



Riksantikvarieämbetet  
National Heritage Board of Sweden

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# **Cultural Heritage Past, Present and Future**

**– Vital, Accessible, Meaningful!**

*Vision and Strategy 2004–2006*

## Preface

Consciously or unconsciously, cultural heritage affects everybody in one way or another. More and more people are also discovering that the cultural heritage is an asset in many different contexts, from recreation, research and tourism, to business and regional development. In order to meet current and future cultural heritage expectations, the National Heritage Board has formulated a cultural heritage vision and developed an organisational strategy for its activities during 2004–2006. We believe and hope that the cultural heritage will be vital, accessible and meaningful for everyone!

The strategy »Cultural Heritage Past, Present and Future« forms the basis of a deliberate and conscious development of cultural heritage work and is intended as a starting point for the planning and development of the National Heritage Board's activities. The strategy will also facilitate the realisation of the National Heritage Board's visions, goals and mission. In the next few years, the Board will take important steps towards increasing cooperation at both national and international level, develop its role as a coordinator and method developer, enhance its contemporary social and environmental studies and take initiatives in providing expertise and knowledge.

Such developments mean that the National Heritage Board will

widen its perspective and frame of reference, take a holistic view of activities and increase internal as well as external collaboration. Key-words in this development are increased participation, accessibility and communication. This new emphasis will have consequences for the National Heritage Board in terms of activities and priorities, role sharing and work modes.

Within the frame of the project, Agenda Cultural Heritage, the National Heritage Board, together with other interested parties within the cultural heritage field, has embarked upon an exiting and essential – as well as challenging and demanding – regenerative process. As the central governmental agency responsible for the historic environment and cultural heritage issues, the National Heritage Board has particular responsibility for spearheading this development in collaboration with other agents. We are now continuing the developmental work of the last few years with a view to making the National Heritage Board a leading, effective and positive advocate of the cultural heritage role in societal development.

*Inger Liliequist*  
Director General

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### **The Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment Concepts**

Definitions of the cultural heritage and historic environment concepts vary and change. As it is not possible to give precise definitions, they often tend to overlap. In taking the Government Bill, »Cultural Heritage – the historic environment and artefacts« (1998/99:114) as the starting point, we have chosen to interpret the concepts in the following way:

Cultural heritage refers to material as well as non-material expressions. This includes the traditions, ideas and values that we consciously or unconsciously acquire from previous generations. That which is regarded as cultural heritage changes with time, and is an expression of society's changing values. When cultural heritage is accompanied by the definite article, it refers to cultural heritage in all its diversity. The National Heritage Board is one of a number of partners operating within the cultural heritage field that also includes archives, libraries, museums and exhibitions as well as non-profit agents.

The historic environment refers to humanly influenced physical historical and geographical environments, and can include everything from individual objects to large areas of landscape. The historic environment is an essential and integral part of the cultural heritage.

Cultural heritage and historic environment work refers to activities that promote cultural heritage and historic environment conservation, e.g. by protecting, caring for, researching, disseminating knowledge about and developing these aspects.

## **The National Heritage Board Strategy**

»Cultural Heritage Past, Present and Future« is an internal management strategy for the National Heritage Board during the period 2004–2006. The strategy aims at strengthening the cultural heritage in society in line with existing historic environment and cultural policy goals. The strategy constitutes the starting point for the planning and development of the Board's activities and forms the basis of an overall perspective within the agency.

The strategy consists of the following:

- Goals and Mandate
- Vision
- Ideas for Activities
- Process Orientation
- Focus Areas 2004–2006

### **The National Heritage Board's Goals and Mandate**

As the government's statutory adviser on the historic environment and cultural heritage issues, the National Heritage Board's mandate is partly determined by overall politico-cultural goals and those concerning the national historic environment and cultural heritage, and partly by the direction outlined for the Board in the government's annual policy documents.

As a central governmental agency, the National Heritage Board also has a more general, national administrative function. In this respect, managerial policy is based on principles of democracy, legal rights and efficiency.

