

**WARWICK
OF UK CITIES
PROJECT
MAXIMISING
AND MEASURING
THE VALUE OF
HERITAGE**



WARWICK
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THE FUTURE TRENDS SERIES—published as part of the **Warwick UK Cities of Culture Project**—discusses ways of thinking about the value of culture. It explores the importance of research for understanding the place of culture in everyday lives, its impact on local people, society, the economy, wellbeing, and prosperity at large. It does so through a research-informed approach that connects with the needs of policy making.

The intended audiences for the series include cultural workers, organisers of cultural events, funders, policymakers at the national level and in local government, as well as academics. The series aims to provide accessible, research-led accounts of issues related and relevant to the development of the DCMS UK City of Culture Programme and connected initiatives supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Arts Council England and others.

The papers are expected to inform, provoke and engage with place-based ambitions and planning for cultural growth and vitality at all levels. They also offer a practical guide to understanding the range of concepts, methods, data, and evidence that can inform the planning and preparation of proposals and programming.

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The AHRC-commissioned Warwick UK Cities of Culture Project is led by the University of Warwick and highlights the importance of universities and of research in the DCMS UK City of Culture Programme: from the bidding process for the title, through to delivery, evaluation, and legacy of the programme.

The project has a particular focus on increasing the use of arts, humanities, and social science research to match the scale of opportunity for evidence-based learning afforded by the DCMS UK City of Culture Programme.

The project is committed to sharing insights and data that can benefit and inform the UK City of Culture Programme and other place-based cultural investments, mega-events, and initiatives.

MAXIMISING AND MEASURING THE VALUE OF HERITAGE IN PLACE

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5. **MAXIMISING AND MEASURING THE VALUE OF HERITAGE IN PLACE**
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HERITAGE AND PLACE-SHAPING: MAXIMISING AND MEASURING IMPACT

GRAEME EVANS AND GEOFF WILLCOCKS

Heritage (tangible, natural, and cultural) and Place have a mutually-symbiotic relationship, and much intangible heritage has a strong place-based association and origin.

Both heritage and place are multi-layered and change over time, physically and through people's perceptions and values¹. All heritage is not, however, treated equally, and engagement and participation in heritage activity is uneven across social groups.

We argue that greater focus is needed on hidden and everyday heritage, and also on the experience and interpretation of designated heritage assets in order to better reflect and represent contemporary society. UK Cities of Culture provide a valuable opportunity to drive place-shaping efforts and improve impacts from local heritage engagement through the involvement of host communities and the development of participatory co-produced research that employs socially-engaged practices and spatial and visualisation approaches.

¹ Emma Waterton and Steve Watson, *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage is important in the process of place-shaping, particularly in the UK CoC context, and culture-led regeneration more generally.²

Indeed, without tangible and intangible legacies of the past, building an authentic place 'identity' is very difficult.

Heritage values—and their measurement—reflect a selectivity that is often inherent to heritage designation and preservation, and therefore its 'production'.³

This is important in terms of what is included in official audits of heritage and its perceived importance, and also what is excluded.⁴

Places provide sites where the effects of inclusions and exclusions can be observed, documented, and researched at the level of individuals, communities, and the wider economy.

When we think of a CoC, we think of the year-long celebration. However the power of the title is transformational within itself. Coventry UK CoC 2021 did not root itself in cultural heritage in the traditional sense, but focused on cultivating the natural heritage of the city through green and environmental programmes/initiatives.

But the title allowed heritage organisations within the city to draw significant inward investment, accelerating their organisational growth and

heritage restoration/ redevelopment plans, as outlined in the case study below. COVID-19 caused the city's heritage assets to be closed for long periods and there were delays in construction activity, meaning that Coventry UK CoC 2021 could not benefit from its heritage assets at the commencement of the CoC year. However, a stronger heritage infrastructure is in place for post-event legacy and beyond.

² Graeme Evans, 'Rethinking Place Branding and Place Making through Creative and Cultural Quarters', in *Rethinking Place Branding - Critical Accounts* ed. by M.Kavaratzis et al. (Vienna: Springer, 2014), pp. 135-158

³ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by D.Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991)

⁴ DCMS, *Culture and Sport Physical Asset Mapping Toolkit*, Cities Institute and TBR for DCMS, Arts Council England, Historic England & Sport England (London: DCMS, 2010)



1: KEY ISSUES ARISING IN RELATION TO HERITAGE

Whose heritage is it anyway?

Official data on participation and engagement in heritage reveals key inequalities between different groups.⁵ Only 41% of black respondents visited heritage sites versus 75% of white and 60% of Asian respondents. Only 51% of respondents from the most deprived areas did so, versus 83% in the least deprived areas. Similarly, those in higher managerial/professional occupations are more likely to visit heritage sites (84%) than those working in routine/manual occupations (62%). The greater tendency of rural inhabitants to visit heritage sites (83% vs. the 70% of urban dwellers) is an indication of a higher preponderance of traditional heritage sites in countryside locations (stately homes/castles, national parks, etc).

This sizeable 'non-participation' element in cultural activity surveys has remained consistent for the several decades of government surveys.⁶ While barriers to participation have been identified, notably cost, time, access, transport, health, and

'cultural capital', it must be noted that these official surveys are largely biased towards the subsidised arts and cultural facilities rather than the wider range of cultural activity.⁷ The resulting statistics of less than 10% of the public being classed as cultural 'omnivores',⁸ with 50% having, according to cultural agencies,⁹ 'little engagement' in arts and culture, does not reflect the fact that most people engage in everyday cultural pursuits, even if these are not identified in official terms.

A high level of regular engagement is however evident in studies of amateur/voluntary arts¹⁰ which estimate that 9.4 million UK citizens participate in the arts and crafts in either a voluntary support capacity or directly as members.

A recent review of *Everyday Culture*¹¹ found significant 'hidden' collective activity, sometimes home-based and sometimes in community settings (e.g., faith centres), that was not categorized by standard art or cultural forms. Local amenities such as libraries and parks also represent embedded and frequently used

legacy assets, often hosting key heritage facilities, such as archives, arts centres, museums and galleries, and historic buildings. These, like the memories and experience derived from community festivals, key historic events, characters, and industrial heritage, help to define a place and particular community.

⁵ DCMS, Heritage – Taking Part Survey 2019/20 (London: DCMS 2020)

⁶ Graeme Evans, 'Cultural mapping and sustainable communities: planning for the arts revisited', *Cultural Trends*, 17(2) (2008), 65-96

⁷ Mark Taylor, 'Nonparticipation or different styles of participation? Alternative interpretations from Taking Part', *Cultural Trends* 25(3) (2016), 169-181

⁸ Tak Wing Chan and John H. Goldthorpe, 'The social stratification of cultural consumption: Some policy implications of a research project', *Cultural Trends*, 16(4) (2007), 373-384

⁹ Catherine Bunting, Tak Wing Chan, John Goldthorpe, Emily Keaney, and Anni Oskala, *From indifference to enthusiasm: patterns of arts attendance in England* (London: Arts Council of England, 2008)

¹⁰ Fiona Dodd, Andrew Graves, and Karen Taws, *Our Creative Talent – the voluntary and amateur arts in England* (London: DCMS/Arts Council England)

¹¹ John Wright, *Research Digest: Everyday Creativity (Vol.1)* (Leeds: Centre for Cultural Value, 2022); also see



1: KEY ISSUES ARISING IN RELATION TO HERITAGE

What is heritage?

The distinction between tangible and intangible heritage legacies emphasizes the physical (buildings/sites, artefacts) and human (cultural diversity) dimensions recognised in various designations and awards by national and international heritage organisations. They include listed buildings, historic districts, Conservation Areas, and World Heritage Sites. Engagement and participation with heritage in official discourses predominantly relate to the built/historic environment however, a field now intensified by Climate Change imperatives and heritage degradation.¹²

However, heritage organisations have begun to adopt a more people-centred approach that also values intangible heritage, such as the UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy, Literature, Music, and Design. This recognises that intangible heritage is constituted by meanings that are shaped by people's perceptions: such heritage exists and is sustained through the 'acts of people'.^{13 i}

Indeed, it is important to recognise that heritage amenities are not limited to those formally designated as such (e.g., listed buildings and museums) since local historic assets and practices—both tangible and intangible—are often valued more highly than official heritage assets.^{14 ii}

What further underscores the need to recognize these designation categories and fluid forms of heritage is the phenomenon of heritage re-use and renewal. The re-use of heritage spaces for cultural activity has been a particular feature of regeneration schemes and local campaigns to save community assets.

