



Keeping the right balance

Action Plan to strengthen the 's-Hertogenbosch Cultural Heritage policy

Rich past - promising future 2012 - 2029

November 2021



This Action Plan has been developed within the framework of the Interreg Europe project
KEEP ON: effective policies for durable and self-sustainable projects in the cultural heritage sector.

The KEEP ON project brings together partners from seven European countries having extremely rich cultural heritage and solid experience in cultural policies.



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1. Introduction

Sustaining the effects of investments remains one of the most burning problems in the management of cultural heritage. Many cultural institutions have difficulties to cover even basic maintenance costs. This issue is of great importance to the whole EU area, where recent economic downturn put cultural heritage at the bottom of the priority list. The main aim of the KEEP ON project is to improve public policies in the cultural heritage sector in terms of delivering high quality projects that allow results to remain sustainable with reasonable public funding and have long-lasting impact on regional development. When the public funding is over, how do institutions sustain their work for the future? How do they get funds for their future functioning? How can public policies support beneficiaries in the self-sustainability of their projects?

During Phase 1 of the KEEP ON project we have addressed these questions from an EU-wide, interregional, and local perspective. In this Action Plan the municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch sets out its goals for the upcoming years. As the cultural heritage policy document 'Rich past – promising future' will last until 2029, this Action Plan should be regarded as an add-on. It enables the municipality to set additional targets in multiple domains. The results of the implementation and monitoring during Phase 2 of the KEEP ON project will be regarded as a prelude to future policy.

2. Description of challenges

In addition to the ongoing investment programme to sustain the fortified heritage in 's-Hertogenbosch, in 2012 a new cultural heritage policy was introduced for the municipality: 'Rich past – promising future'. At the time it tackled all the issues that were relevant in the foreseeable future. The analysis carried out within the framework of the KEEP ON project, the continuous exchange with our stakeholders, and certainly the critical eye of the KEEP ON partners, make it clear that our policy needs to be expanded on a number of issues.

2.1. Description of the policy instrument

In 2012, a new vision of cultural heritage policy was presented: Rich past - promising future 2012 – 2029. This memorandum does not contain a completely new vision on cultural-historical policy. The starting point is that our municipality is doing well in this area. However, several improvements were still possible. Cultural history can contribute more to the involvement of residents in the city, to attractiveness as a business location and to tourism. We believe that we can make cultural history accessible to a broader target group.

This new emphasis in the policy will have consequences for many activities, such as those currently carried out by the professional organisations. Cooperation with the volunteer organisations will be intensified. A coordination team will be put together for this purpose. Another main theme of this memorandum is the reallocation of monuments that are becoming vacant and for which no new use has yet to be found. It is proposed to set up a reallocation team that makes it possible to facilitate initiatives more effectively. This team will help to speed up

procedures and assist in the search for potential users. In selected cases, the municipality, together with the owner, will draw up an "adaptive reuse profile".

Regular consultations are being established with the diocese and church councils about the future of existing churches, which will lose their function in the foreseeable future. A subsidy scheme will be made for drawing up feasibility studies for conversion. When monuments are redeveloped, cooperation will be sought with national and regional organisations for urban regeneration.

More attention will be paid to cultural history in the outlying area. Several elements related to the 1629 line will be tackled in the coming period with the aim of making them more perceptive and preventing further decay.

When subsidising municipal monuments, we opt for a more active approach. This is to use the available resources where the city wins the most. We will prepare a proposal for the amendment of the municipal subsidy regulation for monuments in a few areas.

Finally, sustainable preservation of monuments will be promoted by producing a brochure that indicates the possibilities for making monuments sustainable with as little damage to the monument as possible.

The municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch has an annual budget for the implementation of the policy document 'Rich past – promising future'. As shown, the annual budget will be reduced in the upcoming years. Even though there will not be less responsibilities.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Expenses	6.193	6.105	5.024	4.986	4.968	4.949
Benefits	947	1.557	628	628	627	627
Balance	-5.246	-4.549	-4.396	-4.358	-4.341	-4.322

All amounts x 1.000

2.2. Understanding cultural heritage in the analysed policy instrument

In drawing up the policy document (2012), the city experienced a period of economic stagnation. This has to have an impact on cultural-historical policy as well. The cultural-historical values have been an engine for the urban economy for many years. For example, the city with its 143,000 inhabitants has a catchment area of approximately 500,000 inhabitants with its shopping facilities. Research shows that the cultural-historical image is one of the most important reasons why people choose to visit our city. But that image is also important when choosing to live there. That has to do with the involvement that the inhabitants have with the city. That is the strength of the city. But there is more. The cultural-historical image of the city appeals to the highly educated and, in particular, people in creative professions. The success of the many creative companies that have established themselves in De Gruyter Fabriek is striking.

