

Milton Keynes Heritage Association Business Plan (V8.1)

1. Mission statement

Milton Keynes Heritage Association (MKHA) was formed in 1994 to encourage and develop cooperation and coordination between all organisations and societies with an interest in heritage of the Milton Keynes area and to advocate appropriate heritage development and conservation within the area of the unitary authority. It will work with all authorities and agencies within the geographical footprint of its member's interests and locations. MKHA has well over 60 member organisations beyond Milton Keynes ranging from Buckinghamshire, South Northamptonshire to Bedfordshire. Milton Keynes Council regard MKHA as delivering key heritage services, in support of the Council's adopted Heritage, Museums and Archives Strategy 2014-2023, and through various projects and events as listed below. Member groups also contribute to the Heritage Strategy in their own right.

- DiscoverMK – the showcase for heritage in Central Milton Keynes Library. MKHA is a lead partner.
- Legacy work on *Learning Triangle* and *Young Heritage Hunters* – HLF funded projects managed by MKHA, maintaining relationships between schools and member groups and delivering heritage outputs
- Support for heritage events throughout Milton Keynes and beyond
- Heritage Open Days – annual national event supported by MKHA locally
- IT training skills and building heritage-based websites
- Coordination of heritage activities
- Awarding, Managing and coordinating grants to members

2. Constitution and management

MKHA has adopted a formal Constitution (appended to this Business Plan), which is reviewed annually prior to the AGM in September each year. MKHA is managed on a day to day basis by an Executive Committee with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. MKHA has adopted formal policies covering Child Protection, Education and Equal Opportunities (appended to the Business Plan) which are reviewed periodically (at least every two years).

Sub-groups handle IT, Archaeology, Discover MK and projects such as Heritage Open Days, and Young Heritage Hunters.

3. Officials

The officers of the organisation are defined in the Constitution and comprise Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. It is proposed to extend positions to cover - Membership Secretary, Minutes Secretary and Website Coordinator in order to acknowledge and focus better on the activities associated with these specialist supporting roles.

MKHA will develop a succession plan to cover future Executive Committee vacancies, by co-option, secondment, mentoring or otherwise. The plans will cover the handover of knowledge of the work of MKHA.

4. Contact arrangements

MKHA has the following contact arrangements:-

Email:- mkha@buckspoint.org.uk also - info@mkheritage.co.uk

Address: c/o Milton Keynes Museum, McConnell Drive, Milton Keynes, MK12 5EL.

5. Administration

All administration is handled by the Executive Committee officers assisted by other members of the Committee as required.

6. Legal

MKHA is bound by all legal and legislative requirements. Particular attention is given to data protection issues.

7. Accounts and finance

7.1 MKHA monitors finance continuously and it is managed through its Executive Committee. End of year accounts are independently examined annually by a qualified accountant.

7.2 Income – Is primarily through member subscriptions and associated webhosting fees. In addition MKHA receives an annual grant from Milton Keynes Council which is sub divided to provide individual grants for heritage related projects undertaken by member groups, based on defined criteria. A small part of the annual grant is used to help defray MKHA administrative costs. MKHA also receives from time to time grants from other bodies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund for specific projects in support of MKHA objectives.

7.3 Budget – MKHA will develop an annual budget statement.

7.4 Grants given – for small heritage related projects

7.5 Grants sought – for major heritage related projects, for the benefit of the membership and key stakeholders

7.6 Trading – MKHA does not engage in trading operations, other than limited MKHA branded goods, the proceeds of which are used entirely for the benefit of MKHA on a not-for-profit basis.

8. Relationship with MK Council and other authorities

MK Council has a published Heritage, Museums and Archives Strategy 2014-2023 which recognises MKHA as a key heritage provider. MKHA will work with MK Council and other local government organisations for the mutual benefit of heritage and in accordance with its Constitution.

9. Engagement

9.1 Membership – via quarterly Members' Meetings (including the AGM), where members give verbal reports and are encouraged to accompany them by visual presentations.

Other membership engagement is via - website, training, meetings, projects, events, , outreach, assistance, direct contacts and a regular weekly newsletter (delivered via a free 'opt-in' subscription list.

9.2 Young people – via specific projects and other MKHA communications.

9.3 External stakeholders – via specific projects and other MKHA communications.

9.4 AHA – MKHA is a member of AHA, and will work with AHA in support and promotion of heritage related activities, in accordance with the MKHA Constitution and including the AHA managed Cultural Educational Partnership.

9.5 HLF – via specific heritage related projects.

9.6 Lobbying – engagement with appropriate heritage interests for the promotion of heritage related issues in accordance with the MKHA Constitution.

