Understanding Heritage: Multiple Meanings and Values

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Abstract

This research aims to explore the ways in which people understand and value heritage through a focus on the lay rather than the expert view. This focus was considered important in order to move beyond the emphasis on expert knowledge within heritage discourses and in turn, privilege lay understandings of heritage. This study adds to current knowledge by offering an in-depth understanding of the non-expert view of heritage and the multiple meanings and values that heritage represents within this context. The rationale for this research is based on the increasingly important role heritage plays within the wider visitor economy and the recognised interrelationships between heritage and tourism. In order to develop long-term, meaningful relationships with current and potential heritage audiences, there is a need to appreciate the ways in which people engage with heritage in a much broader sense and to understand the meanings and relevance that heritage may represent within this context.

In order to meet the aim of this research, an inductive qualitative methodology was designed which prioritises the emic or insider perspective of heritage. To further enhance the inductive nature of this study, the primary research took place away from a pre-defined '*heritage'* context in order to allow the participants themselves to define and shape heritage as they understand and value it. Eight focus groups were carried out with forty-seven members of the public and the data was analysed through a thematic framework. Nine themes and related sub-themes were constructed to represent the lay understandings, meanings and values of heritage. The social nature of the focus group method, along with the interaction it

fosters between participants, led to a range of insights about the relevance of heritage.

The majority of heritage research to date has taken place within a pre-defined heritage context, which inevitably limits the scope for accessing and understanding the views of those who do not typically engage with heritage in this way. Therefore, this study further contributes by incorporating the views of those who do not typically fall within heritage user or visitor categories. By exploring the views of the so called non-user or non-visitor of heritage the barriers that prevent engagement with 'heritage' and 'heritage tourism' as it is defined and presented by the industry are identified.

The implications of this study relate to the need for more engaging and personally relevant heritage narratives that build from an understanding of the meanings and values that shape engagement with heritage beyond a personal level. Heritage practitioners and academics need to embrace lay understandings of heritage within their activities and seek to empower current and potential audiences to critically engage with and actively interpret meanings from the heritage they present.

Table of Contents

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List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

AHD -	Authorised Heritage Discourse
CAQDAS -	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis
DCMS -	The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (UK Government)
ICOMOS -	International Council on Monuments and Sites
UNESCO -	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research aims to explore the ways in which heritage is understood and valued and seeks to add to current knowledge by focussing on the lay perspective rather than the expert view of heritage. To achieve this, the *emic* or insider perspective is prioritised in order to access and understand the multiple meanings and values that shape heritage for different people. The review of the literature (chapter 2) highlights that heritage is an ambiguous and complex concept and one that merits further research. This is particularly well illustrated by the ongoing pursuit of an appropriate definition of heritage by academics (Timothy and Boyd 2003; Ahmad 2006; Hewison and Holden 2006; Papayannis and Howard 2007; Smith 2006 & 2009; Vecco 2010) and also key stakeholders in the UK heritage sector including The National Trust (Cowell 2009), The Heritage Lottery Fund (Abramsky 2008), and central Government (Lammy 2005; DCMS 2011) to name a few. Indeed, Harrison (2012, p.x) has recognised that since the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, *'various crises of definition have significantly influenced the ways in which heritage is classified, perceived and managed in contemporary global societies'*. With the Convention now celebrating 40 years (UNESCO 2012) the debate continues and key stakeholders continue to discuss the need for appropriate definitions and frameworks that suit the needs of the industries and the communities that rely on heritage and its resources.

Despite the continuing efforts, the definition of heritage remains contested and there is a growing interest in 'bottom-up' research to better inform these

frameworks. In light of this, this research aims to contribute by exploring the views of people outside of academic and professional settings. Whether or not a finite or accepted definition of 'heritage' is achievable, it is important to explore what heritage means to people and its role in their lives.

The focus on the general or lay understanding of heritage is particularly relevant considering the significant role heritage continues to play within UK policy, principally in relation to Government Tourism Policy (Penrose 2011a) and funding strategies for the historic environment, museums and galleries, culture and the arts (DCMS 2011 & 2012). Furthermore, the DCMS and the Department for Education (2012) have jointly launched the 'Heritage Schools' initiative in response to an independent review of Cultural Education in England (Henley 2012). As part of this, the Department for Education has granted £2.7m in funding to English Heritage to implement the initiative for an initial 3 years (Atkinson 2012). With heritage being seen as a key issue within these contexts, it becomes important to gain an insight into how people understand and value heritage in their own terms, not least to ensure that such policies can be informed and shaped to be relevant, justifiable and ultimately more sustainable in a difficult economic environment.

To understand heritage and the issues surrounding its meanings and values, it becomes necessary to understand its background and roots. To address this, the review of the literature starts with a discussion about the nature of heritage, its complicated and often contested relationship with history and the ways in which heritage has been conceptualised and defined over time. Important themes that

arise from the literature review highlight the multiplicity of possible meanings and values that heritage represents for people. These themes shape and inform the decision to adopt a social constructionist, interpretivist and qualitative methodology for this study (see Chapter 3). This methodology is designed specifically to explore the emic perspective of heritage in order to prioritise participants own interpretations and local inside knowledge of the meanings relating to a given phenomenon (Pearce et al. 1996; Jennings and Weiler 2006). This is important given that an *'etic'* approach would be shaped largely by the constructs generated and designed by the researcher (Pearce et al. 1996, p.4) and as such would not fit with the overall aim of this study. To achieve the emic perspective, and to avoid imposing a particular typology upon participants, an open and inductive approach is embraced. To this end, focus groups were chosen in order to create an environment which encouraged open and free discussion between participants (Morgan 1988; Weeden 2005) to illuminate and explore the different ways in which heritage is thought about and understood. Participants were encouraged to define and discuss heritage and its meaning for them and this approach generated rich data in various forms. The groups actively constructed and explored their understanding of heritage within the focus groups through the use of descriptions, experiences, memories and by sharing stories and ideas. The analysis and interpretation of these data are presented in the discussion chapters (see Chapters 4, 5 & 6).

A particular consideration in the design of this study was the context of the primary research. As the literature review highlights, much heritage research has taken place within certain 'management' contexts, such as tourism, heritage

tourism and visitor attractions (Baldwin 1999; Poria et al. 2001 & 2006; Leask et al. 2002; Fyall et al. 2003; Timothy and Boyd 2003; Fisher 2006) and also heritage management and heritage resource management (Hall and McArthur 1998; Carter and Bramley 2002; Fairclough et al. 2008). This research aims to contribute to both bodies of literature through an understanding of how people think about, understand and value heritage in an everyday sense. In light of this, it was decided at an early stage that the primary research should not take place at a heritage visitor attraction, site or other 'heritage' setting. The reasons for this are threefold. Firstly, by avoiding a pre-defined 'heritage' setting, the inductive quality of the study is enhanced and the risk of leading or restricting the findings is reduced. For example, if the primary research took place at a museum, a castle or a historic garden - the possibilities being endless - the ensuing data may suggest that museums or castles or gardens are particularly important aspects of heritage. Furthermore, the participants may have been consciously or unconsciously constrained by the setting they were immersed in at the time of taking part.

Secondly, by choosing to conduct the primary research outside of a 'heritage' context, the expert view is further avoided. For example, heritage visitor attractions and sites are necessarily marketed to attract audiences in the first instance (Austin 2002; Neilson 2003; Misiura 2006) and once there, the setting is interpreted and presented to these audiences in many sophisticated ways (Tilden 1977; Uzzell 1988; Goulding 1999a; Timothy and Boyd 2003). Through these processes a whole array of messages and therefore meanings are communicated and thus, if the research took place in such a setting there would be no way of

knowing the extent to which expert or professional perspectives shaped the data collected.

Thirdly, this study seeks to include the views of those who may not fit into a heritage tourist or visitor category. By avoiding such restrictive categories when designing the research sample, this study can further contribute to knowledge by including those who may not currently visit or use 'heritage' sites or attractions and who may not necessarily define themselves as heritage visitors or tourists. This group is of interest to a range of stakeholders in terms of understanding the latent demand for heritage (Davies and Prentice 1995) or the non-visitor market (Urry 1996; Jewell and Crotts 2001). Timothy and Boyd (2003, p.282) suggest that much research has focussed on current demand for heritage and heritage tourism (looking at demographics, origins and motivations for example) rather than the *'unmet demand'* and the obstacles that may prevent or subdue any interest in visiting heritage sites. Furthermore, Bedate et al. (2004, p.102) recognise a *'non-use'* value of heritage whereby people value the future possibility of visiting, or an *'existence value'* whereby people may not personally visit heritage sites but value its existence in its own right or for the benefit of future generations. Therefore, to accommodate these distinctions and values, no filter was put in place to specifically sample heritage tourists, visitors or users and there was no pre-requisite knowledge or experience needed in order to participate.