The strategy »Cultural Heritage Past, Present and Future« thus constitutes the agency's interpretation of these goals and mandate and the resulting plan of action. The work of the National Heritage Board is formulated in accordance with society's demands and expectations. From a strategic point of view, the agency will strive to articulate and highlight cultural heritage issues in society as a whole.

### **Politico-cultural Goals**

The Swedish Parliament (Riksdagen) has approved the following national cultural policy goals (Government Bill. 1996/97:3, bet. 1996/97: KrU1, rskr. 1996/97:129):

- to safeguard freedom of expression and create opportunities for everyone to use it,
- to work towards everyone having the possibility to participate in cultural life, cultural experiences and develop personal creativity,
- to promote cultural diversity and an artistic renewal and quality that counteracts the negative affects of commercialism,
- to provide opportunities for culture to develop into a dynamic, challenging and independent force in society
- to maintain and use the cultural heritage,
- to promote educational aspirations and
- to promote international cultural exchanges and encounters between different cultures within the country.

### **National Historic Environment Goals**

The Swedish Parliament (Riksdagen) has approved the following goals for the historic environment field (Government Bill 1998/99:114):

- a safeguarded and maintained cultural heritage,
- a sustainable society with attractive and stimulating environments and with historic environment work as a driving force in its development,
- that everyone will have an understanding of, participation in and responsibility for their own historic environment,
- national and international solidarity and respect for the cultural heritage of different groups.

## The Board's Cultural Heritage Vision

### ***Cultural Heritage Past, Present and Future – vital, accessible, meaningful!***

The cultural heritage is vital, accessible and meaningful for everyone. Cultural heritage work is characterised by diversity and openness and constitutes a dynamic and positive force in societal development.

### **The Vision's Main Focus**

The National Heritage Board's vision describes a desired future position in which the cultural heritage plays a leading role in societal development and is placed firmly on the political agenda. The issues not only concern the politico-cultural and social spheres, but also include trade and industry, the environment and other fields. The field of cultural heritage contributes to a multi-cultural, democratic and long-term sustainable society through a humanistic and historical perspective that creates understanding and identifies connections with societal development.

## Ideas for National Heritage Board Activities

### ***The National Heritage Board will motivate, inspire and unite!***

The National Heritage Board will motivate, inspire and unify cultural heritage work. The agency's knowledge and expertise will be recognised and sought after.

### **The Role of the Agency**

The main tasks of the National Heritage Board include representing and raising historic environment and cultural heritage issues at central level, introducing a humanistic and historical perspective to societal development and working towards long-term sustainable development. The agency's intention is to create opportunities in which the cultural heritage becomes vital, accessible and meaningful for everybody and for society as a whole. Communication with local communities – through dialogue, participation and debate – will therefore be improved.

### **Core Issues**

A new and deliberate cultural heritage agenda puts new and increased expectations on the National Heritage Board. The sharing of roles and responsibilities in the historical environment sphere, as well as changes in work modes and methods, are under discussion. This means that the agency's focus needs to be concentrated on the following core issues:

- the national perspective, dialogue and debate,
- core support, coordination and oversight,
- the development of systems and methods.

## Cultural Heritage Work in Transformation

The field of cultural heritage is experiencing radical changes that affect all who are involved in the work. Today's great interest in history, together with society's increased understanding of cultural heritage work, bode well for the creation of the cultural heritage as a concerned and positive force in societal development. As the central government agency in the historic environment and cultural heritage field, the National Heritage Board has, in collaboration with other agents, particular responsibility for such development.

### Widening Perspectives

The National Heritage Board, and public conservation work as a whole, has a long and interesting history that reflects both societal development and the importance of the cultural heritage over a period of some 400 years. This historical perspective and long tradition are important strengths. In recent decades, the emphasis of public cultural heritage work has changed. From the physical conservation of ancient monuments and the maintenance aspects of social planning evident during the 1970s, via the everyday environmental and ecological issues of the 1980s, it turned towards a more holistic view in the 1990s, in which cultural heritage was regarded as a resource where both its material and non-material aspects were integrated. The emphasis has thus shifted from »monuments« to »environment« to »heritage«. In the revival work of the 21st century, history, dialogue and diversity have come into focus, as has a wider cooperation both with and beyond the traditional heritage sector.

