

Review May 2023 - April 2024

Our Purpose

The National Heritage Science Forum works to demonstrate the relevance of heritage science in the UK. It is a focus point for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and partnerships, working to make heritage science better connected to the needs of society.

Our 2023-24 Strategic Priorities

Each year our Trustees identify strategic priorities for the year ahead, in consultation with our Member Council. These align with the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK, 2018-2023, [which can be found here](#).

- A. A successor to the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK, 2018-2023 is developed.
- B. UKRI and AHRC are provided with sector data and insight to support investment in, and successful launch of the Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science (RICHeS).
- C. The broad relevance and importance of heritage science is well articulated, demonstrating how heritage science helps to address the issues that matter to people.
- D. A vibrant and sustainable NHSF is able to champion heritage science and support its members.

Our 2023-24 Progress

A. A successor to the Strategic Framework for Heritage Science in the UK, 2018-2023 is developed.

- The NHSF Working Groups and Member Council **reviewed the 2018-2023 Strategic Framework**; proposed draft changes; and considered progress, opportunities and challenges for each strategic outcome.
- **Consultation** with the heritage science community will begin later in 2024.

B. UKRI and AHRC are provided with sector data and insight to support investment in, and successful launch of RICHeS.

- Held a [Digital Society 'Deep Dive' meeting](#) to examine challenges, solutions, and future developments for UK heritage science digital infrastructure. AHRC provided an update on the Digital Research Services branch of RICHeS.
- NHSF Trustee joined the **RICHeS Project Board**.
- Contributed to RICHeS Gateway 2 and Gateway 3 reviews.
- Contributed to the evaluation of the strategic importance of AHRC's **World Class Labs** portfolio.
- Contributed to the **Council for Science and Technology (CST) Roundtable** on Research & Development in the UK Creative Industries.

C. The broad relevance and importance of heritage science is well articulated, demonstrating how heritage science helps to address the issues that matter to people.

- Published **briefing notes** on: [Scotland's Museums & Galleries Strategy](#), the [NLHF's 'Heritage 2033'](#), and the [Culture and Heritage Capital Programme](#).
- Conducted a **survey on impact** data collection methods and audiences.
- Published [5 general case studies](#) (originally produced for AHRC) and [1 societal challenge case study](#) on the NHSF website to evidence the value of heritage science.
- Ran a [Climate Emergency 'Deep Dive' event](#) to discuss how the heritage science sector is helping to address the climate emergency, and opportunities for future research. The event was followed by 6 weeks of online discussion groups. The NHSF will publish a series of blog posts based on the event's presentations.
- Participated in a **focus group** to help shape recommendations to the Welsh government on tackling climate change and nature emergencies.
- Contributed to a **consultation on operating sustainable archaeological archives** as part of Historic England's Future for Archaeological Archives Programme.
- Hosted an [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion workshop](#) for members.
- Trustee presented on NHSF and RICHeS at a Royal Microscopical Society EM-UKI event to **raise awareness of heritage science** amongst the electron microscopy community.

D. A vibrant and sustainable NHSF is able to champion heritage science and support its members.

- Appointed the **new Board Chair**, Prof Chris Gaffney, in January 2024.
- Ran the NHSF [mentoring programme](#) for students and early-career professionals.
- Provided **Letters of Support** to member organisations for RICHeS bids.
- Welcomed **three new NHSF members**: the Science Museum Group, the British Library, and the University of Reading.
- Commissioned a **communications resource** to support NHSF in communicating what heritage science is and why it matters.
- Ran an NHSF **newsletter survey** to improve our offering to subscribers.
- Launched the [NHSF LinkedIn page](#) in February 2024, which has since gained over 225 followers.