This approach is also appropriate from a professional perspective when taking into account the types of activities that heritage organisations invest in in order to attract wider audiences. For example, English Heritage has previously used a

dedicated outreach team to build relationships with potential audiences and to appeal to those who do not typically engage with heritage (Levin 2009; Bloodworth and Levin 2011). Furthermore, The National Trust has recognised an increasing need to *'...embrace a far wider concept of what heritage is and why it matters to people'* (Cowell 2009). By focussing on the lay rather than the expert view and exploring the ways in which members of the general public think about and construct knowledge about heritage, and the multiple meanings and values heritage represents for them, this study aims to contribute to both academic and professional knowledge frameworks.

Rationale

From a personal perspective I have long been interested in heritage and have worked in the heritage and tourism sector in the past. As an Irish citizen who moved to the UK at the age of ten, I recognise that in some ways, heritage became a safe harbour in the face of unfamiliar surroundings and often served as a comfort zone growing up. Later, heritage and heritage tourism became a familiar working context. I spent five years working in the Irish World Heritage Centre in Manchester as part of a small travel and events department, organising functions for the local community to experience Irish heritage through various media including art, literature, music, dance and sport. I also spent several months at Shannon Heritage in Ireland, gaining experience at three different heritage tourism attractions; Bunratty Castle and Folk Park and Craggaunowen both in Co. Clare and King John's Castle in Limerick. As part of this experience I enjoyed giving educational talks to schoolchildren and guided tours to international visitors. However despite my genuine professional interest in heritage, I was never a

frequent visitor to heritage attractions or sites and often wondered what it was that people gained from their experiences. Without knowing it, I had become an observer of those visiting the heritage places I was working in and enjoyed talking to them about their experiences.

When I started university, I chose a specialist degree route combining tourism management and heritage management and quickly realised my passion for both subjects. I also realised how the two different schools (business and history) viewed the other with a degree of antipathy and found this particularly interesting. Furthermore, the heritage management literature often treated tourism as a somewhat dirty word and as a barrier to conservation and/or meaningful interpretation, whilst the tourism literature seemed to view conservation and interpretation as a means to an end when creating more attractive, sustainable tourist destinations. I was interested and open to both perspectives and in this research drew on both bodies of literature when exploring the meaning of heritage as both share a concern for what drives people to take an interest in heritage and its related sites and attractions. Finally, my current research interests are rooted in my undergraduate dissertation which focussed on cultural differences in the perception of heritage. Whilst this was a very small study, it signifies the start of my research journey and solidified my interest in the ways in which people understand and value heritage.

From a tourism perspective, the UK is renowned for its rich historic environment and diverse cultural heritage, and together these form a significant part of its tourism industry. Visits to heritage related places are increasingly popular with

both domestic and inbound tourists. Furthermore, John Penrose (2011b), Minister for Tourism and Heritage states that eight out of every ten people visiting the UK from overseas cite cultural or heritage attractions as the main purpose of their trip, spending some £4.3 billion in GDP each year and creating employment for thousands of people. Indeed, of the five criteria used for tourists to rank the destination, the '*UK only really shines on one of the top five; culture and heritage*' (Penrose 2011a, p.51). It is also interesting to note that many of the twelve different visitor attraction categories used by Visit England (Mills 2011) can be judged to have a heritage dimension, for example museums/art galleries, historic houses and castles, visitor/heritage centres, steam/heritage railways and other historic properties. Whilst this is a partial snapshot, it serves to demonstrate that heritage crosses a wide range of tourism and leisure activities in the UK and is integral to its destination image. Furthermore, the Minister for Tourism and Heritage recognises a symbiotic relationship between tourism and heritage, suggesting that heritage is important not just to inbound tourists but also to domestic tourists and to local residents:

> '*...tourism provides something extra which few other industries can offer: an opportunity to showcase our country's great heritage and national assets in a way which doesn't just delight our visitors but also improves our everyday quality of life. It's not just that a good place to visit is usually a great place to live – although that's often true – but that, if we live somewhere which is beautiful and impressive, and which the rest of the world wants to visit, it gives us something to be proud of too*' (Penrose 2011a, p.14).

This theme of quality of life is one that the DCMS has focussed on for a number of years and builds on the premise that heritage and the historic environment

should be harnessed as a *'Force for our Future'* (DCMS 2001). The Draft Heritage Protection Bill (DCMS 2008, p.7) which was largely well received by key stakeholders sought to *'improve the quality of life for all…'* and to *'unify heritage protection regimes, allow greater public involvement in decisions, and place heritage at the heart of the planning system'*. This legislation recognised a need for public consultation and the development of policies sensitive to the needs of the heritage sector, including those relating to conservation and access. Whilst the Bill was never passed into law, the current government rhetoric remains focussed on the importance of heritage and the key role heritage is to play in tourism, culture, the arts and education. Furthermore, despite funding cuts, heritage remains a core investment for the DCMS and over £700 million was allocated to various aspects of the heritage sector in 2011 - 2012, including organisations such as English Heritage and a wide range of museums and galleries (see Figure 1.1).

The heritage sector itself has been criticised in the past for not doing enough to resonate with audiences. The assistant director of external affairs at The National Trust has suggested that the *'relentless focus purely on visits and visitor numbers does not, in my view, tend to encourage a broader and deeper understanding of what heritage can mean to people'* (Cowell 2009). An article published by The Guardian Newspaper condemned the National Trust for having *'airbrushed the poor from history'* and for continuously presenting a sanitised *'tea-towel heritage'* (Monbiot 2009 cited Cowell 2009). These criticisms are not new: English Heritage dedicated a conference in 2009 to the idea of participation in heritage, and urged delegates to *'go out and listen to what people want'* in order to better understand potential heritage audiences (Ghosh 2009).

Notes:
- Indicative allocations only
- £m figures show total expenditure *of which*
  - Solid colour – resource spending
  - Hashed shading – capital
  - Vertical shading – PFI schemes

Arts £389m (of which £388m is ACE)

Other Media (inc. BIS) £118m

British Film Institute £20m

S4C £90m

Media £228m

Other Sport £20m

UK Sport £60m

Sport £176m

Sport England £95m

Admin (inc. Research) £51m

Visit Britain £36m

Departmental Total £1,656m

The Royal Parks Agency £16m

Heritage £166m

English Heritage £115m

Royal Household £15m

Other Heritage £21m

Other (inc. Ceremonials; Broadband) £70m

Regional Funds (Renaissance) £46m

National Museum of Science & Industry £38m

British Library £107m

Museums and Galleries £540m

Other Museums £173m

British Museum £54m

Tate Gallery £35m

Natural History Museum £46m

Victoria & Albert Museum £41m

Figure 1.1: DCMS Planned Expenditure 2011 – 2012

Source: DCMS (2011)

Finally, from an academic viewpoint, this research seeks to contribute to a number of areas raised by the literature review. The ongoing debate over the definition of heritage provides a rationale for research that explores heritage from an inductive, emic perspective. Timothy and Boyd (2003) propose that an agreed definition would simplify the concept of heritage and the issues surrounding it, as the lack of a clear frame of reference is stifling potential within both academic and practical settings. This is supported by Ahmad (2006) who suggests that issues of definition have universal significance in terms of international heritage institutions and their conventions, charters and objectives. Similarly, Catsadorakis (2007, p.309) identifies the *'intrinsic difficulties'*, brought about by the different professional

perceptions of heritage, which are particularly problematic in international settings. An appropriate definition of heritage is therefore desired within the community and warrants further research to inform academic and practical frameworks. A particular challenge relating to this desire is that the significance of heritage is often viewed differently from different disciplines and scholarly perspectives:

> *'The intrinsic values once thought to reside almost within the stonework of historic buildings are now more often regarded as cultural values imposed upon the building by scholars, and that others from other disciplines or other perspectives impose quite different sets of values on the same piece of heritage'* (Papayannis and Howard 2007, p.299).

Values emerge as a clear and important theme; they are thought to shape perceptions of heritage for individuals in unique ways (Howard 2003). Considering this, it is clear that there is a multiplicity of possible meanings that heritage may represent for different people. Furthermore, heritage may represent a *'multiplicity of values'* (Chung 2009, p.129) and understanding what these values are and how they are constructed would further current knowledge about heritage. In light of these ideas and the aim of this research, it is useful to conceptualise heritage as *'not so much a thing as a set of values and meanings'* (Smith 2006, p.11) and this represents a useful framework from which to understand heritage and so informs the design of this research. In particular, it may be that the ways in which people understand heritage and the meanings and values it represents for them may not necessarily fall into a tourism or other action based typology. As such, this further justifies the context of this study taking place away from a pre-defined 'heritage' place such as a visitor attraction or heritage site. By giving

participants scope to explore and construct their own understanding of heritage, the nuances, meanings and values gained from this can then be applied to the relevant tourism or management context, as opposed to the context directing or influencing the data at the outset.