### Cultural Heritage in Society

Protecting, documenting and caring for the historic environment, and making these values known and vital for present and future generations, are fundamental tasks of cultural heritage work. Social planning and economic perspectives now complement these aspects. Indeed, these perspectives mean that the cultural heritage can now be regarded as a regional and local development resource that allows people to make improvements in their everyday, domestic environments.

The present work of regeneration and renewal has resulted in a broader and more humanistic cultural heritage perspective where the significance of cultural heritage in human terms takes centre stage, where the cultural heritage is regarded as an asset and where accessibility, participation and communication are top priority. This change of emphasis means a revision of values, perspectives and priorities for the Board and other agents alike. While archaeology, building- and cultural landscape conservation are still central areas of activity, the previous emphasis on conservation has now been replaced by a more proactive and goal-related social role. This means developing an attitude where conservation and development are to be seen as integral parts in the management of the cultural heritage.

## Process Orientation – a developing operation

The strategy, »Cultural Heritage Past, Present and Future«, is just one small part of the broad, internal developmental work that is taking place within the National Heritage Board. Work leading up to the strategy has mainly been in connection with the project, Agenda Cultural Heritage, as well as with analyses of the agency's wider activities.

### Agenda Cultural Heritage

The national project, Agenda Cultural Heritage, undertaken during 2001–2003, contributed to a countrywide discussion about the direction of the cultural heritage field and its ways of working. A recurrent theme has been the need to increasingly put »people in the centre« of the activities and create networks and interfaces with new agents.

In connection with this project work, the National Heritage Board's discussions have focussed on the importance of not only keeping questions regarding the use of history, values and attitudes very much alive within the agency, but also within the sector and in society in general. The discussions have also focussed on the agency's role and work in creating opportunities for people to influence and participate in historic environment work.

One of the objectives of the Board's involvement with Agenda Cultural Heritage was to work on the compilation of this strategy.

### »The Dynamic Cultural Heritage« – with an environmental focus

The National Heritage Board's annual environmental analyses have identified a number of particularly important tendencies in society that cultural heritage work would do well to take into consideration. These tendencies include an increased social diversity, the im-

portance of democracy, the tenable nature of social development and the increase of regionalisation. In focusing on these development areas, the National Heritage Board will be in a better position to pursue a determined and future-oriented cultural heritage work that has significance for societal development. The reasons for choosing these particular areas, and the consequences for the cultural heritage and the Board itself, are to be further developed in the analysis "The Dynamic Cultural Heritage".

In working with these development areas – diversity, participation, sustainability and co-ordination – the National Heritage Board will put a stronger emphasis on cooperation with other central agencies and organisations within these fields. This work is long-term and forms an important and integral part of this strategy.

### An Analysis of Activities

The agency is also embarking on internal development work as a result of activity analyses. These analyses have revealed the need for a clearer and more holistic perspective, as well as a better homogeneity within the agency itself in terms of attitudes and working methods. The analyses have also shown the need to formulate clear goals, work according to these goals and continuously assess them.

### Process Orientation – a stimulating work mode

The strategy is envisaged as taking effect by the end of 2006. Activities will therefore be successively developed through the introduction of a process-oriented way of working that incorporates regular review opportunities. In this way, both the strategy and the planned measures can be revised, reprioritised and improved during the course of the work. The diagram on the right illustrates how the

strategy aligns with other aspects of the agency's planned activities.

A process-oriented way of working is defined as a series of connected activities that illustrates who is in need of and who receives the Board's services.

The strategy will form the basis of annual activity planning and budget process. In connection with this work, the overall aims of each respective focus area will be itemised according to the efforts and achievements planned for the year in question. The goals and achievements are to be reviewed and revised at three yearly intervals.