This development does not stand alone. About 120 small businesses have now settled in the temporarily rented buildings on the GZG site. Also elsewhere in the country, monuments are being

redeveloped to accommodate small, creative businesses. Where does this trend come from? It is not only because the economic crisis is leading people to start their own businesses. It is also a consequence of modern digital technology, which makes it possible to start your own business with much less investment than before and to promote and sell the developed products via the internet. These companies establish themselves where affordable space is available. But also - as already indicated in the introduction - in a city with a special atmosphere, a strong image and preferably in close proximity to each other. This is how these companies end up in our large monuments that have lost their original function. This explains the success of De Gruyter Fabriek.

To be interesting as a city for highly educated employees of innovative companies, it is not only important to pay attention to cultural history. The overall cultural climate in the city is decisive for this. The reallocation of the Verkadefabriek shows that a link between cultural history and contemporary culture can lead to an inspiring and successful result. Linking cultural-historical policy, contemporary cultural policy and economic policy in the redevelopment of monumental buildings: then we will make use of the power of the city.

Of course, there was existing cultural heritage policy that was prolonged, to ensure the protection of our monuments where necessary. In times of construction activities, we carry out building archaeological and historical research in order to provide advice to the public.

The policy document 'Rich past – promising future' introduced the following new emphases:

- Making heritage accessible to more people.
- Redesignation of empty buildings.
- New attention for cultural-historical elements in the outlying area.
- Sustainability in the preservation of monuments.
- Consequences of the new government policy in the preservation of monuments.

2.3. Defining key issues and challenges for the coming period

The KEEP ON project challenged us to thoroughly analyse our policy document for cultural heritage. The frequent discussions with our colleagues of the Heritage Department, the extended meetings with our local stakeholders and the most interesting exchange with our KEEP ON partners gave us enough input to write this Action Plan. Initially we focussed on the energy transition and its implication on cultural heritage. Lessons learned from Good Practices of our European partners fuelled our intention to improve our policy document on other topics as well. The Italian GP shows a way how to manage publicly owned heritage buildings within one Municipality in a sustainable way. The Spanish GP gives insight how we should make choices regarding with which buildings we should 'take our financial loss' and with which buildings we can compensate that financial loss. The Croatian GP is inspirational as a sustainable decision-making tool for managers. All, to safeguard our entire heritage portfolio.

Renovating in an energy and resource efficient way

The European Cultural Heritage Green Paper launched in March 2021, highlights the benefits of including Europe's cultural heritage sector in the Renovation Wave for Europe strategy. Nearly all cities and villages have historic centres with a vast older building stock. Giving these buildings new life through renovations that combine the safeguarding of heritage values with new energy-efficient technologies would unlock enormous economic vitality. Prior energy efficiency renovation initiatives have sometime resulted in the needless loss of these assets and even the degradation of building performance through indifference to cultural heritage co-benefits and ignorance of the workings of traditional building systems. Sensitively retrofitting Europe's historic buildings while preserving Europe's unique selling point – its cultural heritage – provides an extraordinary opportunity to enhance a post-COVID19 economic recovery. Especially as it's relatively job intensive.

The Heritage Department is, just like all the other departments of the Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch, involved in the Energy Transition Programme. From now on all renovation should be performed in an energy and resource efficient way. This means that we need to learn fast as there is limited experience. In the near future choices in renovation will be accompanied by uncertainty, as an approach aimed at innovation also means uncertainty about the result.

To reduce the risks involved in innovation, the Heritage Department is eager to analyse past energy efficiency measures that have been implemented in heritage buildings. This analysis is needed to improve the policy document on the topic of sustainable management/decision making of the heritage buildings owned by the Municipality. A balanced framework that does justice both to the climate objectives to be achieved and to the preservation of cultural-historical values needs to be designed.

During Phase 2 of the Keep On project we will focus on the involvement of the public in planning and decision-making process (participatory governance) and a proper management of both publicly and privately owned monuments. In addition to that we will increase our structural involvement in policies of other departments, offer our expertise and safeguard our cultural heritage.

Good Practices that are exemplary for 's-Hertogenbosch

The Asti Museum Foundation: levelling of surplus and deficit in the management of various public monuments.

