



BROADENING ACCESS TOOLKIT



Czech
National
Trust





We are delighted to present this toolkit, developed as part of the Staff Exchanges in European Cultural Heritage Trusts (SEECHT) project.

ERASMUS+ OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING EXCHANGES AND THE CURRENT PROGRAMME FOCUSES ON INCLUSION

WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR THIS PROJECT



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
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ORGANISATION

The aim of the project - networking, sharing knowledge and building capacity for a more open and welcoming heritage sector - is reflected in multiple ways in the interesting case studies presented here.

Through a system of secondments, 12 participants undertook on-the-job training by shadowing their contemporaries in other European contexts.

Having learned from their neighbouring trusts, the participants initiated projects that welcome everyone and broaden access to the European public, whilst opening their doors to heritage trusts from other countries as part of a reciprocal visiting programme.

The learning achieved here through genuine collaboration is really exciting. Sharing knowledge is at the heart of INTO and Erasmus+ and we believe this kind of exchange benefits people, nature and history.

Catherine Leonard, Secretary-General, INTO
Irena Edwards, Chair, Czech National Trust

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Broadening access is a wide subject and can cross over between multiple areas of the visitor business, strategy and development of a heritage organisation. To ensure this learning is accessible and benefits the maximum number of readers, this toolkit is arranged thematically. We have grouped the case studies under the following themes:

EVERYONE WELCOME

- **Everyone welcome and diverse audiences**
- **Communications and audience engagement**
- **Volunteering and community engagement**
- **Income generation and stakeholder relationships**

This toolkit is presented on the INTO website and circulated among our members and the wider international heritage sector. This ensures the learning captured in this project will be utilised to make everyone welcome at places of historic and natural beauty in Europe, and the rest of the world.

Locations of participating organisations



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MEET THE PARTICIPANTS



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Toolkit Editor: Ellie Oliver,
Communications Manager, INTO

EVERYONE WELCOME



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PHYSICAL ACCESS - REVIEWING BEST PRACTICE

ALESSANDRA SAMPÒ, OPERATIONS AND PROJECTS, FAI

INSPIRATION

I had the opportunity to see how attention given to accessibility is extremely high in all National Trust (NT) properties. In particular at Polesden Lacey, where there are several resources to aid visits, like a volunteer-led accessibility bus, wheelchairs available to borrow from visitor reception, level access to the shop and café and ramped access to the house.

There are also accessible automatic doors for wheelchair-users, with a button to access the café. Some of these facilities are sponsored by individuals or companies.

ACTION

Some of these ideas are easier to implement, like ramped access, others may be more complex. **FAI is already working on an extensive project** to make its properties more accessible to visitors with disabilities. The first session of a two-year training project on accessibility was held in May 2023, for staff of FAI HQ and properties. The course was financed by **Amici del FAI** (Friends of FAI) for €75,000.

FAI is implementing different tools according to our property characteristics:

- wheelchairs available, ramps and dedicated paths for visitors with physical disabilities
- dedicated guidebooks and routes for visitors with intellectual disabilities
- staff trained for guided tours in LIS sign language (La lingua dei segni Italiana)
- paths, additional supports and guidebooks in braille - in Orto sul Colle dell'Infinito (Recanati), a property dedicated to one of the most important Italian poets Giacomo Leopardi and to the poem Infinito, a braille version of the poem is now available (see photo)

THE SOLUTIONS IMPLEMENTED BY THE NATIONAL TRUST, ARE A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION



Braille poem in Orto sul Colle dell'Infinito

GROWING FAMILY VISITS - AUDIENCE DIVERSITY

ALICE CHIAPPARRONE, PROPERTIES' PLANNING AND MARKETING MANAGER, FAI

INSPIRATION

Castle Van Laarne

A lot of families visit the castle, but not all families are the same: in order to engage all children in the visit, the castle team have developed three different family packs according to their ages.

They offer a simple activity for children between 3 and 6 years old, a more complex one for children from 6 to 12 years old, and a crossword puzzle for those older than 12.