As far back as the 1960s, town halls, factories, and industrial buildings were transformed into art centres, preserving key local historic assets. Across the world, creative industries cluster in heritage quarters in former industrial districts from Beijing (**798 Art District**) to Sheffield (**Cultural Industries Quarter**).¹⁵

The success of these re-occupied heritage spaces comes at a cost, with the more

affordable arts and cultural uses becoming priced out by higher value firms such as IT, design studios, and professional services.¹⁶ Private occupation comes at a cost, with public access to many assets being lost in the process.ⁱⁱⁱ

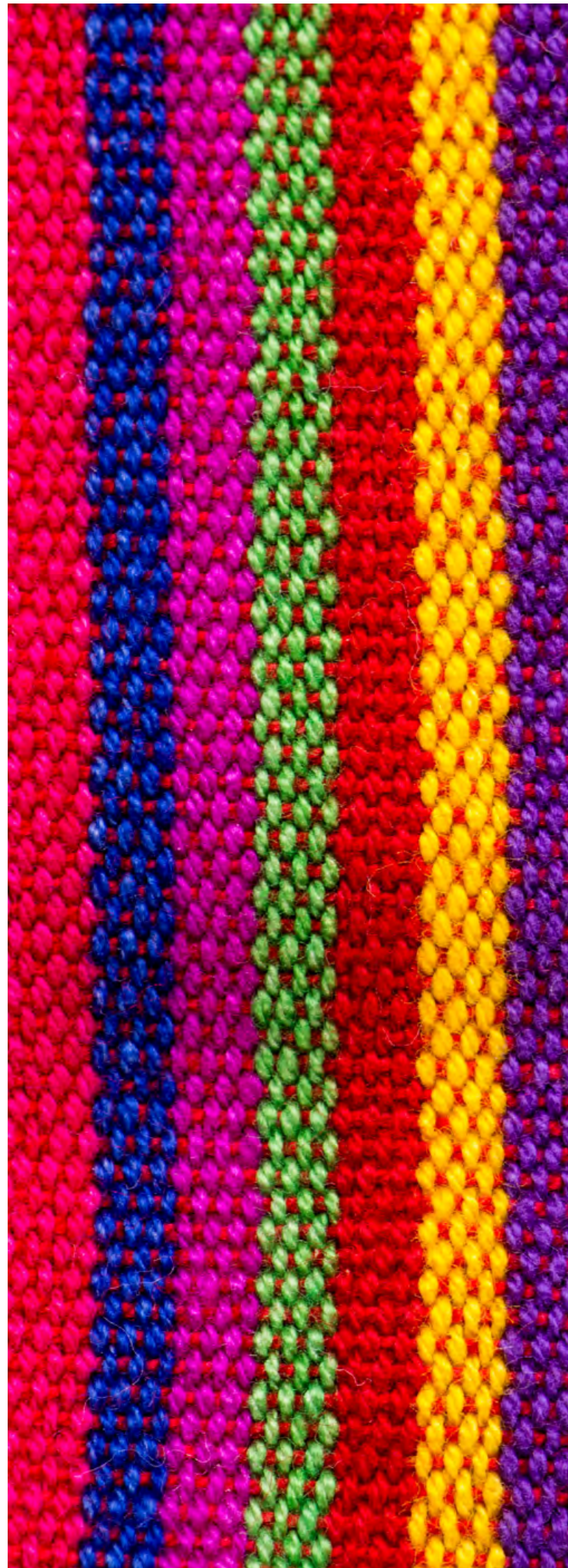
¹² Caitlin DeSilvey, Caitlin, Harald Fredheim, Amber Blundell, and Rodney Harrison, *Identifying Opportunities for Integrated Adaptive Management of Heritage Change and Transformation in England: A Review of Relevant Policy and Current Practice* (London: Historic England Research Report 18/22, 2022)

¹³ UNESCO, *International Round Table on 'Intangible Cultural Heritage - Working Definitions* (Turin: 2001)

¹⁴ Rebecca Madgin, *Why Do Historic Places Matter? Emotional Attachments to Urban Heritage* (Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 2021), p. 1

¹⁵ Graeme Evans, 'From cultural quarters to creative clusters: creative spaces in the new city economy', in *The Sustainability and Development of Cultural Quarters: International Perspectives* (Stockholm: Institute of Urban History, 2009) pp. 32-59; Chen, Jie, Bruce Judd, and Scott Hawkin, *Adaptive Reuse of Industrial Heritage for Cultural Purposes in three Chinese Mega-Cities: Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing* (Sydney: RICS/COBRA AUBEA, 2015)

¹⁶ Graeme Evans, 2014, pp. 135-158



1: KEY ISSUES ARISING IN RELATION TO HERITAGE

How do you measure the value of heritage?

There are difficulties to measuring the impacts arising from participation in heritage. First, because public attitudes to and perceptions of heritage can be distinguished at three levels.

- **Individual:** pleasure, fulfilment, meaning and identity, health and wellbeing
- **Community:** social capital, cohesion and citizenship, shared sense of place, civic pride
- **Economic:** employment, income/ investment (personal, business, taxes, inward)

Second, the values attached by people to what might be termed the 'historic environment' will be multiple, changeable, and not necessarily in line with those identified by official bodies.

Third, the nature of what constitutes heritage is open-ended, encompassing buildings, sites, monuments, districts/ quarters, entire cities, and routes.

Fourth, many heritage assets are 'free' to access or view. Heritage facilities with entry systems are obviously able to measure visits and income, and libraries offer a good example of collecting data on users that can be mapped by household and catchment, and compared across other provision.¹⁷

Finally, since heritage incorporates historic environments, towns, and landscapes, engagement with this broad heritage, not surprisingly, ranks highly in official data, with 73% of those responding to the **Taking Part** survey¹⁸ saying that they had 'visited a heritage site' in the last year (compared with c.52% who had visited a museum). These 'sites' included cities or towns with historic character (the most frequent heritage type cited), monuments (e.g., castle, ruin), and historic parks or gardens, with spending time with friends and family being cited as the most common reason for the visit (46%), followed by having a general interest in heritage or history and just being in the area (26%).

Lack of time (37%) or interest (36%) were the two prime reasons for not visiting.

Critically, these official cultural activity surveys are not place-based. A 'visit' could have been undertaken locally or anywhere else in the world. Moreover, whilst much heritage is place-based or associated with place, it can also be mobile and cross boundaries, such as historic routes/trails.^{iv} The rigour of evidence in this field therefore tends to be lacking, particularly in the case of heritage policy.¹⁹

¹⁷ Orian Brook, *International Comparisons of Public Engagement in Culture and Sport* (London: DCMS, 2011)

¹⁸ DCMS, *Heritage – Taking Part Survey 2019/20* (London: DCMS 2020)

¹⁹ Helen Graham, Rhiannon Mason and Andrew Newman, *Literature Review: Historic Environment, Sense of Place, and Social Capital* (ICCHS, Newcastle University for English Heritage, 2009)

Heritage and *place-shaping*, *placemaking*, and *place-branding*

The relationship between *place* and *heritage*, and *culture* more widely, is long established. A 'spirit of place' is defined by the traditions, legacies, and everyday practices that make a place distinct and help define its identity. It may be manifested through historic buildings/sites, artefacts, and landscapes. Thus, a sense of place can include topographical, built, environmental characteristics, and also people's own experiences, which together make up the 'character' or local distinctiveness of a specific place. A sense of place is also used to emphasise the way in which people experience, use, and understand place, leading to concepts such as 'place identity' and 'attachment'.

Place and *place-shaping* has not featured in cultural policy until recently and, as noted in Text Box 3, place is generally absent from cultural activity surveys. However, English Heritage is one of a number of agencies that have

sought to demonstrate the importance of place to wider social outcomes. *Power of Place* stemmed from the belief that 'the historic environment has the potential to strengthen the sense of community and provide a solid basis for neighbourhood renewal'.²⁰ The Lyons Inquiry into Local Government²¹ also stressed local government's *place-shaping* role: 'using powers and influence creatively to promote the well-being of a community'.

