

Historic England

Measuring the immeasurable: the value of places of worship'

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Content

Not just nice to have

The Culture and Heritage Capital (CHC) Programme

Historic England's CHC research – New Research on Historic Churches

Main takeaways



Not just a nice to have

A need for a coherent and robust narrative and evidence about the value of heritage to make the case for heritage investment and to avoid obsolescence.

- Heritage is often undervalued/ underrepresented in investment decisions.
- But heritage has great public value – people care deeply
- Lack of recognition and understanding of this a risk of loss and threatening the future of heritage assets.



Heritage and public value:

People care; emotional attachment; connections

Crooked House pub campaigners say they won't let rebuilding plans die

One year after Black Country alehouse set on fire, campaigners fight to keep cause alive



“It’s an iconic building that’s a part of the history of the industrial revolution – it’s an absolute tragedy to lose and something people are desperate to see rebuilt,” Paul Turner, from the Save The Crooked House group, told *The Independent*.

Britain Keeps Knocking Down and Rebuilding Historic Pubs

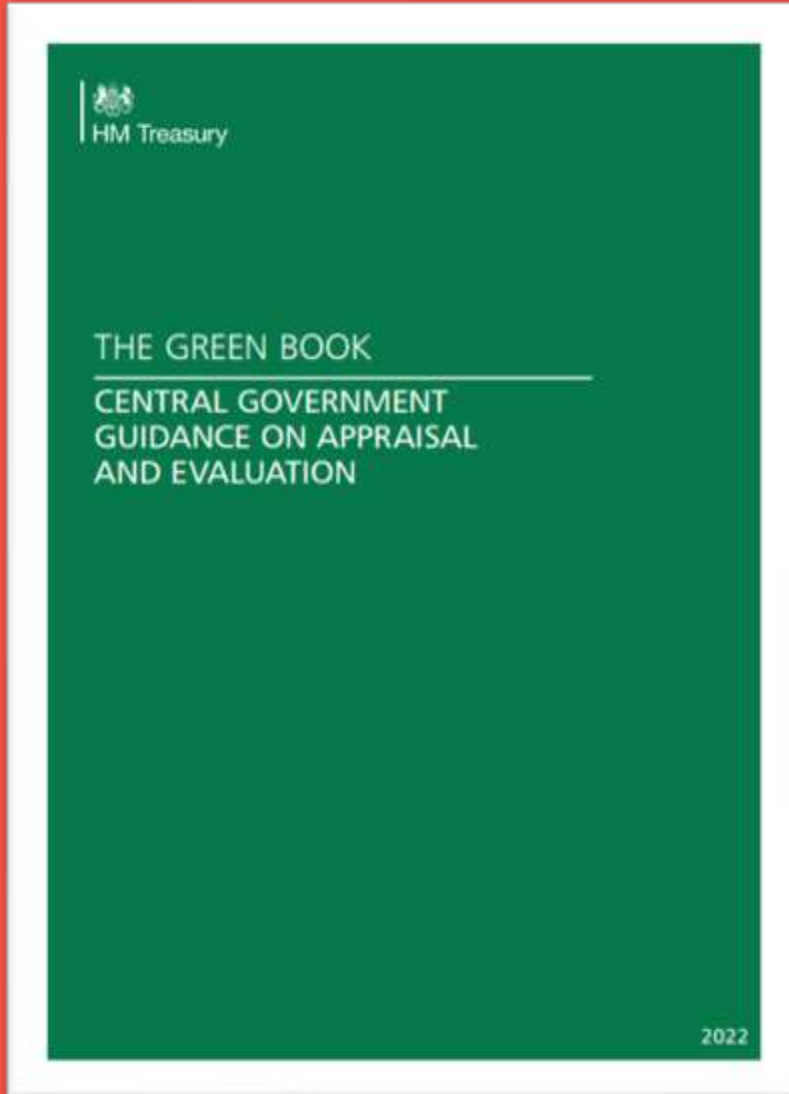
Stringent preservation laws and community affection for local pubs has obliged several property owners to reconstruct historic buildings after demolishing them.



Owners who demolished Crooked House pub after fire ordered to rebuild it

ATE Farms issued with enforcement notice for unlawful demolition and told to build it back to ‘what it was before the fire’





The HM Treasury Green Book

When it comes to public funding the Green Book sets the rules of the game.

