

The Built Environment – Research Strategy

The outcomes of the discussions and subsequent submissions on the Strategy are summarised below:

1 Resource Assessment:

There was overwhelming agreement that a resource assessment for all periods (prehistoric to modern) of the Built Environment is an essential prerequisite for the formulation of a regional research strategy. An assessment is needed for Castles, Military Buildings and Great Houses, for Ecclesiastical Buildings, Townscapes, Vernacular Architecture of all periods, the Rural Built Environment and Industrial and Transport Buildings.

The Assessment should seek to define the extent of the Built Environment resource in the region and would include identifying the following:

- Regional and local types of buildings and other structures, both urban and rural
- Parkland, urban open spaces and water-related features
- The significance of local and regional buildings and structures
- Data required to formulate typologies for buildings and structures
- Buildings, structures and their environs which are at risk
- The status of Conservation Areas, locally, regionally and nationally
- Local and regional research gaps

2 Making use of the archive:

Adequate foundations are required in order that prioritised regional research strategies can be implemented.

The following resources would greatly improve work on the Built Environment:

- HERs should aim to improve long-term maintenance and ease of on-line access
- HERs should add lists of County Archives
- Linking use of HER, UAD and HLC
- Academic studies and research should be added to HERs
- Urban and rural surveys should be added to HERs

- Building surveys and plans should be added to HERs
- Backlog excavations published and if possible made available on-line
- Grey reports should be catalogued and made available on-line

3 Publishing and on-line services

Provision of on-line services is important to maintaining the Built Environment in the 21st Century.

The following are required:

- On-line library of appropriate journals
- A regional publishing medium for surveys and reports
- A regularly maintained on-line regional bibliography
- Web-links to all interested groups possibly through County Council web-sites
- On-line lists of maps and documentary sources
- Lists of buildings of historic interest by county

4 Communications

The investigation and conservation of the Built Environment requires the active co-operation of the local community.

The following provisions are recommended:

- An East Midlands Forum for built environment stakeholders was thought to be essential for the successful implementation of the strategy with provision for a co-ordinator to ensure effective communication
- Improved communications to keep the public, relevant societies and volunteers aware of research developments and ensure full involvement of all interested parties
- Enhance communications with academic researchers and students undertaking relevant research and other stakeholders

Carol Allen and David Knight 4 February 2009