

INVERCLYDE HERITAGE STRATEGY 2019-2029

Summary Report July 2019



Inverclyde
council



FOREWORD

As Chair of Inverclyde Alliance, the Inverclyde Community Planning Partnership, I am delighted to introduce Inverclyde's Heritage Strategy 2019-2029.



Inverclyde Alliance's *Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017-2022: Moving Forward Together* identifies three strategic priorities for the area, one of which - Environment, Culture and Heritage - recognises that a thriving culture and heritage offer can have a positive impact on the physical, mental and social wellbeing of residents of all ages, as well as contributing to social and economic regeneration, promoting tourism, and making Inverclyde a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

Commissioned by the Inverclyde Cultural Partnership, one of the Outcomes Improvement Plan delivery groups, the Strategy has been prepared in consultation with community groups and organisations with an interest in culture

and heritage, as well as with Inverclyde's communities. In order to celebrate and promote our unique culture and heritage, a vital part of the strategy is to ensure it is available to all and to provide the community, including our children and young people, with opportunities to engage, volunteer, and learn new skills.

The Strategy comes at a time when the public sector is facing unprecedented financial challenges, and this will require us to work closely with a wide range of partners from the public, private, and third sectors to achieve the Strategy's ambitious vision, aims and objectives and the strong, sustainable infrastructure required to ensure that heritage is in the best possible position to build civic pride and social capital. The Strategy will

therefore serve as a framework for partners with an interest in culture and heritage to share, learn and collaborate.

The Strategy is both backwards and forwards looking in its understanding of heritage, acknowledging that heritage does not simply exist in the past but provides a sense of enduring continuity helping us to make sense of today and to make decisions about how things should be in the future. It will help to ensure that Inverclyde's unique culture and heritage is preserved for present and future generations.

STEPHEN MCCABE

Chair, Inverclyde Alliance Board

Leader of Inverclyde Council

INTRODUCTION

A titan of industry and trade, place of spectacular natural beauty, magnet for immigration, launchpad for the Scottish diaspora and birthplace of internationally renowned individuals whose legacy is still felt today, Inverclyde has a profound and significant heritage.

Study Background

Heritage has been identified by Inverclyde Council and its community planning partners, the Inverclyde Alliance, as of strategic importance for improving wellbeing and quality of life in Inverclyde.

In seeking to maximise the potential of heritage engagement, heritage should not be conceived of as a singular sector but embedded within a wider and multifaceted cultural strategy. Acknowledging the natural synergy between arts and heritage, the strategy seeks to build on and complement the recommendations of Inverclyde's Creativity Strategy (2017), with both strategies working in tandem to unlock the socio-economic potential of cultural engagement across the region.

Study Overview

The Inverclyde Heritage Strategy was commissioned by Inverclyde Council, working through the Inverclyde Cultural Partnership. The vision for the future is of a strong, sustainable heritage infrastructure operating across the public, private and third sectors. Core objectives are as follows:

- Achieving fluid engagement partnerships both within the sector and in cross-partnership initiatives.
- Growing the heritage sector, capitalising on underused tangible and intangible assets.
- Determining the role for the Watt Institution - Inverclyde's principal heritage asset and set to reopen in autumn 2019.

The study was funded by the Inverclyde Great Places Scheme and delivered by Jura Consultants with icecream architecture.

The study methodology comprises a combination of desk-based and primary research. A total of 797 individuals participated, including representatives from heritage groups and organisations, local councillors, schools, youth groups and local residents, sharing their views on the meaning, value and role of heritage in Inverclyde today and the opportunities moving forward. This report summarises the study's key recommendations. See the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy 2019-2029 Report for full details.

Images: icecream architecture, 2019



INTRODUCTION

Defining Heritage

This Strategy adopts a broad definition of heritage to include:

The built environment (such as historic buildings and monuments); artefacts and materials (from museums and archival collections to online resources); natural heritage (such as landscapes and wildlife); and intangible heritage (local stories, traditions and practices).