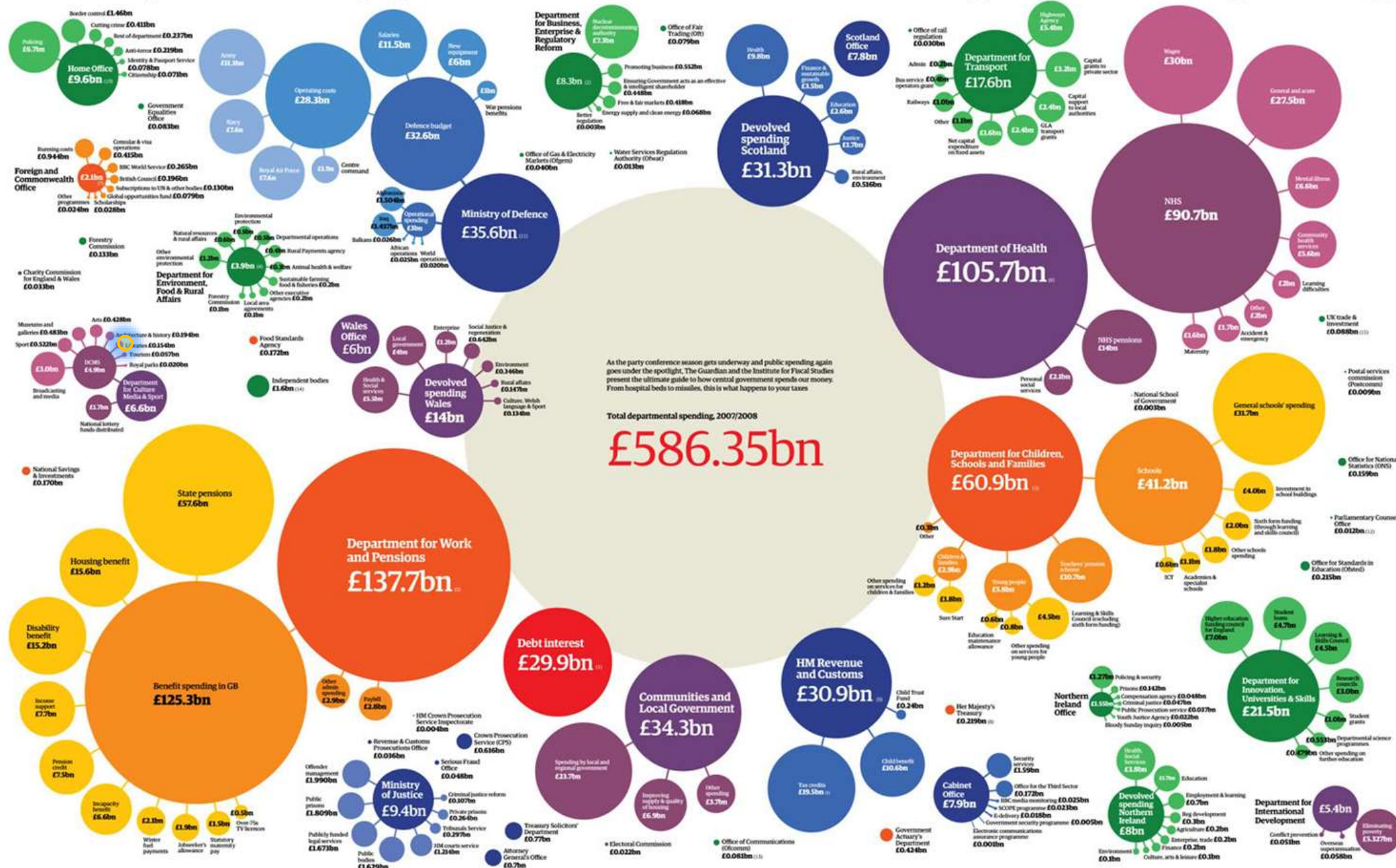
A powerful decision-making tool based on economic concepts

Appraisal and evaluation Guidance. Businesses cases must be compliant.

