

European Heritage Days 2022



European Heritage Days
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Sustainable Heritage



EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS

A joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Union

**European
Heritage Days
2022**

**Sustainable
Heritage**

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You can get in touch with your National Coordinator by visiting our website:

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European Heritage Days 2022

Sustainable Heritage



Preserving the past for future generations

European Heritage Days are an opportunity to celebrate the shared cultural heritage of the many different towns, regions, and people in Europe. Every year there is a theme for European Heritage Days, which all participating countries are encouraged to adopt for their programme of events.

This brochure will help you think about how to deliver your 2022 programme of events based on the theme of Sustainable Heritage.

The [European Heritage Days](#) (EHD), a joint action of the [Council of Europe](#) and the [European Commission](#), are the most widely celebrated participatory cultural events shared by people living in Europe. The pan-European nature of the events contributes to bringing people together and highlighting the European dimension and the value of cultural heritage in 50 States, signatories of the [European Cultural Convention](#). Thousands of events are organised every year in order to help raise awareness of Europe's common heritage and the continuous need for its protection, as well as to create shared cultural heritage experiences, promote inclusiveness and foster creativity and imagination.

Sustainable Heritage is the shared pan-European theme for the 2022 European Heritage Days. The theme invites event organisers to explore what steps can be taken to protect our rich and diverse European cultural heritage in the context of climate change and environmental degradation. There will be a focus on the active role of communities and heritage in the process of building a more sustainable and resilient future. It also offers an opportunity to begin a conversation about how we imagine that future will look.

The 2022 European Heritage Days present many opportunities for event organisers and visitors to reflect on how we can identify and protect our tangible, intangible and natural heritage, promote sustainable tourism, consider our use of resources, and ask how these questions relate to heritage, art, and the preservation of landscapes, wildlife and biodiversity.

The question of what it means to safeguard heritage is also an important facet of this shared theme. Raising awareness of renovation techniques and materials, the development of digital initiatives in the field of heritage, sharing traditions and skills across our European borders, and highlighting good practices from the past that allow us to enjoy the historic sites today, could help us to find solutions on how we might protect and manage our vulnerable sites, making them accessible for current and future generations. We hope that the 2022 EHD celebrations will encourage a broad discussion on the relevance and value of culture and heritage in contributing to sustainable development, and provide an opportunity to imagine what the future might look like.



Understanding Sustainable Heritage

by Dr Hakan Shearer Demir

The impact of climate change and environmental degradation are felt globally, and create vulnerabilities across the world, influencing economies, food security and population movement. Asking questions about sustainability, therefore, calls for a comprehensive critique of daily life, including our use of resources. This questioning needs to consider transformative alternatives to address economic, social, and environmental needs through democratic and more sustainable practices.

Sustainable heritage, the theme of the European Heritage Days in 2022, offers an exciting opportunity to revisit the role of heritage, its management and sustainability at a time when communities are facing multiple challenges, be it environmental, climate change related, economic, social or political. Particularly following an unprecedented period of COVID restrictions on mobility, accessibility and in-person interaction, the importance of local community-based activities and community well-being have become more evident. Searching for a new set of norms in daily lives encourage societies to explore possible alternatives regarding workplace design, consumption, interdependency, education, attention to local communities and a better quality of life, thus reviving discussions on sustainability.

II. Sustainability and sustainable development

Among many definitions of sustainable development, the UN World Commission on Environment and Development's (WCED) is the probably [most used](#), referring to the concept as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". In most definitions of sustainability, along with natural and cultural resources, economic and social resources are also considered essential aspects of development processes. These should be understood as interlinked. *Social sustainability* is closely linked with universal human rights, access to resources for basic needs, as well as the concepts of justice and equity. In this context, respect for the right to practice one's own culture and heritage and protection from any kind of discrimination play a crucial role in community well-being. *Economic sustainability* often refers to access to work under dignified conditions, ability to meet financial needs and secure sources for livelihoods, and maintaining independence. *Environmental sustainability* is concerned with the extraction of natural resources and the treatment of the natural world, which is not able to cope with the relentless demands of human activity. All of these aspects of sustainability are interconnected and present a set of complexities in the practice, addressed by the [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) in an integrated manner.

While sustainability is set as a goal, the process and practices that lead to this goal are sustainable development, which takes on different forms in diverse cultures, geographic regions and political contexts. Many descriptions of sustainable development have influenced development practices over the last decades. Today, many international organisations try to define the concept within their own context, while closely aligning their activities with the Agenda 2030 - SDGs. For example: the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) considers sustainability "a livelihood that can cope with, and recover from, stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, whilst not undermining the natural resource base."

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) highlights the use of resources and the environment today that does not compromise their use in the future. The World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD), in line with the WCED definition, stresses that the three pillars (social, economic and environmental) must be established at local, national, regional and global levels, drawing linkages between poverty alleviation, human rights, biodiversity, clean water and sanitation, renewable energy and the sustainable use of natural resources.

The sustainable development concept, as described by WCED, is deeply rooted in the European project. The EU recognises the need to "modernise its economy to embrace sustainable consumption and production patterns, to correct the imbalances in its food system, and to put its mobility, the way EU produces and uses energy, and designs its



buildings onto a sustainable path.”¹ The EU acknowledges the need for new designs of materials and products, a shift in behaviour so that there is increased re-use, repair and recycling, and embracing sustainable consumption and production patterns. In full compliance with the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs, the EU stresses the growth of its economy in a sustainable way in order to improve living standards, considering the SDGs not as an objective in themselves, but as a roadmap and a compass. In this regard, there are increased efforts for the transition to a circular economy, such as the EU Plastics Strategy that all plastic packaging placed on the EU market will need to be recyclable by 2030. In addition, the [European Green Deal](#) advocates for transformative public investments that support green infrastructure, digitisation, and responsible consumption and production, while promoting education, and the development of skills in heritage governance throughout Europe to accelerate the convergence of living standards. The SDGs and the objectives of the Green Deal, with a strong territorial dimension, seek more habitable housing and sustainable communities regardless of the size of the settlements.