The DCMS CASE study programme²² provides an overview of place-shaping and of how culture and heritage contributes to it, and the study's evidence and data modelling make it a key reference point that establishes the relationships between heritage assets, investment, and social and economic impacts.^v From a more holistic point of view, the contemporary practice of place-shaping seeks to identify, enhance, and better communicate place-assets and place-senses across these physical, symbolic, and everyday dimensions.^{vi}

The term *place-making* on the other hand is normally associated with urban design and public space improvements, but it can also be problematic, implying that a place needs a makeover and that a place can be 'made'. This can lead to the place's (possibly well-hidden) endogenous past and present being undervalued. The term is also associated with urban regeneration effects, notably gentrification and displacement of incumbent communities and enterprises and a loss of authentic place identity.²³

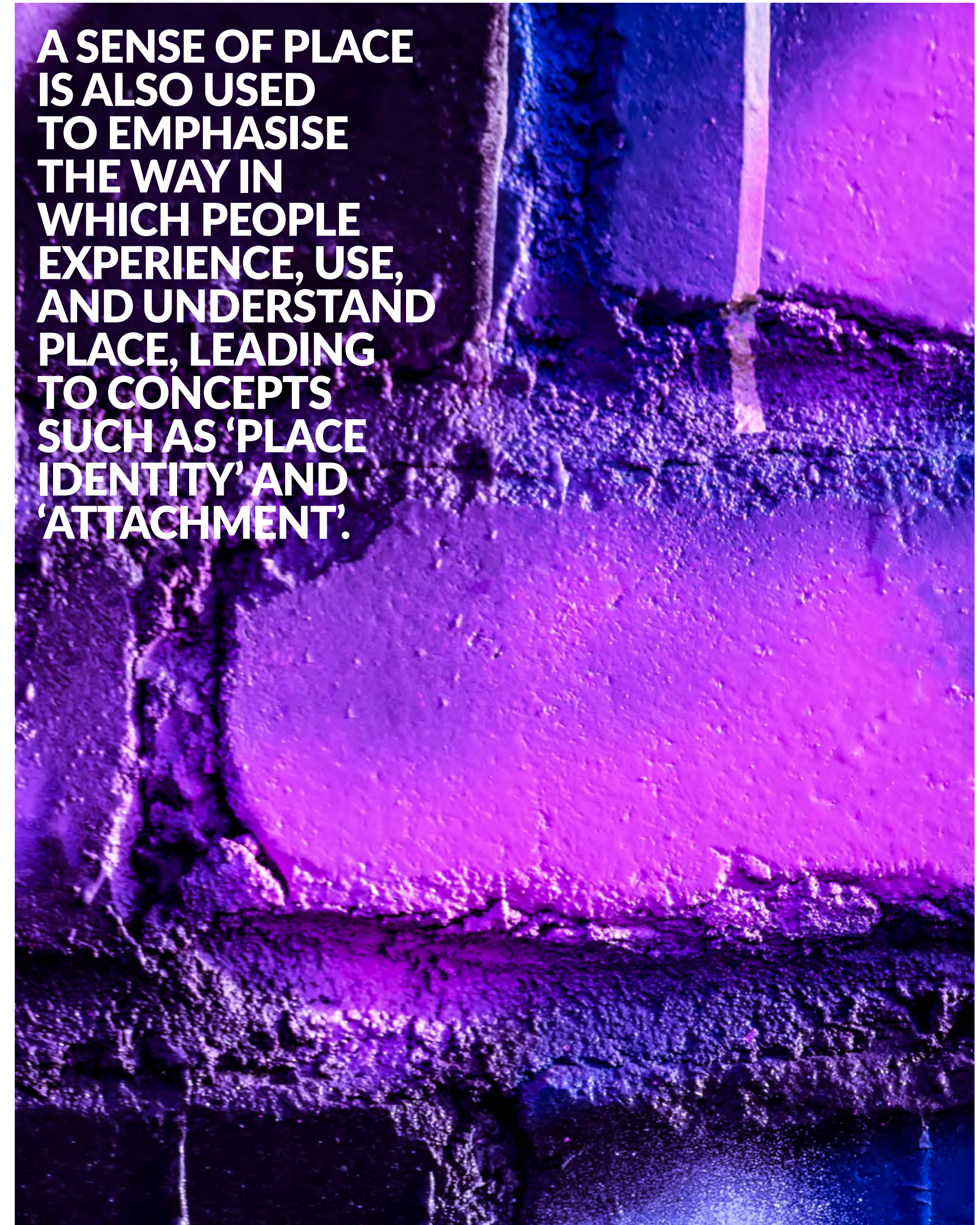
²⁰ English Heritage, *Power of Place: the future of the historic environment* (London: English Heritage, 2000) p. 23

²¹ Michael Lyons, *Place-shaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government* (London: ODPM, 2007)

²² Graeme Evans, NEF, and TBR, *CASE Place shaping Report: The role of culture, sport and heritage in place shaping*, (London: DCMS/ACE/Historic England, Sport England, 2016); Evans, Graeme, and TBR, *The Art of the Possible: A feasibility study on assessing the impact of Cultural and Sporting Investment* (London: DCMS, 2010)

²³ Graeme Evans, 'Measure for Measure: Evaluating the Evidence of Culture's Contribution to Regeneration', *Urban Studies*, 42(5/6) (2005), 959-984

A SENSE OF PLACE IS ALSO USED TO EMPHASISE THE WAY IN WHICH PEOPLE EXPERIENCE, USE, AND UNDERSTAND PLACE, LEADING TO CONCEPTS SUCH AS 'PLACE IDENTITY' AND 'ATTACHMENT'.



In practice, creative and sensitive place-making can help to improve a place from both resident and visitor perspectives, especially when it is part of a wider culture-led regeneration and urban design scheme^{vii} such as Birmingham's Centenary Square. Public art and street art²⁴ can also fall into this category, the most successful of which celebrate an area's cultural heritage, for example the Angel of the North in Gateshead, and an 82m high mural in Leicester that references the city's sporting mascots, the National Space Centre, and Leicester University's DNA research.

Place branding—the practice of place promotion, including event planning—is drawn from product and city branding strategies.²⁵ This practice has evolved from earlier place promotion and boosterism (the 'art of selling places'), with places using their heritage and historical associations to respond to economic and social change and greater inter-place competition.²⁶ Place branding is a now familiar tool in city and local authority

promotion, whether for tourism, inward investment, or location decision makers, including event hosting. Burgess's seminal study on the content of local authority promotion identified four main elements that are still relevant today: centrality, dynamism, identity, and quality of life.²⁷

According to the leading place brand analyst, Anholt,²⁸ a competitive brand identity could be achieved by the city doing things, making things, other people talking about the city, or the way the city talks about itself, all of which may be facilitated through events. The staging of events has therefore come to incorporate the making of place through representational and creative processes, signifying much more than just the physical shaping of space. Cities have evolved from being stages for events into places that are produced through events²⁹ (see Text Box 4).

This analysis of **place** therefore offers some interesting insights into how place image and identity

might be considered through the lens of heritage, and how this might be measured. In the context of cities, particularly smaller cities and towns seeking to develop cultural programmes and event strategies, the need to reconcile authenticity with the drive to be both competitive and attractive for cultural and creative industries requires an appreciation of heritage from all of these perspectives, and of how cultural heritage underpins place values and its economy.³⁰

²⁴ Graeme Evans, 'Graffiti art & the city: from piece-making to place-making' in *Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art* ed. by Ross L. (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 164-178

²⁵ Keith Dinnie, 'Place branding: overview of an expanding literature', *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*

²⁶ Greg Ashworth and Mihalios Kavaratzis, 'Why Brand the Future with the Past? The Roles of Heritage in the Construction and Promotion of Place Brand Reputations', in *International Place Branding Yearbook 2011* ed. by Go F.M. and Govers P. (London: Palgrave Macmillan)

