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BUILDING · CONSERVATION

The home of the conservation professional

THE INSTITUTE OF HISTORIC BUILDING CONSERVATION

'Mark of the conservation specialist'

**Corporate Plan 2020-25
(`CP25')**

CONSERVATION ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCE
Supporting practice : Extending benefits

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A PANDEMIC PREAMBLE

The main text of this 'Corporate Plan' was drafted and consulted on around the outset of the most dramatic social change in modern times: the COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts of that crisis are still unfolding, and no-one knows how we will fare, or indeed where we will be, in the coming years.

At the same time wider social, cultural and environmental drivers are re-shaping the practice environments of the IHBC and our members, highlighting further the wider uncertainties and priorities. These range from immediate responses to the pandemic followed by reacting to the seemingly inevitable economic recession, to more proactive planning around major social and environmental issues such as Black Lives Matter and climate change. Such drivers require the kind of in-depth understanding and strategic responses that must be embedded within our forward planning, which must be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances, not tied to predictions that may never transpire. Indeed these new drivers also clarify how the work that our members undertake, and the benefits we bring as a professional body and a charity, even more critical in achieving a sustainable future.

Yet none of this changes this plan's titular ambitions to advocate and influence on behalf of conservation, while 'supporting practice' and 'extending benefits', for members and for society. In fact it only emphasises how relevant, forward-looking and important this work actually is to society. So the original draft of this plan has not been substantially changed since the onset of these tumultuous times. It has been simplified and adjusted in light of feedback, but not much more than that.

This strategy is robust because this plan has been developed from previous plans, plans that effectively guided the organisation in times that may have been less tumultuous globally than those today, but were certainly no less threatening to the institute. As they informed the organisation and our trustees successfully then, so we see every reason to think this plan can guide us now.

The central role the IHBC must play over the period of this plan is both clear and critical: we must respond to the kind of pressures mentioned above, continuing our operations, while being sure we can successfully undertake the transition to a post-pandemic society, whatever the challenges. Accordingly, in the short term, this plan can guide a retrenchment of operations and consolidation of services as we as we get to understand better the impacts and trajectory of the pandemic in our new world.

So for all the changes around, as we are still in their midst there is little point in adjusting the focus of the pre-pandemic strapline commitment: supporting members and their colleagues in conservation practice, and to extending the benefits we bring to society by influencing and advocating the practice of built and historic environment conservation.

September 2020

A. INTRODUCTION

1. This document is the 'Corporate Plan' of [The Institute of Historic Building Conservation](#) (IHBC) for the period 2020 to 2025, abbreviated as 'CP25'.

2. The IHBC is the professional body for built and historic environment conservation specialists working within the UK and beyond. It is a [charity](#) registered in the relevant jurisdictions in the UK, and a [company limited by guarantee](#).

3. Following [plans agreed by trustees in 2018](#), CP25 has been shaped by [the success of our Corporate Plan 2015-20](#) – known as 'CP20'. CP25 recognises the achievements linked to CP20, and will extend and refine the operations and aspirations identified there. This follows an established precedent from the IHBC's recent past – and one already [demonstrated in CP20](#) to good effect – that of building on earlier Corporate Plans. The strategy encourages simplification and streamlining of corporate management while facilitating oversight by trustees and stakeholders.

4. CP25 continues CP20's focus on the three primary activities that both frame our membership support and deliver on our charitable objects: helping people, helping conservation, and helping conservation specialists. These are captured in the graphic below, agreed for CP20.