Sustainable development is one of the priorities in [Council of Europe’s agenda](#). Highlighting “the key assets of humanity: the quality of the environment and landscapes, human rights and social equity, cultural diversity and democracy,” the Council of Europe argues that economic progress should not take place at the expense of destruction of natural resources and biodiversity, or the loss of diversity and unique cultures across the world. Upholding human rights and considering climate change as one of the major problems humanity faces today, the Council of Europe has helped to shape an adequate legal environment in Europe in favour of biodiversity, spatial planning and landscape management, and sustainable territorial development based on the integrated use of cultural and natural resources. In line with the SDG cultural pillar of sustainable development, the Council of Europe advocates for simultaneous efforts to develop a culture of sustainability and to protect cultural diversity.² The World Democracy Forum 2021 of the Council of Europe was dedicated to Democracy and Environment, seeking solutions for a sustainable and just world.

Today, the concept of sustainability emphasises “the connections between communities, ecosystems and social justice,”³ as well as the need to analyse the

1 European Commission, “Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030,” European Commission Reflection Paper (January 2019): 3.

2 Ibid

3 United Nations Development Programme, “The next frontier: Human development and the Anthropocene,” Human Development Report (2020): 21.



commodification of resources and relations. Therefore, it is essential that a thorough dialogue takes place beyond meeting the immediate needs and desires of today's communities, focusing on the future-oriented nature of community lives allowing a dialectical balance between what is done today, the impact on surrounding areas, the environment and future generations to be maintained.

Such an approach recalls the Seven Generation Principles of the Iroquis Confederacy in North America, where all decisions made on behalf of the present community must consider the impact on the subsequent seven generations.⁴ Indigenous groups often emphasise that 'community' signifies all inhabitants in the territory, which is comprised of the broader ecological community including the natural world, a concept that was reminded to participants of the 9th World Forum for Democracy by Susanna Israelsson of the Arctic and Environmental Unit, Saami Council.⁵

"In the face of all the changes taking place today in the economy and the environment as regards population movement, scarcity of resources, and conflicts, the concept of sustainability is not about sustaining existing structures for a long period of time, but having the agency to adapt to changes and rebalance following disorientation caused by each major change. Consequently, there is a need to seek commonalities for community well-being with the understanding of heritage and identity as fluid notions."⁶ Heritage has the potential to create organic links across sectors and the power to mobilise inhabitants toward more cohesive societies. Council of Europe's Conventions on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society ([Faro](#)), on Landscape ([Florence](#)), on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats ([Bern](#)), as well as [Strategy 21](#), offering a platform for these links, promotes heritage-led economic and territorial development with an intersectoral and integrated approach. Upholding the right to heritage for all inhabitants in a democratic process as a main principle, it stresses that communities are an essential part of the decision-making processes regarding the identification, assessment, designation and management of heritage assets as community resources.

4 Eleanor Finley, "Indigenous Direct Democracy: Three Case Studies," Academia (2016): 21.

5 Susanna Israelsson, "Threats to environmental defenders," speaker at the 2021 World Forum for Democracy.

6 Hakan Shearer Demir, "Economic and Territorial Development," Council of Europe ST21 - MOOC (2021): 3.

III. Conceptualising sustainable heritage

Heritage, as one of the foundations of contemporary life, plays a crucial role in development processes and offers opportunities for the well-being of communities. The Council of Europe considers culture and heritage as key contributory factors to fundamental human rights, through improved quality of life and living environments. In this regard, it is meant to foster a community life based on active individuals, committed through free and democratic participation in decision making and the process of development. This democratic development process should be based on the sustainable use of local heritage resources, on the creation of opportunities for equal access to these resources, and on the fair distribution of benefits among peoples in a dignified manner.

“Sustainable development, in the context of cultural heritage, is as much a social and political concept as a territorial and economic one. The essential questions of what kind of development, and development for whom, have found different answers based on the values across generations and cultures at different periods of time.”⁷ As sustainable development is an effective and efficient use of internal dynamics and is driven by internal forces, it is essential to pay attention to the changing nature of these internal forces, acknowledge the value in diversity, and work towards an inclusive community. Choosing what to sustain in heritage is closely linked to power dynamics, making sustainable heritage a complex social and political matter.

The sustainable heritage discourse within the context of the European Heritage Days needs to encourage an analysis and innovative process to value diversity, inclusion and address community well-being at the crossroads of sustainable development. In conceptualising sustainable heritage, a community could place heritage at this crossroad as a central element of local governance. This approach would use the power of culture and heritage to bring diverse groups together with an intersectoral and multidisciplinary approach in order to generate ideas and would play a pivotal role for community well-being. Alternatively, a community could consider heritage as a part of a larger sustainable development process and contribute to sustainable development goals from a heritage perspective. While possibilities are not limited to these two approaches, they could constitute a departure point for a dialogue process, with a fundamental principle of cooperation, as emphasised by the Faro Convention.

