

EXERCISE

Introduction to heritage projects

To do: Read the following description of a potential project scenario and consider the following questions.

Intended for: Groups, organisations, individuals at the start of a potential heritage project.

Aim: To help you consider the scope and development of a potential project.

A mid-19th Century Grade II deconsecrated chapel located in a secluded, overgrown corner of a historic cemetery. A rare example of its type, it was extensively refurbished internally in the 1950s but has since fallen into disrepair and is now listed on Heritage at Risk register (low priority).

The private owner is contactable but has little to no funds for its repair. The council is keen to see something done to prevent its condition deteriorating further. The building is not very well known within the community. The cemetery entrance is only a couple of minutes from the busy high street.

You are part of a local friends group that supports the running and maintenance of the cemetery and want to find a way to bring the building back into some kind of sustainable use.

- 1.** What might be the project opportunities within this scenario?
- 2.** What might be the project constraints/risks with this scenario?
- 3.** What information is missing that you might need to know, or what could you investigate further, in order to better understand the opportunities and constraints/risk?
- 4.** As a member of the friends group, what might be some of the first things you could do to initiate a potential project?
- 5.** What skills within your group might you need to help you get going and why? i.e. maybe someone with fundraising experience?

EXERCISE

Introduction to heritage projects – example answers

Below are some thoughts on the five questions asked.

Questions	Thoughts
What might be the project opportunities within this scenario?	Rare type of heritage and At-Risk so it will be considered a priority for funders; support from the local authority; located close to a busy high street; opportunity to speak with owner; part of a wider public amenity; lots of green space; possible group to move project along or even take ownership
What might be the project constraints/risks with this scenario?	At-Risk nature means there could be high repair costs; secluded location and being within a cemetery could pose problems with access, burials and potential uses; renovations in the 1950's could mean presence of asbestos; private owner might not be willing to take part and Compulsory Purchase process is difficult
What information is missing that you might need to know, or what could you investigate further, in order to better understand the opportunities and constraints/risk?	Understand the history of the building; understand the size and form of the building (measured drawings?); location of known or possible burials; inspect the condition/structure of the building; understand opinions of the local community and statutory bodies; understand high-level costings of repair; understand the needs of the local area; understand the thoughts of the owner
As a member of the friends group, what might be some of the first things you could do to initiate a potential project?	Speak with local authority about the site and owner; consult with the local community on needs, ideas and uses for the building; research the history and significance of the site; try to obtain some initial free support from professionals (i.e. conservation architect, structural engineer, quantity surveyor); seek advice from organisations such as Heritage Trust Network, Historic England and LHBT, or other local building preservation trusts; speak with other groups/organisations who have carried out projects at comparable sites; identify the skills and appetite amongst your group for taking on a project
What skills within your group might you need to help you get going and why? i.e. maybe someone with fundraising experience?	Conservation – to understand significance and repair needs; fundraising – to assist with making early-stage funding applications; project management – to coordinate the conversations and processes; advertising/marketing – to help communicate the project and engage with people