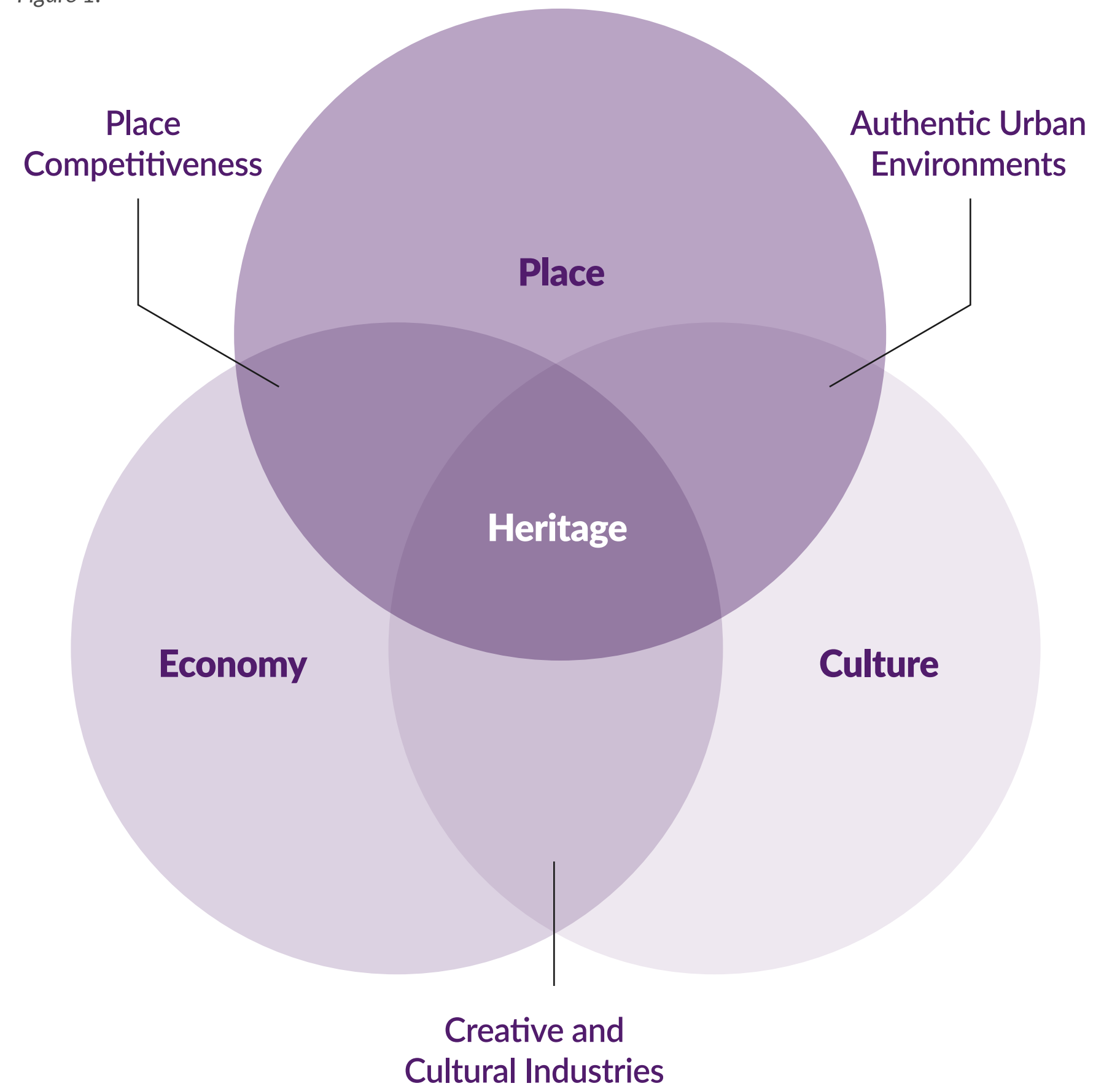
²⁷ Jacquelin Burgess, 'Selling Places: environmental images for the executive', *Regional Studies*, 16, (1982), 1-17

²⁸ Simon Anholt, *The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)

²⁹ Greg Richards (2017), p. 4

³⁰ AuthenticCity, *Creative City Planning Framework: A Supporting Document to the Agenda for Prosperity: Prospectus for a Great City* (City of Toronto, 2010)

Figure 1:



2: PLACE BRANDING AND EVENTS, AND THE CASE OF DERRY/LONDONDERRY

Whether explicit or not, the decision to host a major or city-wide event is an act of place branding and often one of place-making. However it is not necessarily one of place-shaping because the 'place' may revert to its pre-event state afterwards. The image, programme mix, theme, and heritage—tangible and intangible—are the prime elements that a city must assemble to plan, pitch, and promote an event or festival to a range of stakeholders, who are both internal (residents, businesses, politicians) and external (funders, awarding bodies, media, wider public). City branding campaigns commonly incorporate events in order to animate corporate and consumption-oriented strategies that target inward investment and tourism.

UK CoCs are prime examples of how cities draw on their tangible and intangible heritage in order to bid for the CoC award, programme events, and to a lesser extent, develop a post-event legacy. Key inspirations for the UK's programme were Glasgow's 1990 and Liverpool's 2008 European Capital of Culture programmes.

Pre-dating these cultural events, both cities hosted Garden Festivals (1984 and 1988, respectively), as did Ebbw Vale, Stoke, and Gateshead. These evidence the long-term aspirations and timescales of a regeneration process, that events can both punctuate and help catalyse.^{viii}

Derry/Londonderry was the inaugural UK CoC in 2013 and therefore the city for whom the longest post-event period has elapsed. The city was not only associated with the Troubles, it had a long-standing history of colonialization and division, and economic and social decline. These were all features that the CoC sought to address. Surveys of residents, stakeholders, and visitors were undertaken, and there was evidence of genuine transformative change regarding image improvement and civic pride, enhanced community relationships and sense of unity, and cross-community attendance. However, improvements in employment, social deprivation, and tourism (e.g., visitors/hotel occupancy declined in 2014-15) were not evident, and demonstrable impact and legacy were both lacking.³¹

As the authors conclude,^{31 32 33} unrealistic expectations (social, economic, consensus) might have been dampened by a more dialogic process shaped by community narratives and evidence.

Such a process would have offered the potential to challenge and shift the debate beyond the rivalries of heritage and its misuse in the service of urban culture.³² This dialogic approach has been successfully adopted in heritage and place-making research across Europe in an attempt to break down the distinction between the observer and the observed, fostering the co-production of knowledge to deal with the complexity of urban heritage.³³

³¹ Philip Boland, Brendan Murtagh, and Peter Shirlow, 'Fashioning a City of Culture: 'life and place changing' or '12 month party?', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 25(2) (2019), 246-265

³² Brendan Murtagh, Philip Boland, and Peter Shirlow, 'Contested heritages and cultural tourism', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 23(6), (2017), 506-520

³³ Heikie Oevermann, et al., 'Heritage Requires Citizens' Knowledge: The COST Place-Making Action and Responsible Research', in *The Responsibility of Science* Vol.27 ed. by Mieg H. (Vienna: Springer, 2022), pp. 233-255

MEASURING PLACE & HERITAGE: RESEARCH APPROACHES AND STATE-OF-THE ART

In practice, evidence suggests that a combination of different approaches is needed in order to ‘catch a city’ or place.³⁴ Given the range of stakeholders, histories, and timescales involved, this requires a strategy that is not so much multi-disciplinary as multi-dimensional. The approach should encompass cultural asset mapping—tangible and intangible—media/content and literature data analysis (cf. Guggenheim Bilbao³⁵) as well as qualitative research on place communication and word of mouth. Such an approach can contribute to understanding the values attaching to a place and its heritage, given that identity exerts a strong influence over how it is perceived.^{ix} The strength of associations with place can also

be measured by, say, network analysis³⁶ and stakeholder analysis, in order to determine how decision-making powers and interest groups influence place identity and heritage values. More research is needed into these approaches and how one might operationalise heritage-based and place-shaping efforts.³⁷

Reviews of heritage literature have also identified the need for exploring the links between the historic environment, sense of place, and social capital. Active place-shaping projects and ethnographic studies can improve understanding of how the historic environment and heritage activities might figure within people’s daily lives in different areas of the country³⁸

**MORE RESEARCH
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³⁴ Sebastian Zenker and Erik Braun, ‘Rethinking the Measurement of Place Brands’, in *Rethinking place branding - Critical accounts* ed. by Kavaratzis M. et al. (Vienna: Springer, 2015) pp. 211-223

³⁵ Beatriz Plaza, ‘Culture-led city brands as economic engines: theory and empirics’, *Annals of Regional Science*, 54 (2015), 179-196