In this regard, it is essential to pay attention to nuances between the terms: participation and participatory. While ‘participating in something’ has the connotation of

7 Ibid: 2



joining an already established structure, participatory (such as participatory budgeting) refers to an open process, offering a possibility of co-creation or co-construction. Accordingly, the Faro Convention increasingly refers to cooperation rather than participation, which lays the groundwork for a commoning process and advocates for the cooperative use of the commons.⁸

The concept of sustainable development, as expressed in the SDGs, addresses the scarcities of human existence today, and the sustainable heritage discussions and actions need to embrace these issues, assuming the responsibility to focus efforts to address societal concerns through heritage, at least at the community level. This is where the understanding and reclaiming the commons and the process of commoning for sustainable heritage and community well-being takes place. Engaging in such a process sets the ground for a transformative approach where heritage can play an essential role for a sustainable future. Focusing on the importance of the common goods and the responsibility to protect and manage, Marie-Theres Albert stresses that knowledge and awareness gained by the communities regarding their heritage assets “beyond the constraints of purely morality and politically based arguments,”⁹ can promote a concept of

8 Commons and common spaces refer to a physical, social, cultural, economic and intellectual place for the struggle for rights. They are often affiliated with urban space, knowledge, social entitlement, and cultural and intellectual wealth. They are closely linked to the presence of social relations, networks and practices, including struggles and collective action that also constitute the commons.

9 Marie-Theres Albert, *Perceptions of Sustainability in Heritage Studies*, (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 17-18.



sustainability, where sustainable heritage discussion gains its momentum. Albert points out the empowered people with knowledge will assume direct responsibility in acknowledging the heritage of all and commit to the democratic processes. Cooperation, in this regard, comes forward as an important aspect of sustainable heritage where empowered community members cooperate in a process.

It is imperative to think about the value of heritage beyond solely economic or financial terms, considering natural resources and biodiversity along with human aspects including labour relations, sustainability of management, networks, social movements, and scientific knowledge and the evidence-based data it offers. Sustaining heritage assets and cultural practices, while respecting nature, calls for particular attention to the construction, rehabilitation, protection, maintenance and management of heritage assets, as well as the organisation of heritage events, considering the potential impact on the environment and the surrounding areas. This will require specific attention to details and stepping away from harmful habits that may have not taken the environmental impact into consideration. Such a perspective may require the use of technology as well as revitalisation of traditional knowledge and practices that were side-lined in the name of modernity. Therefore, it is quite specific to each community in particular, but calls for a country-wide policy change. Gillian Foster explains that today's city planning prioritises environmentally sustainable and vibrant communities with resourceful and innovative approaches for the built environment.¹⁰ Foster highlights the importance of working with existing buildings as one of the essential issues to accomplish future sustainability. With a focus on circular economy, Foster introduces a flexible framework with a strong emphasis on refusing the use raw materials, reducing, reusing, repurposing materials while recycling and recovering materials for heating systems.

¹⁰ Gillian Foster, "Circular economy strategies for adaptive reuse of cultural heritage buildings to reduce environmental impacts," Elsevier: Resources, Conservation and Recycling 152 (2020): 1-14.



As per **environmental sustainability**, the European Green Deal presents the EU's main new growth strategy to transition the EU economy to a sustainable economic model. It aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a cleaner environment, more affordable energy, smarter transport, new jobs and an overall better quality of life. The EU plans to reach its objectives through cutting carbon emissions and achieving economic growth with an inclusive approach and specific attention to resource use. The Green Deal is an integral part of the EU strategy to implement the United Nation's 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Accordingly, the Green Deal works toward designing a set of deeply transformative policies and mainstreaming sustainability in all EU policies.

In this regard, the European Heritage Days can play a crucial and exemplary role in identifying good practices at a European level, sharing them through an expanded network and instigating a dialogue and action for a transformative process, with a consideration of a sound economy to sustain itself. Therefore, an economy of alterity, including but not limited to circular economy and social solidarity economy can be explored.¹¹

Sustainable heritage requires the effective governance of heritage with a holistic approach at a community level. As the Faro Convention suggests, this is not a stand-alone process and foresees an extended cooperation with all layers of society from grassroots to municipal, regional, national and international mechanisms while putting the local communities at the centre of heritage governance. European Heritage Days hosts and organisers should pay particular attention to ensuring intergenerational and inclusive dialogue as a central purpose of their events.

¹¹ For more detailed information see Annex 1.



IV. The potential of culture and heritage for sustainable growth

Culture and heritage play an essential role as an enabler of social cohesion and democracy, which have direct influence on community well-being. In order to sustain this state of well-being, local heritage resources need to be governed in a responsible manner, ensuring a balanced approach between economic, social and environmental aspects. With time, changing dynamics and needs in each community, this transformation process needs to stimulate collective imagination and regularly renew itself, as it pertains to heritage, sustainability and decision-making processes.

The ability to exercise power at the smallest group setting (for example, at street level) gives all inhabitants the opportunity to actively engage in the democratic process directly, representing themselves, sharing their concerns, understanding the positions of others, and seeking collective solutions that facilitate community well-being with the existing resources. Such an approach to decision making can be an empowering process, as the relations of power, privilege and difference are better understood and addressed. Place-based and people-oriented community initiatives such as the European Heritage Days provide a platform for collective action.

The European Heritage Days in 2022, while focusing on sustainable heritage, instigate a process of dialogue at a community level where they revisit, redefine and redesign their understanding of sustainability in their context and reflect upon their heritage governance practices. As advocated by the Faro Convention, these efforts need to go beyond seeing heritage as a neutral financial asset, and instead approaching cultural heritage, including natural heritage, as an important resource for sustainability and an important element in the creation of an equitable society.



