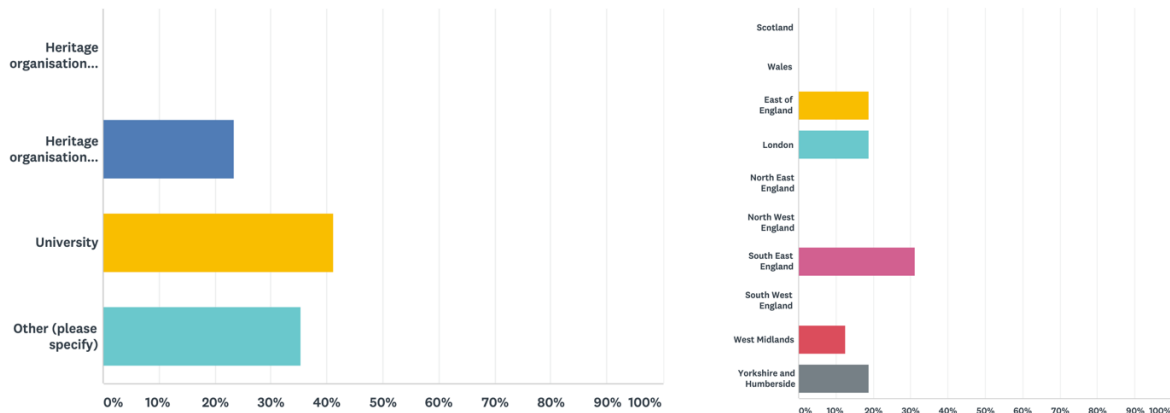


Heritage 2020

Summary of responses to survey by the Heritage 2020 'Discovery, Identification and Understanding' working group into the findings of the report 'Mapping collaborative interactions between Higher Education Institutions in the UK and Heritage Sector'

An online survey was carried out in July 2019 to engage people with the report '[Mapping collaborative interactions between Higher Education Institutions in the UK and Heritage Sector](#)', test the findings and find out what type of further guidance could help to strengthen and extend collaboration.

Survey respondents came from three categories, with the most frequent 'other' respondents being from local authorities (Historic Environment Records or Archaeologists). They were mostly based in the South of England or Midlands.



The report found relatively little collaboration between heritage sector organisations and universities that focused on the historic environment. 100% of survey respondents indicated that this is an area in which they would like to do more collaborative work.

When asked what would help them to do more collaborative work, responses included how to find out about research topics/ needs, how to make connections, improvements to the structures that support or enable collaboration, and a need for better awareness of working practices on both sides so that true collaborations are formed with early input and equal access to research outputs:

- *Knowing what work universities are doing in our area so that we can liaise with them over research topics.*
- *Knowledge of research areas/ projects within 'local' universities and at a wider national scale.*
- *Knowing who and how to engage with in universities and other research bodies.*
- *Being able to make connections more easily with the right people in the heritage sector.*
- *More networking events to bring together heritage organisations and universities looking to collaborate, perhaps with support and guidance from AHRC and ESRC.*
- *A greater empathy amongst co-collaborators.*

- *Understanding by academics of other areas of the sector and a willingness to actually communicate and share information from universities.*
- *Collaborative work must be a true partnership; [...] many university-led projects fail to take into account the information and resources that local authority collections can bring to bear in integrated studies, and the dissemination of this back into the local archaeological information resource (particularly HERs) is often poorly-planned, if considered at all.*

When asked whether respondents would welcome facilitation to further their involvement in collaborative work (e.g. from AHRC, Historic England, National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement), 82% would welcome facilitation, whilst the other 18% were unsure.

Further comments included:

- AHRC would be beneficial
- The need for brokerage in this matter was apparent within my own research, and your report.

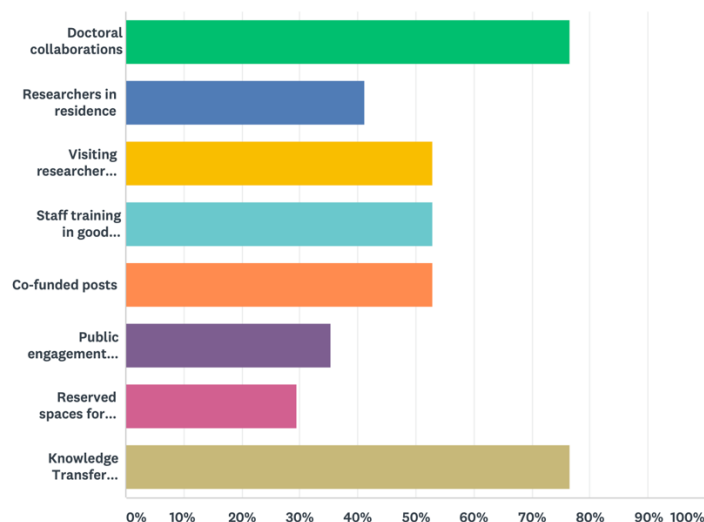
People were then asked what form of facilitation they would find helpful. Answers ranged from raising awareness amongst academics of local authorities and HERs as sources of data including grey literature, to access to heritage sites, to regional brokerage or a programme that would explain the roles of people working within the different sectors.

