

REPORT TO GARIOCH AREA COMMITTEE – 13 DECEMBER 2022

HISTORIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

1 Executive Summary /Recommendations

1.1 This Report details projects planned to be undertaken by the Historic Asset Management Project (HAMP) in the financial year 2023/2024. It also provides a summary of progress made over the past 2 years, with a list of completed projects, budget information and other relevant updates.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1. **acknowledge and make comment to the Infrastructure Services Committee (ISC) on the annual update on the Historic Asset Management Project.**
2. **endorse the approach taken by the Historic Asset Management Project in respect of Council owned historic assets.**

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 Following consideration by the six Area Committees in May-June 2020, the ISC agreed at their meeting of 1st October 2020.

<https://committeesinternal/FunctionsPage.aspx?dsid=105336&action=GetFileFromDB>

- (1) to endorse the proposed adapted approach to be taken by the Historic Asset Management Project in respect of Council-owned historic assets as detailed in the report;
- (2) to note the ongoing investigation of additional funding sources, including revenue for films and events and the consideration of use of in-house resources for appropriate repairs.
- (3) to welcome that underspends in other parts of Planning & Environmental Services budgets can be used to augment repairs required for Health and Safety reasons; and
- (4) to commend staff for their work within tight budget constraints.

2.2 In addition to consideration by Area Committees, but prior to the October ISC, the Adaptive Services Board (ASB) and Resilience Recovery Group (RRG) set up in response to the pandemic had approved some partial reinstatement of the HAMP budget which had been reduced from its original annual allocation of £200,000 due to budget challenges at the time.

2.3 There are over 500 non-operational historic assets in Council ownership on the HAMP list, including church ruins, historic churchyards, commemorative towers and fountains, war memorials, Pictish carved stones, stone circles, and castle ruins, for example. All assets were first surveyed between 2014

and 2015 with their repair needs prioritised on health and safety criteria. The project's key focus continues to be that of organising repairs and maintenance based on the principle of a prioritised list. The first re-survey of all HAMP assets was completed in 2019, instigating a programme of quinquennial surveys.

This will enable the Council to track the progress of repairs and deliver on-going improvements in the condition of the historic assets in Council ownership.

3 Discussion

3.1 Aberdeenshire Council has a statutory duty under health and safety legislation to keep historic structures in its ownership safe. Under heritage legislation, there is also an obligation to maintain historic structures in good condition. HAMP was set up within the Environment Team in the Planning and Environment Service in 2013 to combine these two important functions with three main aims:

- 1) To establish, as far as possible, a definitive list of non-operational historic assets in Council ownership: -
- 2) To survey these assets to ascertain condition and repair need; and
- 3) To implement a prioritised programme of repair.

3.2 Table 1 below shows the number of historic assets by Council area. These figures change occasionally when either a new asset is discovered, or it is found that the asset is not in Council ownership.

Table 1. Historic Assets by Council Area

Council Area	Number of Assets
Banff & Buchan	100
Buchan	71
Formartine	67
Garioch	63
Marr	126
Kincardine & Mearns	71

3.3 **Projects Completed 2020-2023.** Lists of projects completed since April 2020 can be found in **Appendices 1, 2 & 3** together with budget information. In any one year, there may be competing demands from other projects on the Historic Environment budget line as the year progresses. Where some HAMP projects were unlikely to come forward in a particular year, the Service identified other Environment projects for any projected budget underspend.

- 2020/2021 financial year there was a total spend of £43,648.00 directly on HAMP assets. £50,000.00 was used to support the Fraserburgh 2021 project.
- 2021/2022 financial year there was a total spend of £82,918.32.
- 2022/2023 to date, there is a total spend of £100,050.87.

- 3.4 Table 2 shows the number of assets in each Council Area where work has been undertaken in the last 29 months and those Areas where work is planned in financial year 2023/24.