V. European Heritage Days as a trigger for a transformative process

The evolution of the concept of heritage and the work of Council of Europe in this field has had a positive impact on the European Heritage Days over time. As democratic participation and human rights aspects were increasingly pronounced during the European Heritage Days and societal challenges were examined using heritage lenses, it was clear that such complex issues required further cooperation and sustained action with a complimentary and synergetic approach.

Among a number of initiatives, the Council of Europe emphasised its complimentary work strongly linking the European Heritage Days, Faro Convention Action Plan and Strategy 21. A clear division of tasks among these three programmes offer a framework for sustained actions for member states where the EHD programme, with its outstanding outreach capacity, assumes the role of identifying distinctive heritage-led initiatives and examples across fifty countries, encouraging mobilisation of communities. The Faro Convention Action Plan plays a pivotal role in focusing on specific topics in addressing societal challenges in line with the priorities and further studies them. The studied and tested practices with analysis provide substantial resources for the implementation of the Strategy 21, where members states could take part and benefit from a comprehensive process based on the principles of the Faro Convention.

The complimentary aspects of these three Council of Europe programmes present a comprehensive approach to heritage, encouraging the European Heritage Days to further seek cooperation with other departments of the Council of Europe as well as other institutions to multiply its work and impact. Such an international dimension offers a solid framework for participating states and communities to highlight, discuss and analyse specific themes that are important to them at a European level and have the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences. The EHD Network gradually connects with a number of heritage communities across fifty countries and beyond, toward a network of heritage communities. Such networks constitute the basis for cross-border cooperation and regional initiatives, tapping into resources and instruments provided by international institutions including the Council of Europe, the European Union and specialised professional associations.

The theme of Sustainable Heritage holds great potential for the European Heritage Days to create a platform for dialogue, which refers to sustainable and inclusive heritage governance practices at various levels. This platform is fundamental for the democratisation and acknowledgement of cultural heritage as a human right for all who are present in the communities. The European Heritage Days are a trigger for such a transformative process, giving heritage makers of today the role of changemakers.

Examples of Good Practice

The following Council of Europe initiatives, European Heritage Days events and grant-funded projects offer some inspiration for organising your own events -

- [Event: The Govan Thriving Place Zero Waste Market | European Heritage Days](#)
- [Event: Lymm Hall's Low Carbon Transformation | European Heritage Days](#)
- [Event: The Hidden Gardens | European Heritage Days](#)
- [Event: Education workshop about water mills in Costur \(Castellón\) | European Heritage Days](#)
- [Kåserikonsert om og med naturinstrumenter - Kulturminnedagene \(kulturvern.no\)](#)
- [Visite guidée de l'exposition «Réenchanter le monde» | European Heritage Days](#)
- [Revival of the Stone Village - European Heritage Days Stories Grantee](#)
- [The Colonies of Benevolence - European Heritage Label Site](#)
- [The Ljubljana: A River that Connects - European Heritage Days Stories Grantee](#)
- [Publication: European Heritage Strategy for the 21st century - The Golden Collection of Good Practices](#)
- [Council of Europe Landscape Award Projects](#)
- [Conversion of De Hoorn brewery into a creative hub](#)
- [Historic Towns Initiative](#)
- [Sustainable development of the Mourela plateau](#)





Event Ideas

The European Heritage Days are proud to present a selection of **event ideas** that you can bring to your local communities in order to highlight a shared European heritage, show how Europeans connect through different surroundings and highlight the importance of shared cultural values.

Apart from tours, talks and exhibitions, here is a list of creative ideas that can help you make your event engaging, interesting, inclusive and enlightening. Remember that your events should:

- Have the elements of learning, exploring and fun.
- Encompass, if possible, different forms of heritage: tangible, intangible, natural and digital.
- Target a broad spectrum of audiences – children, young and elderly people, vulnerable groups, locals, tourists and overseas visitors.
- Engage the curiosity of people to find connections and links and to situate their own personal story of cultural heritage in the site they are visiting. Curiosity and shared experience lead to learning more about the diversity all around us.
- Be rewarding in the sense that people will find out things they didn't know, in places they didn't expect and have ideas they wouldn't have otherwise had.

These ideas offer a starting point for exploring the cultural ties that your country/region/ community has with Europe, celebrating the continuing exchange of ideas and innovation that has taken place across the continent for thousands of years.

Nature and Biodiversity

1. **Nature rocks** – how much do you know about the geology of your local area? Organise a day out exploring local rock formations and what they mean for your local community's relationship with the environment.
2. **Have a field day** – The protection of biodiversity is increasingly seen as a priority by landowners and farmers, and a lot of work is being done to care for the wildlife and

plants that share our fields. Invite people to see the work you are doing and share your knowledge, and if you are able to host a group, you could organise a workshop.

3. **Build a garden wormery** to make compost. Composting worms will eat almost anything – including eggshells, coffee grounds and the insides of your vacuum cleaner!
4. **Collect wildflowers** and make artwork with them. Become a 19th century botanical artist and learn about how flowers are painted onto the pages of manuscripts.
5. **Build an insect hotel** – our insect populations are under threat as a consequence of changing climate, pollutants, and the destruction of natural habitats. To combat this, we can build homes for insects, to give refuge to beetles, bees, ladybirds and butterflies. An alternative might be birdhouses, or any kind of wildlife refuge you can think of!
6. Basic Survival Skills were something previous generations would have taken for granted. Organise a **Wilderness Survival Event**. Learn how to light a fire using flint and steel with no matches or modern methods, how to purify water, and how to signal if you are lost.
7. **Bird song** – How many bird songs are you able to identify? So much music has been influenced by bird song. Organise a link up with your local bird-watching experts and a classical music enthusiast and see how one has influenced the other and enjoy some great sounds.
8. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, rarely seen forms of wildlife were spotted taking advantage of the quiet environment of usually busy urban settings. This included endangered species such as red squirrels, wild cats, beavers, golden eagles and varieties of butterflies which hadn't been sighted for decades. Organise a research project exploring how wildlife has evolved around you in the last two years, and discover the animals who are your neighbours.
9. Many traditional skills have local roots and were dependent on what was available locally, what could grow, what type of stone or rock lay underground, and the availability of clean water. Ask a historical geographer to give a talk about the aspects of your **local landscape** that have defined your place and how to provide a platform for the development of innovative ideas in heritage management.
10. Organise a bird/insect watch and do a **count of 'endangered species'** in your area.
11. Organise a **dendrological workshop** and raise awareness of old trees as both nature and cultural monuments.