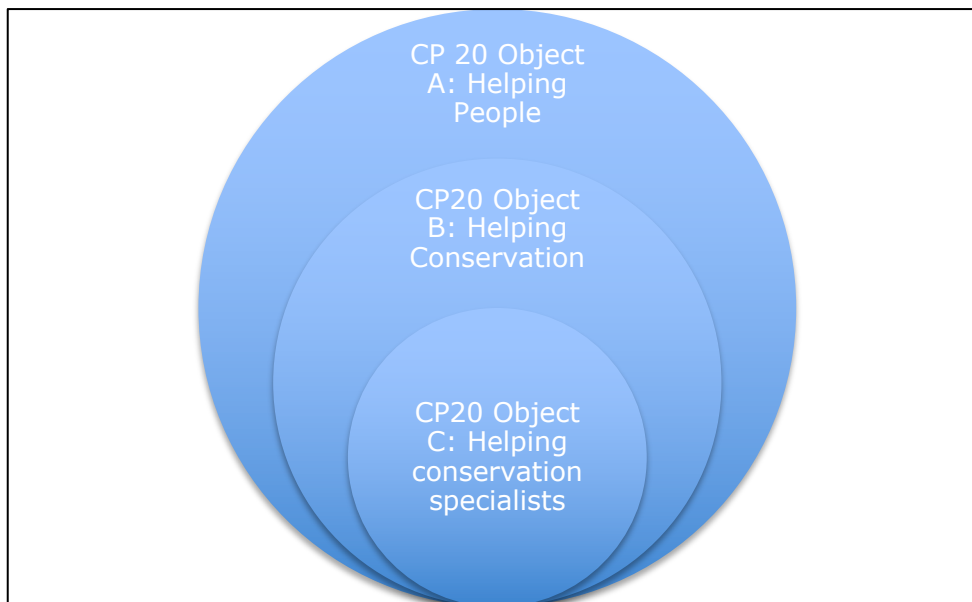


Illustration 1: Integration of the IHBC's corporate 'Objects' framing both overarching charitable duties and support for members

5. For CP25 these objects are expanded as follows, with more detail offered in Section C:

A: Helping people - *Extend conservation advocacy and access, to enhance the communities and places in which our members work*

B: Helping conservation – *Support specialist and non-specialist practitioners, to improve the practice environments in which our members work*

C: Helping conservation specialists – *Streamline our own corporate governance, services and operations, to refine the quality and regulatory frameworks within which our members work.*

B. CORE STATEMENTS

6. Vision and mission: What is to be achieved and why?

The IHBC should be universally recognised as the lead body advocating and supporting built and historic environment conservation practitioners, their specialist interests and standards, their ethical objectives, and the diverse benefits of their work.

Our vision recognises that the future of historic fabric and places is best served by recognised and skilled conservation specialists, the conservation professional. They achieve their best outcomes when supported by an informed, independent and ethical professional body dedicated to supporting and advocating skills and careers as well as their practice principles, standards and objectives.

7. Sustainable development, climate change and the IHBC: The IHBC recognises the urgent global and local threats of climate change, and the need to respond in a timely fashion. Consequently the institute promotes the care of the built and historic environment as an inherently sustainable strategy, including for carbon management. The recent IHBC 'Position Statement' on '[Sustainability and Conservation of the Historic Built Environment](#)' makes that position explicit. Additionally, the IHBC's work and remit accord with the five principles of sustainable development in the [UK's sustainable development strategy: 'Securing the future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy'](#). Published in 2005 and still in operation under the UK and devolved governments and administrations, these principles are:

- a. Living within environmental limits
- b. Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- c. Achieving a sustainable economy
- d. Promoting good governance
- e. Using sound science responsibly.

8. Built and historic conservation practice and the IHBC: The IHBC's historic role is recognised in CP20 as the 'Home of the Conservation Professional', working with the built and historic environment. Acknowledging that same operating environment for members, the institute today also directs its management, accreditation and regulation of conservation practice to serve as the 'Mark of the Conservation Specialist'. Building on the global recognition of built and historic conservation as an interdisciplinary practice noted below, the IHBC operates a unique approach to assessing and supporting interdisciplinary skills. To inform our operations, a wide range of resources, models and standards are used, all linked from the IHBC's digital [ToolBox](#), including:

- a. [Conservation Principles](#), notably the IHBC's practice standards and principles as outlined in the joint '[Conservation Professional Practice Principles](#)' (CPPP, 2017 and after)
- b. [Conservation Standards](#), including for example historic statements on skills by [ICOMOS](#), and on project management by the [World Bank](#), as well as our internal <https://ihbconline.co.uk/toolbox/recognised.html>.
- c. [Conservation Models](#), that the IHBC has adopted to support its practice principles and standards. That support is guided by priorities identified across eight technical and ethical conservation 'Competences' that cover familiar practice areas. In pairs, these correspond to generic conservation 'Areas of Competence', discussed further below, as represented in Illustration 2:

AREAS OF COMPETENCE		COMPETENCES
PROFESSIONAL		1. Philosophy 2. Practice
PRACTICAL	EVALUATION	3. History 4. Research, recording and analysis
	MANAGEMENT	5. Legislation and policy 6. Finance and economics
	INTERVENTION	7. Design and presentation 8. Technology

Illustration 2: The IHBC's Areas of Competence and Competences

c.i The IHBC's model of the conservation process, the '[IHBC's Conservation Cycle](#)' captures how the four overlapping but distinct 'Areas of Competence' underpin any *bona fide* conservation process.¹ If the IHBC's built and historic environment practice standards are observed, then conservation actions must follow the sequence of '**Evaluation**', or 'understanding' of the resource, '**Management**', or its 'care', and '**Intervention**', or 'change', while at all stages being fully informed by consistent and credible, specialist, interdisciplinary 'Professional' standard of conservation oversight.

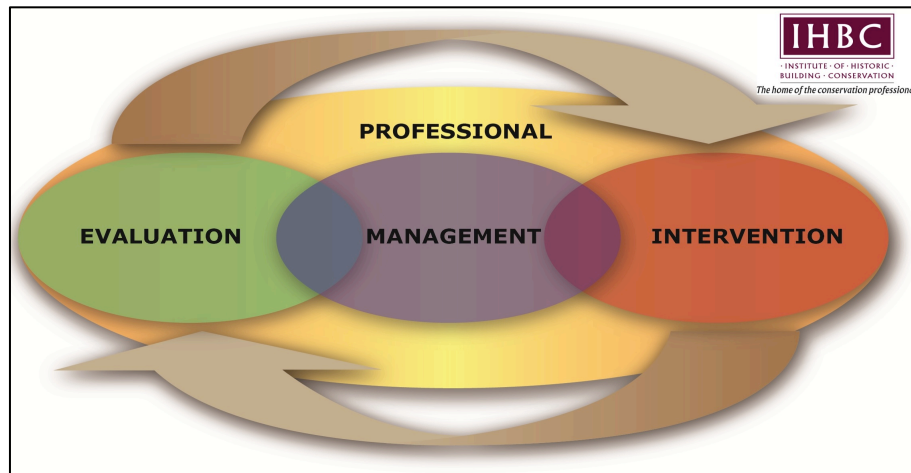


Illustration 3: The IHBC's Conservation Cycle and four Areas of Competence

c.ii Each of the four Areas of Competence demands appropriate skills, while all must work in concert, informed by a common ethical awareness of responsibilities. The IHBC's Conservation Cycle and its four Areas of Competence, are expressed in terms of the eight IHBC Competences, listed below and described in our [membership guidance](#) and [application forms](#). These reflect more traditional and familiar practice areas, making it easier for applicants to demonstrate competence in line with the IHBC's Conservation Cycle.

c.iii The Conservation Cycle, the four Areas of Competence and eight underpinning Competences, are all used to inform, describe, define, determine, support and regulate the IHBC's [membership arrangements](#) and [CPD](#), including for accreditation and other regulatory purposes. They also shape many of our supporting initiatives, including our [Annual Gus Astley Student Awards](#) as well as our [research and advocacy](#).

¹ The IHBC's Conservation Cycle represents the process of built and historic environment conservation practice as described in the joint '[Conservation Professional Practice Principles](#)' and operates as follows:

- a) The process is sequential, as that is the only way to secure successful outcomes. It starts out with the investigation and understanding of any values, or '**Evaluation**'. This knowledge then informs arrangements for care, which is the '**Management**' of the built and historic environment as a resource. Only then, and only where appropriate, is change introduced, with '**Intervention**' undertaken to relevant practice standards. All parts of the sequence are informed by an holistic understanding of '**Professional**' conservation standards and objectives.
- b) As well as describing the sequence in the Conservation Cycle, the four 'Areas of Competence' also represent generic areas of skills, knowledge and understanding that are no less essential to the successful outcome of a conservation project:
 - i. Professional, or the overall conservation capacity to advise on and shape the cycle of conservation as a whole, reflecting the level of oversight that a Conservation Officer or other professional might undertake
 - ii. Evaluation, or the skills required to understand and value what is being conserved, corresponding to the role specialist historians, archaeologists or listing advisers might carry out
 - iii. Management, and the ability to advise on the care and sustaining of historic fabric and places, with the kind of responsibilities seen in specialist planners and project developers, and
 - iv. Intervention, which represents the skills required when changing the historic resource in line with agreed plans, and familiar to heritage development specialists from architects to engineers and project managers.
- c) The arrows in the graphic represent the conservation process as what the IHBC calls its 'Conservation Cycle'. This is because the entire process is iterative, within any one cycle of conservation as well as across difference cycles, all supported by appropriate monitoring and documentation. This ensures that advice and actions can take full account of changing circumstances and impacts.

