



Presentation to the Spring Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 20th March 2003

Background

- EAHTR formed in Strasbourg in October 1999 – part of Council of Europe's campaign 'Europe a Common Heritage'.
- Legal entity – Company 'limited by guarantee'.
- 12 National and Regional Associations have joined so far – representing approximately 1000 historic towns and cities - including Turkey, Czech Republic, Malta, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, The Netherlands, Russia and UK.

Aims and Objectives

- Promote the interests of Europe's historic towns and regions
- International co-operation in urban conservation and cultural heritage through: -
 - A European network of historic towns associations.
 - Collaboration with other relevant European organisations.
 - Regional co-operation between historic towns.
- Share experience and good practice on urban conservation and management.
- Promote vitality, viability and sustainability of historic towns.
- Encourage and support European Partnerships between historic towns.
- Assist members with bidding for finance and projects.
- Ensure policy-making bodies recognise the needs and interests of historic towns.

Current Priorities and Actions

Strengthening the Network

- Develop database – currently – approximately 2000 contacts on cultural heritage covering, historic cities, universities and other organisations.
- Attract more members – help create historic towns associations where they do not exist – e.g. Ireland, France, Italy, Greece, Sweden and Germany
- Improve links with other organisations in sustainable management and cultural heritage
- Build links with Universities – membership campaign.
- Develop relationship with Council of Europe.

Promotion and Publicity

- Produce 3 issues of "The Chronicle" newsletter per year and distribute.
- Develop web site www.historic-towns.org as 'portal' to useful sites.
- Produce updated publicity material to promote the Association and its members.
- Exploit the full potential of e-mail in distribution of information and good practice.

Conference Programme 2002

- Symposium on the “Preservation of the Urban Fabric in Turkey” Antalya, February 2002
- EAHTR 1st General Assembly: Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 15th March 2002 –
- International Symposium on Cultural Heritage - Kazan, 20-23rd June 2002
- Grainger Town International Heritage Conference, 'Investing in Heritage - Regenerating Europe's Historic Cities', Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK, 3-5th July 2002
- 12th International Symposium of Walled Towns Friendship Circle, Soave, Italy, August 2002

Key Outputs

1. **EAHTR Annual Report** –see www.historic-towns.org
2. **‘Kazan Declaration’** – **See newsletter for details**
 - Preservation of cultural and historic heritage is essential to cultural diversity and a sustainable future for historic cities.
 - Cultural Diversity contributes to increased quality of life, social harmony and security and can bring economic benefits including Tourism.
 - International, national and regional collaboration sharing of experience was seen as key to promoting cultural diversity in historic cities.
3. **INHERIT –proposal to create group of ‘heritage led’ cities within EAHTR** – **See newsletter.**

This proposal builds on the ‘Investing in Heritage’ conference held in Grainger Town, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. Cities who have now formally joined are Gothenburg, Verona, Belfast and Newcastle.

Conference Programme 2003

- Meeting of INHERIT group of cities - Paris, 7th February 2003.
- “Regeneration of Historic Urban Cores: learning from experience,” 13th – 15th April 2003, Malta, organised by INTA, the World Urban Development Forum, the Maltese Ministry of Environment, the Tourism Authority of Malta and EAHTR.
- “The Wooden Town Through the Centuries” - Porvoo, Finland 15th – 16th May 2003, jointly with Finnish Association of Historic Towns
- The Turkish Association of Historic Towns & Regions International Conference - "Historical Towns and their Associations: Local Governance for the Protection and Development of Cultural Heritage", 30th - 31st May 2003, Bursa, Turkey.
- “13th International Symposium of Walled Towns Friendship Circle”, Waterford, Ireland, 9th – 14th June 2003.
- General Assembly – Date and Venue to be confirmed

Plans for 2004

- Norwich Symposium on Historic Towns- proposed conference jointly with the Council of Europe, Norwich City Council and EAHTR.
- INHERIT workshop –date and venue to be agreed

Work programme

European Projects

EAHTR is establishing links with European Universities and collaborating in research projects currently under consideration within the 6th Framework. The role of EAHTR is to represent user needs and help disseminate research findings to the user community e.g. stakeholders within historic cities.

- CULT – STRAT – “Assessment of Air Pollution Effects on Cultural Heritage – Management Strategies” led by a group of European universities.
- PEACH – Pollutant Effects Assessment & cultural Heritage – project to assess the effects of pollutants on cultural heritage monuments linking to practical issues such as traffic

- management and conservation/heritage repair.
- Heritage Agents - project led by University College London to protect cultural heritage from the adverse effects of mass tourism with the aim of developing the concept of sustainable tourism.
 - ITEACH -ITEACH network of Excellence proposal (ITEACH = Integrated Technologies for Archaeology and Cultural Heritage) which aims: -
 - to promote the integration of research efforts in the applications of recording, archiving, interpreting and analysing cultural heritage artefacts and
 - to enable the resulting content to be delivered effectively for research and for public communication of cultural heritage.

Historic Towns Liaison

English Historic Towns Forum visit to Slovenia – hosted by the Slovenian Association of Historic Towns –2004

Discussion with Europa Nostra on opportunities for collaboration/ liaison – Europe Nostra 40th Anniversary Symposium in Strasbourg –22nd June

Opportunities to work with Council of Europe

EAHTR network now has capacity to help disseminate information and act as conduit for ‘user’ feedback.

Could add value to work of Council of Europe by: -

- Aligning priorities on cultural heritage issues
- Co-organise conferences
- Contribute to working groups / campaigns
- Progress key issues on behalf of Council of Europe
- Help identify key areas for priority action.

Council of Europe could help EAHTR; -

- Helping publicise EAHTR to create National Associations where they do not exist
- Continued support - logistical and where possible financial

Brian Smith
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