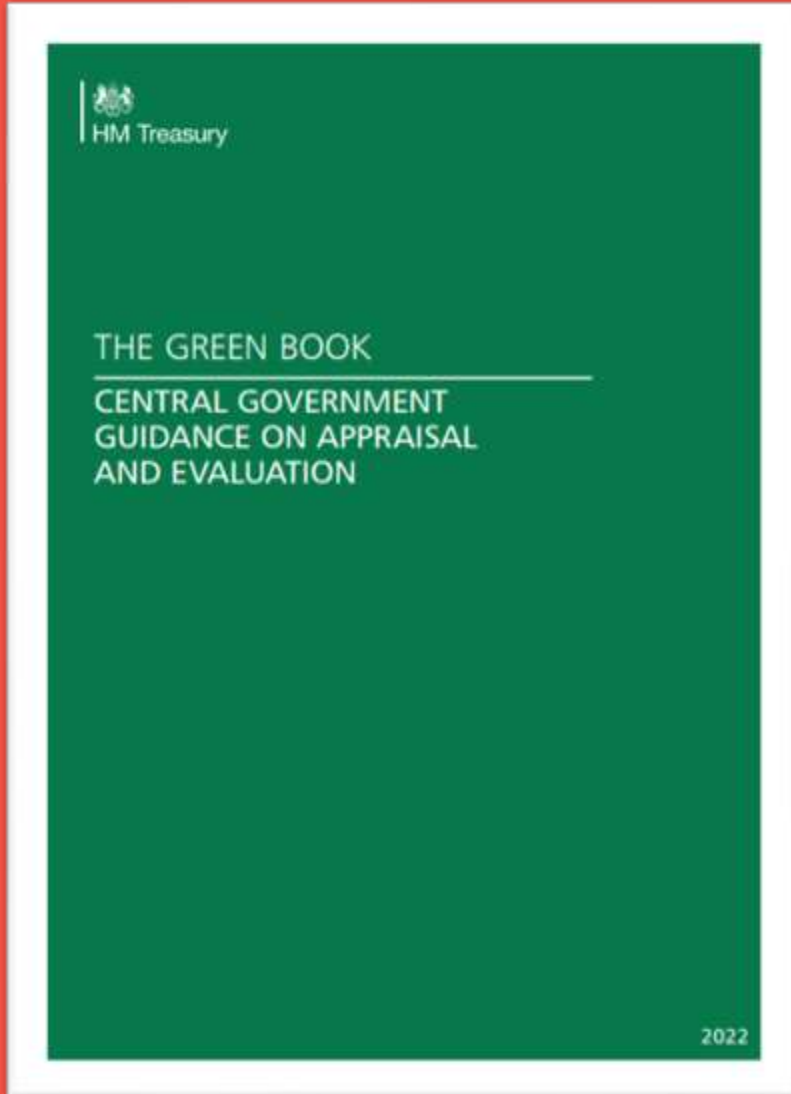
But there is currently **no agreed method for valuing cultural and heritage assets or the services they provide** to the people, to communities, to society. No method to capture public welfare of heritage.

Benefits often implicitly valued at zero

Where your money goes: the definitive atlas of UK government spending



Source:
Guardian



A shift occurred in 2018 – Revision in the HM Treasury Green Book

The goal of public policy is to increase public welfare or wellbeing. Not just wealth.

“Social or public value therefore includes all significant costs and benefits that affect the welfare and wellbeing of the population, not just market effects. For example, environmental, cultural, health, social care, justice and security effects are included.”