Children can do the activity on their own while walking around the castle with their families; the materials developed are very simple and included in the normal entrance ticket. It is a very simple and cost-effective way to engage families and help them to enjoy the visit.

ACTION

Growing family visits is a target for our properties - working in a more focussed way offers an opportunity to **increase the number of visitors, and to strengthen relationships with the community.**

Inspired by what we saw at Castle Van Laarne, we developed materials to improve our family offer at Palazzo Moroni (Bergamo).

We started with a pilot project and now we are working on ideas that are different according to age, in order to involve a broader audience. This will be ready in November 2023, to coincide with the celebrations of the opening of 4 new rooms at the property.





AN ACCESSIBLE WAY TO INVOLVE PEOPLE IN HERITAGE PUCK VERSTRAETEN, SITE MANAGER, PALEIS OP DE MEIR & DE HOFKAMER, HERITA

INSPIRATION

Pruger Garden

The National Trust of Slovakia manages a community space in this historic garden, owned by the city of Bratislava. Activity is volunteer-led so there are no costs. There is also no income, but for the ten families with allotments it offers many benefits and it is part of the Trust's public engagement work.

Kochs Garden

This is another garden owned by the city of Bratislava where the National Trust of Slovakia offers free guided tours on Saturdays in September and October. These are organised and given by a volunteer in return for their expenses. It is a low-cost way to increase public awareness of the Trust's work and highlight the need to invest in the site's restoration and long-term care.



NÁRODNÝ TRUST
The National Trust of Slovakia

ACTION

Gardens are an accessible way to involve people in heritage. Every season is different, and visitors will come back to see the garden many times a year.

Herita takes care of 12 historical places. The potential of the gardens at our places is not yet fully used. The focus of the National Trust of Slovakia and the National Trusts in the UK on gardens, inspired me to take more action.

Our pilot project will concentrate on the gardens of the Paleis op de Meir and De Hofkamer in Antwerp. **We will make the gardens more attractive in 2023/2024 to grow visitor numbers and create more involvement with the local community.** We will also **focus on the sustainability of these urban gardens:** biodiversity, the relationship with the subsoil and rainwater recovery.

In this way, **these gardens also become 'learning gardens'** for people who want to make their city garden more ecological.

Garden De Hofkamer

- Restoration began in October 2022
- We created an extra experience for visitors: audio-guide, wall poem and link between the herbs in the garden and the floral design of the ceiling painting inside De Hofkamer
- The revamped, ecological city garden is a beacon to attract a new audience. There are few green spaces in the historic centre of Antwerp.
- The garden is also attracting new members, as members can visit every Sunday for free.
- Costs 2023: €16.000

Garden Paleis op de Meir

- In 2023, we'll start with analysing the soil and research on the historical context
- A landscape architect will draw up a plan for an ecological ornamental garden, appropriate to the property
- Together with the City of Antwerp, we are exploring the possibility of making the historic cisterns operable for use





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COMMUNICATIONS

SIMPLE SIGNAGE FOR A POSITIVE MESSAGE

MIKE LEIGH, GENERAL MANAGER, NATIONAL TRUST

INSPIRATION

Gardens and Castle at Kroměříž

Signage provided visitors with an explanation of what the work is and how it will be carried out. With a site which is undergoing significant restoration, it was enlightening and didn't take away from the experience - it introduced the work in a way which allowed people to be involved and it had a low impact on accessibility.

The cost overall for all the material was under £800.

ACTION

I have implemented this across two properties which currently have infrastructure work on site. I took the learning from what I observed and we placed the information alongside a banner, which is similar to the building site at the castle. The approach we took was to create the information and the design of the boards through our marketing team. The overall cost for this installation came to £1,300, plus 24 hours of our staff time.

This has allowed us to **explain how, why and what we shall be doing to improve the facilities on site.** We showed how we are going to improve accessibility with the introduction of a new Changing Place (fully accessible) toilet. **This has been received well and created a positive message when informing visitors about the minor interruptions they will experience.**



ARE OUR PLACES TELLING INCLUSIVE STORIES?

