

Heritage Partnership Meeting

Discussion Notes

Date: 6th October 2021

Location: Online with Microsoft Teams

Chair: Jane Marley

Attendees: Eilidh Auckland, June Bamford, Alan Bryant, Geoff Clark, Leah Collier, Hannah Cornford, W. E., Alex Gibson, Sue Hope, Helena Jaeschke, Hazel Jones, Margaret Jones, Kate Kelliher, George Kousouros, Jasmine Loveys, Simon Stevens, Carol Thorne, Hilary Smith, Peter Tyzack, Chris Willmore

Description	Action
<p>A discussion convened by Jane Marley on the theme suggested at the last meeting</p> <p>To explore how we address the significance of slavery and its role in creating the wealth underpinning the area. How do we address the significance of slavery to the histories we work to research and disseminate? Is there a need to reflect on how we do this as a community and as local councils?</p>	
<p>Jane Marley gave a short presentation to contextualise the subject and give people time to muster their thoughts for the discussion.</p> <p>Carol Thorne, Trustee, Frenchay Village Museum said that the Holburne Museum, Bath has a permanent exhibition of paintings, and each has notes by the painting to which mention direct and indirect links to slavery on all the paintings as part of background. <i>Action Point to take forward: Future practise: research links to slavery and add information about buildings and artefacts as background.</i></p>	<p>All: Suggested future practise: research links to slavery and add information about as background.</p>
<p>Eilidh Auckland, House and Collections Manager, Dryham Park said the research undertaken over the last 3 or 4 years into</p>	<p>All: Suggested future practise: researching</p>

slavery and colonial connections is now feeding into the main interpretation at Dyrham Park, a National Trust property; it is now no longer a stand-alone topic but part of the main story. The new exhibition due to open in November about the history of chocolate exhibition will not just be celebrating chocolate as an amazing, as in the past, but will show the human cost to obtain it and the journey it took to get to our shores. We hope the story will be part of what people talk about and not just a one-off event. *Action Point to take forward: Future practise researching slavery and colonial connections should become a long-term part of research and interpretation for the public, not just a one-off event.*

Hilary Smith, Head of Education, Learning and Skills, South Gloucestershire Council attended to raise awareness of the Equality in Education Initiative launched earlier in the year to address long standing inequalities in education. For example, under achievement of Black/Caribbean boys and Gypsy, Romany, traveller children. This has been the case for the last 10 years at least and therefore senior officers are developing a plan to tackle the issue with the involvement of the education and wider community. An *Equality in Education Steering Group* will oversee the development and implementation of an action plan and then ongoing monitoring of impact of the plan. The Steering Group is cross-party member led (Cllr. Erica Williams, Cllr. Franklin Owusu-Antwi, Cllr. Ian Boulton and Cllr. Jayne Stansfield). It includes members from *Stand Against Racism* and *Show Racism the Red Card*.

The focus initially is on 3 priority groups where inequalities exist:

- Race
- LGBTQ
- special educational needs and disabilities

Task Forces have/will be established to develop action plans and the task force will comprise representatives of the various groups from across the local education system supported by expert external advisers.

For example, the Race Equality Task Force is led by Alex Raikes SARI and is making good progress in development of the plan.

It has been agreed that priority focus in the first year of the plan should be given to the legal framework and compliance; wellbeing of children and young people within the education system and monitoring of and response to hate/racist incidents.

slavery and colonial connections should become a long-term part of research and interpretation for the public and not just a one-off event.

We welcome involvement from representatives of the local community from the priority groups if people would like to be involved.

Jane Marley said that in March 2021 Britain's colonial past, and racism and the contributions of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities to be made mandatory in Welsh schools under changes to the new curriculum. Would this be the case England? Hilary reported that there was no proposal by the Government to follow the direction of Wales, but the department is encouraging local schools to make their curriculum offer be more relevant to local communities. Also, we want to identify and share good practise examples of engaging curriculum and share them across the system.

Jane Marley, asked about the for positive role models for children and their families and not too much emphasis on people being slaves or suffering through being one of the Windrush generation.

Hilary said that we definitely want to identify positive role models from the local community including the business community.

Underpinning the initiative is the aim for all children and young people to have the opportunity to achieve and for all schools to have high aspirations for all pupils.

Jane asked if historic information about colonialism links and links to black presence and slavery in South Gloucestershire would be useful to the Steering Group, task forces and schools. Hilary said she would be interested in hearing about it and considering it with the Task Forces and consider taking this forward. Jane Marley suggested each museum and heritage site researched its area/collection and added it to their website it would become accessible and the Task Force and schools link to that information if they chose to do so.

Chris Wilmore, Yate Town Council has three questions for discussion.