The municipality of Asti, with the support of the local Bank foundation, established the private Asti Museum Foundation because of their desire to preserve the city's valuable cultural, tangible, and intangible heritage, its important historic, social and aesthetic values. The management of the Asti Museum network represents an efficient model of cultural management: a public heritage is managed by a public/private foundation in order to be valorised in non-profit way. All the revenues raised through the work of museums must be reinvested in the other cultural project of the city what is an exquisite example of the good practice contributing to the long-term cultural development of the city.

Parador de Santo Estevo – when tourism and heritage come together: anticipating future multifunctional use resulting in a smart transformation of a listed building.

By restoring the monastery, re-using it for a commercial purpose but keeping its unique characteristics of a Romanesque and baroque architecture, the project ensured the safeguarding of this valuable historic and religious heritage. Furthermore, in cooperation with the various cultural actors, the hotel is a host of different cultural events, such as exhibitions, concerts, performances, etc. This way, the project also has an impact on a stronger cultural development in this area, bringing the history and art together with the purpose of revitalizing and safeguarding the culture as a driving force for a wider development of a local community. Thus, repurposing historic building of an exceptional architectural, cultural, and religious value, for hospitality services (adaptation to the current needs), while at the same time safeguarding the built heritage, can be identified as a key good practice.

Ex ante evaluation of the heritage planning documents as a tool for sustainability – Historic town centre of Buzet (Croatia).

Ex ante evaluation of the heritage planning documents, which includes the evaluation of the sustainability, can be seen as an important tool for ensuring the sustainability of the heritage projects, pointing out the gaps and challenges in their sustainable management and guide decision makers or managers to develop necessary changes already in the planning phase. The ex ante evaluation of the Integrated Built Heritage Revitalisation Plan (IBHRP) for the historic town centre of Buzet has been conducted in order to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of this strategic document. To analyse if it actually transferred the historic town centre into an attractive space to live, work and visit; if it provides guidelines for the revitalisation in both social and economic terms and for spatial planning and restoration of housing stock in the old town centre. An important part of the evaluation has been focused on the long-term sustainability of the future investments. When evaluating the current shortcomings in the projects, focus was placed on the interest of potential private partners in the project.

3. Guidelines for Phase 2 and beyond

As the cultural heritage policy document ‘Rich past – promising future’ will last until 2029, this Action Plan should be regarded as an add-on. It enables the municipality to set additional targets in multiple domains. The results of the implementation and monitoring during Phase 2 of the KEEP ON project will be regarded as a prelude to future policy.

3.1. General goals and actions for the future

Preservation through development

The city of ‘s-Hertogenbosch has, for the past decades, used history as a source of inspiration for innovative solutions, in which conflicting interests can be reconciled. With this approach contemporary problems can be tackled and at the same time history becomes more significant. We will continue this approach, as it guides us in many ways:

- Integration of historical elements and modern/urban functions
- Improving the quality of public space
- Strengthening natural and ecological values
- Strengthening the tourist infrastructure
- Stimulate exploitation and business developments
- New restauration techniques

Meanwhile we have learned from the KEEP ON project partners that it is of the utmost importance to be open-minded, creative, and flexible when it comes to adaptive re-use of heritage buildings. In future, before we start a new restauration project, we will take more time to assess the development project proposal. Does the proposal include enough aspects of sustainability? Is it really future proof? And as budgets for cultural heritage projects are shrinking, we have to convince all stakeholders that money is spend in a sustainable way.

Cultural heritage: the cornerstone of a sustainable society

Climate change, sustainability and the quest for renewable energy sources have since the 1990s taken a more central position in the public debate and policy making. This has led to a paradigm shift for society as a whole, and for cultural heritage management in special. We are convinced that our cultural heritage (policy) not only safeguards the past, but also plays an important role as a cornerstone on which a sustainable society can be built. The area surrounding ‘s-Hertogenbosch can best be qualified as an amphibious landscape, in which water and land interact to create an ever-morphing landscape. Over the centuries, people in the region have adapted to this landscape in both their agricultural methods, as well as with sustainable city planning. That is why the cultural history of both the city of ‘s-Hertogenbosch and the surrounding lands can offer solutions to current societal and sustainability challenges.

Expected positive changes

The Action Plan ‘Keeping the right balance’ aims at reinforcing our cultural heritage policy. Together with our stakeholders we have selected the key objectives for the sustainability and

durability of cultural heritage projects for the next period, based on the identified problems and needs that were observed in the previous period, as well as new knowledge and new achievements.