ALESSANDRA SAMPÒ, OPERATIONS AND PROJECTS, FAI

INSPIRATION

I visited Standen House and participated in a 'Narrative workshop' - a brainstorming session on key themes and how to engage visitors. The participants were Ruth Howard, House Manager, Lauren Milson-Harris, Visitor Experience Manager and Zara Luxford, General Manager. It was a great opportunity to experience in a very immersive way, the creative process behind the building of a property's offer.

Starting from the *Spirit of Place*, the objective was to test its validity over time. Then we selected the strongest themes and tried to understand if they were used in the best possible way, and we brainstormed new ideas linked to these themes.

ACTION

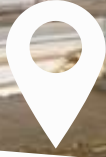
I shared this experience with my team, and we are now implementing the same workshop for FAI Properties.

Our headquarters (HQ) plays a big part in this visitor engagement process, so it will be beneficial to organise brainstorm sessions involving FAI HQ staff along with property staff, in order to increase a sense of autonomy.

Another **benefit of the active analysis of the current offer and brainstorm of new ideas is keeping the properties' offer updated**, which is an issue for some of FAI's oldest properties, the same way it affects some National Trust properties.

We are excited to see what inclusive themes we will discover.





SHARING THE STORY - A PEEK 'BEHIND THE SCENES'

KATEY BOAL, ENGAGEMENT MANAGER,
NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND (NTS)

INSPIRATION

At the Archbishop's Castle in Kroměříž, I had the opportunity to scale the 16m high scaffolding to see conservation work being undertaken on the ceiling of the assembly hall.

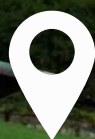
We talked about the value of conservation, the **importance of sharing the story of how the work was done and how to make it accessible to people**. There is a real value in doing conservation work in the open and ensuring that people visiting your site can see the 'behind the scenes work', and the work being done on the ceiling was an excellent example of this. The guides taking people around the castle were highlighting the work and were able to answer questions and engage visitors with the story.

ACTION

This case study reminded me of **the importance of communication of behind-the-scenes activity. Both in relation to the visitors but also the wider community.**

At Culloden battlefield our conservation message includes the objects in our care as well as the landscape we look after. In response to my visit to the Czech National Trust we have:

- Commissioned and delivered a 'Sense of Place' exercise to help create a common language within the organisation to talk about our site.
- Included conservation messaging in our hourly guided tour of the site delivered by the Engagement team.
- Our Engagement Ranger is developing new presentations and tours to highlight the conservation story of our landscape including how we manage it, what impacts its sense of place and how our visitors can support our work on site.



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VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY

DEVELOPING A VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME

MARTIN KRČMA, CO-FOUNDER AND PROJECT MANAGER,
CZECH NATIONAL TRUST

INSPIRATION

Standen House and Garden

On the day of my visit, there were about ten employees and twenty volunteers. We made and installed Christmas decorations in historic interiors and worked in the garden, which is a popular volunteer role at the property. The ranger here regularly has around thirty volunteers on hand, who help with the maintenance of the estate.

Runnymede

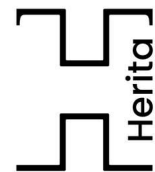
I received a detailed explanation of the volunteer system during my visit. I learned about the principles of recruiting volunteers, their training and communication with them. I also learned how managers solve conflicts and problems, so that volunteering is a positive and rewarding experience.

ACTION

For the Czech National Trust (CNT), the development of a volunteer programme is a challenge. There is a lack of volunteer management experience or process.

These experiences are very useful: using what I learned **we are creating a CNT plan to activate volunteers**, engage them and motivate long-term relationships with the trust.

Thanks to the experience gained in England, we started to think differently about the layout and content of the new volunteer and visitor centre. The CNT team were able to implement a revised design, which has volunteers and their work as a priority.



CREATING A VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

IGOR KOCIAN & GRÉTA KORPÁDIOVÁ, VOLUNTEERS,
THE NATIONAL TRUST OF SLOVAKIA

INSPIRATION

The National Trust for Scotland (NTS) operates with hundreds of volunteers involved in diverse activities from rangers, gardeners, beekeepers and flower arrangers through visitor welcome, guides, retail and tearoom assistants to collection care assistants, event volunteers and exhibition stewards.