Firstly, there is a heritage sector issue. Primary links like where is this product being sold and what raw materials is it relying on, e.g., the felt hat industry but there is a second step. We need to consider where the product's being sold. The secondary issue is that pretty much anything funded in South Gloucestershire was by big landowners by the 1830's/1940's was funded by slavery money, but we do not have the data. We could do with help with a small number of clear pointers as to where to look, e.g., the

slavery links of the Codrington's – this is where you look. This would be very helpful in saving research time.

Secondly, there is a real issue about slavery being seen as something that happened a long time ago and that it would not happen now. However, modern slavery exists still. The modern slavery is not just about how we recognise the indicators of someone who is a slave, but also public awareness that slavery is not only historic. We are ready to criticise our ancestors for buying slave produced goods etc. but we today buy cheap clothes without thinking for a minute about the conditions of the workers, many of whom are victims of modern-day slavery. I am not suggesting we can do much but being aware of this and ensuring when we talk for slavery, we recognise it is not something that happened and stopped (it's like making sure with Holocaust remembrance we do not treat it as historic but recognise genocide continues to take place sadly).

Thirdly, images on leaflets and web site. The *Evening Post* did photo montages for a 2-page spread on health since 1940 with only white faces. The montage on entertainment had 1 non-white face. We must check our materials for diverse images so that we can reflect our diverse communities.

Jane Marley suggested that each museum to do research and provide links which can then be put on other websites (e.g., SGC's website). Chris Willmore said she would prefer if something could be done for everyone as that would be incredibly useful. Jane Marley agreed she would create a South Gloucestershire Council web page on black history webpage on the South Gloucestershire Council to include the Black Cultural Archives in London. Chris Willmore said this would be very useful. Hilary Smith, Steve Reade, and Chris Willmore agreed this would be very useful

Jane Marley said that the Codrington's of Dodington is a special project that Gloucestershire Archives and they are looking for volunteers to assist. Gloucestershire Archives holds the archives for South Gloucestershire. Chris Willmore said that the Codrington's were just an example she used as help is required for researching other local families.

Carol Thorn emphasised the need for positive images and role models, given the emphasis on slavery without pointing out the positive stories of black people achieving.

All – suggest research colonialism links and images for own web sites.

JM to check with South Gloucestershire Council Corporate Comms about creating a webpage for the subject

Sue Hope said that Mark Steeds has researched Colston and written books on the topic of slavery so has researched his own resources which might be of use including radicalism. Sue will email him to see if we can use some of his resources. Jane Marley suggested we could have a list of speakers.

SH to contact Mark Steeds to make contact with JM.

Sue Hope hoped that the National Trust piece of work on colonialism and slavery and links to their properties will be continued, a controversy mentioned by Jane Marley in the presentation. What is the position of the Historic Houses Association?

EA to follow up on information about position Historic Houses Association on these issues.

Jane Marley said the issues surrounding Modern Slavery is different to history slavery. Where would we start? Hilary Smith suggested that there are safe-guarding concerns and HR Workforce Development training concerns re Modern Slavery and so the council's Human Resources Team would be the place to start.

Jane Marley read out feedback from Heather Forbes, Head of Archives Service, who was unable to attend:

- a) Undertake research into statues/related issues – Gloucestershire has resource list. University College, London's list of people who were financially compensated is a good place to start research.
- b) Consult with stakeholders, those most affected – race equalities council (or equiv.), decision makers.
- c) Learn from examples elsewhere and those who have led reviews – e.g., Bristol and Gloucester.
- d) Several events at Glos. History Festival have addressed this issue – some of which are on-line. There was a film made by the university students on this topic.

Jane Marley asked whether houses and buildings in the local area which have connections to slavery and colonialism and are open to the public should give information about these links. They could be in the form of exhibitions, leaflets, guided tours, or re-enactments. George Kousouros mentioned Poole Court, Yate as an example and said that this was very important to raise the profile and let people know about this. There could be a talk for Black History month or have an Open Day. Chris Willmore said this was a good illustration of the difficult in finding out the back-story of how the wealth was derived by the originator family to provide this information, despite working hard already to try find out about the origins. That is why we need a database of information about the originator families

Jane Marley said we need to use volunteers as a resource to undertake research and use Gloucestershire Archives and seek their advice which is now open again after Covid-19 closure. Partnership research projects with UWE and Bristol University could also be undertaken by students.

George Kousouros re images and photographs of diverse people, some years ago Paul Appleby set up a website and uploaded photos he had for people to download them. George said it was big project at the time associated with Bristol City Council and MShed.

Alan Bryant, Kingswood Heritage Museum has a Bristol Museum currently exhibition on slavery available for use, in store.

GK to follow up with Paul Appleby and provide JM with details.