One important implication of this approach is that, if heritage is understood as a representation of multiple meanings and values, then it stands to reason that people will understand and relate to heritage in unique ways. Therefore any subsequent engagement with heritage, for example in the sense of participating in heritage through visiting heritage places, sites or attractions, may be shaped by quite subtle, perhaps unconscious ideas. As such, this research takes an inductive approach in order to remain sensitive to these subtleties and to the various forms of engagement as they become known during the research process. This approach seeks to contribute to the call for research that *'develop[s] a narrative for the value of heritage to modern life'* in order to help communicate the relevance of heritage outside of specialist groups (Abramsky 2008, p.4). By exploring the range of possible meanings and values that heritage may represent for people, this research can contribute to the knowledge of both heritage management and tourism management literature.

Research Aim and Objectives

This research aims to explore the ways in which people understand and value heritage through a focus on the lay rather than the expert view. To achieve this, the *emic* or insider perspective is given priority in order to access and understand the multiple meanings and values that shape heritage for different people.

Objectives:

1. To engage in a dialogue with the literature to further understand the nature, context and definitions of heritage.

2. To explore through inductive research the ways in which lay people understand heritage and the range of meanings and values that shape the emic view of heritage.

3. To understand the ways in which people engage with heritage and the relevance it holds for them in their everyday lives and whether/how this translates into engagement in heritage tourism activities.

4. To contribute to current knowledge as to the meanings and values of heritage through an understanding of the lay perspective and to make recommendations as to how key stakeholders can best engage audiences by offering insights into the multiple meanings and values that underpin and define heritage.

The Structure of the Thesis

The following chapter is dedicated to a review of the literature (chapter 2). Chapter 3 provides an extended discussion and justification for the research design and methodology. Chapters 4, 5 & 6 present and discuss the thematic and sub-thematic framework developed through the analysis and interpretation of the focus group data. The conclusion is in chapter 7 presents the key findings and contributions of the study, including implications for practice and theory, alongside recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter reviews the background literature relating to this study in order to connect the *'...research topic to the directly relevant concerns of the broader research community'* (Silverman 2000, p.231). In doing so, this chapter serves to set a context for the study and to provide an *'overall orientating lens'* through which the research can be viewed and understood (Creswell 2009, p.62). As it is not possible to know in advance what *'salient problems or relevant concepts'* may arise from the data collected (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.35), further literature will be brought in throughout the discussion chapters in order to interpret and explore the emergent themes. This approach is the norm in qualitative research, where the data direct an ongoing review of the literature (Jones et al. 2012). Therefore the role of the literature in this study is twofold. In this chapter, the literature is used to contextualise and position the study, whilst in the discussion chapters it is used to interpret and theorise about the meanings and values that shape heritage for the participants.

Furthermore, this chapter seeks to contribute to the first objective of this study:

> To engage in a dialogue with the literature to further understand the nature, context and definitions of heritage.

In doing so, this chapter draws on key literature from a number of perspectives including heritage management, tourism management, heritage studies and public policy. As a starting point, this chapter includes a discussion of the nature of

heritage and its complex relationship with history. It then explores the wider context and relevance of heritage, particularly focussing on the role and importance of heritage to tourism. The literature review highlights a growing interest in 'bottom up' research that explores the multiple meanings and values that shape heritage. This chapter concludes with a brief discussion as to how the literature review informs the research design and methodology.

The Nature of Heritage

To begin to understand heritage and the issues surrounding its meanings and values, it becomes necessary to understand its background and roots. Whilst a discussion of the nature of heritage may potentially commence from a number of perspectives, such as culture, the arts, tourism and so on, this chapter begins with history, for both history and heritage are intrinsically linked in that both are, in effect, a representation or interpretation of a version of the past. Therefore, the following section discusses the relationship between history and heritage, serving to illustrate the highly selective and interpretive nature of heritage.

A Brief Critique of the Idea of History

The philosopher Benedetto Croce suggested that *'in its eternal essence, history is the story of the human mind and its ideals, in so far as they express themselves in theories and in works of art, in practical and moral actions'* (Croce 1933, p.230). Viewing history as inextricably linked to present day society, Croce considered *all* history to be contemporary and comprising of *'contemporary thoughts of the past'* (ibid). This understanding of history is one that developed over a considerable amount of time and was not always accepted as such. Beard (1934) deconstructs

the notion of *'history as thought'* through his analysis of theoretical approaches to, and academic thinking about, history over time. Recognising that once history is written, recorded and passed on, it is no longer, and can no longer be, a record of what *actually* happened. Rather it is a biased and framed version of the past that the historian selects to write about:

> *'...it is history as thought, not as actuality, record, or specific knowledge, that is really meant when the term history is used... it is thought about past actuality, instructed and delimited by history as record and knowledge... authenticated by criticism and ordered with the help of the scientific method. This is the final, positive, inescapable definition. It contains all the exactness that is possible and all the bewildering problems inherent in the nature of thought and the relation of the thinker to the thing being thought about'* (ibid 1934, p.219).

This definition presents numerous implications in terms of the nature and validity of history, recognising that if history is a record of *'thoughts'*, then the source and context of these thoughts create further philosophical dimensions to consider when evaluating history. This raises questions about the very idea of history and its legitimacy (Collingwood 1961). Writing from the dual perspective of history and philosophy, Collingwood denounced any history derived from *'unqualified witnesses'*, suggesting that in order to answer fundamental questions such as *'what history is, what it is about, how it proceeds, and what it is for'*, it is necessary to scrutinise what is presented as history, recognising that different people would likely answer the questions in different ways (ibid p.7). Furthermore, Collingwood proposed two qualifying criteria for the role of historian; first that the claimant is experienced in the *'kind of thought'* necessary, rather than the superficial experience of thinking gained

through education/opinion and second, that this historical thinking derive from continuous reflection, both of the thoughts themselves and the experiences that have shaped them (1961, p.7). In short, this calls for a historian to be reflexive, and it is this reflexivity that qualifies their work as 'history'. Interestingly, this echoes the need for reflexivity in qualitative research, whereby the researcher must recognise the active role they play in shaping their study (Rossman and Rallis 2012). Therefore there are parallels between the discussion here as to the nature of history and the discussion in the methodology surrounding reflexivity and the nature of qualitative research.

A different approach calls on the reader of history to evaluate and critique the proffered material. In the first few lines of *'Use and Abuse of History'*, Geyl (1955, p.1) outlines his unique perspective and resulting biases but then passes the challenge to the audience:

> *'In what follows I write not as a philosopher but as a historian... I shall not feel compelled to analyse all my assumptions... I shall argue from my own experience and look at problems as they have presented themselves to me...'*

Whilst somewhat counter to Collingwood's notion of continuous reflexivity, this quotation reveals that Geyl is aware of, and an advocator of, understanding history as *an interpretation*. Therefore, Croce, Beard, Collingwood and Geyl can be seen to have converging views as to the nature and legitimacy of historical representations. If this is accepted, then the validity of any historical account can (and perhaps should) be questioned through the level of authority the *reader* affords the writer. From the outset, Geyl makes explicit the types of knowledge

claims presented and the reader understands the content as such. However not all historical texts or records are as transparent, and the popular understanding of history as representing the facts of the past remains largely unquestioned, particularly by non-specialist audiences. This is particularly significant considering that many people are introduced to history in the classroom at a young age, as many countries include history within their curriculum at various stages, with common activities such as learning about key dates, people and events through the use of selected history books. Therefore, the teaching of history in the school curriculum may not instil a questioning or evaluative approach to the material. Carr (1961, p.16) recognises the paradox that *'the belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian is a preposterous fallacy, but one that is very hard to eradicate'*. Rather than the relentless focus on *'historical facts'* we should instead view all history as contemporary, as a *'view of the past through the eyes of the present'*, embracing rather than ignoring the evaluative judgments that inevitably shape history (ibid p.21). Whilst Collingwood and others highlight the limitations of history due to the influences of such bias, Carr suggests that it is a writer's very ability to illuminate the past by drawing relevant parallels from the present, which produces the greatest results. This moves beyond the earlier view of historian as expert witness and proposes instead that history is inherently shaped by the values of those who engage with it:

> *'When we seek to know the facts, the questions which we ask, and therefore the answers which we obtain, are prompted by our system of values. Our picture, of the facts of our environment, is moulded by our values… Values enter into the facts and are an essential part of them. Our*

values are an essential part of our equipment as human beings…' (Carr 1961, p.132).

The central role of values in the construction of history may relate to the idea that different people might each write a different version of history (Collingwood 1961), and this translates easily to the idea that each reader would also take away different meanings from the history they read. Their values would shape both questions and answers. Furthermore, warning against a *'false separation between facts and values'*, Carr proposes the notion of *truth* as a more appropriate platform from which to understand meaning in history. For Carr, truth is neither merely fact nor value judgement, but relevant to and composed of both. He states that somewhere between the *'valueless facts'* and the *'value judgements still struggling to transform themselves into facts - lies the realm of historical truth'* (ibid p.132). Despite this intention, the paradox remains, and whilst it is generally accepted that history is constructed by the historian, *'we still see the historians trying to raise before us the spectre of the real past, an objective past about which their accounts are accurate and even true'* (Jenkins 1991, p.12). Suggesting that for many, history represents the facts and historians are seen as an authority on what actually happened in the past. However, whilst there may be one past, there may well be many histories (Jenkins 1991) and therefore a critical audience should be encouraged to ask questions in much the same way as Geyl (1955) invites his audience to evaluate his version of history. History, rather than being simply accepted as a valid account, should be actively questioned and evaluated by those encountering it (ibid). It is up to the reader to determine what value they wish to take away from the various historical narratives.