9. IHBC: Roles and operations: The IHBC operates in diverse roles, including as a:

- a) [Charity](#), serving the non-profit sector, with a dedicated restricted fund, the IHBC [CREATIVE Conservation Fund](#)
- b) [Company](#), observing appropriate corporate standards including in the operation of its trading arm, [IHBC Enterprises](#)
- c) [Membership body](#), generating [benefits](#) for those subscribing to our services and operating to our standards
- d) [Voluntary organisation](#), adding value to the society and the sector
- e) [Civic resource](#), encouraging sustainable and inclusive community access to, enjoyment of, and benefit from the built and historic environment as a public resource
- f) [Centre of expertise](#), offering advisory services such as [consultations](#), and resources such as those held in our online our [ToolBox](#) and [Conservation Wiki](#), to specialists and the wider public
- g) [Research and advisory body](#), that promotes, shapes and as necessary implements [research](#) and related resources, including [guidance](#) and less formal practitioner support such as the IHBC's [description and characterisation of conservation services](#)
- h) [Internationally recognised and respected specialist body supporting built and historic environment conservation interests](#), responsible for advising on, regulating and promoting sustainable practice standards in conservation; encouraging career progress and skills development for specialists and non-specialists engaged on conservation-related activities, and interacting with related disciplines across the globe to support the holistic delivery of good conservation.

C. STRATEGY: ACTIONS FOR CP25

10. The following actions inform how the IHBC will secure the conservation, creation and amenity of the built and historic environment. These have been simplified from previous models to respond better to the changing and uncertain social, community and business environments following the pandemic.

OBJECT A: Helping people - *Extend conservation advocacy and access, to improve the civic and social contexts within which our members secure conservation.*

Summary action for 2020 to 2025

Secure and embed formal, public recognition of IHBC accreditation as a mark competence in built and historic environment conservation

KEY ACTIONS:

- a. Advance the [All-Party Parliamentary Group](#) ('APPG') as a UK-wide political resource delivering on this object
- b. Consolidate the emerging '[IHBC CREATIVE Conservation Fund](#)' as a sustainable resource enhancing conservation investment and outcomes
- c. Refine operations to align with an enhanced and more accessible public profile
- d. Highlight the value of built and historic environment conservation as a carbon management strategy in the mitigation of climate change.

OBJECT B: Helping conservation - *Enhance support for specialist and non-specialist practitioners, to enhance the practice environment within which our members secure conservation.*

Summary action for 2020 to 2025

Extend individual and network users of the IHBC's public and membership services, digital and otherwise, including social media, HESPR, Jobs etc., Conservation Wiki, Caring for your home etc.,.

KEY ACTIONS:

- a. Enhance training, support, recognition and benefits of IHBC accreditation across key built and historic environment stakeholder interests
- b. Simplify and focus IHBC operations and services to facilitate access, use and support by and for all practitioners
- c. Extend core specialist networks and credibility:
 - i. Refine and extend our international constituency by upgrading our international strategy in accordance with any new constitution
 - ii. Explore and test chartered status internally and externally, including through a cost-benefit analysis, and in accordance with any new constitution.

OBJECT C: Helping conservation professionals - *Modernise corporate governance and streamline operations, to refine the regulatory framework within which our members secure conservation.*

Summary action for 2020 to 2025

Expand and extend accredited membership numbers and credentials

KEY ACTIONS

- a. Review the IHBC's Competences, to secure recognition of IHBC accreditation and regulation as the 'practice standard' for interdisciplinary built and historic environment conservation
- b. Through the adoption and implementation of a new constitution, informed by our '[IHBC+](#)' programme, make governance fit for the IHBC in the 21st century
- c. Enhance [IHBC Enterprises](#) as a financial and operational resource for the IHBC's charitable interests.