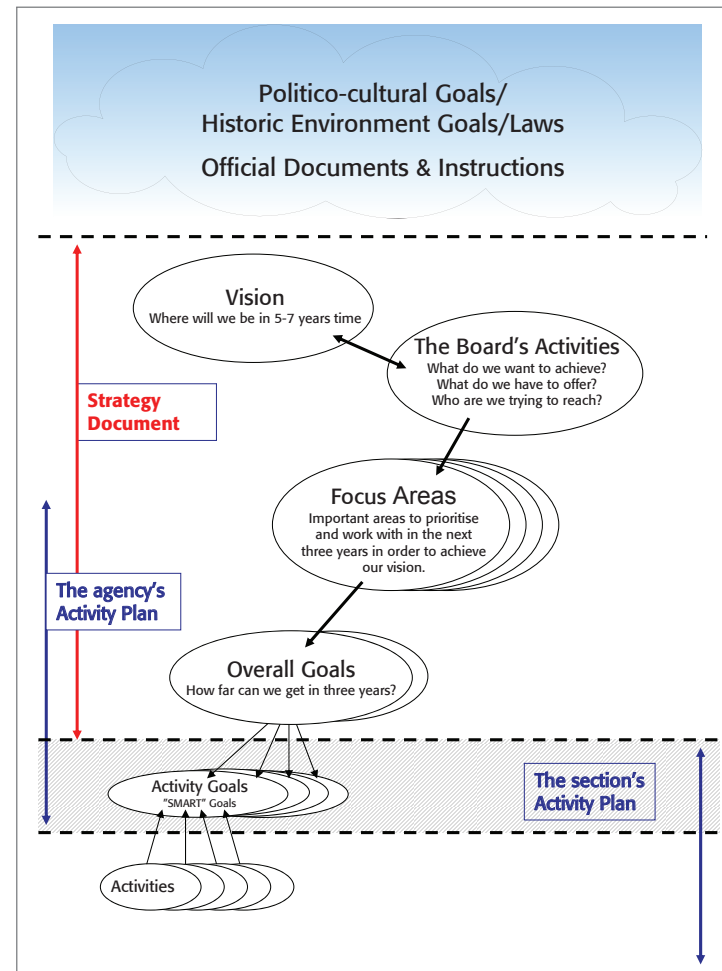
### Management by Objectives, Appraisal and Feedback

Whilst management by objectives take account of staff members' own creativity and competence, it also demands continuous follow-up and revision in order to be efficient and effective.

With regard to long-term and effective strategic work, it is essential that the activities and goals are continuously followed up and appraised. This will ensure that, for individual activities as well as the work as a whole, methods can be changed and improved and new priorities decided upon.

### Strategic Coordination

The National Heritage Board has already initiated a number of development projects and has been involved in different kinds of strategic work. As the majority of these projects are linked with »Cultural Heritage Past, Present and Future«, coordination is essential. This strategy is intended as a bridge between the old with the new. Planning work will strive towards finding interfaces between the projects that have been completed, those that are already underway and those that are still at the planning stage.



The diagram illustrates how the strategy and its content relate to other parts of the National Heritage Board's activity plan.

## Areas of Focus 2004–2006 – Working Modes and Methods

In order to develop particular modes of working, the National Heritage Board has identified four focus areas for the period 2004–2006. These are seen as forming the basis of the Board’s work for the next few years, and will act as guides in the prioritising of target groups, collaborative partners, work modes, products and services.

The four focus areas constitute the work modes chosen by the Board in order to achieve its goals. In focusing on these areas, the National Heritage Board’s role as a central government agency will become clearer and facilitate a more determined approach. The focus areas are:

1. Strategic social and environmental orientation and evaluation
2. Vital knowledge and safeguarded expertise
3. Increased participation and widened responsibility
4. Efficient tools and systems

Each one of these focus areas includes a number of overarching goals relating to the programme period in question. The work conducted within these particular areas will enable the strategy to reach the vision and goals outlined for cultural heritage work.

### **Focus Area 1. Strategic social and environmental orientation and evaluation**

*The National Heritage Board continually reviews and revises its directions and work modes in relation to external changes. The agency monitors, follows up and evaluates its own activities, other parties’ actions and the country’s historic environment.*

#### **Overall goals 2004–2006**

- The National Heritage Board will strengthen its Strategic social and environmental orientation and develop its external analysis work
- The National Heritage Board will improve and develop systematic follow-up and evaluation of its own activities and the historic environment in general.