Respondents were then asked if they were part of their [regional Historic Environment Forum](#). 65% of respondents were not, 18% were members and 17% were not sure.

For those who were not members, reasons were:

- Not relevant/ or interest (17%)
- Unaware of this opportunity (83%)

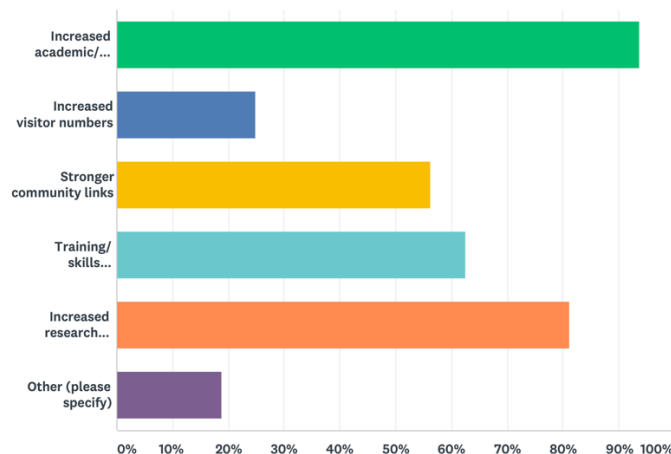
The next question sought feedback on the types of heritage sector- university collaboration that are important to the respondents. The answers are shown in the graph below, with doctoral collaborations and knowledge-transfer opportunities being the most frequently identified as important.



Examples of areas in which people would particularly welcome additional heritage sector-university collaborations included:

- Sharing of research.
- Research and mapping, synthesis of development funded work across our area.
- Developing rigorous evidence to demonstrate the value of heritage to policy makers, including economic research.
- Research focused on data-driven approaches.
- Exploration of museum collections using heritage science techniques to reveal object biographies.
- Audience engagement and co-design.
- Research priorities/ questions that can be worked on collaboratively; data/ archives, particularly for scientific work.
- Publication and knowledge transfer. Publishing and sharing results of research.

Respondents were also asked about what type of impact they seek from an HEI-heritage organisation collaboration. Increase academic/ public/ media awareness scored most highly, with increased research capacity also popular. The full range of answers is shown below.



When asked what existing resources or materials people drew upon in support of current collaborative working, answers included:

- Research frameworks
- Our archives, interviews, visits to sites in our network, opportunities for presenting and writing about research.
- Professional networks and colleagues.
- Our own in-house teams.
- We are a provider rather than vice versa.
- Reactive at the moment, to when people contact us.

The survey asked: 'If a toolkit were to be developed in support of heritage sector-university collaborative working, what would you like to see included?' There did not seem to be strong support

for a toolkit from the answers that were given; instead, answers prioritised improved communication. Answers included:

- A reminder that HERs can only grow from being sent results of work that use our data.
- A toolkit would not be beneficial to our course or students.
- I'm not sure a toolkit is the way forward. Increase communication/ pathways to communication should be the first priority.
- Clear guidance on what Local Authority Historic Environment Services can offer, particularly HERS, the data they can provide and would like back in return.
- The necessity to have a clear research design, and writing up results of excavations.

For respondents from the heritage sector, the survey also sought to establish whether their organisation had any kind of mentoring or formal/informal supporting relationship between an Independent Research Organisation (IRO) heritage organisation and a smaller sector organisation. Most (72%) did not, 21% were unsure, whilst 7% confirmed they did have a relationship in place.

But those who did not have such a relationship in place were not sure that it would be beneficial, although it was noted that even where IROs sometimes have a remit to provide this kind of support they may not have the resource to actually provide it.

Conclusion

The survey showed that there is enthusiasm for greater collaboration, particularly amongst HERs. Whilst it may not be necessary to develop additional guidance or support packages such as toolkits to further collaboration, it is clear that improved communication and more opportunities to communicate between HEIs and heritage organisations would be beneficial. It is suggested that regional Historic Environment Forums and collaborative doctoral networks might be existing structures that could help to achieve the desired improvements in communication.

July 2019