

What we learnt from the tangible and intangible workshop

We are no longer trying to separate 'tangible' and 'intangible' heritage. Those at the workshop told us that heritage is the combination of the two, and that to separate them is unhelpful and misleading. As a result, we're now using the term 'heritage' to include both, without having to define or specifically identify either. This broader approach aligns with the Māori world view, and strengthens our connection with those who have come before us.

The workshop also developed a list of what constitutes 'heritage' that expands on the current understanding of heritage as 'cultural practices' and the UNESCO Definition of Intangible Heritage discussed by Chris Johnston in her presentation. You told us that any recognition of 'heritage' needs to include a 'sensory' element, and the feelings of awe or wonder inspired at an emotional level in response to places, landscapes, stories, buildings or traditions. We need to explore just how this could be done.

It was very positive to look through the comments about what is currently being done to acknowledge, protect and celebrate our heritage. There are so many groups, individuals and organisations who have or are planning inspiring heritage projects. However, there are some gaps identified from the workshop that we can start to think about:

1. We need to be more collaborative. You suggested some ways we could start to do this:
 - Create a shared calendar for heritage events.
 - Produce a newsletter/magazine or other forum to share ideas, information and keep up to date with what's going on in the world of heritage.
 - Make sure the heritage messages going out align with the new direction we're seeking – for example, imbedding heritage in, or identifying its contribution to, many events which are already happening.
 - Record and measure how heritage benefits individuals and the economy, for example through domestic or international tourism.
 - 'Market' our unique heritage to maximise this economic benefit.
 - Create a centralised digital database to hold all our heritage information, which everyone can access.
 - Make information about heritage funding readily available, ideally via a single point.
2. Engage more with our Māori heritage to give it wider recognition, inclusion and promotion. This includes opportunities to use and access Te Reo.
3. We need more themed walks and trails – specifically mentioned were a defence trail, maritime trail, places of significance to Māori trail, trails to experience other cultures, art trails, agricultural/industrial trails, sculpture trails, and rail trails.
4. We need to be more digitally advanced – apps were mentioned a number of times, including virtual tours, apps to support trails, augmented reality, and data collecting.
5. Community voices need to have a central role, including local stories, mapping or trails, local oral histories, local publications or books.
6. ANZAC Day celebrations and commemorations were identified as an important tradition and this could be better acknowledged and explored.

7. Funding for a local historian or historian in residence should be sought. This could help support communities to research, identify, promote and celebrate their local history and heritage.
8. Sensory responses to heritage are important – we need to explore how we can capture, record and acknowledge these aspects of our heritage.

The way forward

Heritage

(Includes tangible and intangible heritage and the natural and built environment: buildings, places, objects, landscapes, traditions, stories – those things which we inherit and value enough to pass on to future generations)

The places, landscapes, buildings and objects, memories and stories which connect us to those who have come before us, and those who will follow.

Sense of Place

Our landscapes, natural and built environment, buildings and stories are what make this place unique.

Identity

Our heritage gives us a sense of belonging, pride in who we are and where we have come from, and it holds our communities together.

Diversity

We celebrate and learn from the stories of everyone who has made this place home.

Cultural Anchor

Our past gives us an anchor in a changing world, and a secure place to start from and return to.

Connection

We are linked between generations and across communities (across time and place).