This discussion serves as a brief critique and an introduction to the nature of history and its implications for heritage. The following characteristics of history are considered to form the underpinning framework from which to understand heritage:

- History is a selected, framed and interpreted reference to *a* past influenced by the historians' unique situation, background, values and motives.

- The validity and relevance of history is influenced by different historians' varying skill, experience and unique agenda.

- The reader/audience plays a key role in the appraisal of history, in turn interpreting and selecting a framed understanding of the past influenced by their values and experience in much the same way.

- History is a contemporary and value-laden interpretation of the past for the present.

By understanding that all history is a contemporary *interpretation* of the past, shaped by the *values* of each writer or reader that engages with it, history can also be understood as an evolving social construction that serves a purpose for those who seek to understand more about the past. This lays a foundation from which to explore the complex nature of heritage and its contested relationship with history. History can be seen to have an *'epistemological fragility'* that accounts for the varied attempts made to represent the past (Jenkins 1991, p.13) and it is suggested here that heritage has a similar vulnerability. Whilst it is largely accepted that the historical 'record' is one comprised of countless different, selected and value-laden interpretations of the past, similar concerns are evident within the debate about heritage.

From History to Heritage

Heritage has been subject to numerous criticisms in the academic literature, with heritage being viewed as a manipulation or misuse of the past for present ventures. Heritage has been branded as a *'bogus history'* that uncritically polishes, reselects and rewrites history to suit contemporary needs (Hewison 1987, p.143). Hewison criticised the emerging *'heritage industry'* for stifling both history and economic growth and for lacking *'a critical culture that engages in a dialogue between the past and the present'* (ibid p.144). The notion of heritage as a *'bogus history'* is one that can be further understood through the deconstruction of heritage and its relationship with history (Lowenthal 1998, p.x). Whilst the criticisms which are often levelled at heritage by academics, i.e. that it is *'false, deceitful, sleazy, presentist, chauvinist and self-serving'*, can be seen to have some merit, these are founded on the mistaken assumption that heritage is *'bad'* history (ibid).

Lowenthal challenges these assumptions and presents history as a heritage in itself, proposing that a historian's perspective is influenced to some extent by *'heritage bias'* and that no heritage is wholly false as it holds some relation to historical reality. Whether it is real or fake, it still means something and these meanings are important. *'Just as yesterday's heritage becomes today's history, so we in turn embrace as heritage what our precursors took as history'* (ibid). The relationship between history and heritage thus intertwines over time, as both continually evolve and change. Additionally, Lowenthal (1998, p.x) stipulates that instead of the *'bad history'* thesis, heritage should not be seen as history at all. Whilst heritage adopts from and enlivens aspects of history, it is more a

celebration of the past that is *'...tailored to present-day purposes'* (ibid). This view suggests a clear distinction between history and heritage, and positions heritage as a separate entity, albeit underpinned and shaped by history and its resources. Heritage is necessarily drawn from history, as the past itself is an absent subject only available through the constructions of the historian (Jenkins 1991).

Another attempt to further distinguish between history and heritage takes the view that *'history is what a historian regards as worth recording and heritage is what contemporary society chooses to inherit and pass on'* (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, p.6). This suggests that the issues of bias and selectivity identified as intrinsic to the nature of history are also implicitly relevant to the notion of heritage. The idea of 'worth' and the choices that people and society make are necessarily shaped by the values of those making the decisions. A similar view is that of history as a *'scholarly activity'* that *'produces knowledge about the past'* as opposed to heritage which is a *'means of consumption of that knowledge'* (Sant Cassia 1999, p.247). This understanding does not however recognise the limitations of history and may oversimplify the underlying interrelationships between the two concepts. Whilst recognising that both history and heritage have *'similar and overlapping social bases'* from which to celebrate the past (ibid p.260), this positioning of history as the producer of *'knowledge'* relates more to the old paradigm of history as a record rather than as an interpretation of the past. Whilst heritage is viewed as a poor relation of history in this context, it may be that the selection of heritage by many, may be a fairer or certainly a more revealing representation of the past, and indeed the present, than history with its

evaluative judgements made by relatively few. If this view is accepted, a key difference between the nature and validity of history and heritage, may be rooted within the question 'who decides' and furthermore, what values shape the decisions to select, interpret and present heritage. Figure 2.1 illustrates some of these dimensions in recognising that history provides the resources upon which heritage tourism and other *'high order economic activities'* rely, with history being *'transformed into heritage'* through a process of commodification (Ashworth 1994, p.17).
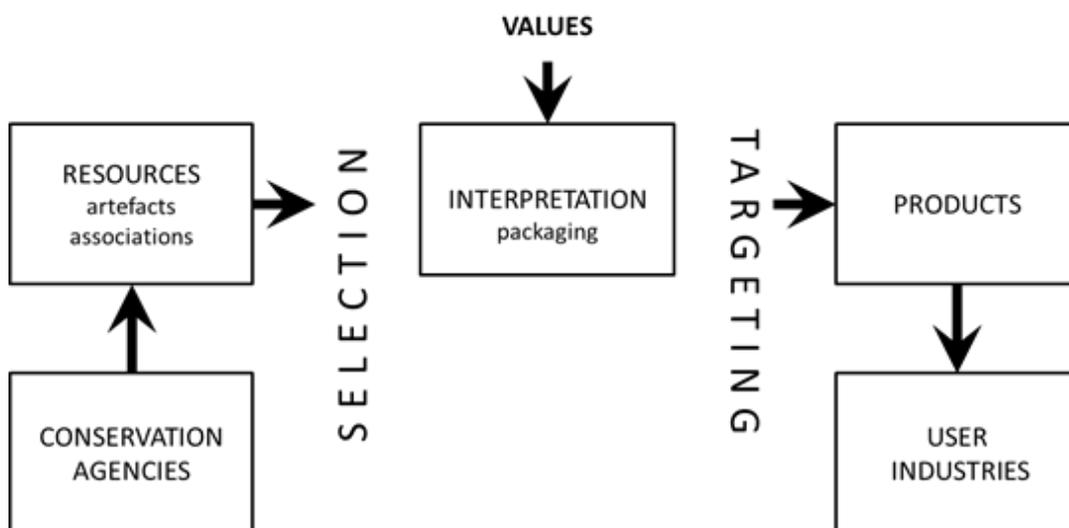
Figure 2.1: Components of the Heritage Industry

Source: Ashworth (1994, p.17)

The above model suggests that values play a central role in the interpretation of heritage resources, with the heritage 'product' being the result of this value-laden process. Considering the previous discussion surrounding the nature of history, it could be suggested that the values element of the model should also be directed at

the earlier stages of the process. This would reflect the role values play in the selection and interpretation of the initial resources. Thus the process of selection and interpretation imbues further values at the level of transforming history into heritage. Therefore it is evident that whilst there are layers of different values that shape the heritage that is available to consumers, the heritage industry's presentation of the past may be no more *'misleading'* or flawed than other understandings of the past gained through media, often deemed more worthy, such as biographies and historical novels (Urry 1990, p.112). Furthermore, Johnson proposes that heritage tourism and its particular *'framing of history'* has a valid role to play in understanding the past and does not simply present a *'sanitised or bogus version'* of history (Johnson 1996, p.555). Additionally, whilst heritage is widely understood as an imperfect representation of history, Timothy and Boyd (2003) assert that the historical narrative itself is limited and does not represent a complete record of the past. A particular difficulty arises however when recognising that *'it is not at all clear just what understanding of history most people have'* (Urry 1990, p.112). Despite the fact that history and heritage are defined as largely separate or even as being *'antithetical'* in nature they are often used interchangeably and *'are habitually confused with each other'* (Lowenthal 1998, p.x). This highlights the ambiguity of both concepts, and suggests that while specialist audiences and academics may be at ease with the distinctions, other audiences may not explicitly understand or consciously think about the nuances.

This raises a number of issues for heritage research, not least in terms of ascertaining what people are referring to when discussing such concepts. There is

no real understanding of what people outside the academic or professional context might understand by 'heritage'. Indeed it is clear that even within academic circles there is little consensus relating to the term. What is clear is that both history and heritage are shaped by and are a product of contemporary values. As such the *'epistemological fragility'* of history (Jenkins 1991, p.13) also applies to heritage in that we cannot 'know' the past; the past is absent and inaccessible. This conclusion lends weight to the rationale for research that explores the ways in which people understand and value heritage as *they* view it.