The NTS Volunteer Handbook is a unique guide to procedures related to volunteering with the NTS, and care for volunteers. It describes areas such as induction and training, what representing NTS as a volunteer means, volunteer expenses, volunteer reward and recognition, health and safety training information, insurance, confidentiality and intellectual property rights, records management and data protection.

In addition to the Volunteer Handbook, local NTS sites and properties provide further materials, for example on the history and overview of the particular site, property guides or local operations guidelines.

INSPIRATION

Herita has a Community Manager to organise volunteers. Volunteer benefits are:

- Herita interviews prospective volunteers about their expertise and abilities
- Learning Days/Training Days – volunteers receive a certificate
- Specialised assignments, eg photography, translating web texts
- Expenses
- Herita branded clothing to be visible
- When planning events, volunteers participate and give their advice
- Herita publish online adverts for volunteer recruitment and spread good experience by word of mouth
- Volunteers are offered a free membership
- The day before 'Open Monument Day', Herita invites the public to join the volunteer community

ACTION

The outline and content structure of a **new National Trust of Slovakia (NTSK) Volunteer Handbook is planned to be drawn up by the end of June 2023.**

Between July and October 2023, NTSK staff and volunteers will collect further information relating to volunteering operations and standards, with respect to local details and the legal system of the Slovak Republic.

The information will be processed and included in **a pilot version of the Handbook by early December 2023.** The final pilot version will be presented to the NTSK Board at the annual pre-Christmas meeting in December 2023, and **the Handbook will be available to volunteers and wider public from January 2024.**

The pdf version of the new Volunteer Handbook will be published on the NTSK website by the end of December 2023 alongside other useful information, documents, forms and templates related to volunteering with us. Volunteering positions and role descriptions will be advertised on the website.



VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

MARTIN HUGHES, OPERATIONS MANAGER,
NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

INSPIRATION

Sempione Park

FAI Autumn days are an exemplar of volunteer engagement.

The Autumn day at Sempione Park in Milan is **a wonderful example of volunteers who were knowledgeable about the site, passionate about membership selling and providing an amazing guest experience.**

There are clear lines of regular communication between FAI and volunteers along with a culture that 'volunteers' are not 'volunteers' but actual staff members.

ACTION

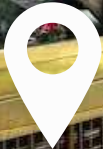
We have volunteers that work different hours and days and in different areas. **Inverewe and Corrieshalloch sites in the Highlands of Scotland are now trialling a smaller scale 'Autumn days' weekend, where all volunteers will be on site to welcome local guests as well as tourists** to sell the benefits of NTS membership and showcase the many benefits of these 2 properties to visit.

Volunteer communication will be key to get all on board and aware of the aims and objectives - **we are using our NTS national 'tea party' to launch and engage.**

Barriers may come up for those who may be working in a place or on a day they don't normally give their time - budget impacts are minimal with this trial.



INCOME GENERATION



INCREASING REVENUE AND GROWING CONNECTIONS

MARTINA KUBEŠOVÁ, DIRECTOR OF CASTLES KINSKÝ DAL BORGO, KARLOVA KORUNA CASTLE, KOST CASTLE, CZECH REPUBLIC

INSPIRATION

Villa Necchi Campiglio

The Villa dates from the first half of the 20th century. It is very well preserved, with rich and beautiful decor and objects. In a very attractive location in the centre of Milan, the villa greets approximately 80,000 visitors a year.

I was delighted to learn about the very well organised volunteer group and the commercial operations of the property, which include:

- Beautiful merchandising and a very professional shop
- A restaurant - leased to a catering company
- Organisation of company events
- Space rental offer for companies, private parties

ACTION

Inspiration for Karlova Koruna Castle:

- We will agree our own concept for retail, merchandising and **focus on own brand, local products**
- We will locate the store at the entrance and exit
- We are excited to develop a podium for passers-by – performances by non-professional street performers in the park

The **benefits of these activities are to increase revenue and visitors to our castle, and at the same time create a strong sense of connection with local stakeholders.**

WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS FOR REVENUE AND AUDIENCE DIVERSITY

ZARA LUXFORD, GENERAL MANAGER, NATIONAL TRUST

INSPIRATION

Romer House, Bratislava

Owned by the Evangelical Church but leased and managed by the National Trust of Slovakia. The building is on the oldest medieval street in Bratislava, a stone's throw from the main square. It is a 1500s courtyard building, with large cellars connecting to neighbouring buildings.