9.7 Milton Keynes and other Councils – via regular contact.

9.8 Other organisations - such as libraries, national bodies, regional and other local organisations – as and when required.

10. Archives

MKHA does not retain physical archives, other than its own records and correspondence. Where offered heritage related material it will refer such material to appropriate established repositories such as museums and records offices. However, MKHA does retain archive copies of its own central website data and also copies of its members' website data where MKHA hosts those websites through its contracted webhosting companies. In addition, MKHA is developing a project to promote safeguarding and digitisation of archives held by members. Issues such as the archiving costs and data security will be assessed as part of that project.

11. Information Technology & Websites

11.1 Webhosting - MKHA continues to support its members in the use of IT and the Internet. In particular, MKHA have contracts with web hosting companies to provide hosting for many of our members' websites (currently 28). IT and Web training form a major part of the free courses MKHA run for members. MKHA also organise weekly exchange-of-experience website development sessions where members are encouraged to help each other but can also receive more individual help and support.

11.2 Software assessment and recommendation - MKHA provides help to members in keeping their use of Web technologies up-to-date, in areas such as content management systems (WordPress), mobile technology, online mapping (Google Maps API), social media (Facebook), online exhibits (SIMILE Exhibit and potentially eHive), SEO, web statistics and video. Wherever possible, use will be made of open-source (free) software programmes to ensure no-cost accessibility to such digital resources for all members.

11.3 Databases - MKHA are investigating ways to maintain and then develop online relational databases used by a number of members for the historic records of people, buildings and documents in their community. The further development proposed would include interoperability between user groups in terms of searching with a view to including all MKHA groups wishing to adopt the system. Any such system should maintain compatibility with existing systems and also external systems to recognised standards.

11.4 Mailing List - MKHA operates a mailing list to deliver a weekly email newsletter to members and others interested in our activities. MKHA will continue to develop this newsletter and widen the list of recipients who can receive it on an 'opt-in' free subscription basis.

11.5 Events Calendar - MKHA operates an overall Events Calendar giving notice of forthcoming events and talks for (currently) up to 4 months ahead. This is in the process of development to cover the whole membership with potentially a 6 month forward time horizon.

12. Digital information management and security

Members' collections have been moving from physical collections - museum objects and photographs - to digital form, such as websites, databases and digital image collections. MKHA will identify appropriate guidelines for

MKHA itself and also our members to use in managing these digital collections, in areas such as data protection, copyright, metadata, continuity planning, data backup and security.

13. Policy

MKHA has agreed policies for Education, Child Protection and Equal Opportunities which are regularly reviewed.

14. Training

Currently, Powerpoint, WordPress, and other heritage related activities such as display techniques, conservation, and photography etc. are covered. Courses for the benefit of members will be organised from time to time. A series of free IT Learning Guides have been produced and will continue to be produced to support specific IT training subject matter for attendees. These will be made downloadable and the possibility of further e-learning materials will also be investigated.

15. Equipment and assets

Display boards and display material, IT equipment (some of which is installed on permanent sites at various libraries) and reserve stocks of brochures and heritage maps are held by the Association. MKHA will develop an asset register to cover these.

MKHA may from time to time lend equipment to member groups, and where appropriate charge reasonable nominal costs to defray wear and tear of materials and replacement of consumables.

16. Artefacts

MKHA does not collect or own historic artefacts and documents, and if offered will suggest alternative appropriate locations, such as accredited museums and records offices, for them to be safeguarded. However MKHA intends to develop techniques and resources for digitally recording such artefacts for 2D and 3D (virtual) preservation/display purposes ideally before the items are despatched to other locations or into deep storage. Temporary physical storage may need to be organised to secure items during this process.

17. Marketing and publicity (communications)

Brochure, website and display material. MKHA will develop a communications strategy to improve engagement with key stakeholders and members. Use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and use of mediated forums will be adopted. Application to appropriate competitions will also be pursued with a view to potentially raising MKHA profile if successful.

18. Current and past activities

- Hold regular quarterly Members' Meetings including an AGM
- Coordinate heritage activities such as Local Heritage Open Days
- Maintain, develop and enhance award winning website
- Lead Partner managing Discover MK at the Central Library and other libraries
- Organise and run IT and other heritage-focussed training
- Formulate and manage sustainable HLF funded heritage projects such as Young Heritage Hunters, Learning Triangle and others, developing and enhancing knowledge and expertise, community engagement and providing lasting legacy, and toolkits for others
- Organise heritage related publicity material such as brochures and newsletters
- Develop and improve MKHA member engagement
- Administer a small heritage member grants programme (funded by Milton Keynes Council)
- Support and deliver Milton Keynes Council heritage strategy
- Support campaigns for safeguarding, preserving and conserving heritage (e.g. Heritage List) Comment and advise on heritage related planning applications and associated issues
- Develop and promote website as a major portal for all heritage interests
- Develop a digital archive project (proposed funding via HLF)
- Provide new heritage related training courses
- Improve member engagement