> *'Critiques of the heritage industry have often revolved around the idea that its visitors can only experience a false representation of history. Although valuable in many ways, such an approach does not explore the full complexity of these experiences'* (Breathnach 2006, p.100).

This suggests that there is merit in exploring what the consumer of heritage gains from their experiences rather than focussing on the expert or professional view. Breathnach (2006) recognises that the experience of heritage is a rich and complex one which cannot be simplified or reduced into a 'false' interaction. Therefore, this thesis seeks to explore some of the complexities of heritage by moving beyond the critique of heritage as a 'bad history' or as a false representation of the past, focusing instead on the ways in which people understand and value heritage and the meanings it represents for them and their lives.

Furthermore, the characteristics highlighted in the discussion surrounding the nature of history, may well be equally relevant to the nature of heritage:

- Heritage is a selected, framed and interpreted reference to *a* past, one that is influenced by the context in which it is presented and the unique situation, background, values and motives of those who present it (i.e. those who work at heritage sites and attractions) and the reasons why it is being presented.

- The validity and relevance of heritage is influenced by different stakeholders' varying skill, experience and unique agenda.

- The audience/visitor/consumer of heritage plays a key role in the appraisal of heritage, in turn interpreting and selecting a framed understanding of the past that is influenced by their values and experiences in much the same way as it is shaped by those who present it.

- Heritage, like history, is a contemporary and value-laden interpretation of the past for the present.

The Interpretive Nature of Heritage

As the previous discussion highlights, the nature of heritage is highly interpretive and is shaped by numerous value-laden decisions and selections throughout the process. Viewing heritage at different 'levels' may serve to clarify the interpretive nature of heritage. It is suggested that there are four preliminary levels that can be identified from the discussion so far and which are classified here as:

- *The Inception Level* – whereby heritage comes into being, primarily from the resource base of history.

- *The Interpretive Level* – recognising the subjective, interpretive nature of all 'heritage' and also the interpretation tools used within heritage management.

- *The Consumption Level* – whereby heritage presented as a 'product', 'attraction' or 'site' is experienced or engaged with by the heritage tourist or visitor.

- *The Non-Consumption Level* – recognising those individuals and groups who do not consciously seek out or interact with aspects of 'heritage'. Who may not view themselves as heritage tourists or visitors but may engage with heritage, as they view it, in different ways.

Within these levels, it is important to distinguish between the different 'people' and their role in relation to heritage. For example, it stands to reason that an academic, a manager, a conservationist, a curator and a member of the public, would all have differing views, levels of knowledge, values and interests relating to heritage, therefore the heritage that is experienced at each level will be different for each of the stakeholders. (See appendix A for further description of each level).

Each level can be seen to have social and political influences, demand-led factors and numerous differing personal values and interpretations and therefore understandings of heritage. A question relevant to all these levels relates to how such values and interpretations may influence different levels of engagement with heritage. The first two levels are largely decided upon by a minority of experts or professionals whose values and interpretations determine what is selected and made available to the public. Therefore, there is a rationale for research that examines how non-experts value heritage in order to ensure that heritage is relevant and meaningful. Furthermore, by understanding how the public understands and values heritage, the ambiguous nature of heritage and its scope and definition may be further illuminated.

It can be suggested that heritage is largely the product of individually and socially driven value-laden judgements, which affect all stages of its development, from inception to consumption. Heritage may also be viewed as a cyclical process, with each facet having direct and indirect influences on the meaning that *is* and importantly *can be* derived from heritage and its resources. Research that explores how heritage is understood by non-experts or professionals and the meaning heritage represents for people as they understand it would add to the current understanding of heritage.

What is Heritage – A Defining Problem

Whilst this study is concerned with the lay perspective of heritage and exploring the general or non-expert understanding of heritage, this section discusses some of the problems surrounding the definition of heritage from an academic and industry perspective in order to further justify and underpin the focus adopted in this research.

Whilst heritage, after history, is accepted as a framed interpretation of *a* past, its precise terms of reference remain ambiguous. This is well illustrated by the ongoing pursuit of an appropriate definition and theoretical foundation of heritage. This debate has spanned the decades since the adoption of the World Heritage Convention (Harrison 2012) which was first ratified 40 years ago in 1972 (UNESCO 2012). Furthermore, the lack of a widely accepted definition has had much influence on the literature over this time, and the heritage debate has been beset with statements that betray tensions relating to this problem: *'once it is appreciated how many things there are to which the word 'heritage' is attached…*

the word becomes absurd' (Hewison 1987, p.11), and similarly, *'so widespread and fast growing is such concern that heritage defies definition'* (Lowenthal 1991, p.7). These concerns are echoed in the introduction to a book on the construction of heritage: *'I shall not be offering a definition of the term, since its use has become extremely various and vague'* (Brett 1996, p.1). Meanwhile Edson (2004, p.333) asks with some resonance, '*what is heritage?'* whilst simultaneously discussing its significance and the accepted need to protect its resources. Such frustrations are evident throughout the heritage literature, arguably serving to fuel the debate among academics as to the nature of heritage.

Early discontent related to the perceived shortcomings of traditional dictionary definitions of heritage; such as *'that which is inherited, one's inherited lot, the condition of one's birth, anything transmitted from ancestors or past ages'* which was judged to be both deceptive and inadequate for a concept taking on wider relevance and meaning over time (Hewison 1989, p.15). Revised dictionary definitions made some move towards reconciling these limitations, with heritage being defined as *'valued objects and qualities, historic buildings and cultural traditions... things of architectural, historical or natural value...'* (The Oxford Dictionary of English 2005). However, these dictionary definitions, along with others of varying degrees of specificity, fail to convey the highly contextualised and subjective forces that shape the meaning of heritage in modern society. Whilst the essence of these definitions is generally not disputed, the pursuit of a comprehensive and applicable definition for academic and practical purposes is one of primary concern, with continual debate as to what constitutes heritage and its wider connotations.

Such a definition, one that communicates the nature of heritage and its diverse agenda, is seen by some as the antidote for what has become a well-established discourse within 'the heritage debate'. However, one criticism of the heritage literature is that is even if it *were possible to draw exact parameters around an acceptable, workable definition, interpretation of that thereby encompassed would still be subjective'* (Wheeller 2009, p.84). Wheeller suggests that too much time is being spent on academic debate and *'definitional niceties'* in the tourism literature with heritage being a prime example (ibid). Despite this critique, the widespread and varying use of the term 'heritage' and its elusive definition can be judged to have had an adverse effect upon academic cohesion, as authors continually frame and justify their own terms of reference for their work. This in turn affects the consistency, transparency and transferability of new knowledge and understandings gained through heritage research within various disciplines.

The Problem of Definitions within Heritage Tourism

The lack of consensus on the precise meaning of heritage also applies to the context of heritage tourism. Calls for clarity in relation to the use of the term 'heritage tourism' have added to the ongoing debate surrounding appropriate definitions for this area of tourism study (Yale 1991; Apostolakis 2003; McLean 2005). Referring specifically to the heritage tourism phenomenon, Jamal and Kim (2005, p.60) view the lack of critical discussion between the different heritage and tourism bodies of literature, as a barrier to establishing *'integrated frameworks'* from which to advance. They suggest that *'existing definitions, descriptions and understandings'* be revisited in order to close the gap in current knowledge and create opportunities for *'greater interdisciplinary exploration'* (ibid). Such

interdisciplinary work is hindered by the fact that heritage is viewed differently from different disciplines and scholarly perspectives (Papayannis and Howard 2007). These challenges highlight that there is ongoing interest in an appropriate definition, and that the debate has value for the academic endeavour of understanding heritage.

Garrod and Fyall (2001, p.1051) propose that lengthy definitional debates are somewhat counter-productive and that *'the real danger in concentrating on definitions is that one rarely transcends rhetoric'*. Conversely, others maintain that the lack of a clear frame of reference is stifling potential within both academic and practical settings and that an agreed definition would simplify the concept of heritage and the issues surrounding it (Timothy and Boyd 2003). One cause of the conflict evident in the literature (see Garrod and Fyall 2000 & 2001 and Poria et al. 2001) may lie in the suggestion that *'heritage'* is being used to denote two different phenomena (Timothy and Boyd 2003). Firstly, *'heritage'* is used as a positive reference to heritage as landscape, culture and so on and secondly, as a reference to the '*The Heritage Industry*' with its underlying negative associations (ibid). Furthermore, Timothy and Boyd (2003, p.5) suggest that terms such as *'cultural tourism'*, *'heritage tourism'*, *'ethnic tourism'* and *'arts tourism'* are used almost interchangeably *'with limited consensus regarding whether or not people are talking about the same thing'*. They highlight that there is little understanding as to whether or not such terms, widely in use in the literature and often assumed to be accepted and familiar frameworks, hold the same meaning for the different stakeholders.