The National Trust of Slovakia has overseen the renovation of the building and work continues. Visitors are able to enjoy the space by visiting the café, which opens from 4pm-10pm every day. The café/bar tenants are working to engage a young audience - one evening there was a DJ in the courtyard. The setting for a DJ is perfect as the courtyard contained the sound and created a good atmosphere.

ACTION

My main learning from Romer House is in the ongoing dialogue that is necessary to maintain the relationships with the Evangelical Church and tenants. I am keen to explore how we can encourage others to use our spaces to attract new audiences, as the National Trust of Slovakia have done at Romer House through their bar tenancy.

I have reviewed and changed the scope of our Volunteering and Community Officer role. **Inspired by the National Trust of Slovakia's community based approach to delivery**, I will be advertising this role with an increased focus on community development.

I am working with our Visitor Operations & Volunteer lead, to remap our stakeholders and to increase our delivery to broader audiences through partnerships. A date for this session is already in the diary. Our initial discussions about this have led to a new relationship with a healthcare provider, to allow out-of-hours access at Nymans in England to those experiencing poor mental health.





ENCOURAGING LOCAL SITES TO SELL MEMBERSHIP

KATHLEEN ENGELS, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, HERITA

INSPIRATION

Insights from National Trust for Scotland (NTS) membership

- Membership is the NTS's biggest source of income
- About 200.000 households are a member of NTS, generating a revenue of £80 million a year
- About 50% are (joint) senior members, motivated by the NTS cause
- About 35% are families, motivated by the membership benefits -nice days out. NTS promotes their cause to this group, to retain families for a longer period of time
- Only an estimated 2% are lifetime members
- NTS estimates 18-25% of members do not renew each year
- The price of the single adult membership is voted on during the annual members meeting. The prices of the other memberships are a derivation
- There is a membership team who tailors the product
- Every year there is a marketing campaign to attract new members. It consists of TV adverts supported by a digital campaign

INSPIRATION

About 80% of NTS memberships are sold online and 20% at local sites. Selling membership at the sites can be challenging, but sites gain a recruitment credit for every membership sold. This works well for some sites, but also has its downsides.

When visitors buy their membership online before their visit, the membership is active immediately through a temporary card (digital or print at home). The property does not benefit from the credit in this case. It's been proposed that the member credit system is removed altogether, but discussions with the properties are ongoing.

Properties each have a membership champion who receives policies from HQ, and is tasked with communicating that knowledge on site. HQ sends out a new internal membership manual every year.

Each year the sites get an overview of their performance. They set a target on how many memberships they aim to sell the coming year.

ACTION

- Recruitment credit for properties: we discussed the option, but based on the experiences of the NTS (and other considerations) **we will create a scheme that rewards properties on getting visitors to return several times a year.** We believe that it is more fair and that in time **it will lead to better visitor experiences overall.**
- **Membership champions: this is a concept we can implement** when we have more employees at every property.
- **Staff training on storytelling: long term goal.** NTS has experimented with external trainers, using actors who train staff in storytelling. This is something we can develop.



RECIPROCAL VISITING

INTO Places - where will your membership take you?

INTO promotes the conservation of the heritage of all nations, for the benefit of the people of the world and future generations.

Many of our member Trusts offer free entry to each other's places. These reciprocal visiting arrangements are managed through INTO.

Our member organisations extend complimentary admission to the members of other participating organisations – and in return offer their own members free visits to an extraordinary range of heritage around the world.

Regular feedback shows that members of these organisations are using this benefit to appreciate cultural and natural heritage throughout Europe and the world, opening up access to wider audiences.

For more information and an interactive map, visit <https://www.into.org/places/>





MEET THE PARTICIPANTS



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