

Maintain Our Heritage

Maintaining Value

Module 5: Demand and
Supply: Building the
Business Case for
Planned Maintenance

1 Executive Summary

Heritage buildings are part of the UK's historic past and many of these buildings are still very much a part of its present. Heritage buildings are often used by local authorities and central government as, for example, libraries and public buildings, by corporations as headquarters or shops and by individuals and families as private homes. The nature of these buildings and what in many cases makes them special, are the historic materials and the techniques used in their construction. These same points are also what makes these buildings more difficult to maintain as often specialist knowledge is required. In many cases owners are not aware of their buildings' specific needs but do realise that measures need to be taken to ensure that the building retains its character, value and can withstand the elements and use. Parish logbooks have long recommended that for churches gutters should be cleaned twice a year, with some basic maintenance, and that every five years a building specialist should survey the structure and recommend any necessary repairs. This belief has become a best practice of sorts and is one based on proactive maintenance and quinquennial full surveys.

The history of the parish logbook emphasises the need for maintenance and the question then remains as to who or what would carry out the actual work. A certain degree of specialised knowledge is needed beyond what a typical contractor may have and the logical alternatives for carrying out the work would be private companies, public bodies or specialist consultants.

Arup was commissioned by Maintain Our Heritage as part of its Maintaining Value programme to develop the business case for structured maintenance and what or who would be the likely parties to deliver the service. This report comprises the 5th module in the programme and it builds on research undertaken in the first three modules, by the University of the West of England [see <http://www.maintainourheritage.co.uk/findings.htm>], and will cross reference with Module 6 Skills and Training carried out by De Montfort University [see <http://www.maintainourheritage.co.uk/findings.htm>]. This module incorporates first an overall view of the existing market including case studies and service providers. Second, it establishes some of the key elements of supply and demand and brings the two together for a look at the general market and third offers some basic scenarios as to how structured maintenance may be approached by both businesses and public agencies. This is followed by a summing up of the key issues into a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis and key conclusions.

The actual methodology of the study was a three-step process that included:

- Review of available literature on maintenance issues and its share of the construction industry and inclusion of key questions to potential consumers and suppliers of the programme in the De Montfort survey.
- Informal interviews were conducted with those involved in the Bath Pilot programme and various building and heritage organisations.
- Development of possible business model scenarios.

The review of business case considers the results of both the Maintain Our Heritage Bath Pilot Programme and the Dutch organisation Monumentenwacht. Although a precise size of the provider market for maintenance inspections is difficult to ascertain there is some evidence as to its potential minimum size and there do appear to be some businesses that already offer maintenance and inspection services as part of a range of services.

As this potential business will only target heritage buildings there is a limited market size. The number of heritage buildings and the take-up rates experienced by both the Bath pilot and Monumentenwacht were examined in order to set some parameters for assumptions.

Models were developed based on scenarios that incorporated inspections with additional work and estimated the number of firms that would be needed to meet a 10% demand figure and how many jobs, full-time equivalents, this would require.

Research found that there were companies already engaging in this field, thus there is some element of commercial viability within the concept of structured maintenance; however, these firms also carried out other services and were not reliant upon only inspections. This point circled back to the modules, which estimated how much additional work would be needed to make inspections commercially viable.

This study differentiates the likely service suppliers and customers and how the overall market may fit together. It incorporates a range of research and offers key conclusions and next steps.