To add to the nuances in definitions, Weaver (2011) coins the term *'tourism heritage'* to reflect heritage that uses tourism as its foundation, such as *'tourism related museums'* or the contemporary tourism heritage being consumed by heritage tourists travelling along *'Route 66'*. The distinction is further broken into four types of tourism heritage and yet this raises the question – where does it end - will there be a need for a heritage of heritage tourism? Will there need to be a different definition for every different type of tourism that draws from an element of heritage? This remains to be judged, particularly since the nuances may become more and more academic and closer to *'definitional nicety'* (Wheeller 2009) rather than a genuine advancement of our understanding of heritage tourism.

Within this context, further conflict arises from the question as to which tourists can legitimately be described as *'heritage tourists'* (Poria et al. 2003) and what components must be in place in order to classify a place as a *'heritage site'* (Garden 2006). These questions result in much debate amongst academics. Garrod and Fyall (2000 & 2001) and Poria et al. (2001 & 2003) for example, have diverging views over the appropriate use of terms such as *'heritage tourism'* and *'historic tourism'*. These authors concede however, that the definitions that exist within the literature remain flawed despite numerous attempts to rectify ambiguities. Garrod and Fyall (2001) question whether a universally accepted definition of heritage is necessary in order to progress current understanding: would such a definition ultimately be valuable to those involved in managing heritage and heritage tourism resources?

The Relevance of Definitions for Heritage Management

Whilst the different definitions within the heritage and heritage tourism literature cause difficulties from an academic perspective, there is sustained evidence that appropriate definitions are also of interest for professional practice. Catsadorakis (2007, p.308) highlights a particular management problem arising from the fact that terms commonly used within heritage literature, such as *'natural heritage'* and *'cultural heritage'* need to be *'more carefully defined'*, as the differing perceptions of heritage can cause confusion within decision-making processes. Furthermore, cross-cultural and national differences in the way heritage, and in particular natural heritage, is viewed, intensify this disparity from a management perspective (ibid). For Catsadorakis (2007, p.309), the *'intrinsic difficulties'*, in the differing perceptions of heritage are particularly problematic in international settings, with natural heritage for example, being impossible to divorce in a European context from cultural heritage. Such interrelationships further complicate the definitional debate. Ahmad (2006, p.292) suggests that issues of definition have universal significance in terms of international heritage institutions and their conventions, charters and objectives.

In a review of the scope and definition of heritage, and how the term is adopted and utilised by international organisations such as UNESCO and ICOMOS and charters such as the Venice Charter, 1964 and the World Heritage Convention, 1972, Ahmad (2006, p.298) concludes that whilst the general scope of heritage is making some progress towards achieving wider agreement, there is no uniformity as to the *'finer terminology of heritage'* which remains neither *'streamlined'* nor *'standardised'* between countries. Throughout the past few decades the pursuit of

a definition has been hindered by the continual reinterpretation of various heritage related concepts such as *'historic monument'*, *'intangible heritage'* and *'cultural property'* and each ensuing organisation/charter takes a slightly different stance from its predecessor (ibid). This suggests that the lack of an accepted framework of heritage has direct implications for the practical management of its resources and related decision-making processes.

Importantly and in spite of the seeming consensus as to their value, the extent to which theoretical frameworks are utilised in practice also remains unclear. Carter and Bramley (2002, p.175), suggest that *'the values and significance of heritage resources are often acknowledged but not integrated into the management process'*. This highlights that the idealistic efforts to understand heritage and the value it supposedly represents may be seen by practitioners as a superficial endeavour that may not translate into the decisions or processes necessary to effectively manage resources. In spite of this, Donaghey (2001, p.365) maintains that a *'clear strategy for assessing the significance of historic places is a prerequisite for effective cultural resource management'*, emphasising the need to establish not only the value of a resource, but to have a predetermined framework from which this understanding is gained.

It may be that the inherently subjective and interpretive nature of heritage, has contributed to the disjointed development of heritage understandings across the spectrum of stakeholders. Any framing of heritage would have to account for the ways in which different people, within different environs and cultures, draw upon the past in order to derive their own perceived benefits in the present. Research

aiming to understand these unique processes and the forces that shape them would allow for the nature of heritage to be further illuminated. Furthermore, these tensions may arise from the original *'what is heritage'* debate, suggesting that research into the layperson's understanding of 'heritage' and its multiple meanings and values is needed. By exploring such a perspective, this may enhance understanding within academic and practical forums.

Harrison (2012, p.x) suggests that in the last four decades *'various crises of definition have significantly influenced the ways in which heritage is classified, perceived and managed in contemporary global societies'.* This illustrates the impact that ambiguous or conflicting definitions can have upon practice and suggests that appropriate definitions and theoretical frameworks of heritage would be valued across stakeholder perspectives.

Locating Heritage in its Wider Context

Despite continuing efforts, the definition of heritage remains a subject of much debate in both heritage tourism and heritage management literature and there is growing interest in 'bottom-up' research to help inform current knowledge frameworks. However, whilst the definitions of heritage and its many associated terms are often debated, it is widely accepted that heritage is diverse both in scope and relevance. As such, heritage is intrinsically linked to a wide spectrum of activities, concepts and environments.

Heritage Tourism

Whilst this section does not set out to discuss all the various forms of heritage tourism, it seeks to illustrate the strong interrelationship between heritage and tourism. Indeed it has been suggested that *'often tourism is based on local heritage resources such as older buildings and customs that attract visitors'* (Madden and Shipley 2012, p.103). Heritage is also a key player in the visitor attraction sector with heritage visitor attractions representing an *'integral component of the tourism product in many countries'* (Leask et al. 2002, p.247). Furthermore, an estimated 80% of inbound visitors to the UK are primarily motivated by the cultural or heritage attractions it has to offer (Penrose 2011b), and heritage is viewed as a key priority within current UK tourism strategy:

> *'The days when heritage – and it's absolutely vital place in our tourist economy – was on the side-lines of Government thinking and priorities, are over. Next year offers a heaven sent opportunity to promote Britain to the world, and get us as a nation back on our feet, and our heritage – built, natural and cultural – will be at the very heart of our offer to the world'* (Penrose 2011a).

It is also interesting to note that many of the twelve different visitor attraction categories used by Visit England (Mills 2011) can be judged to have a heritage dimension, for example museums/art galleries, historic houses and castles, visitor/heritage centres, steam/heritage railways and other historic properties.

One way to illustrate this wider context of heritage is through the idea of *'The Heritage Spectrum'* (Figure 2.2), which illustrates a number of complex interrelationships between heritage and its wide sphere of activity. Whilst this model is primarily influenced by a 'heritage tourism' focus, it also serves to locate

heritage alongside cultural, natural and economic activities. The model differentiates between types of heritage landscape and recognises subtle differences between types of tourism activities and how these fit into a 'heritage tourism' continuum. Furthermore, Timothy and Boyd (2003) imply that cultural tourism is in fact one type of tourism that has common characteristics to heritage tourism, whilst the heritage landscape is the wider resource base from which numerous types of tourism draw. Whilst this distinction between heritage and culture is less than clear cut in the wider literature, this conceptualisation is a useful starting point from which to understand the various elements of heritage tourism.
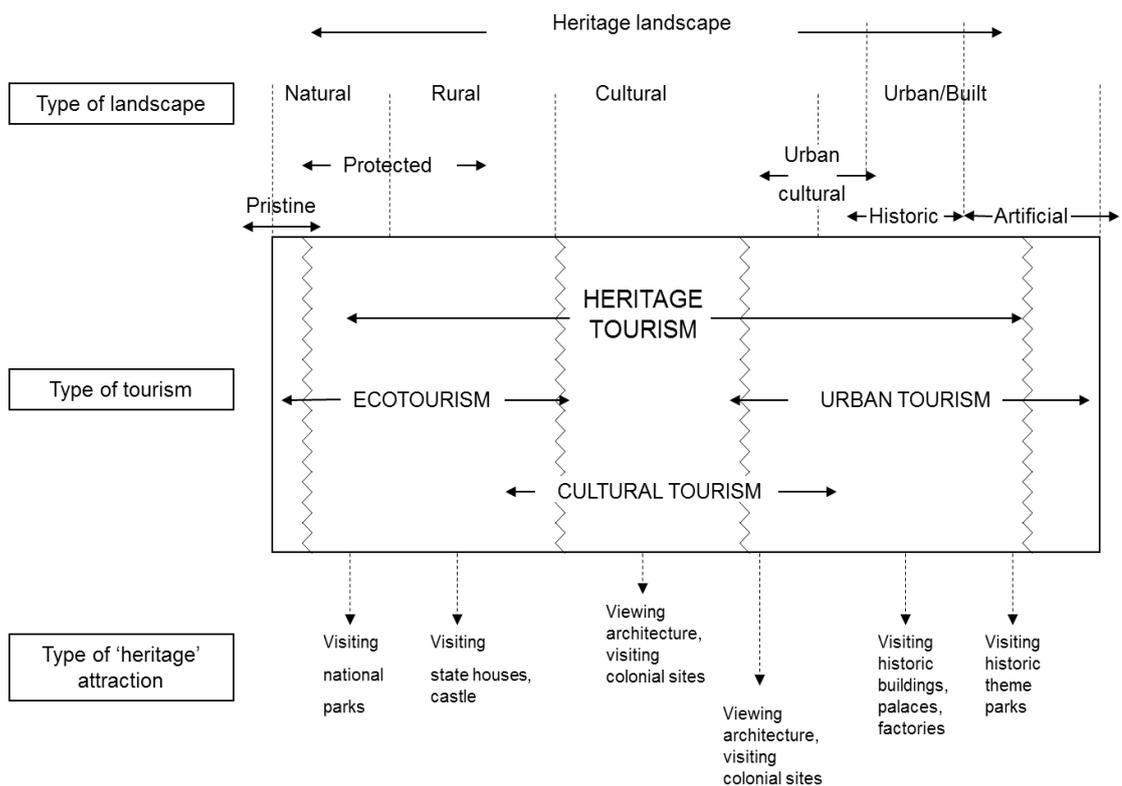
Figure 2.2: The Heritage Spectrum