### **Focus Area 2. Vital Knowledge and Safeguarded Expertise**

*The National Heritage Board is committed to the cultural heritage field having a well functioning system for the development and accessibility of vital knowledge, education and expertise with regard to the social significance of the historical environment and cultural heritage. This is based on humanistic values and an historical perspective.*

#### **Overall goals 2004–2006**

- The National Heritage Board will, in collaboration with others, create a working system for the development and accessibility of vital knowledge and expertise within the cultural heritage field.
- The National Heritage Board will develop methods for increasing expertise and provide a secure and creative working environment.

### **Focus Area 3. Increasing Participation and Widened Responsibility**

*The National Heritage Board aspires towards creating opportunities for other social sectors and individuals to influence and take responsibility for the cultural heritage and historic environment.*

#### **Overall goals 2004–2006**

- The National Heritage Board will develop ways of collaborating with other sectors of society
- The National Heritage Board will make accessibility and communication aspects top priority.

### **Focus Area 4. Efficient Tools and Systems**

The National Heritage Board strives towards the historic environment field having access to and making use of efficient tools and systems.

#### **Overall goals 2004–2006**

- The National Heritage Board will analyse and develop directional and control measures
- The National Heritage Board will improve its own organisational efficiency.

## Motivating the Choice of Focus

### Connections between Goals and Mandate

There is a strong connection between the focus areas and the overall goals for cultural environment and heritage work. There is also a direct relation to the identified aspects of diversity, participation, sustainable development and coordination. In addition, the focus areas are in line with governmental administrative policy action programmes.

The four focus areas are described in more detail below.

### Focus Area 1. Strategic social and environmental orientation and evaluation

#### CULTURAL HERITAGE ISSUES ON THE AGENDA

Cultural heritage issues are coming to the fore in an increasing number of contexts. This positive development demands systematic orientation, strategic planning and coordination in order to facilitate a wise prioritisation of the Board's work. In order to take an active part in societal development, it is essential that the agency has an overview of the historic environment and cultural heritage and how these areas relate to more general social changes. This presupposes that the agency pays continuous attention to social tendencies, assesses their consequences in terms of the cultural heritage, and reviews and revises its activities accordingly. A continuous environmental orientation that includes all the activities and parts of the organisation can contribute to a holistic perspective and homogeneity that is essential for a government agency.

#### READINESS FOR CHANGE

It is vital that the activities – both individual and as a whole – and goals of any long-term and effective strategic work are followed up

and evaluated on a continuous basis. This is to ensure that methods and priorities can easily be changed and improved.

One of the agency's central tasks is to monitor and evaluate the country's historic environments and have sufficient knowledge and expertise to assess whether eventual changes might warrant certain actions. The international perspective is also important in this context.

### Focus Area 2. Vital Knowledge and Safeguarded Expertise

#### THE NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

Knowledge relating to the historic environment and cultural heritage forms the basis of cultural heritage work. Knowledge development can be broken down to include knowledge that supports conservation and maintenance, the use and development of the physical environment and knowledge concerning the significance of the cultural heritage in society. The prioritisation of aspects such as diversity, participation and sustainable development in cultural heritage work also means that knowledge and expertise in these areas needs to increase. Cooperation with important knowledge and research agents, such as universities and university colleges, needs to be developed.

#### NETWORK DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL OVERVIEW

A broader cultural heritage perspective and an increased decentralisation lead to greater demands for a well thought through knowledge acquisition strategy within the cultural heritage field. Local authorities, regional counties or other central organisations are not always in a position to provide general cultural knowledge or specialist expertise in all areas. Efficient networks therefore need to be developed. Collaboration between archives, libraries and museums

are important in this context. As the central government agency with a national overview, the National Heritage Board has a particular responsibility to follow these developments and, together with other agents, ensure that provision is made for education, training, research and development in the cultural heritage field. This is something that has to happen through dialogue and cooperation with other relevant agents.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF AN OVERALL PERSPECTIVE

The National Heritage Board must also try to find a balance between the need for strategic, long-term knowledge acquisition and developing a knowledge base that keeps pace with environmental changes. While knowledge and expertise levels are high in certain areas of the Board's work, the agency would, in some cases, benefit from an overall synthesis and analysis. There is also the need for good, national decision data.