The Strategy is both backwards and forwards looking in its understanding of heritage, acknowledging that **heritage does not simply exist in the past but provides a sense of enduring continuity helping us to make sense of today and to make decisions about how things should be in the future.** Heritage can be accessed as much through the contemporary experiences of life in Inverclyde today as it can by focussing on a particular period from the past.



Images: Inverclyde Council, 2019

VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Inverclyde Heritage Strategy aspires to achieve the following **VISION** by 2029:

“Inverclyde's heritage is a source of knowledge and pride across the region and is employed at every opportunity to support our diverse community's social, cultural and economic wellbeing”



Image: Inverclyde Council, 2019

AIMS

- Inverclyde's heritage is **captured, conserved, protected and enhanced**.
- Inverclyde's heritage is **valued, appreciated and instils a sense of pride and belonging** amongst residents.
- Inverclyde's heritage offers **opportunities for participation to all**, inspiring and sustaining **meaningful heritage engagement** over the long-term.
- Inverclyde's heritage encourages **more people to visit, stay longer and spend more** across the region.
- Inverclyde's heritage sector is **strong and sustainable**, underpinned by an ethos of **collaboration and co-ordination** across the public, private and third sectors and **integrated** within Inverclyde's wider **cultural sphere**, harnessing the synergy and reciprocity with the arts.

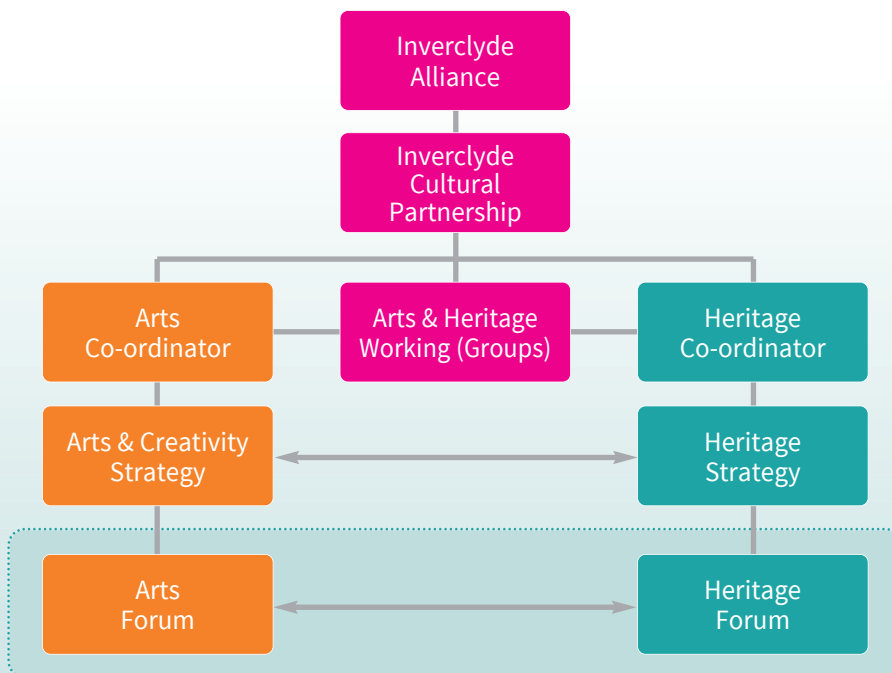
OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that Inverclyde's heritage assets are **well cared for, looked after and protected**.
2. To identify and pursue opportunities that capitalise on **underused and/or underappreciated heritage assets**.
3. To **improve perceptions and reshape attitudes** towards heritage by encouraging local communities to "rediscover" their heritage on their terms; fostering positive relationships and a **renewed sense of relevance**.
4. To **celebrate heritage at both a local and regional level** - relating the distinctiveness of Inverclyde's settlements to the overarching narratives the region shares.
5. To **engage more people and a more diverse range of audiences** in participating and volunteering in heritage, including young people, socially isolated older people and those unable to engage in heritage activity through economic circumstance and/or disability.
6. To sustain and create new opportunities for **employment and skills development**.
7. To develop and promote Inverclyde's unique attributes creating a **distinctive and authentic destination** which appeals to both day trippers and overnight tourists.
8. To **strengthen existing and create new partnerships** with stakeholders who share our objectives:
 - within Inverclyde's heritage sector;
 - between the heritage sector and organisations in other sectors operating in Inverclyde;
 - with other national stakeholders.
9. To **maximise** the use of current **resources** and capitalise on funding opportunities.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