³⁶ Geraldine Henderson, Dawn Iacobucci, and Bobby J. Calder, ‘Using Network Analysis to Understand Brands’, in *Advances in Consumer Research* (Vol. 29) ed. by Broniarczyk S.M. and Nakamoto, K. (Valdosta, GA: Association for Consumer Research, 2002) pp. 397-405

³⁷ Sebastian Zenker, ‘How to catch a city? The concept and measurement of place brands’, *Journal of Place Management Development* 6(1), (2011), 6-17

³⁸ Helen Graham, 2009

Future research on place and cultural heritage could usefully draw on evidence arising from Connected Communities, Cultural Ecosystems³⁹ and European programmes,^x particularly those using participatory research techniques and socially-engaged practices, which demonstrate the state-of-the-art in visual and co-design methods. Exemplar projects that have developed participatory and socially-engaged creative practice around local heritage include: *InSitu* (EPSRC-funded participatory heritage mapping/access)^{xi} and *ICE-SAV*^{xii} (AHRC GIS-Participation), whilst other AHRC-funded examples^{xiii} include *Cultural Mapping for Sustainable Communities* (Cultural Ecosystems), *Utopia festival* (heritage town hall/creative industries re-use) and *Towards Hydrocitizenship* (AHRC industrial/water heritage). In Australia, co-designed/produced cultural mapping is

more advanced, with local communities being invited to write their own cultural histories and profiles linked to facility maps and images.^{xiv} A GIS-based cultural atlas in Western Sydney has created a web resource that produces trails and tours that allow users to zoom in on images, video, audio, stories, and links to documents, whilst in Queensland, a locally-generated web resource provides maps and links to culture in terms of places, people, events, and the history of an area.

³⁹ Robert Fish, Andrew Church, and Michael Winter, 'Conceptualising cultural ecosystem services: A novel framework for research and critical engagement', *Ecosystems Services*, 21 (2016), 208-217



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CASE STUDY: A PLACE IN HISTORY: HISTORIC COVENTRY TRUST AND ITS DEVELOPMENT OF COVENTRY'S HERITAGE

The Historic Coventry Trust began in 2011 with the creation of The Charterhouse Preservation Trust.

As the name suggests, the charity was set up with the sole purpose of restoring just one building: the fourteenth century Charterhouse Priory. However, it became apparent that Charterhouse was not the only historic building in Coventry that needed attention. Within 3 years, The Charterhouse Preservation Trust had increased the number of buildings within its purview to become the Historic Coventry Trust.

The Trust negotiated a framework agreement with Coventry City Council that offered a route for the asset transfer of some 22 historic properties across the city. Their portfolio now holds a wide range of properties, including fourteenth century monasteries, an historic high street, cemetery chapels, medieval city gates, and an early 19th century former guildhall.

Historic Coventry Trust has developed a model of practice that has been nationally recognised as the acme for heritage development. The model is centred on the sustainable

repurposing of properties. Before any work is undertaken on a property, the Trust will spend up to two years working on a business plan to establish the best possible use for the building to ensure its long-term sustainability. The Trust rejects the model that an historic building, once restored, is then opened up to the public purely as a visitor attraction.

This model has next to no sustainability in the medium-term (3 years), let alone the long-term because once the local community has seen the building there is little incentive for them to return. Therefore finding a use for historic buildings that is sympathetic to their history and architecture and capable of generating enough revenue to sustain them is vital to the business of the Trust. Often a useful starting point is to look at the building's original function. While times and functions change, the building's fundamental purpose can often be adapted to modern needs.

The Trust's belief is that historic buildings should not be preserved in aspic. Putting them back to work allows them to not only look after themselves financially, it also gives people the opportunity to engage with these wonderful buildings without the barrier of a velvet rope. They can once again become part of the city's lived, everyday experience.

Of course, none of this happens context free. In Coventry's case, it happens in a dynamic city of over 350,000 people. The buildings that the Trust restores and repurposes have an impact on the environment in which they exist. The obvious term to begin using at this point is place-making but this often seems to be hyperbole; places that already exist do not always require *making* but often they do require intervention in the form of a conscious *shaping*. Thus, conscious place-shaping is very much part of the vision of Historic Coventry Trust.

The Trust has, since its inception, sought to make a significant contribution to the city in the broadest possible way.

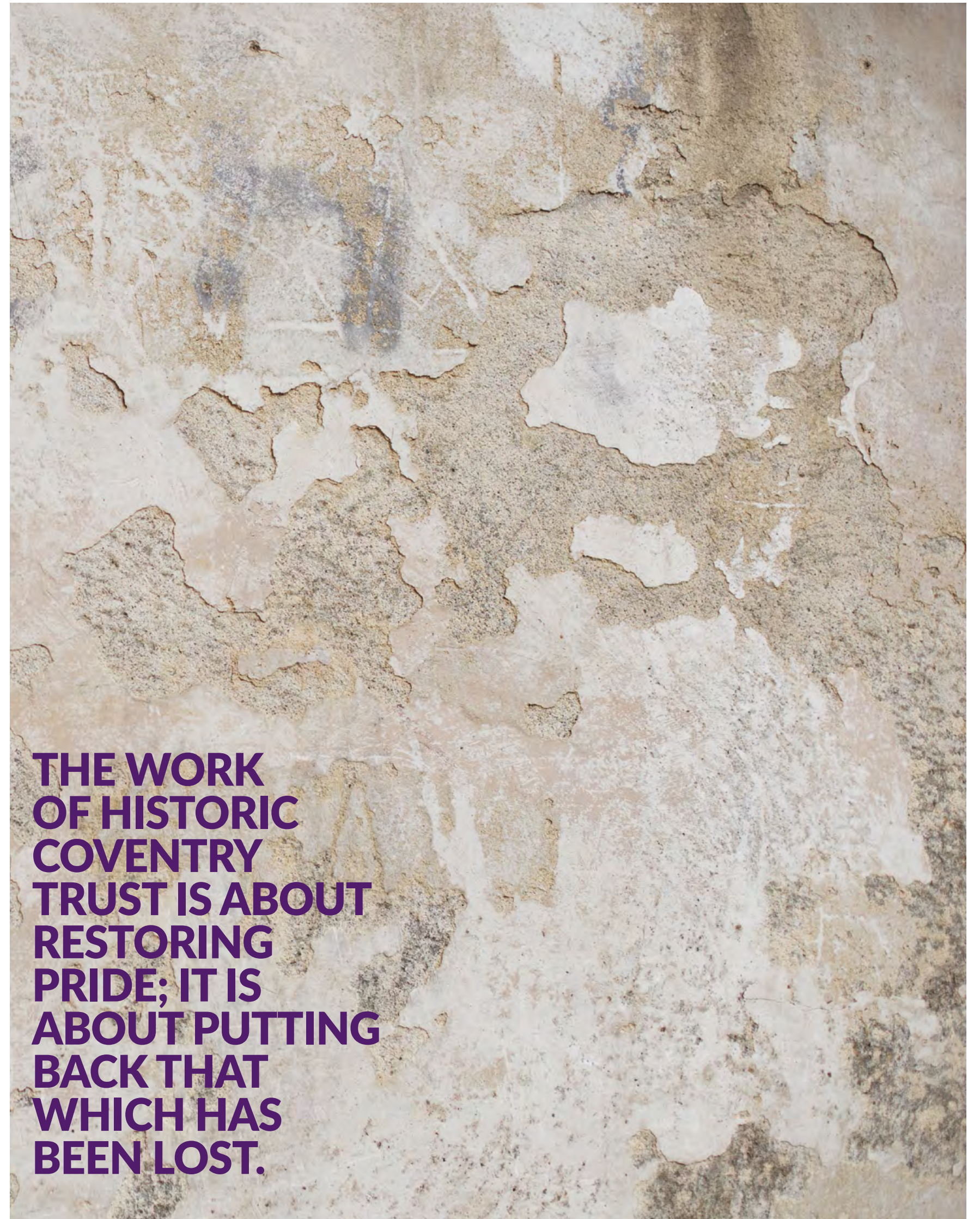
This might be by improving the architectural and greenspace landscape of the city, increasing the number of tourist visits and visitor spend, assisting in the city's economic growth, augmenting educational opportunities, and enhancing health and wellbeing.

However, walk into any pub in the city and you will hear any number of Coventrians lamenting the city's loss of its magnificent medieval architecture. Blame is generally attributed to either the Luftwaffe or the City Councils of the pre- and immediate post-war years.