#### RECRUITMENT AND COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Strategic recruitment and skills development are essential to a professional and attractive workplace. Creating a generous and stimulating atmosphere, together with a continuous dialogue concerning values and attitudes, is also important. In the same way that an equal gender and age distribution and people with varying cultural and ethnic backgrounds are an asset to any workplace, a mixture of different skills and education contributes to a creative and stimulating working environment. Prioritising the perspective of diversity presupposes a conscious recruitment of people with backgrounds or education- and work-related experiences that are either lacking or unusual within the agency.

### **Focus Area 3. Ways of Increasing Participation and Responsibility**

#### INTEREST IN HISTORY AND COMMITMENT TO CULTURAL HERITAGE

There is a great deal of interest in history and cultural heritage in society today. By making cultural heritage issues more visible, and creating opportunities for active participation in the work, the National Heritage Board increases the possibilities for citizens to develop their own attitudes and relationships to the cultural heritage. Many people are more familiar with contemporary issues, which means that it is important to highlight ways in which the cultural heritage can be seen as an asset in societal development. In assuming responsibility for the historic environment and cultural heritage, the agency therefore needs to be sensitive to people's different needs. The National Heritage Board will make its expert knowledge available and engage in a meaningful dialogue that will not only lead to increased involvement, but also inspire individual responsibility and debate. The cultural heritage must also stimulate debate and assert its place on the political agenda in a much more explicit way than at present.

#### WAYS OF COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

In terms of its attitude to appraisal and interpretive matters, and its capacity for communication and dialogue, professional cultural heritage work is of great importance. The National Heritage Board therefore needs to increase cooperation at a central level with non-profit organisations, schools and representatives of different groups in society, in order to find ways to increase participation in cultural heritage work. The compilation of an active and forward-looking

communication strategy will make a significant contribution to the continuation of this work.

The government is putting a higher priority on national cooperation. This has been particularly evident in the national coordinating assignment in which the National Heritage Board, together with other government agencies, has been involved in creating an efficient sector-based collaboration strategy for the country. Work with regional growth and development programmes is also moving in a similar direction. Today, the Board experiences an increase in requests from other social sectors when it comes to knowledge about the historical environment. As the agency is itself unable to raise issues relating to the care of the historic environment in all sectors of society, it has to collaborate with others. As the National Heritage Board's most important role is to promote matters relating to the historic environment and cultural heritage at central level, it therefore needs to strengthen its dialogue with other central government agencies and strategically important organisations. In addition to intensifying work in the environmental field, it is essential to widen the network of cooperation to include trade and industry, the social field, etc. In order to improve areas of responsibility in terms of the historic environment and cultural heritage, a more extensive cooperation with other cultural agents needs to be developed.

#### **Focus Area 4. Effective Tools and Systems**

##### RESOURCES AND TOOLS FOR THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Apart from knowledge, engagement and voluntary work, the tools that are available to the cultural heritage field are informative, financial, administrative and judicial in nature. In the same way that the roles, direction and work modes of cultural heritage expand and develop, the need for more effective instruments also changes. The National Heritage Board therefore needs to analyse, draw attention to the need and work towards developing tools and systems that will be of benefit to the cultural heritage field.

##### DEVELOPMENT OF WORK MODES AND SYSTEMS

With numerous agents and an expanded sphere of responsibility, a definite and comprehensive perspective of activities is important. An effective goal and result-related system that includes follow-up and appraisal is essential to any justification of work-related resources. Likewise, it is important that administrative and financial systems are both simple and appropriate. In order to develop the work in terms of increased dialogue, participation and debate about cultural heritage issues, effective instruments and methods of communication that take account of different social groups are also necessary. As a central agency, the National Heritage Board has especial responsibility when it comes to analysing, drawing attention to and initiating improvements in tools and systems that will benefit cultural heritage work.