

REPORT TO MARR AREA COMMITTEE – 19 FEBRUARY 2019

HISTORIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PROJECT ANNUAL UPDATE

1. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 **Note and provide comments to the Infrastructure Services Committee on the annual update on the Historic Asset Management Project.**
- 1.2 **Continue to support the approach taken by the Historic Asset Management Project.**
- 1.3 **Agree that the next Annual Update in the Spring of 2020 will be given using the Council's Ward Pages.**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 It was agreed by Members at the Six Area Committees in November and December 2017 and by ISC on 25 January 2018, that an annual update would continue to be given on the Historic Asset Management Project (HAMP). This report provides an update to Members on the work undertaken over the past 12 months, with the repair and maintenance programme well underway, as well as proposed projects for the next financial year.
- 2.2 To date, HAMP has an allocated budget of £200,000 per year. There are over 500 non-operational historic assets in Council ownership on the HAMP list. All assets were first surveyed between 2014 and 2016 with their repair needs prioritised on health and safety criteria. HAMP is continuing to work through the prioritised list.
- 2.3 The 2018/19 financial year will see the following main projects delivered, as well as a number of smaller repair projects:
 - Repairs to the George Meldrum Enclosure, Marnoch
 - Repairs to Kennethmont Old Churchyard
 - Emergency repairs to Strichen Parish Church
 - Emergency repairs to the Vinery, Banff
 - Ivy removal and stone repairs at Inverbervie Old Church
 - Repairs to gable and bellcote at St Carol's Church, Ruthven
 - Survey work at Old Inverbervie Bridge
 - Financial contribution to the Tullich Church Project for repairs to the Old Church
- 2.4 There are a number of other projects that continue to be worked on, and whilst allocated for 2018/19 work programme, will continue into the next financial year. These are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 – HAMP Ongoing Projects, to be continued into 2019/2020

Asset	Works Required/Current Situation	Area
Macduff Burgh Cross	Invitation to Quote to be published in February 2019 seeking design and engineering services for a new viewing platform around the Cross, including the repointing of the Cross base plinth.	B&B
St John's Church and Churchyard, Gamrie	Application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) submitted to HES for a first phase of small scale repair work. Work due to commence May 2019.	B&B
The Bass, Inverurie	Bass structures eroding due to rabbit damage. Rabbit control measures - project temporarily on hold for Officers to consider other means of rabbit control, including relocation.	G
St Brandon's Graveyard, Inverboyndie	Repair works to burial vault and boundary wall. Project Officer has asked HES to consider carrying out the repair works as a training event.	B&B
Kildrummy Old Churchyard	Repairs to three burial enclosures and St Bride's Chapel. SMC application required before going out for quotations. SMC application to be submitted in March 2019.	M

- 2.5 **Resurvey of Assets** - Resurvey of the 500 HAMP assets is due to start in the summer of 2019, 5 years on from when the first surveys were carried out in 2014. The survey work will take place over two consecutive summer periods with the appointment of a graduate surveyor for a summer placement. The cost for the graduate surveyor will be met from the existing HAMP budget. It is anticipated that the first post holder would start in June 2019 for a minimum period of 4 months. This may be extended depending on budget.
- 2.6 The resurvey will form an important part of the HAMP project. When resurvey is complete, HAMP will have a new prioritised list of assets. It will enable, for the first time, a comparison to be made and progress to be measured. It is envisaged that the high health and safety projects identified first time around will have been addressed and, as time goes on, HAMP will be able to carry out more minor, routine repairs to more assets.
- 2.7 **Survey Data** - The Project Officer has been working with colleagues in Business Support to move the existing HAMP survey data onto the Council's electronic asset management system, Confirm, which is used extensively by other Council services, namely Property and Roads and Landscape Services. This will also allow the graduate surveyor to resurvey the HAMP assets using a tablet enabled with Confirm so that data can be uploaded on site. From this data a GIS layer will also be produced for all HAMP assets onto MapHub so that colleagues in other Services can locate HAMP assets and can access HAMP survey data.