Source: Timothy and Boyd (2003, p.9)

One criticism of *'The Heritage Spectrum'* may be that it over emphasises the physical activities of tourism within different landscapes, with little attention given to the wide and varied activities or processes that may be less related to tourism and more to do with everyday experiences within social, cultural, political and natural contexts. It is therefore an illustration of heritage tourism within a partial spectrum of heritage, rather than a holistic approach that incorporates the wide and varied meanings and values that heritage is constructed through and the ideas and activities that relate to these. A broader conceptualisation of heritage, (see Figure 2.3) discusses a heritage tourism experience within a wider context of economic and cultural/societal 'filters' and within the behavioural and physical world.

The model (Figure 2.3) proposes a number of significant ideas that are relevant to this research:

- There is a behavioural 'heritage' environment – in the behavioural world

- Heritage is perceived through cultural/societal filters

- There is a phenomenal 'heritage' environment – in the physical world.

The model includes a *'heritage valued'* dimension which relates to the *'economic filters'* that shape and influence heritage, whereby the *'filter of human values'* takes place at the behavioural heritage environment (Timothy and Boyd 2003, p.9). The latter of which ultimately determines whether or not a person then decides to act i.e. to become a heritage tourist and experience that heritage (ibid). Whilst the discussion Timothy and Boyd (2003) provide to support the model

includes the recognition of complex filters and how they may interrelate in practice, the model itself points to a linear association between the physical and the behavioural worlds that does not account for the interpretive, value-laden meanings of heritage.
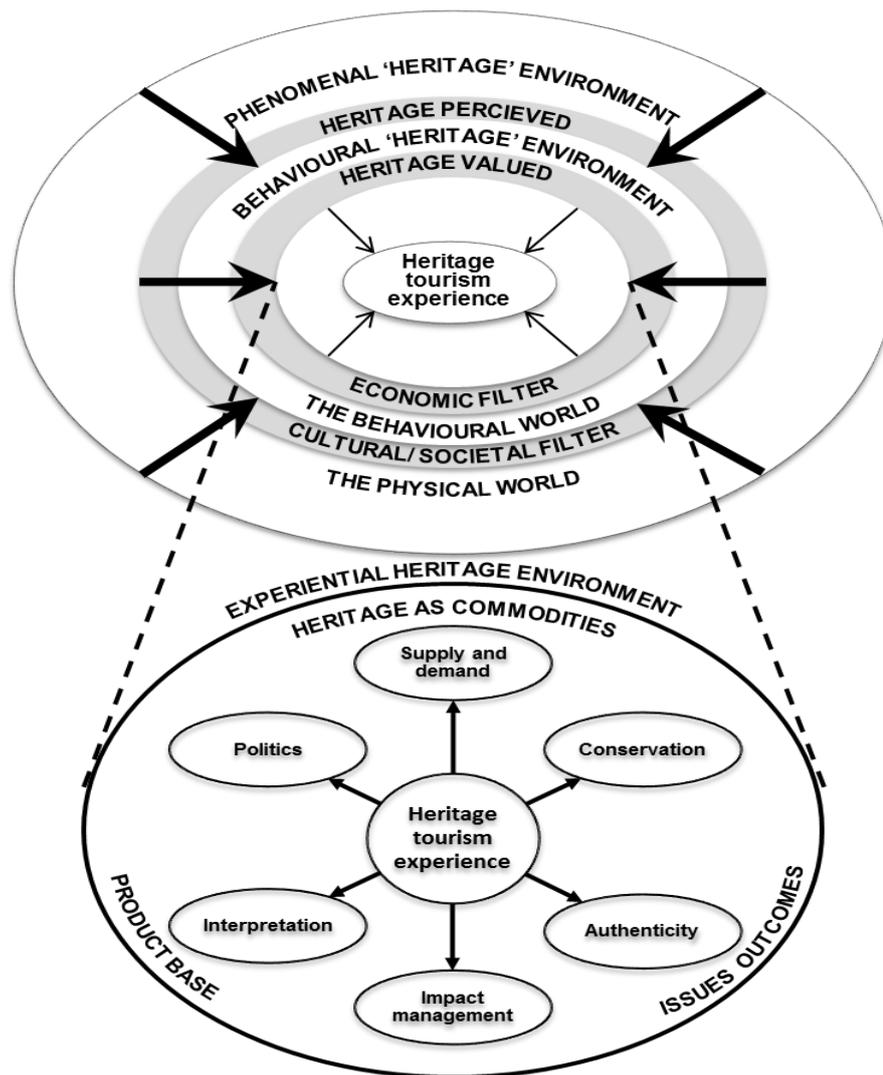
Figure 2.3: A Model of Heritage and Heritage Tourism

Source: Timothy and Boyd (2003, p.8).

A key strength of this model is that it communicates the multi-dimensional construction of heritage and heritage tourism and specifically how it is experienced. This helps to inform this study, whereby heritage is conceptualised as a socially constructed representation of the past, upon which 'heritage' significance is placed by people in order to construct meanings and values that resonate with them, whether or not they choose to engage with heritage in an active sense i.e. through heritage tourism.

Values and Heritage

Howard (2003, p.7) proposes that it is individuals who define heritage and that these individuals attribute the value they deem appropriate to heritage, rather than the value being intrinsically present and ready for them to discover in an appropriate way. This fits with the view that the value of heritage is culturally determined, imposed upon heritage resources by scholars, rather than accepting *'the intrinsic values once thought to reside almost within the stonework of historic buildings'* (Papayannis and Howard 2007, p.299). This raises questions as to what the value of heritage may be, particularly considering the fact that different scholars, disciplines and perspectives *'impose quite different sets of values on the same piece of heritage'* and that *'... the very concept of 'authenticity' ...has now been shown to be anything but immutable or intrinsic. Different disciplines use different authenticities'* (ibid). If accepted, these are important distinctions that should inform any framework of heritage; as the nature of heritage and the difficulty of reaching a consensus as to its definition and management, may be rooted within the question of what values shape it and whose values are important:

'The heritage process depends on the values that people invest in the heritage phenomena, on the different kinds of ways in which things are viewed... they will differ between people according to a whole range of lenses that give biases to particular views of attractiveness. To understand the heritage value of any particular item we need to grasp where all the stakeholders are 'coming from' and what values they bring to it' (Howard 2003, p.12).

The idea that the value of heritage is intrinsically linked to the values of the individuals and groups engaging with it, is one that can be understood within all of the 'levels' of heritage previously identified, raising several questions about the interpretive nature of heritage. For instance, which values are significant in the context of heritage and how do these values influence what is selected, interpreted, communicated, consumed or not consumed? Furthermore, what further subtle differences are there within these values, for the numerous different people involved in the varied 'spectrum of heritage'?

Timothy and Boyd (2003) propose that *'society filters heritage through a value system that undoubtedly changes over time and space, and across society'*. Bringing further complexity to the role of values in heritage, this view illustrates that the value of heritage is neither static nor universal and that the values through which heritage is 'filtered' are the unique product of specific individuals within specific cultures and contexts. Considering this, it is clear that there is a multiplicity of possible meanings that heritage may represent for different people. Furthermore, heritage may represent a *'multiplicity of values'* (Chung 2009, p.129) and understanding what these values are and how they are constructed would further current knowledge about heritage. In light of these ideas, it may be

that heritage is *'not so much a 'thing' as a set of values and meanings'* (Smith 2006, p.11): this represents a useful framework from which to understand heritage.