19. Future activities

19.1 Short term (within next two years)

The following items have been identified:-

- Draw up an asset register and update redundant/acquire new equipment
- Support Arts Council sponsored new Cultural Education Partnership (via AHA) to promote heritage and learning
- Migrate all original MKHA websites onto new webhosting company (TSO Host)

- Improve membership offer to promote MKHA, better engagement with existing members and encourage new members
- If funded, develop and implement a community local archive project to be known as ArchMK
- Input to MK Council to develop a local listing of heritage related assets

19.2 Medium term (2 to 5 years)

Strategy to be developed based on workshop findings in the Appendix 1 to the Business Plan.

19.3 Longer term (5 to 10 years)

Strategy to be developed based on workshop findings in the Appendix 1 to the Business Plan.

The costs of developing the short, medium and long term strategy will be established.

20. This Business Plan dated September 2016, and agreed by the MKHA Executive Committee on 19 September 2016 and accepted by the MKHA membership on 28 September 2016. The Business Plan will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1. Other MKHA Business Planning initiatives

- As lead partner in Discover MK encourage contribution levels of member organisations to exhibitions and projects (current)
- Work with MK Consortium Partners (MK Museum, Living Archive MK, Bletchley Park, MK City Discovery Centre & Cowper & Newton Museum) on collaborative heritage projects and training initiatives. (current)
- Share training and other opportunities that STAccess project provides (current)
- MKHA members and the organisation should participate in planned History Festival in new permanent building planned by The Parks Trust for Campbell Park to hold events etc. (0-2)
- Ensure MKHA members use their detailed and diverse heritage knowledge to support heritage projects and for dissemination (2-5)
- Consider opportunity for MKHA social events to further engage membership (2-5) Develop MKHA participation in MK50 in 2017 (current)
- Develop free downloads for tracking websites availability and usages (traffic monitoring) (0-2)
- Offer advice, assistance, training in social media skills and how best to use (2-5)
- Engage with young people to ask what/how they see heritage – Young Heritage Hunters brand is the key – (possible project = revamp 1950s I-Spy books into YHH mobile App) (2-5)
- Care and Conservation of collections – best practice guides and practical workshops
- Develop practical display training on a small budget to improve professional look of exhibitions (2-5)
- Develop advice and information on running organisations – check all have constitutions etc. raising standards and making them inclusive for all (2-5)
- Consider commercial and other opportunities for using heritage for the benefit of members and MKHA (not for profit basis) (2-5)
- Develop the legacy and sustainability of Young Heritage Hunters brand – engagement of members with local schools, colleges, youth groups (current)
- Investigate opportunities for bulk purchase of conservation materials with groups like Bucks CC (Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies) is a major purchaser of materials for conservation/storage – investigate with them how we can make valuable offers to support membership to preserve their collections (2-5)
- Identify gaps in local heritage coverage amongst member groups and encourage and support the formation of new groups (2-5)
- Investigate the opportunities for a geophysical investigation project (2-5)
- Investigate the opportunity for an 'Adopt a monument' (work with local schools) (5-10)
- Investigate improved linkages with neighbouring authorities and heritage organisations, influential non-heritage organisations and groups, tourist attractions, schools, AHA (current), DestinationMK, Parks Trust, Centre Parks
- Investigate improved communications between member groups and opportunities for joint activities (2-5)
- Investigate whether we need other staff to help support MKHA (2-5)
- Develop effective lobbying to Councillors to raise awareness of MKHA, members and heritage (2-5)
- Develop Speaker list (0-2)
- Investigate publicity opportunities and distribution outlets (0-2)
- Investigate opportunities for alternative sources of grant support when current grants end (2-5) Investigate Charitable Status registration (5-10)
- Investigate Charitable Incorporated Organisation registration (5-10)
- Provide support to local groups lobbying for heritage or its protection as required (current) e.g. actions on Save St Peters to fight heritage corner

- Develop local 'Buildings at risk' register (2-5)
- Acquire, develop and share equipment, guidance, knowledge and publications (current)knowledge
- Seed new groups (identify gaps in MKHA coverage) – extend/update existing gap map
- Explore and promote Tourist Office facilities in MK (2-5)
- Develop income and expenditure plan (0-2)
- Investigate heritage funding models used elsewhere (2-5)
- Investigate opportunities for MKHA promotional material such as pens, pencils, and USB sticks (2-5)

(draft versions record - updated 17/9/15, DM amends 17/11/15, 11/12/15 & 14/4/16 revision NL 19/4/16)