12. Create a demonstration by local craft workers to discover and promote **local skills and know-how related to nature** (forests, agriculture, use of water, saltscapes) or on the [planting of hedgerows](#) to promote pollination.

Creativity

1. Songs, poetry, dance, and other elements of **intangible heritage** helped in building identities, creating unity and social cohesion. There are diverse ways in which cultural heritage is used to forge identities and to support and shape memory, both individually and collectively. Showcase which ways are characteristic to your community.
2. Does your country have a **traditional dance** that has been changed or modified by over time? Compare the different versions, and discuss with young people what prompted these changes and why. Should traditional dance always be performed in its original version or should it be allowed to evolve?
3. Have you ever thought about the values that underpin the stories of your local **fairy tales**? Explore the values that shaped them as part of a daytime pyjama party at your community library.
4. Organise a guided walk of a national park/reserve or Special Area of Conservation. Discuss the natural heritage preserved there and the important role it plays in a sustainable environment.
5. Explore the heritage of cosmetics and how people used to take care of their skin before synthetic preservatives, emulsifiers, activating ingredients and fragrances were discovered. The tradition of **natural skincare** might even become your daily routine!
6. **Let's cook together!** Collect healthy recipes of dishes from the archives or your grandma's diary. Invite other people in the community to join you in preparing and enjoying it, using local produce where possible.
7. Find a **treasure trove** in your trash! Hold a masterclass in making sculptures out of pre-loved objects and recycled materials.
8. Research and compare traditional skills for preserving food and cultivating land with contemporary practices. Discuss which approach is more sustainable.



9. Explore the heritage of medicine! Using plants for remedies was a common practice in the past. Rediscover chemical-free, sustainable and **nature-based approaches to medicine**.
10. Organise a **painting competition** at school on the theme of Heritage and Sustainability. You could offer an award for the contest winner to encourage imagination about how heritage can contribute to sustainability.

Recycling

1. Partner with a [Repair Café](#) to highlight local skills and the ability to re-use and repair rather than discard.
2. Get together with your local community to make festive bunting and decorative street art out of old clothes and fabric. Are there local craftspeople who could share their knowledge and skills?
3. **Give new life to old objects!** Partner with a local restoration workshop to refurbish a piece of old furniture. Don't forget to take before and after photos and post them on social media.
4. Have you ever thought about taking fashion inspiration from your grandparents? Team up with a local tailor and plan a workshop for teenagers. You could even hold a fashion show!
5. Organise a **crafts workshop** and invite people to bring their unwanted items. Show them how to recycle it, repair it, or even give it a new purpose.
6. Discover the **wealth in your waste!** Treat your house plants to a nice pot of old tea, or even have a go at growing gourmet mushrooms in your used coffee grounds.
7. **Upcycle your old bicycle!** Organise a bicycle repair workshop for your community. Follow it up with a heritage trail bicycle tour of your local area.
8. **Open a Living Library!** Invite people in your local area to share their knowledge and experience of traditional sustainable practices at a special event, with a view to promoting social inclusion and fostering intergenerational dialogue.
9. Explore the process of **making paper by hand**. Make pulp using recycled material and natural plant-based dyes. Infuse the paper with seeds or add pressed petals and leaves for a decorative finish.

Built Heritage

1. **Participatory Conservation Planning** - Organise maintenance workshops to teach residents practical skills for conserving cultural heritage buildings and landscapes and improving their own living conditions. Based on the cooperation of multiple stakeholders, participatory conservation planning would provide an opportunity to explore more sustainable designs to achieve positive ecological, economic, and social benefits.
2. **Adopt** a heritage asset - In line with the expanded definition of heritage, local heritage groups and or schools can adopt a heritage asset to inspire a study, raise awareness or perhaps even be used as a fundraiser. It is essential that such an action is recognised and supported by local authorities, which contribute to community well-being and a sense of shared ownership of cultural heritage. Find inspiration in [Adopt a monument programme organised in Tampere, Finland](#).
3. Organise a tour of a **recently restored** historical area or building in your community. Discuss to what extent the restoration project contributed to the enhancement and adaptation to new uses of the historical site.
4. **Pick a place!** Examine the interactions between people and community who meet in this place. Consider how the place itself has contributed to local history, and how it might continue to do so.
5. Organise a tour in a **historic urban centre**, highlighting some of the ways in which sustainability and heritage relate to one another, and discuss the ways the town might be developed in a way that protects its identity while also making it suitable for today's needs.
6. **Architects'** representative organisations may be a great source of ideas or provide potential speakers when it comes to progressive ideas on sustainable building and the re-use of old materials in new ways.
7. Organise a **scavenger hunt** for kids to find historic features that reflect different time periods in history with a sheet of images with everything from windows and doors to stone carvings.
8. **Conservation skills** - Go behind the scenes at a museum with a conservation department. It is fascinating to meet the people who work on conserving various items of heritage significance and see them at work.
9. Are you planning to restore a run-down building which forms part of your local heritage? Organise fieldwork for the community to learn about stonemasonry, bricklaying or other traditional techniques involved.