Table 2 Hamp work per Area since last Area update

Council Area	Work completed	Work ongoing	Work planned
Banff & Buchan	9	5	6
Buchan	3	1	2
Formartine	2		1
Garioch	1		2
Marr	11	4	3
Kincardine & Mearns	3	3	2

It should be noted that the planned work can change due to other projects coming forward for unforeseen health and safety prioritization.

- 3.5 For the coming 2023/2024 financial year, the budget for the HAMP project is anticipated to be £177,700.00. This includes all project running costs such as the Project Officer's salary.
- 3.6 **Priority Project for 2023-2024** - HAMP is working to secure the long-term stability of St. Brandon's Churchyard, Inverboyndie. In 2019, a section of the wall collapsed. The wall and churchyard are Category B listed and the church is a Scheduled Monument. As a temporary measure, a net has been secured over the area of wall failure to catch falling stone. The wall is a retaining wall, and buttresses installed in the mid-20th century are failing. The ground outside the churchyard is significantly lower than the ground inside the churchyard, with ground on the churchyard side pushing the wall outwards. This is a complex project, but progress has been made in understanding the issues that face the site. The consultant's report found the wall to have no weep holes to allow for the release of water pressure and the ground the site sits on is unstable and shows signs of past landslips. The Council does not own all the land adjacent to the churchyard that may be required should it become necessary to build up the ground slope along the outer edge of the churchyard wall. HAMP Project Board have agreed that it is a work priority, and match funding, acquisition or temporary lease of land are all being investigated as options to bring about a successful resolution.
- 3.7 **Other Projects** proposed for 2023–2024
These will depend on progress with St. Brandon's project as detailed above.
- Scheduled Monument consent is now in place to allow repairs to the Elphinstone Aisle, Kildrummy, Marr and is programmed to start on site in Spring 2023.
 - Completion of the wall and aisle repairs, St Talorgan's Fordyce.

- St.Drostan’s New Aberdour, Scheduled Monument consent to be applied for prior to work to consolidate the walls and repairs to the roof.
- Repairs to cemetery walls at Lumphanan, Ordiquhill, Blairdaff, Kinnellar, Bethelnie and Forglen.
- Replacement of lime harl to Findlater Doocot, possibly grant funded.
- Culsh Monument repairs to ironwork.
- Repairs to John Carnegie Lantern, Marykirk.
- Wooden shelter with Tarland cemetery.
- Removal of vegetation and re-pointing to Parish Church of Garvock, St Cyrus.
- Old Parish Church of Crimmond, repairs to church and gateposts.

3.8 **Interpretation Boards** - Working alongside colleagues in the Archaeology Service, HAMP funds new and replacement interpretation boards at Council owned historic assets and other sites of historical interest. No new boards have been produced and/or installed over the past 2 years due to pandemic restrictions and workloads. The programme is to resume during the second half of the current financial year.

3.9 This Report is intended as a summary update on the HAMP Project. Should Members require any further information about the project or sites mentioned in this Report, please contact the Hamp Officer at hamp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 This Report helps deliver the Strategic Priority ‘Infrastructure and Resilient Communities’ within the Pillar ‘Our Environment’, in relation to climate and sustainability.

4.2 The HAMP Project helps to deliver against the Aberdeenshire Built Environment Strategy Objective 1 Conservation of the Built Heritage and Objective 2 Enhancement of the Built Heritage.

4.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	x		
Staffing		x	
Equalities		x	
Fairer Scotland Duty		x	

Town Centre First		x	
Sustainability		x	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		x	

4.4 An integrated impact assessment screening process (ref IIA-000966) has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals set out above. No impact has been identified and the justification is provided below:-

This report which will be presented to all 6 Area Committees is a general report on the repairs and maintenance of non-operational structures, across Aberdeenshire that are owned by Aberdeenshire Council. There is no assessment that would be relevant to the work that is being described.

4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level.