- 2.8 **Website** - Members may recall that an action from last year's report was to improve the presence of HAMP on the Council's website. Slow but positive progress has been made with this. The content of the HAMP web pages has been agreed and is due to go live in mid-February. This has been part of the updating of all built heritage web pages. HAMP also has an Instagram account @Aberdeenshirehistoricassets which is generating some interest.
- 2.9 The Project Officer was invited to speak at a conference organised by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in November 2018 on 'Managing Historic Graveyards' to talk about the HAMP project. HES and other local authorities are interested in the approach Aberdeenshire Council is taking in maintaining historic assets in its care and were keen to learn from our experiences.
- 2.10 **Interpretation Boards** - working alongside colleagues in Archaeology, HAMP funds new and replacement interpretation boards. New boards have been installed (or will be this financial year) at:
- St Drostan's Church, Inch
 - Kintore Pictish Stones, Kintore Churchyard
 - Easter Aquhorthies Stone Circle
 - The Bass, Inverurie
 - Rhynie Carved Stones
 - Midmar Stone Circle
 - Mither Tap Hill Fort, Rowantree Car Park
 - Maryculter Old Churchyard
 - Cowie Churchyard
- 2.11 The following projects in Table 2 are the next projects on the prioritised list. This is a provisional list of projects HAMP is anticipating will come forward. Further work is still required in some cases to define the full extent of repair needs and associated costs. There may be other smaller scale projects, both urgent and non-urgent, that come forward as unforeseen issues arise with certain sites. In addition to enabling those projects listed in Table 2, HAMP contributes financially to Roads and Landscape Services for historic bridges work. It has also provided a degree of financial support to other Council projects such as the Tullich Church and Symbol Stones project, the Vinery Options Appraisal, and the Inverurie Symbol Stones project.

Table 2 – HAMP Proposed New Projects for 2019/20

Asset	Works required	Area
Hatton of Fintray Old Church	Significant ivy Removal of church ruin	G
Duff of Hatton Mausoleum	Ivy Removal	F
Alex Gordon Tomb, Rhynie Churchyard	Stone repair, consolidation and repointing	M
Ogilvy Burial Enclosure, Alvah Churchyard	Clearing out & repairs to structure	B&B

Asset	Works required	Area
Old Lime Kilns, Fordyce	Vegetation clearance to allow proper inspection of structure to inform possible repairs.	B&B
Old Aberdour Old Church	Repairs to roof, missing slates, patch repointing	B&B
St Fergus Mort House	Repairs to roof and repointing	B
Churchyard of Fettercairn	Memorial repairs	K&M

2.12 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 Project Officer, Frances Swanston, frances.swanston@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

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

3 Scheme of Governance

3.1 This report will be presented to all six Area Committees in advance of the Infrastructure Services Committee (ISC) on the 14 March 2019 under the provisions of paragraph B.1.2 of the Scheme of Governance. This follows a decision taken at the ISC meeting of 25 January 2018 that there would be an annual update on the HAMP project to all Area Committees and to ISC.

4 Implications and Risk

4.1 Aberdeenshire Council is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty. An Equality Impact Assessment is not required because the reason for the report is for the Committee to note and consider and there will be no differential impact, as a result of the report, on people with protected characteristics.

4.2 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. The HAMP budget is a revenue budget and is allocated from the Planning & Building Standards Service Historic Environment budget line for the HAMP. This includes staff salary costs. It is anticipated that HAMP will have a budget of £200k for the next financial year 2019/20. It is possible that there may be competing demands from other projects on the Historic Environment budget line as the year progresses.

4.3 A graduate surveyor will be sought for a temporary period of 4 months to commence resurvey works in June 2019 at an estimated cost of £12,000 which will be met in full from the existing HAMP 2019/20 budget.

- 4.4 The Project Officer currently works 3.5 days. Since the inception of the HAMP project, the Project Officer post has been a temporary position. It was agreed by the Head of Planning that the Project Officer post be made permanent from 1 January 2019.
- 4.5 No risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate or Strategic Level in terms of the Aberdeenshire Council Risks Register. 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 or repair and maintenance.
- 4.6 The content of this report has been considered against the Town Centre First Principle and would have no impact upon the town centres listed, therefore a Town Centre First Impact Assessment is not required. The sites listed in the tables in this report for ongoing and proposed works are not within the town centres of any of the towns listed in the Local Development Plan identified by the TCFP (Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Inverurie, Westhill, Stonehaven, Ellon, Portlethen, Banchory, Turriff, Huntly, Banff, and Macduff) where the principle applies. There is great potential for historic assets located in town centres to impact in a positive way. The projects proposed for 2019/20 are not located in any of the defined town centres, but the HAMP project does have assets on its list that are.

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Report prepared by Frances Swanston, Environment Planner/Project Officer
Date 1 February 2019