Schools

1. Encourage children to become **nature detectives**. Let them solve clues together on a visit to a local park. Or create a **nature hunt** using a page of local flora and fauna so that they can tick a box as they find them.
2. Did you know that there are enough garments on the planet to clothe the next 6 generations? Reduce the carbon footprint of your wardrobe by organising a **clothing swap shop** event in your school. You could combine it with a catwalk show of **vintage fashion** across the eras.
3. **Good Planets are hard to find**. Organise a contest to reduce waste levels in your school to what it was in your grandparents' time. Set up a display in the school common area using images to show the different items students used from previous generations to today. Highlight the items that they re-used and the ones we discard today.
4. Try your hand at **Plogging!** A combination of 'jogging' and 'picking up litter' from the Swedish word *plogga*, it's a fun and healthy way of keeping your local area clean. Why not organise a special Plogging event with your school for **#WorldCleanupDay** on Saturday 17 September?
5. Teach primary age children about the importance of **pollination** with a fun afternoon of watching Bee Movie.
6. **Learn to sew!** Did you know that there is a shortage of skilled surgeons because fewer children are learning to sew at school? Develop your pupils' manual dexterity skills by letting them try their hand at using a needle and thread. Who knows where it might lead them in their future career path? (And at least they'll be able to repair their own clothes!)
7. Become an **anti-obsolescence activist!** Get together with your classmates to lobby politicians and manufacturers to extend the lifespan of mobile phones and electrical goods to preserve the planet's precious resources and reduce unnecessary e-waste.
8. **Encourage your school to reduce its impact on the environment by joining the #PlasticFreeChallenge**
9. Organise a school **photography competition** followed by an exhibition on the theme of Heritage and Sustainability to encourage young people to capture the stories of how heritage contributes to cultural and social sustainability.
10. Organise a discussion in secondary schools on the impact of climate change on cultural and natural heritage. List the actions that we can fulfil in everyday life to help care for the planet.

Communities



1. **WE need to TALK!** Hold a community consultation on sustainability and sustainable heritage. Through participatory community consultation methods, bring the community together to discuss, define and design sustainability and sustainable heritage in the local context. This process has the potential to engage all inhabitants to stimulate interest and commitment on the issue while encouraging greater involvement in decision making. It is essential that meetings are accessible for diverse groups.
2. **Create community gardens** - Allocate space to establishing community gardens or micro farms which schools, groups or neighbourhoods can fully design and manage together. As well as being an excellent educational tool, such a project can reap substantial social, environmental and economic benefits for a community.
3. **2030 Vision** for cultural heritage management - Set up groups of diverse members of the community and ask them to discuss and create a vision of how they would like their community to look in 2030. This could be organised with the local authorities that take care of heritage assets where you live.
4. Many heritage sites are working hard to improve accessibility. However, there are still some places, not least natural heritage sites, where people with disabilities find access impossible. If you manage a difficult-to-access site, why not have a go at creating a **virtual tour** using a simple camera to ensure that everyone can enjoy what your site has to offer.
5. **Youth Residential Trips** based on sustainable heritage - Organise youth camps where young people from similar backgrounds (e.g.: coastal regions, mountain communities, farming communities, urban centres, etc) can be involved in an activity to develop a vision for a sustainable and just future, in an experiential environment.
6. Work with local partners to create new maps to share **walking or biking routes** between heritage locations in your area.



7. Find out if there are any local **museum exhibitions** relevant to sustainability and arrange a visit. Explore its role and aim. How does it relate to the concept of sustainability on both theoretical and practical levels?
8. Tourism can cause difficulties for local communities, contributing to damage to heritage assets and financial instability. Organise an event that promotes **tourist activities** that are sustainable.
9. Organise a conference for young professionals addressing the following questions: What should be sustained in heritage, what should heritage sustain, and what is the relationship of heritage to other dimensions of sustainability?
10. Work together with your local community and **plant a tree as a natural monument** for future generations. Be sure to involve children and teach them about the different role of trees (trees in folklore, trees as environment saviours, trees as sources of nutrition).
11. Get closer to nature by planning an **astronomy night** or 'Dark Skies' night in your town or village. Encourage everyone to turn off their lights and go stargazing!
12. Organise activities with **professionals dedicated to protecting nature** and raise awareness about risk management and possible ways of citizen collaboration in the area of [major hazards](#) and climate change.
13. Digital technologies have an increasing role as a tool to interpret and disseminate multiple values of heritage. Bring together a group of community members and specialists including, historians, heritage managers, data scientists and IT specialists to organise a **heritage science hackathon**.

European Initiatives

1. Take part in the next edition of the [Young European Heritage Makers](#) initiative, which invites young people to explore their cultural surroundings and find their story of Europe. Encourage young people to take a photo, make a video or tell a story and share it with the rest of Europe on our website as part of the next edition.
2. Are you an organiser of a project involving European cultural heritage, with a mission to share your experience with the rest of Europe? Do you have an idea for a new project to further develop your story? If you organise an EHD event, you will be eligible to take part in the next edition of our [Call for European Heritage Days Stories](#). We particularly

encourage applications from community projects based on sustainability for a source of inspiration for your 2022 event.