**An opportunity
for heritage**



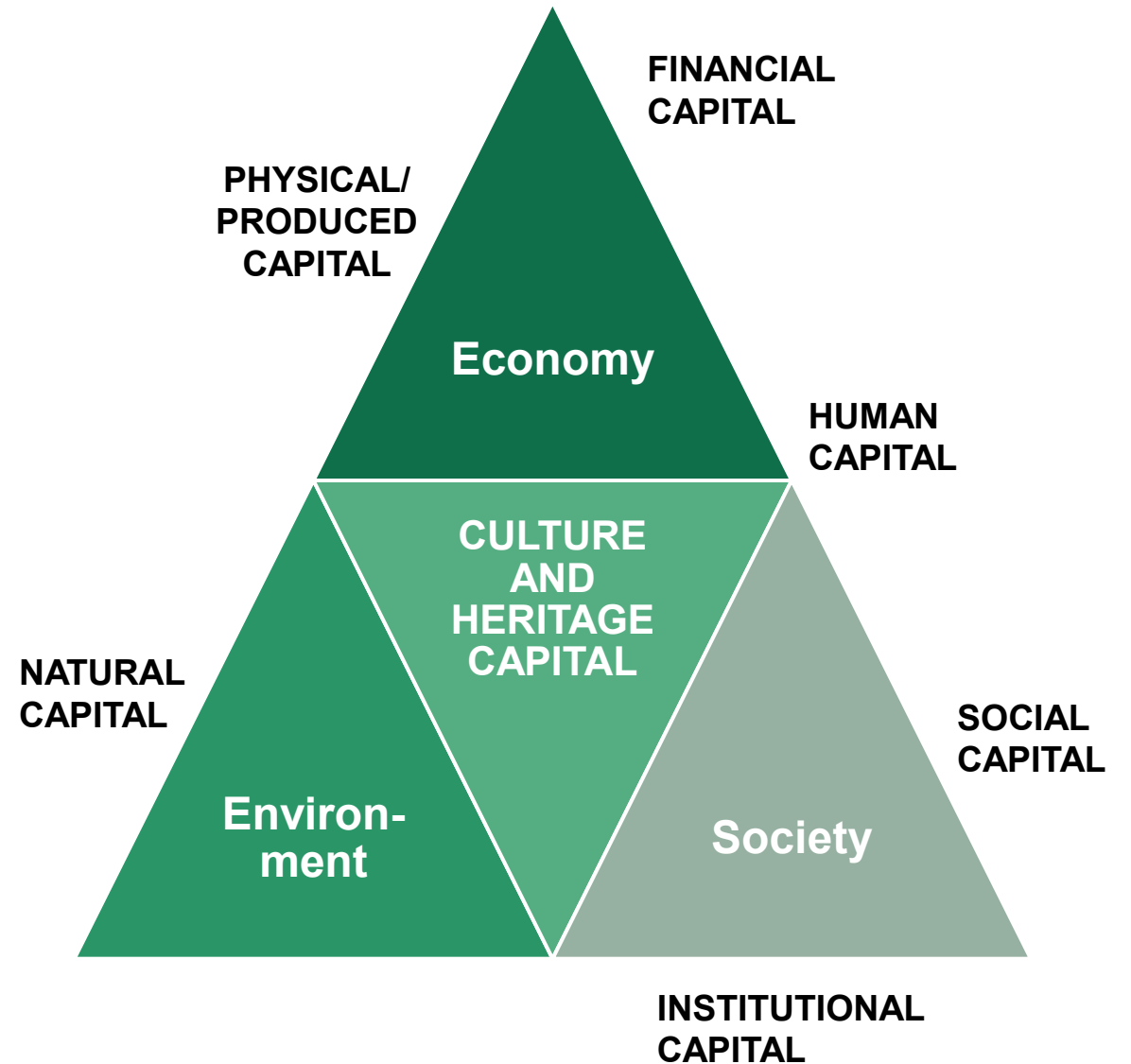
DCMS Culture and Heritage Capital Programme

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/culture-and-heritage-capital-portal>



The Culture and Heritage Capital Programme

- Launched in January 2021
- Move beyond orthodox economic techniques and market metrics of value
- A welfare approach – not just wealth
- Natural capital approach is best practice



A typical Business Case:

Heritage values
largely un-monetised
- externalities



We measure e.g.

Floorspace

Land values

Training

Land use

Visits

Volunteering

To calculate...

Net Jobs
(new and
safeguarded)

GVA
(new jobs and
training)

But silent on...

Historical values (collective memories, vintage effects)

Architectural values (distinctiveness, craftsmanship)

Aesthetic values (beauty)

Spiritual values (meaning, authenticity, pride)

Environmental values (Embodied carbon, biodiversity)

Key Outputs of the Programme

1. A bank of evidence and values for a range of culture and heritage assets



2. Supplementary guidance to the Green Book for culture and heritage capital



3. A set of national culture and heritage capital accounts



4. A joint narrative about the broad economic value of heritage



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**But we continue to value
what is traded in markets
more**

Economic prosperity is almost exclusively associated with economic growth and accumulating produced and human capital.

They are easier to measure and measurement matters!

