's towns and municipalities grant scheme, as part of the process of promoting civil society dialogue between the EU and Turkey. EAHTR was a partner in this submission, which involved us planning for a Symposium and 2 workshops during 2008 to be held in Istanbul.

7.2 Unfortunately the proposal was unsuccessful and the late decision announced in August 2008 meant it has not been possible to organise a replacement Symposium this year.

7.3 In addition, the municipality of Elmalı submitted a smaller local project bid about the restoration of historic houses, involving Alba Iulia in Romania and Ponte de Lima in Portugal. Notification of the decision on this application is awaited.

8 Sustainable Tourism

8.1 The Bureau will recall that the Dubrovnik Declaration adopted in September 2006 included an undertaking to 'Promote sustainable cultural tourism as a crucial part of territorial economic development to include the development of cultural tourism guidelines for local and regional authorities'

Future Action

8.2 EAHTR has appointed Brian Human (former head of planning at Cambridge City Council) as one of a series of 'experts' funded from the Culture 2008 programme (see below) to coordinate the preparation of guidelines on sustainable tourism. A draft brief for the work is attached at Appendix 3

8.3 It is intended to ensure this work is coordinated with the Council of Europe's work in this field. To this end EAHTR is contributing to a Council of Europe paper 'Between mass

tourism and cultural tourism: a drift towards folklorisation of cultures' to be presented to the Committee of Culture and Education in Spring 2009.

9 CULTURE 2008

- 9.1 In November 2007 EAHTR submitted an application to the CULTURE programme, which provides support for bodies active in the field of culture at the European level. In June 2008 EAHTR was notified that that this application for a 3 year Partnership agreement had been approved with funding of €79K initially for 2008. Further submissions are required for 2009 and 2010 but under a streamlined procedure where proposals are judged against the 3-year programme submitted as part of the initial application – with funds earmarked in principle as part of the partnership agreement.
- 9.2 This funding will support the core functions of EAHTR and will specifically help realise a number of specific short to medium term initiatives aimed at direct involvement of EAHTR's membership. Key priorities for 2008 include: -
- European Technical Network – database of expertise from member cities and experts in the field of cultural heritage and sustainable management of historic towns
 1. Prospectus
 2. Canvas members –establish database
 3. Identify initial collaborations
 - Heritage Zone (related to Technical Network)
 1. Web 2 forum – feasibility study completed. 3 companies invited to tender. 2 bids evaluated -web designer appointed.
 2. Participation criteria agreed
 3. Invite membership –end of 2008
 - Heritage Guidelines –possibilities identified but not exclusive
 1. Air quality
 2. Heritage evaluation model – INHERIT & EPOCH
 3. Flooding
 4. Sustainable tourism
 - Europe wide dissemination of good practice
 - Membership Campaign
 - Management and Coordination – Project and Bureau financial support
- 9.3 The programme for 2009 is to be submitted by 1st October. Proposals included in approved bid: -
- Historic Towns Visits – Location(s) for 2009 to be decided
 - Video Conferencing feasibility study
 - Round Table discussion forums/ publications
 - Heritage Guidelines – Possible subjects - contemporary architecture, identity audit, measuring benefit

Future Action

- 9.4 To complete the priorities identified for 2008 and agree a programme for 2009.

10 Historic Towns Visit to The Netherlands

10.1 This visit on 4 to 6 June 2008 was jointly organised by Conny Van Nes of the Dutch Association of Historic Towns, working in partnership with EAHTR and the English Historic Towns Forum. 21 people attended the visit, representing local authorities, English Heritage and heritage related businesses, and they visited Utrecht, Hertogenbosch, Dordrecht, Rotterdam and Delft.

Future Action

10.2 The feedback from those who attended has been very positive – ‘a Dutch master class’ was one typical comment. The success of this event combined with the potential support for this activity by Culture 2008 means that EAHTR should consider a regular programme of such visits involving member associations.

10.3 EAHTR is in the process of preparing a newsletter about the visit with contributions from several of the participants. This will in due course be disseminated widely and posted on the website.

10.4 The possibility of a reciprocal visit by the Netherlands Association to England should be explored.

11 The Walled Towns Friendship Circle Visit to Carrickfergus

11.1 The Secretary General attended this study visit and the meeting of the Executive.

Future Action

11.2 The Secretary General has agreed to make a presentation to the Walled Towns Friendship Circle Annual Symposium 10th –14th October 2008 in Canterbury and to lead a workshop for participants. The theme is Regeneration through culture and EAHTR’s contribution will focus on the INHERIT project.

11.3 The town of Arabarri agreed to coordinate the Circle’s contribution to the technical network which will link to /form part of the overall network being promoted by EAHTR under the Culture 2008 programme. Discussions will take place to ensure a coordinated approach later this year.

11.4 The future of the Circle and Presidency were discussed and the meeting resolved to open discussions with EAHTR about possible future increased support in the short to medium term.

12 The HerO Project

12.1 The theme of this new project funded by URBACT is to develop integrated sustainable management strategies for historic urban landscapes and innovative good practice to facilitate the right balance between preserving cultural heritage and strengthening the competitiveness of historic urban landscapes. This fast track project runs for 3 years from 2009 to 2011 and has a total budget of €800,000. It is currently in its development phase.

12.2 This project is led by Regensburg a World Heritage City in southern Germany and the partnership includes 9 other heritage cities – Graz Austria, Naples Italy, Vilnius Lithuania, Sighisoara Romania, Liverpool UK, Lublin Poland, Poitiers France, Valencia Spain and Valletta Malta.