The positive changes that we expect as a result of our participation in the KEEP ON project are:

- Less top-down instructions on how to deal with cultural heritage and more participatory governance.
- Invite and engage more people and organisations (both profit and non-profit) that are willing to invest in cultural heritage.
- Implement a proper management methodology for the total portfolio of 26 heritage buildings owned by the Municipality.
- Achieve a better balance between costs and benefits of our public heritage real estate - achieving long-term sustainability and social justification.
- Arrange for expert help for inhabitants that want to make their monumental building more sustainable, including the owners of religious heritage.
- Increase cultural heritage awareness at the other departments of the Municipality.

During Phase 2 of the Keep On project we won't be able to complete the achievement and implementation of all these changes we plan. Together with the Stakeholders we have selected a number of tasks that can be executed within the timeframe of Phase 2 (until May 2023).

Action	Sub-tasks	Type of change
Participatory governance	Encourage the involvement of the public in planning and decision-making process	project
	Support the entrepreneurs with heritage-led proposals	project
Management of historic buildings	Monitoring annual surplus and deficit of publicly owned monuments	management
	Detailed monitoring of energy consumption	management
	Encourage energy efficiency measures for listed buildings in the inner city and offer expert help	structural
	Encourage energy efficiency measures for religious heritage and offer expert help	structural
Safeguarding cultural heritage	Participation in development of regional vision of sustainable cultural landscapes	structural
	Development additional policy for ecological footprint of cultural heritage	management
	Include heritage values in policy documents of other departments of the municipality	structural

3.2. Action plan table

The table below describes the measures, projects and activities serving to achieve the goals related to cultural heritage as described in chapter 3.1. The institutions in charge, envisioned period in which these projects take place, amount of funding which should be allocated for the proposed activities alongside its sources are described as well.

Partner N°	Policy instrument addressed	Action	Source or inspiration from the project (initiative/activity or good practice that inspired this action)	Relevance (how the action contributes to improve the policy instrument(s) addressed)	Costs	Institute in charge	Financing sources	Timeframe
PP4	Rich past promising future	Participatory governance	Result of public and stakeholder consultation meetings. Ex ante evaluation of the heritage planning documents as a tool for sustainability – Historic town centre of Buzet (Croatia).	Participatory governance; Encourage the involvement of the public in planning and decision-making process. Support the entrepreneurs with heritage-led proposals.	€23.000 + staff hours (€33.600)	Municipality 's-Hertogenbosch	Municipality 's-Hertogenbosch: Heritage Department, Urban Development Department Covid19 measure regional subsidy	2021-2023
PP4	Rich past promising future	Management of historic buildings	Parador de Santo Estevo (Spain) – when tourism and heritage come together: anticipating future multifunctional use resulting in a smart transformation of a listed building. The Asti Museum Foundation (Italy): levelling of surplus and deficit in the management of various public monuments. Result of public consultation and Local Stakeholder Group meetings and National Heritage guidelines.	Monitoring annual surplus and deficit of publicly owned monuments. Detailed monitoring of energy consumption. Encourage energy efficiency measures for listed buildings in the inner city and offer expert help. Encourage energy efficiency measures for religious heritage and offer expert help.	€29.500 + staff hours (€2.800)	Municipality 's-Hertogenbosch	Municipality 's-Hertogenbosch, National Agency for Cultural Heritage, Owner Cathedral	2021-2023
PP4	Rich past promising future	Safeguarding cultural heritage	Result of Self Analysis. Result of public consultation and Local Stakeholder Group meetings and National Heritage guidelines.	Participation in development of regional vision of sustainable cultural landscapes Development additional policy for ecological footprint of cultural heritage Include heritage values in policy documents of other departments of the municipality.	staff hours (€42.200)	Municipality 's-Hertogenbosch	Municipality 's-Hertogenbosch	2021-2023

3.3. Risk assessment

A selection of anticipated obstacles and challenges have been brought forward in discussions about the prospects of the Action Plan within the local stakeholder group.

- General elections have been held in March 2021. The outcome of the elections will influence the national cultural heritage policy and have impact on our local projects. [In November 2021 there is still no new national government agreement.]
- Local elections will be held in March 2022. The current board of the Municipality will be reluctant to implement any major changes in any policy document before March 2022. The outcome of the local elections will influence the budget for the Heritage Department.
- Lack of resources: personnel as well as funding.
- Balancing transformation of heritage buildings for increased sustainability with monument conservation guidelines.

Date: 15 November 2021

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Stamp of the organisation (if available):