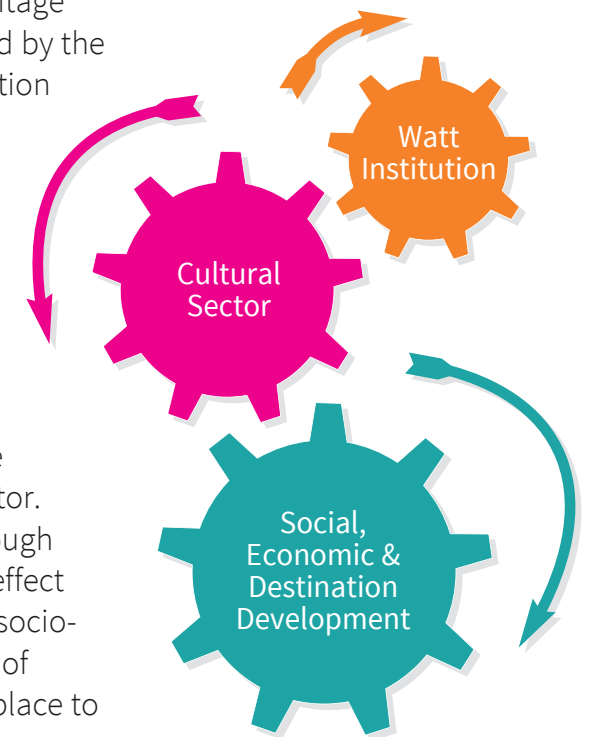
The **Leadership Framework** is the mechanism by which strategic decisions are made. It:

- Reflects the interdependency with the Arts & Creativity Strategy.
- Advocates a partnership approach and sector-led solutions.
- Allows for issues affecting the frontline of sector delivery to be raised through the Heritage Forum. Working Groups are established to take forward actions.
- Requires an externally funded post (Heritage Co-ordinator) for set-up.
- Aims to encourage buy-in, ownership and, as benefits are realised, continued commitment such that the framework is self-sustaining in the long-term.



A **network approach** to service delivery is adopted. This is the coming together of public, private and third sector bodies to share resources, experience and expertise across the cultural sector in response to common goals and actions identified through the Leadership Framework. Partners may adopt a role as a primary or secondary node on the network depending on their capacity and capability.

As the region's main heritage attraction and supported by the Council, the Watt Institution is a key node. A re-positioned Watt Institution, with a greater focus on outreach and collaboration offers reciprocal benefits to partners serving to strengthen and enhance Inverclyde's cultural sector. With involvement of enough partners a snowballing effect occurs aiding the wider socio-economic development of Inverclyde as a thriving place to live, work and visit.