- *ACORP001 Budget Pressures:* The HAMP budget is a Revenue budget and is allocated from the Planning & Environment - Historic Environment budget line to HAMP. This includes staff salary costs. It is anticipated that HAMP will have a budget allocation of £177,700.00 for the financial year 2023/24. It is possible that there may be competing demands from other projects on the Historic Environment budget line as the year progresses. There are on-going operational health and safety risks with historic structures in Council ownership which this project seeks to address by carrying out the prioritised system of repair and maintenance. As highlighted in paragraphs 3.6 above, the priority project, St Brandon's Churchyard, could exceed the HAMP budget allocation, which may subsequently impact upon the Planning & Environment budget. It is hoped that the project will be able to obtain additional funding from external sources which will mitigate the impact of any budget pressures. However, if such grant applications are unsuccessful overspend in this project will have to be met from savings achieved elsewhere within the service.

4.6 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:

- *ACORP010 Climate Change:* Conserve the natural and historic environment by protecting and enhancing landscape, biodiversity and historic assets. The protection of the historic environment is limited due to the lack of available resources, but the HAMP Project was set up to address this issue with a dedicated project and staff resource.

5 Scheme of Governance

5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and they are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.1.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance: To consider, comment on, make recommendations to Services and any other appropriate Committee on any matter or policy which impacts its Area.

Alan Wood
Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Christine Pert, Environment Planner/Project Officer
Date October 2022

List of Appendices

Appendix 1- HAMP Completed Projects & Budget Spend 2020/21
Appendix 2- HAMP Completed Projects & Budget Spend 2021/22
Appendix 3- HAMP Completed Projects & Budget Spend to date 2022/23

Appendix 1 HAMP Completed Projects & Budget Spend 2020/21

Base Budget of £204,000.00

HAMP ID	Description	Area	Actual Spend (ex VAT)
	PROJECT RUNNING COSTS		
n/a	HAMP Officer salary		24,000.00
n/a	CONFIRM licence fee		00
	PRIORITY PROJECT COSTS		
HA0276	St John's Old Church Phase 1 Repairs	B&B	
	Mortar samples		708.00
HA0103	Church Street Burgh Cross (Macduff Cross)	B&B	
	Design work for new platform		1500.00
	OTHER HAMP PROJECT COSTS		
HA0102	Methlick Old Parish Church Bellcote & Steps	Formartine	2,007.76
HA0030	St.Mary's churchyard, Banff	B&B	
	Repairs to railings		3585.00
HA0268	Glenmuick churchyard	Marr	
	H&S emergency repairs to boundary wall		10,075.00
HA0126	Turriff War Memorial	Formartine	2,000.00
HA0052	Stonehaven Clock Tower	K&M	
	New people counter (yet to be installed)		515.00
HA0009	Kindrochit Castle Braemar	Marr	
	Grass Cutting		400.00
HA0156	Culsh Monument, New Deer	Buchan	
	Repairs to internal lighting		124.08
	TOTAL SPEND ON HAMP PROJECTS		43,648

Note a contribution of £50,000 was made to the Fraserburgh 2020/21 Funding pot to allow for the drawdown of match funding.

An underspend of £103,000.00 was offered as a saving to Council budgets.