A shift in the heritage sector (anecdotal evidence)





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Historic England's CHC Research Programme



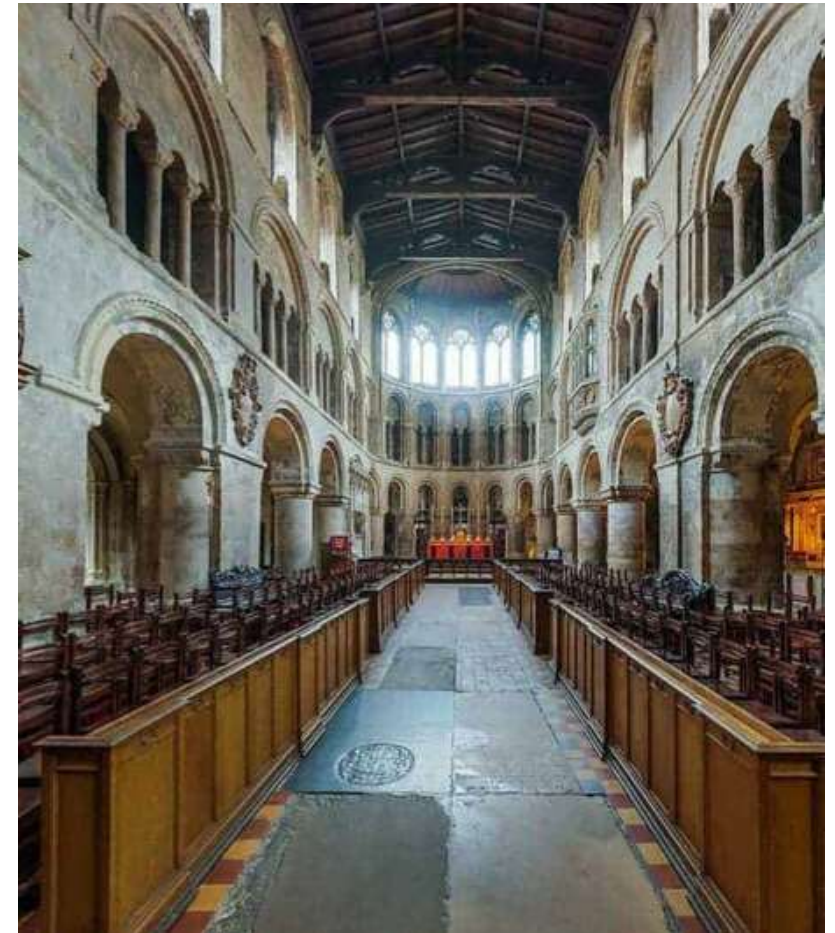


Assessing the WTP for Historic Churches: Evidence from a Discrete Choice Experiment

An economic technique that assesses willingness to pay for different proposals

Is there are heritage premium?

The method has been widely used in environmental economics to value clean air or green space and are now helping us understand the worth of historic churches





Historic Churches



Modern Church

Users
(Regular
Churchgoers)

Non-Users
(Representative
sample)

levels of
repair and
conservation

types of
community
activities

changes to
access

new
technology

Each improvement came with a hypothetical cost.

Analysed over 27,000 choices by over 4,500 individuals

- Willingness to pay for specific improvements and improvement packages
- Willingness to pay for a historic church compared to a modern church



“

The research demonstrates a quantifiable and monetisable ‘Heritage Premium’.





Historic Churches



Modern Church

Willingness to pay for restoration

Users
(Regular Churchgoers)


Non-Users
(Representative
sample)



£15.40



£3.80



£6.30



£0.40

These findings can be used to

- Support investment decisions for historic churches and other heritage conservation
- Understand public priorities, highlighting the importance people place on physical preservation and access to heritage
- Evidence the economic values of the non-market benefits of heritage
- Offer a valuable tool and method that can be applied to other heritage assets from theatres, museums, to parks and historic sites amongst others.



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Main Take-Aways

- **A holistic, transdisciplinary approach is required**
- **Measurement matters**
But much of the value of heritage is just an 'Externality' not folded into current economic systems
Actively seeking solutions to value and embed heritage in policy, business and everyday decisions
- **It is vital that the heritage sector is an active partner in the evolution of our built environment – it is about public value**





THANK YOU

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