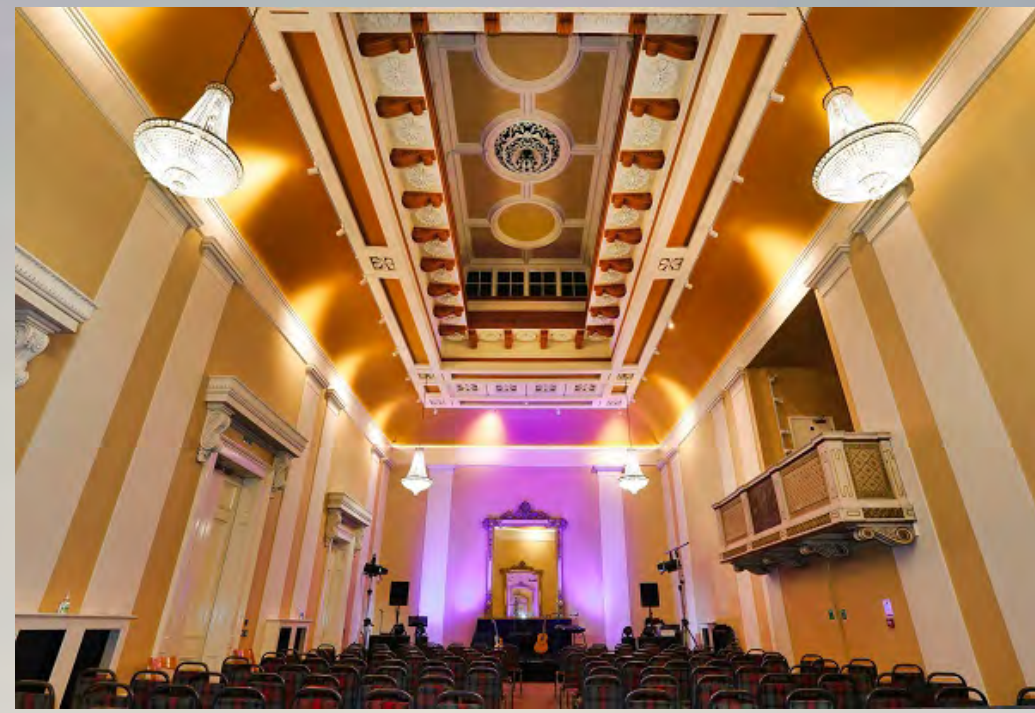
Certainly, it is true that Coventry suffered extensive bombing during the Second World War and that civic redevelopment in the 1930s saw the demolition of many medieval buildings.

To modern sensibilities this appears shocking, but when seen in context, it is understandable. The rundown, dilapidated 'old buildings' were likely seen as being out of keeping with the modern industrial city that Coventry had become. Similarly, the post-war redevelopment of the city was clearly a statement about looking towards a brighter future and away from the horrors of the recent past.

In this debate, the work of Historic Coventry Trust is about much more than bricks and mortar or innovative business modelling. It is about restoring pride; it is about putting back that which has been lost, or at the very least making sure that what remains is cared for and able to perpetuate itself. In terms of the psychology of the city, it begins to address the collective emotional deficit that the previous losses have reinforced.



THE WORK OF HISTORIC COVENTRY TRUST IS ABOUT RESTORING PRIDE; IT IS ABOUT PUTTING BACK THAT WHICH HAS BEEN LOST.



ITS REVIVAL HAS MADE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON HOW THE CATHEDRAL QUARTER DEFINES ITSELF.



While all this is important, it only truly functions when it is placed within the context of the wider benefits of Historic Coventry Trust's work. One of the most important benefits of this work concerns what has been previously termed place-shaping, and how the Trust has been able to shape particular parts of the city. Two good examples of this would be *Drapers' Hall* and *London Road Cemetery*, two different projects that have specific impacts on their immediate environment.

Drapers' Hall sits in the city's Cathedral Quarter. While the focal point of the Quarter is clearly the Cathedrals, it is an area of the city that contains a number of other significant buildings: The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, the medieval St Mary's Guildhall and Holy Trinity Church, as well a number of bars and restaurants. Prior to the Trust's intervention, Drapers' Hall was purposeless and closed off for the best part of four decades,

and so its revival has made a significant impact on how the Cathedral Quarter defines itself, which is as a major destination only a couple of minutes' walk from the city centre, with a wide, multifaceted heritage and cultural offer and a solid F&B offer. This has expanded the thinking of the constituent agencies of the Quarter, prompting the Historic Coventry Trust to create the Cathedral Quarter Alliance (CQA).

The CQA acts as a co-ordinating body for the Quarter, joining up programming and events, undertaking cross-marketing and promotion (for both commercial hires and cultural and heritage events), sharing intelligence and data, and acting as a single voice for the Quarter in respect of issues such as streetscape renewal and wayfinding.

London Road Cemetery is home to two chapels owned by the Trust: the Nonconformist Chapel and the Anglican Chapel. The Anglican Chapel is available for commercial hire for exhibitions, meetings, small conferences, and social events. As well as restoring the chapels, the Trust has also worked in partnership with Coventry City Council to restore the cemetery itself.

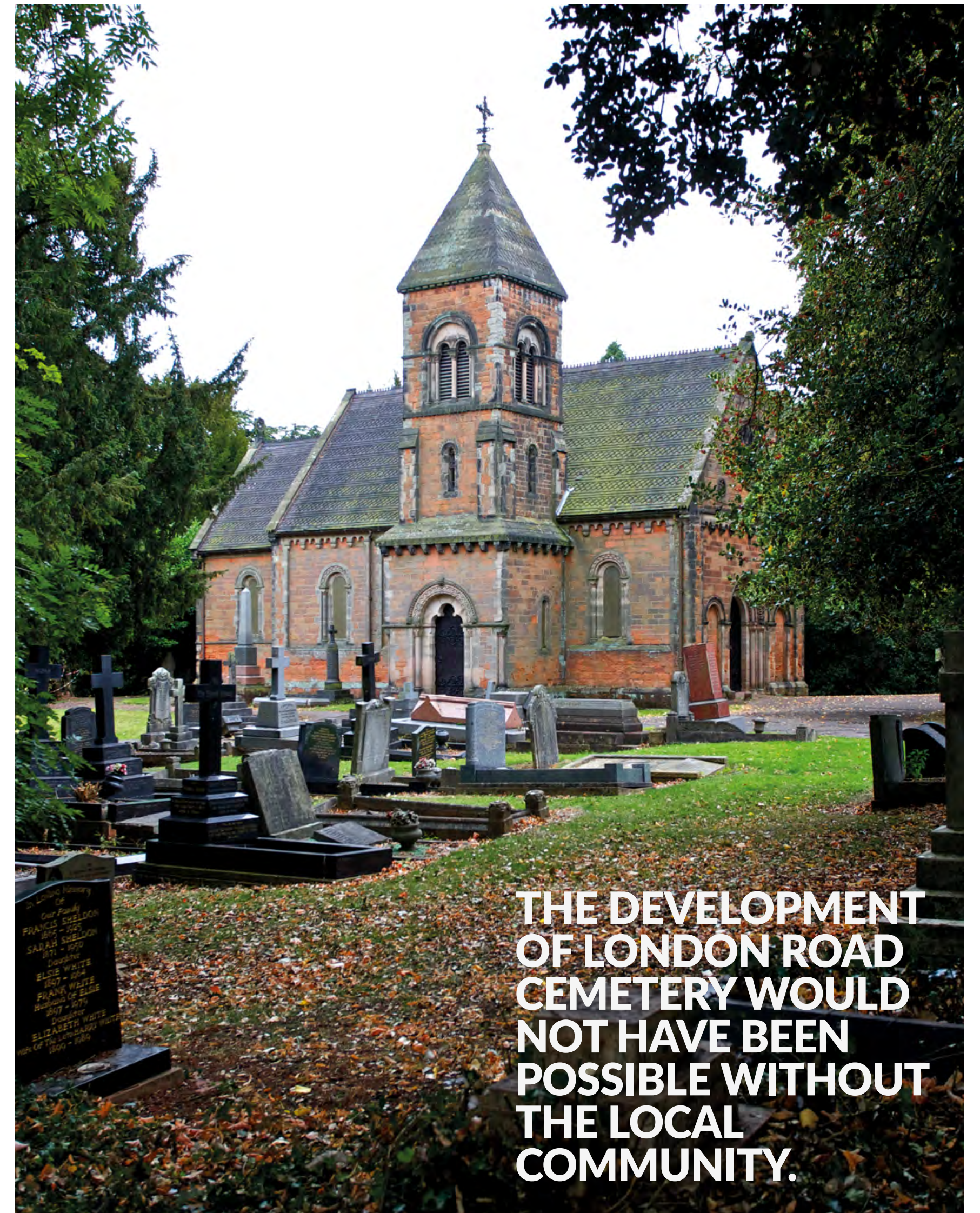
The London Road Cemetery was designed as an arboretum by Joseph Paxton in 1845 and is Grade I listed as an early example of the mid-19th Century garden cemetery movement. The restoration of the cemetery and its buildings offer a good example of bringing a dilapidated and unused site back into public usage. It is now a place that people choose to visit, whether this is to hire the Anglican Chapel, to come to an Historic Coventry Trust event, or simply to walk and admire Paxton's curated trees that have now reached maturity.