3. Follow your nearest European Cultural Route to discover the rich and diverse heritage of Europe. Find out what it has to offer for responsible heritage tourism and sustainable development. There are now 45 recognised routes to choose, stretching across the whole continent.
4. Discover the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award winners in a category of conservation in your area. Learn about the best practice used during the restoration process of a historic site.
5. Visit a site that has received the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe. Find out how it improves the quality of the environment and to what extent it demonstrates social, economic and cultural sustainability.
6. Do you know what the ruddy duck, the grey squirrel and the marbled crayfish have in common? They are all considered [Invasive Alien Species](#) in Europe! These unwelcome guests can upset ecosystems and pose a threat to the continent's endangered species. Find out about the [Bern Convention](#) on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, and how its signatory states are working together to protect the continent's native biological diversity.
7. Have you heard of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society? See what the Faro Convention has to say on the contribution of cultural heritage to human development and shared responsibility for cultural heritage and public participation. Celebrate the approach it offers and plan your European Heritage Days activities with the spirit of the convention.
8. The [New European Bauhaus](#) initiative is a creative and interdisciplinary movement that connects the [European Green Deal](#) to our living spaces. This platform, highlighting experimentation and connection, science and technology and the world of art and culture, seeks innovative solutions and opportunities to improve quality of life.
9. Discover the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals! You might find some goals, particularly Goal 11 - especially target 11.4, - relevant to your activities. Organise an event that demonstrates how your work contributes to the achievement of the UN SDG Agenda. Find out how [Culture can help fill the implementation gaps in the achievement of the 17 SDGs](#).



Top Tips for Event Organisers

to help reduce the environmental impact of your event

- Consider your event's social, economic and environmental impact at all levels
- Brainstorm, plan and deliver your event with sustainability at the core of your approach to ensure that resources are allocated and used effectively
- Aim to minimise high level resource consumption (water, energy, food)
- Consider powering your event with solar or wind energy
- Schedule events in the daytime and choose outdoor places with natural light
- Avoid colour printing. Share your event programme digitally on social media, and provide QR codes on the day to ensure that visitors can find what they need on their smartphone
- Use decorative items that are reusable and recyclable, even producing your own where possible
- Use LED lights as to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon footprints

- Limit an increase in CO₂ emissions produced by transport and other resources
- Suggest guests to use public transport or eco-friendly transportation methods and offer incentives (such as a free cup of tea) for those following these suggestions
- Promote and advertise transport options before the event – make sure visitors know about the cheapest and most efficient ways of getting there and back.
- Consider consuming local, in-season, organic or fair-trade products when selecting catering services for your event
- Reduce waste generation. If food packaging is a must, ensure it is reusable, recyclable or biodegradable
- Provide clearly labelled general waste and recycling bins at regular intervals, including at the entrance to the site
- Avoid generating disposable drinks packaging by hiring in a drinks dispenser. Rent or sell recyclable beakers for visitors to purchase their drinks in. You could even add a special design to your beakers to commemorate your event!
- Avoid using disposable dishes and cutlery – unless you can be sure they are fully compostable. As an alternative, hire in family friendly plates and forks that can be washed and returned at the end of the day
- Sort waste into its correct containers. If necessary, have a guide on hand to help visitors sort their waste
- Have a plan in place for dealing with 'leftovers'. What can be donated to charity, recycled at another event, or stored away safely for next year?
- Ensure accessibility without physical or sensory barriers to enable everyone to join the event
- Ensure music and noise will cause minimal disturbance
- Assess the impact the event will have on the local community

For more Top Tips, see the [Sustainability Checklist](#) produced by the European Union-Council of Europe Youth Partnership on Greening the Youth Sector, or watch their [short introductory video](#).

Resources



European Union

1. European Green Deal https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en
2. New European Bauhaus https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/index_en
3. Horizon 2020
4. The EU Research and Innovation programme, Horizon 2020, funds projects working on "increased resilience and sustainable reconstruction of historic areas to cope with climate change and hazard events". Find out more about Heritage at Risk: EU research and innovation for a more resilient cultural heritage.
5. European Parliament
6. Campaign against planned obsolescence
7. Short video: https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/video/planned-obsolescence-why-things-don-t-last_N01-PUB-170608-OBSO
8. [European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards](http://www.europeanheritageawards.eu) - www.europeanheritageawards.eu

Council of Europe

1. **Council of Europe Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP)**
Special file on climate change and sustainable development relating to culture, heritage and landscape - www.coe.int/en/web/cdcpp-committee/special-file-climate-change
2. **Bern Convention**
Council of Europe Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention

3. Emerald Network

Council of Europe ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/emerald-network

4. European Diploma for Protected Areas of the Council of Europe

Award for areas of exceptional importance for the preservation of biological, geological and landscape diversity and which are managed in an exemplary way
www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/european-diploma-for-protected-areas

5. European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe

Promotes the protection, management and planning of landscapes and organises international co-operation on landscape issues
www.coe.int/landscape

6. The Landscape Award of the Council of Europe

Raises awareness of the value of landscapes, of their role and of changes to them by acknowledging the importance of measures taken to improve landscapes for people's living conditions
www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/landscape-award

7. EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement

A Council of Europe platform for co-operation in the field of major natural disasters
www.coe.int/en/web/euoparisks/climate-change-impact

8. The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes

9. Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention)

www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention

10. European Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century

www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/strategy-21

11. Council of Europe Contribution to the United Nations 2030 agenda for sustainable development goals

www.coe.int/en/web/un-agenda-2030/home

United Nations

1. United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC)

<https://unfccc.int>

2. The Paris Agreement

www.un.org/en/climatechange/paris-agreement

3. The UN Sustainable Development Goals

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals

4. Culture: a Transformative Force for Sustainable Development

UN Sustainable Development Goals flyer

https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/sdg_moment_culture_in_the_vnrs_flyer_english.pdf

5. UN List of World Heritage in Danger

Designed to inform the international community of conditions which threaten the very characteristics for which a property was inscribed on the World Heritage List, and to encourage corrective action. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/danger>

6. UNESCO for Sustainable Cities

The UNESCO Cities Platform gathers 8 networks and programmes for a transversal approach to the Organization's work with cities towards implementing the 17 SDGs.