- 12.3 The Secretary General has agreed to explore participation in this project, in which EAHTR will be an “external expertise” partner with costs being met on a 100% basis but not staff time. The project is particularly interested in the “capitalisation” of INHERIT and other projects with which EAHTR has been involved recently. A major part of this role could include advice on the development of the project and on the dissemination of its findings through the member associations.

Future Action

- 12.4 The Secretary General will attend a HerO partners’ meeting on 19 September, which will agree the overall work programme and specifically the role of EAHTR.

13 Symposia

- 13.1 It has not been possible to organise a symposium in 2008 as explained in 7.2 above. However a number of opportunities have been identified for 2009 and 2010.

Future Action

Council of Europe

- 13.2 We have been invited to co-organise 2 Symposia jointly with the Council of Europe. Firstly a European Symposium in Bydgoszcz, Poland in September 2009 and secondly a Symposium in Istanbul with the Turkish Association in 2010 when the city will be Capital of Culture.

HerO

- 13.3 The HerO project will be organising an annual symposium and initial discussions suggest that EAHTR will potentially be involved in co-organising these events. This will be discussed further at the partner’s meeting in Regensburg when themes, dates and locations will also be determined.

Other

- 13.4 The City of Pécs in Hungary has also approached EAHTR with a view to organising a Symposium when they are also capital of Culture in 2010.
- 13.5 The possibility of organising a Symposium in the Netherlands has also been raised but at this stage the Dutch association has not had time to consider this.

14 Membership Recruitment

Historic Towns and Cities

- 14.1 The Culture 2008 funding will now enable a concerted effort to recruit cities as full members of EAHTR as previously agreed by the Bureau. Both the additional member activities and services now proposed should increase EAHTR’s appeal to historic towns and cities. Work has now been commissioned to produce a membership leaflet to explain the advantages of membership.

- 14.2 As part of this city membership campaign, invitations to continue membership of EAHTR have been sent to each of the INHERIT partners – Ubeda, Gdansk, Verona, Belfast, Newcastle upon Tyne and Gothenburg. To date Newcastle has renewed its subscription.
- 14.3 The Municipality of Chania in Greece became a full member of EAHTR in March 2008. Chania is the second largest city in Crete with a population of 56,000 people and located on the northwest coast. Chania has a long history from Minoan times and was also an important city-state in classical Greece.
- 14.4 Regensburg has agreed to join EAHTR, to promote the Association in Germany and to encourage the HerO partners to become members. The city of Valetta in Malta has also resolved to join as a full city member and to help recruit new member cities in Malta.

Future Action

- 14.5 A review of subscription rates for towns and cities has been carried out and proposed revised rates are set out at Appendix 4 The Bureau is asked to approve these revised rates.
- 14.6 The Culture 2008 funding also will now enable promotional visits to take place to attract new members. To this end the Secretary General has accepted an invitation to speak at a Symposium in Ptuj in Slovenia on 26th September 2008. The theme is 'Old Town worries versus privileges'. This is aimed at mayors of historic cities across Europe and represents a good opportunity to promote the work of EAHTR and attract new members.

Corporate membership & sponsorship

Future Action

- 14.7 Given the development of EAHTR activities there is now potential to extend the membership categories to include a corporate member category and to explore again the possibility of private sector sponsorship. Initial work testing the feasibility and compiling a prospectus will be completed in 2008.

15 Financial Report

- 15.1 A copy of the approved accounts of EAHTR for the year ending 31 December 2007 is attached, as Appendix 5. This shows that the auditor's are satisfied that the accounts give a true and fair view of the financial position and that the financial statements have been properly prepared.
- 15.2 Work is currently underway to assess the predicted actual expenditure in 2008. The injection of Culture 2008 funds in June has inevitably meant end loading of expenditure this year. We are required to submit a 2009 budget as part of the next Culture bid due to submitted by 1st October 2008. This will be finalised after the Bureau meeting taking account of future actions agreed.
- 15.3 These factors combined with the relatively early preparation of the Annual report has meant that the 2008 actual budget and projected budget for 2009 will be circulated to the Bureau later in the year.

16 Headquarter Relocation

- 16.1 The Secretariat is moving in October 2008 to new offices in the historic Guildhall in the heart of Norwich. This will be a very suitable location for a heritage organisation such as EAHTR and we are grateful to Norwich City Council for providing this opportunity and for funding the majority of the refurbishment. EAHTR has agreed a small contribution to the costs involved of £2000.

17 Conclusions

- 17.1 2008 saw the completion and widespread dissemination of the INHERIT project. This has been the most in depth work on good practice guidance carried out by EAHTR and has had a very positive response and significant initial impact. Investing in Heritage –A Guide to Successful Urban Regeneration has given EAHTR a strong platform upon which to build its future development.
- 17.2 The establishment of a partnership agreement with CULTURE 2007 –13 is another very significant step forward for EAHTR. It provides for the first time core funding of the organisation over a three-year period offering stability and the opportunity to take the organisation to the next level in terms of increased membership, enhanced member services and a wider spread of influence.
- 17.3 2007/8 has therefore seen a major shift in the emphasis of EAHTR's activities. As a consequence of the CULTURE funding work priorities have evolved from the recent substantial involvement in specific projects to the enhanced dissemination of experience and information and to increasing the involvement of the broader membership in our activities.
- 17.4 As in previous years, I would like to thank all of those who have participated in the activities of EAHTR in 2007-8 with particular thanks to the President, the Bureau and Secretariat and, of course, to both Norwich City Council and The Council of Europe for their continued support. Thanks are also due to the European Commission for their funding support for the organisation and the range of projects that we have participated in and contributed to.

Brian Smith
Secretary General