Moreover, the development of London Road Cemetery would not have been possible without the local community. Historic Coventry Trust has been successful at animating and engaging the local community, creating local pride in the cemetery where many residents volunteer as tour guides and weed-pullers.

Residents have developed a meaningful sense of their own agency in maintaining and sustaining this beautiful greenspace that is literally on their doorstep.

Historic Coventry Trust has over the past six years achieved an immense amount. However, it should be noted that it has been greatly assisted by the tailwind created by Coventry's year as CoC. It has thereby achieved in four years what it had originally planned to do in ten. It also has to be said that without the solid support of Coventry City Council and a range of other partners, including the Arts

Council, National Lottery Heritage Fund, the National Trust, and the Architectural Heritage Fund, this would not have been possible at all. Furthermore, the response of the people of Coventry has been a vitally important factor. Not only those that have rolled up their sleeves to help, but also those that have responded so positively to the mission and output of the Trust. It is this response from the people of Coventry that is the true validation of the work of Historic Coventry Trust.



**THE DEVELOPMENT
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE, RESEARCH, AND POLICY MAKING

There are key issues arising from the consideration of heritage and place-shaping. Some of these deal with the fundamental question of what and whose heritage is recognised and valued. This includes access, interpretation, representation, and diversity of 'known' and designated heritage sites, and the recognition of intangible and tangible heritage that, while valued by communities, does not feature in official designation and narratives.

Both of these scenarios—designated heritage sites, and un-designated 'community' heritage—demand research and supportive policy at many levels, including central and local government, and cultural agencies. Support may take the

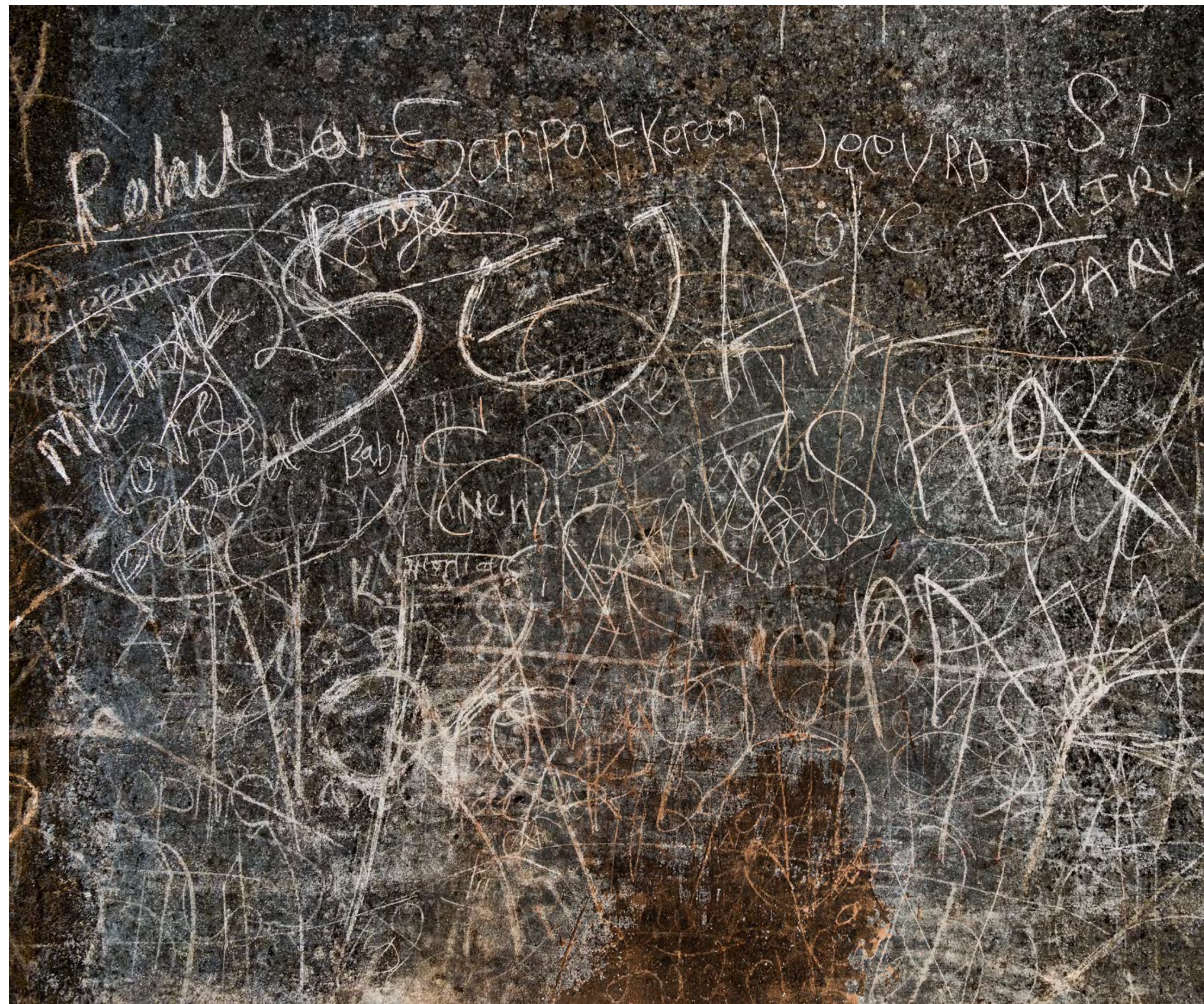
form of funding programmes, heritage recognition processes, land-use planning, and community consultation efforts. Cultural events explicitly and implicitly use their heritage to promote and deliver their programmes while also, to a lesser extent, planning their post-event legacies. Key guidance and toolkits developed under DCMS CASE, AHRC Connected Communities, and elsewhere,^{xv} and other best practices in cultural mapping and planning need to be tested more widely—geographically and in different heritage and community contexts—in order to refine and provide a transferable evidence base. Prospective UK CoCs could provide a useful model in undertaking *a priori* and *a posteriori* comparisons.

These would include cultural mapping projects, and more inclusive and co-produced heritage audits and evaluation studies that focus on places where events have been held in order to measure change and identify knowledge gaps.

Traditional research at both population and local area scales needs a place-shaping approach that engages and reflects local knowledge. Future empirical research is recommended that builds on spatial and visualisation techniques and the use of socially-engaged artists and citizen-scientists through place-based co-designed/co-created projects and schemes. Targeting particular communities who are un- or under-represented in current heritage activity surveys is also recommended; this is both in order to assess barriers to participation and to gauge their own heritage values and aspirations. The better reflection of 'place' and heritage in cultural and other user surveys is a

critical policy challenge in this regard. The use of digital visualisation methods also needs rolling out in cultural heritage situations. There is an opportunity for local councils (who hold much spatial data), local communities (who have local knowledge), and universities (many university art and design school staff also work in practice) to enter into partnerships to improve the conduct of event impact and evaluation studies.

Finally, while much evidence and exemplar projects are drawn from a wide disciplinary and topic base, the existing state-of-the-art research is not exploited or disseminated adequately. As DCMS CASE research demonstrates, the Cultural Asset Mapping toolkit, and other culture planning and place-shaping resources could all be put to more use. There is merit therefore in a meta-review and synthesis of this research evidence and its transferability.