<https://en.unesco.org/unesco-for-sustainable-cities>

7. UNESCO

World Network of Biosphere Reserves. <https://en.unesco.org/biosphere>

8. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices

www.unwto.org/sustainable-development

Heritage Organisations and Civil Society

1. ICOMOS – Heritage Under Threat

ICOMOS produces national reports through its network of heritage professionals identifying heritage at risk and asking the public to get involved in its conservation and protection. <https://www.icomos.org/en/what-we-do/risk-preparedness>

2. Europa Nostra – The 7 Most Endangered Programme

The programme identifies endangered monuments and sites in Europe and mobilises public and private partners on a local, national and European level to find a viable future for these sites. <https://7mostendangered.eu>

3. Climate Heritage Network

www.climateheritage.org

4. Culture at COP

www.cultureatcop.com

5. The Sustainable Heritage Network

www.sustainableheritagenetwork.org

6. Sustainable tourism

<https://sustainabletourism.net>

7. Case studies on eco-friendly events

<https://juliesbicycle.com>

Co-funded projects

1. Creative Climate Leadership

Funded under the Creative Europe programme, this project helps artists and cultural professionals to explore the cultural dimensions of climate change. Artistic and cultural communities have a unique and critical role to play: they influence new ways of being, doing and thinking. Creative Climate Leadership supports cultural professionals to apply these qualities to problems related to climate challenge. Find out more at: www.creativeclimateleadership.com

2. HERACLES project

This project aims to design, validate and promote responsive solutions for the effective resilience of cultural heritage against climate change effects through a holistic, multidisciplinary approach. Find out more at: <http://www.heracles-project.eu>

3. Curating Tomorrow: Museums and the Sustainable Development Goals

<https://curatingtomorrow236646048.files.wordpress.com/2019/12/museums-and-the-sustainable-development-goals-2019.pdf>

4. ENCATC: The Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe project

<http://blogs.encatc.org/culturalheritagecountsforeurope/outcomes/>

5. Back from the Brink

A UK initiative which aims to save threatened species from extinction through conservation projects. Find out more at <https://naturebftb.co.uk/>

6. Rewilding Europe

<https://rewildingeurope.com>

7. Shelter project

The Shelter project brings together the scientific community and heritage managers to increase resilience, reduce vulnerability and to promote better and safer reconstruction in historic areas impacted by climate related hazards. <https://shelter-project.com>

8. Right to Repair

Sustainability campaign against planned obsolescence and e-waste. <https://repair.eu>



Recommended Reading

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BBC Ideas - Why soil is one of the most amazing things on Earth

Short Video: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/ideas/videos/why-soil-is-one-of-the-most-amazing-things-on-eart/p090cf64?playlist=amazing-animations>

BBC Ideas – The extraordinary power of poo

Short Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ID10R3kAHMQ>

BBC News - Climate change food calculator: What's your diet's carbon footprint?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-46459714>

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<https://zcomm.org/znetarticle/sustainability-growth-degrowth-and-debt-based-money-by-athanassios-boudalis/>

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Council of Europe, COMPASS Manual for Human Rights Education with Young people

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/environment>

Council of Europe. 2014. "European Landscape Convention: The Landscape Award Alliance of the Council of Europe." <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016802f2998>

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Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society Action Plan <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-action-plan>

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European Commission - Sustainable Development <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/>

European Commission, "Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030," European Commission Reflection Paper (January 2019) https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/rp_sustainable_europe_30-01_en_web.pdf

Europa Nostra - ICOMOS - Climate Heritage Network
European Cultural Heritage Green Paper "Putting Europe's shared heritage at the heart of the European Green Deal"
https://issuu.com/europanostra/docs/20210322-european_cultural_heritage_green_paper_fu

European Union. 2019. "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The European Council, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions: The European Green Deal." https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/european-green-deal-communication_en.pdf

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations <https://www.fao.org/sustainability/background/en/>

Foster, Gillian. 2020. "Circular economy strategies for adaptive reuse of cultural heritage buildings to reduce environmental impacts." *Elsevier: Resources, Conservation and Recycling* 152.

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability <https://iclei.org/>

ICOMOS - Heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals: Policy Guidance for Heritage and Development Actors https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Secretariat/2021/SDG/ICOMOS_SDGs_Policy_Guidance_2021.pdf

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) - Sustainable Events with ISO 20121 <https://www.iso.org/iso-20121-sustainable-events.html>

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<https://lfcg.co.uk>

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The European Heritage Strategy for the 21st century MOOC
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/st21-mooc>

UCLG: Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals, A Guide for Local Action
http://www.agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/culturesdgs_web_en.pdf

UCLG: good practices “OBS” on cities, culture and the SDGs: <http://www.obs.agenda21culture.net>

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UNESCO Moving Forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002477/247785e.pdf>

UNESCO: The Power of culture for development
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000189382>

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New Zealand Government, Ministry for the Environment: Greener events guide
<https://environment.govt.nz/publications/greener-events-guide-a-practical-guide-to-reducing-the-environmental-impact-of-your-event>

New Zealand Government, Ministry for the Environment: Major event greening guide
<https://environment.govt.nz/publications/major-event-greening-guide-a-practical-guide-to-reducing-the-environmental-impact-of-a-major-event>



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