Appendix 2 - HAMP Completed Projects & Budget Spend 2021/22

Base Budget of £176,000.00

HAMP ID	Description	Area	Actual Spend (ex VAT)
	PROJECT RUNNING COSTS		
n/a	HAMP Officer salary		21,000.00
n/a	CONFIRM tablet		360.6
	PRIORITY PROJECT COSTS		
HA0276	St John's Old Church Phase 1 Repairs	B&B	
	Emergency work to props		332.44
	GI site works and testing		2,223.50
HA0103	Church Street Burgh Cross (Macduff Cross)	B&B	
	Stone conservator report		500.00
	Laser scan		1,175.00
	Design work for LBC		7,400.00
HA0203	St Brandan's Inverboyndie	B&B	
	GI Consultant investigation and analysis		2,223.50
	OTHER HAMP PROJECT COSTS		
HA0078	The Bass, Inverurie	Garioch	330.00
HA0009	Kindrochit Castle Braemar donation box	Marr	130.00
HA0278	Tarlair outdoor pool, Macduff	B&B	
	Repairs to lock due to vandalism		82.80
	Remove concrete blocks from pool		2,925.00
HA0157	Drinnies Observatory, Mintlaw	Buchan	
	Erection of closure signs		33.81
	Repairs to churchyard walls		
HA0241	Coull churchyard wall repair	Marr	1,406.12
HA0066	Banchory	Marr	2,422.50
HA0102	Methlick old churchyard walls	Formartine	4,719.89
HA0177	Ythan Wells	Marr	3,427.19
HA0268	Glenmuick churchyard	Marr	7,475.96
HA0227	Clatt	Marr	1,090.38
HA0312	Auchindoor	Marr	781.83
HA5527	Towie Burial Aisle	Marr	2,868.79
HA0044	Low St. Steeple Banff (steeple jack report)	B&B	795.00
HA0254	Walford Bodie , Doune Churchyard	B&B	1216.60
HA0022	Strichen Old Graveyard	Buchan	
	Repairs to large upright memorial		835.00
	Laying turf over recumbent stones		2000.00
HA0152	Knowes War Memorial , Macduff	B&B	646.64

HA0015	Saltoun Fountain , Fraserburgh	B&B	1,782.77
HA5036	Mill of Benholm , feasibility report	K&M	10,000
HA0454	Airlie Gardens , Banff, repairs & fees	B&B	13,566.00
HA0185	Ballater War Memorial	Marr	40.00
HA5530	Tullich churchyard Pictish Gallery	Marr	18.13
HA0207	Fordyce Parish Church , wall repair	B&B	8,000.00
HA0370	St Palladius , Auchenblae, repair crypt	K&M	1,069.20
	TOTAL SPEND ON HAMP PROJECTS		£82,918.32

An underspend of £58,343.55 was offered as a saving to Council budgets

Appendix 3 - HAMP Completed Projects & Budget Spend 2022/23

Base budget £177,700.00

HAMP ID	Description	Area	Actual Spend (ex VAT)
	PROJECT RUNNING COSTS		
n/a	HAMP Officer salary		25,500.00
n/a	CONFIRM licence fee		00
	PRIORITY PROJECT COSTS		
HA0276	St John's Old Church, Gamrie	B&B	
	Consultant fees		2,169.00
	Search of Sasine's		500.00
	Replacement of framing		242.00
HA0103	Church Street Burgh Cross (Macduff Cross)		
	Consultant Fees, assessment of slope	B&B	1,952.00
	Contractor	B&B	84,540.74
HA0203	St.Brandan's Inverboynie	B&B	
	Consultant fees, report on the wall and surrounding ground & proposed solution		8,122.70
	OTHER HAMP PROJECT COSTS		
HA0125	Turriff Merkat Cross reinstatement of stones	Formartine	1,539.00
HA0278	Tarlair, outdoor pool, Macduff	B&B	368.55
HA0187	Tulich , repairs top recumbent stone	Marr	100.00
HA0024	Strichen Old graveyard	Buchan	1,464.00
HA0009	Kindrochit Castle Braemar	Marr	180.00
	Grass Cutting		
	TOTAL SPEND ON HAMP PROJECTS to date		£100,050.87

A committed spend for 2022/23 of £176,510.61 includes £10,000 held in reserve for health and safety emergencies.

Match funding of £125,050.21 has been drawn down to date in the current financial year which is excluded from these figures, as follows:

- PBIF (Place Based Investment Fund) of £113,299.00 received for work to the Macduff Cross
- CCF Coastal Communities Fund of £9051.21 received for re-slating of Mounthooly Doocot, Rosehearty
- CCF of £2,700.00 to allow for increased verge parking at St. Drostan's New Aberdour

The repairs to Turriff Merkat Cross were undertaken with funds recovered from the Scottish Courts.

In addition to the spend within the HAMP budget a total of £27,666.50 has this year been drawn from Environment budgets to fund emergency H&S on HAMP assets.