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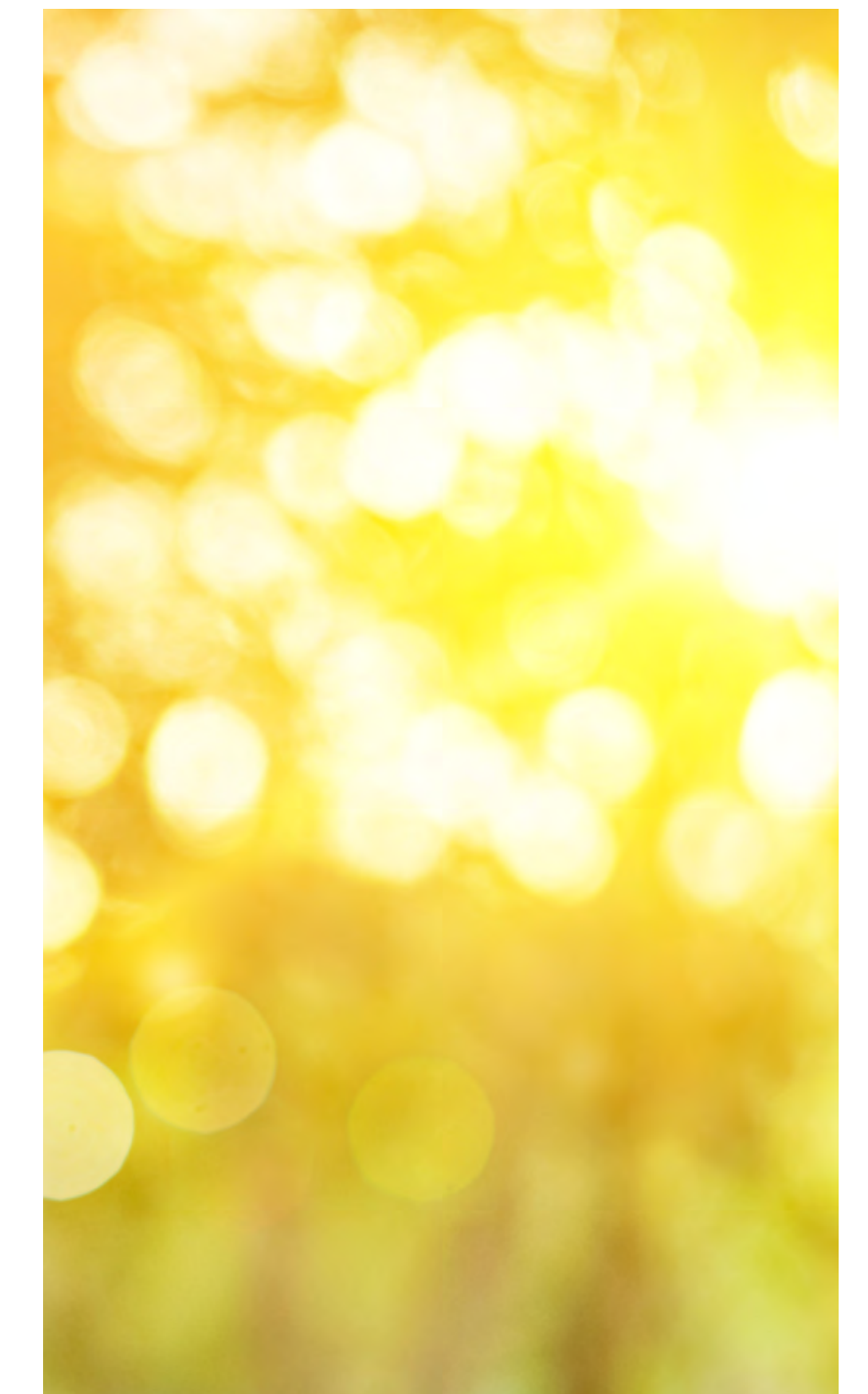
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i There is a growing recognition that the intangible can be a source of inspiration for the tangible and vice versa, and intangible legacies are often subsequently celebrated in museums/exhibitions and festivals such as music, food, culture (e.g., Fashion, LBGTQ, and Slavery museums).

ii According to Historic Scotland: ‘...people are increasingly interested in different aspects of our history that our listing and designation policies have not traditionally recognised’ (Madgin, 2021). Increasingly, heritage agencies work in partnership with local communities and partners in everyday settings (e.g., Historic England’s Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and High Street HAZ scheme) (see Case Study and OBU, 2012), and the recently launched Everyday Heritage fund which focuses on working class history.

iii A downside of the property uplift associated with historic buildings has been the loss of accessible heritage assets (e.g., churches, schools, and municipal buildings) to private (housing) development, whereby their attractive facades are retained but their public access and future use value is lost, e.g., Lister Mills in Bradford.

iv For example, the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes programme, which links cities with common pasts and architecture, e.g., industrial heritage, cemeteries.

v For instance, the study concluded that both the concentration of creative firms and their turnover was positively and significantly associated with the density of

heritage assets and the number of cultural events listings per capita. A follow-up study for Historic England (Evans et al. 2016) surveyed over 60 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)—including Coventry—and found a positive association between heritage assets and narratives, and business location and growth, with heritage images frequently used in BID promotional material.

vi For instance, Richards (2017) uses the combination of physical, imagined, and lived space. Imagined space gives and takes meaning from the social and cultural context, and the lived space is the result of the creativity and knowledge of repeated usage of the space. Through this practice, the interplay of these elements helps to shape place.

vii Lew (2017) outlines four key types of place-making, usefully distinguishing their intent and potential impact. Although not mutually exclusive, they demonstrate notably different processes and outcomes. They are: 1. Standard place-making focused on physical upkeep and maintenance of the built environment. 2. Strategic place-making focused on the creation of a new development on the scale of a neighbourhood or city through a top down development approach with a significant level of investment, often from governments or private developers. 3. Creative place-making focused on the utilisation of the arts, to make a place more vibrant and interesting, be it through applications to the physical environment, the presence of arts related businesses, or

the staging of programming and events. 4. Tactical place-making focused on a bottom-up approach led by community groups looking to test, change, or improve aspects of their locale, often using temporary, low-technology/low-cost interventions.

viii An indication of Glasgow’s legacy is that it has recently been designated the UK’s top cultural and creative city by the European Commission according to a ranking of 29 different aspects of a city’s cultural health, including its cultural vibrancy and its ability to attract creative talent and stimulate cultural engagement. It has also been given City of Music status by UNESCO, as has Liverpool, which has been named as the substitution host for Ukraine in Eurovision 2023.

ix Qualitative and survey-based methods using visualisation, such as the collage technique (Wagner and Peters, 2019) and mapping-based GIS-Participation (GIS-P) (Evans and Edizel, 2017) have proven to be helpful in measuring intangible elements and spatial-place relationships (DCMS, 2010). In Archaeology and Digital Humanities the ‘spatial turn’ in Arts and Humanities (Gregory and Geddes, 2014) has evolved concepts such as Deep Mapping, which combines Historical GIS with creative writing (Biggs, 2010). Arts-led research in heritage settings incorporate co-design/participatory methods such as oral history, drama, dance, visual arts, multi-art-form festivals, and residencies, as well as creative methods practised in community planning and architecture, notably Design Charrettes, Parish Maps,

and Planning for Real (Evans, 2008). All of these applications have been used in or are transferable to heritage situations.

x HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area), <https://heranet.info/>; JPI Urban Heritage http://jpi-ch.eu/wp-content/uploads/2156_JPI-Cultural-Heritage-Web.pdf

xi www.academia.edu/49949867/How_to_reach_the_hard_to_reach_the_development_of_Participatory_Geographic_Information_Systems_P_GIS_for_inclusive_urban_design_in_UK_cities

xii <https://pure.york.ac.uk/portal/en/projects/knowledge-exchange-improved-community-engagement-through-spatial->

xiii https://adri.mdx.ac.uk/culturalplanningforsustainablecommunities/AHRC_Utopia_festivals <http://georgemckay.org/thoughts-on-conference;Hydrocitizenship>; <https://www.leevalley.org/cultural-mappinggis-participation.html>

xiv For a review of cultural mapping and planning guidance and toolkits see Evans (2008) and Evans and Edizel (2017)

xv Cohen, M. et al., *Valuing creative placemaking: development of a toolkit for public and private stakeholders*. (Sydney: NSW Government, 2018).

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