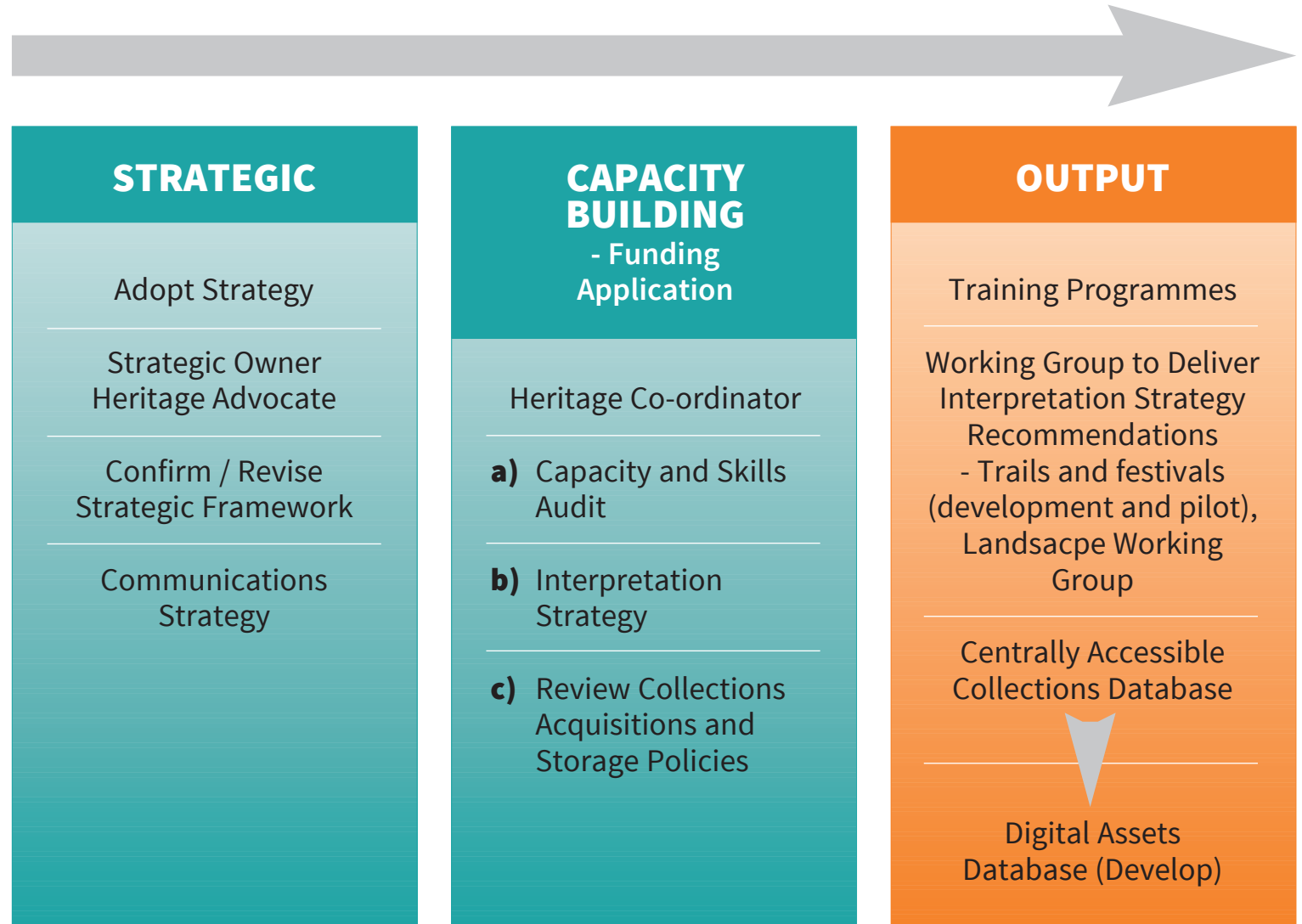
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Implementation Strategy sets out the actions required to achieve the Heritage Strategy Vision, Aims and Objectives over the next ten years (by the end of 2028).


SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

**Year 1 (2019), Year 2 (2020)
and Year 3 (2021)**

The initial short-term actions are strategic in nature, relating to the adoption and ownership of the Heritage Strategy and setting up the recommended decision-making infrastructure. Preparation of a funding application for a series of capacity building activities is the next critical step for achieving the aspirations of the strategy. This application could be a consortium bid. The Inverclyde Cultural Partnership would identify an appropriate lead partner and oversee an agreement between partners relating to the division of resources and delivery of activities.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Medium-Term Actions Year 4 (2022) and Year 5 (2023)	Long-Term Actions Year 6 (2024), Year 7 (2025), Year 8 (2026), Year 9 (2027) and Year 10 (2028)
Operational and self-sustaining Leadership Framework and Network Delivery Model	
Options Appraisals for priority redundant heritage assets - funding to appoint external experts required  Develop capital projects for priority assets - aim to take at least one capital project forward to National Lottery Heritage Fund	Develop and deliver further capital projects
Digitisation training delivered and Digital Assets Database operational - creating a sector skilled in digitisation, a central resource available to the sector and positive promotion of Inverclyde's assets.	Digital Assets Database remains operational and accessible
Embed heritage protection within planning framework (policy in place) - with the aim that every capital development project should seek to reflect and commemorate the heritage of the asset/ area in order that heritage is visible, remembered and celebrated.	Heritage is remembered, visible and celebrated
Provision of new engagement opportunities for schools is adopted as a collective ambition. With greater capacity and more skills, the sector is in a position to deliver new initiatives targeting schools. The Leadership Framework through the Heritage Forum provides the space for organisations to share their plans and coordinate both funding applications and activity delivery. An education focussed Heritage Network will assist in the planning and facilitation of this.	More schools engagement initiatives delivered
Use of community centres and libraries as heritage engagement centres (develop and pilot) - expanding the opportunity to access and engage with heritage across Inverclyde.	Rolled out across Inverclyde
Mainstream an annual Inverclyde Heritage Festival (anticipating results of the Interpretation Strategy) - festival theme is recognisably 'Inverclyde' with partners from across the region participating and interpreting the theme as relevant to their asset/ locality.	Increased profile and appeal of Inverclyde as a destination
Develop heritage brand for Inverclyde - positioning the region's rich and diverse heritage under a collective 'umbrella' as a tool for promotion, communication and creating a single point of access for information.	Brand growth and destination development

WATT INSTITUTION ACTION PLAN

SHORT TERM

A. Implement **staff review** in order to i) determine the suitability of existing posts for delivering the services of the integrated Watt Institution and ii) recast roles in order to meet requirements of the renewed and repositioned Watt Institution. As a primary hub in a more connected heritage network, adequate staff resource for outreach activity and partnership liaison is essential. In light of review findings, identify skills gaps and training requirements (a precursor to the sector Capacity Skills Audit and Training).

B. **Develop partner relationships and implement expanded outreach programme** across Inverclyde. As a result of Action A, a dedicated Outreach post and associated budget for outreach activity within central library and museum funding allocations is envisaged. Initially outreach is likely to be modest in scale but as the Network Delivery Model is developed and activated and other sector-wide initiatives gather momentum (and funding) outreach activity will expand.

C. **Wider activity planning and scoping out opportunities for collaborative initiatives** with regional and national partners. The Watt Institution takes a pro-active approach to engaging and collaborating with partners as it determines its internal strategy for audience development activity, seeking to develop mutually beneficial relationships and opportunities. Joint funding applications and other actions such as promotional or joint ticketing campaigns, collections loans or possibly sharing of expertise are potential outputs. Discussions would occur at Heritage Forum meetings and Working Groups where necessary.

D. **Identify thematic links between Watt Institution collections and exhibitions with other offers across the region.** Linkages are promoted and capitalised upon to maximise the sharing of audiences. This may include the creation of display boards in the Watt, trails, leaflets, activities and so on.

E. **Review Watt Institution's loan policy** and confirm which artefacts can be shared and conditions of this. Information is easily available to partners.

MEDIUM TERM

F. The Watt Institution is a key partner in the **creation of a digital database**, sharing information on its collections and a key **participant in the associated digitisation training**. With a 'train the trainer' approach, staff would share their skills with others across the sector.

G. **Training** for Watt Institution staff delivered as part of Action A is **rolled out to library staff across Inverclyde** as heritage engagement becomes a more prominent feature of community centres and libraries across the region.

H. **Continued expansion and development of Watt Institution outreach programming**, including delivery of partnership initiatives developed during initial years of the Strategy for which funding has now been secured.

I. **Internal monitoring and evaluation**

LONG TERM

J. **Continue to deliver training, engagement activity and other support** as a primary node in the Network Delivery Model. By this point **external relationships** have been developed with other local authorities and national organisations - particularly as Inverclyde develops as a visitor destination.

K. **Internal summative evaluation**

A mixed model in terms of funding and service delivery is essential in order for the Watt Institution to maintain and enhance its role at the heart of Inverclyde's heritage sector.

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