Values and Heritage Management

Questions as to the role and significance of values in understanding heritage are also relevant for the wider social, cultural and political agenda within heritage management. This is evident from the numerous research reports that organisations within the heritage field worldwide have commissioned in recent years. In the USA, for example, The Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, wholly integrates the notion of values into its planning activities. The Institute takes the view that it is *'our very values'* that informs what is, and is not, heritage and in turn what resources warrant conservation. The Institute advocates the use of values sensitive research in order to better understand the driving forces leading toward heritage intervention and management decisions, with the aim that the work it carries out be more relevant to contemporary society. Suggesting that the conservation of heritage *'...shapes the society in which it is situated, and in turn, it is shaped by the needs and dynamics of that society'* (Avrami et al. 2000, p.3). This perspective places heritage and the management of its resources in a central role in society and with this in mind, the Institute calls for research into the values underpinning motivations to select and conserve heritage, in order for the wider social context to be understood, prior to any practical management decisions. However, the Institute recognises that this view is idealistic, framing it within the 'future' of heritage conservation, rather than the current framework that in reality operates *'insulated from social contexts'* (ibid p.4). The framework they have

developed to address this therefore seeks to integrate values, accounting for different stakeholders' perspectives. Figure 2.4 illustrates this, with the initial 'interest' of the current framework, being superseded by a 'values' focus that then informs and underpins the 'interest' of, for example, academic research, public sentiment, political trends and community views:
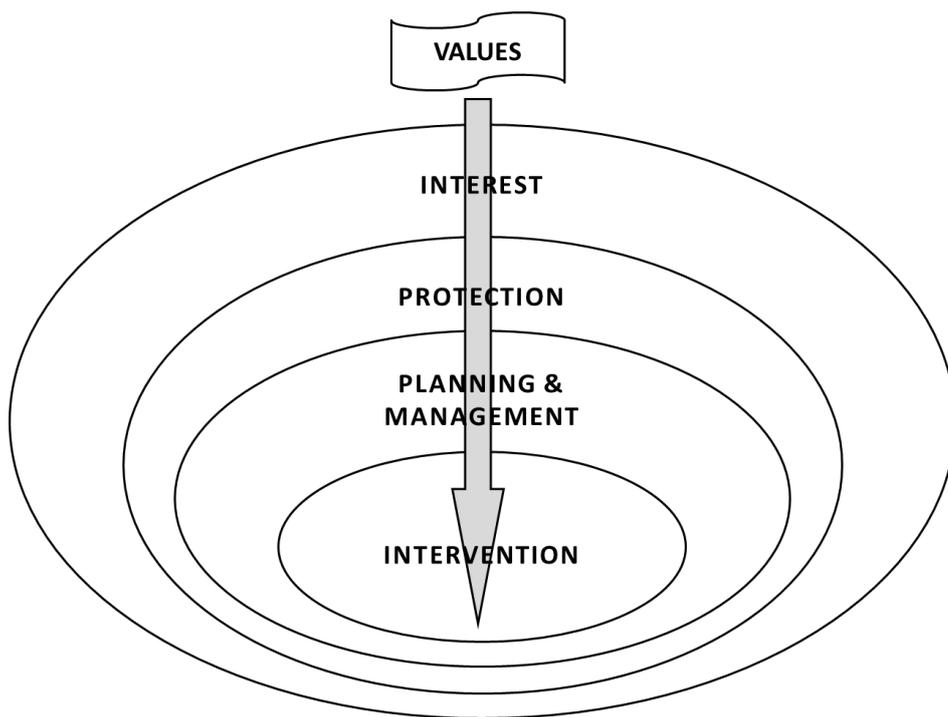
Figure 2.4: The Getty Institute Conservation Policy

This conservation policy outlines the *'potential future of conservation policy and practice: in which different aspects of conservation practice, social constructs, and stakeholders are integrated, connected, and coherent'* (ibid 2000, p.5). By stipulating that values should be the initial driving force considered behind the conservation of heritage, the above figure represents a suggested shift away from

academic and politically led decision-making, towards the integration of the values of multiple stakeholders:

> *'The future challenges of the conservation field will stem not only from the heritage objects and sites themselves but from the contexts in which society embeds them. These contexts - the values people draw from them, the functions heritage objects serve for society, the uses to which heritage is put - are the real source of the meaning of heritage, and the raison d'être for conservation in all senses'* (Avrami et al. 2000, p.4).

Whilst this statement is made in the context of heritage conservation, it reflects the challenges faced in the wider heritage community. Such ideas are given credence in a European context, for example, the Council of Europe's (2005, p.2) Treaty, on the *'Value of Cultural Heritage for Society'*, holds at its core the *'need to put people and their human values at the centre of an enlarged and cross-disciplinary concept of cultural heritage'*. The Treaty stipulates that the ongoing process of defining cultural heritage must involve everyone in society, as all have a human right to freely engage in cultural life. This is significant, as it attempts to redress the traditional 'top-down' understanding and management of heritage resources, placing emphasis on values underpinning notions of heritage. Indeed Robert Palmer (2012) Director of Culture, Cultural and Natural Heritage at the Council highlights that value and values were the main priorities for shaping their activities and programmes in 2011, which recognises that the interest in values and heritage is still strong and warrants further research.

In Ireland, The Heritage Council a statutory body, published *'Valuing Heritage in Ireland'* (Simpson et al. 2007), with the key aim of understanding how the public

perceive heritage and the types of values, amongst other factors, that they hold in relation to different aspects of heritage. This research built on existing national surveys and research projects, all concerned with understanding heritage in Ireland from the public perspective. Similarly, publicly funded research in the UK, published by the DCMS (2006) addresses similar themes. For example, *'Better Places to Live: Government, Identity and the Public Value of Heritage'* looked at the ways in which different stakeholders can work together, using heritage as a sustainable, inclusive resource for improving environments and in turn promoting better lifestyles.

These publications and research projects stress the relevance of understanding values within heritage management. Furthermore, from an academic perspective, Timothy (1997) proposes that heritage is consumed through the values of the individual and that the experience of heritage, even when gained through a shared medium such as a tourism site, is nevertheless entirely personal. Therefore heritage and the experience of heritage can hold different meanings for different people and the specific meaning for each individual is personally derived (ibid). Such a view reinforces the call for values sensitive research, which can be seen to hold weight within a number of specialist areas of heritage, demonstrated by the central role assigned to values by academics, professionals and government organisations.

Understanding Non-Users and Non-Visitors

A central focus of the Model of Heritage and Heritage Tourism (Figure 2.3) relates to the priority it gives to the perceptions of heritage that lead to

behavioural actions, i.e. heritage tourists and users of heritage resources. What is not reflected in the model, but is noted by Timothy and Boyd (2003, p.282) is the need to understand the non-users of heritage and heritage tourism. Recognising that whilst much is known about current demand *'...the focus should be on understanding unmet demand and how to turn this into actual use, overcoming obstacles… that prevent people from visiting heritage sites'* (ibid). Timothy and Boyd (2003, p.282) recognise such barriers to include:

- Structural obstacles - lack of physical and market accessibility.

- Intrapersonal obstacles - lack of educational preparation, desire and interest.

- Interpersonal obstacles - disability as a result of intrinsic, environmental or communication issues.

- Psychological constraints - perceptions of heritage as boring / history / touristic / specialist /older persons pastime - and also - a lack of desire to leave home environments or having no one to visit with.

As these obstacles are well documented in the heritage tourism literature, what this research proposes is that a step back is needed. Rather than pre-empt any contextual or behavioural bias that the heritage tourism dimension brings in, this study will seek to understand heritage and its multiple meanings and values and whether/if this translates into an engagement with heritage or heritage tourism. Furthermore, in addition to the list above, Bedate et al. (2004, p.102) recognise two further factors:

- A *'non-use value'* - those visitors that do not currently use a heritage resource but value the option of future access.

- An *'existence value'* - in relation to those who do not wish to personally use the heritage in question but perceive a value in relation to its existence. For example, they may wish for their children to have the opportunity.

These values highlight the different ways people may engage with heritage outside of a visitor or consumer context. Furthermore, exploring the potential ways in which people may value heritage outside of an action based context such as tourism may further illuminate an overall understanding of heritage. Therefore, this study seeks to include the views of those who may not fit into a heritage *tourist* or *visitor* category. Timothy and Boyd (2003) suggest that much of the existing research has focussed on the current demand for heritage and heritage tourism (segmenting visitors by demographics, origins and motivations for example) rather than focussing on *'unmet demand'* and any obstacles that may prevent or subdue interest in visiting heritage sites. This is particularly relevant considering the increasing supply of attractions labelling themselves as 'heritage' to try and create new demand by capitalising on the ever popular heritage market (ibid p.282). Urry (1996) advocates looking at both visitors and non-visitors to heritage attractions and calls for research that seeks to enhance understandings of how these two groups *'make sense of the past'*, whereas Dicks (2000, p.75) suggests one way in which to meet Urry's suggested gap in knowledge is to consider heritage sites as *'social communication'* tools within which meanings are encoded and decoded in the construction and subsequent consumption of heritage sites. This would suggest that heritage in a wider sense (devoid of sites/attraction delimitations) could also be considered a *communicator* of social meanings which are then negotiated by those who consider its messages. This approach would allow for so called 'non-users' of heritage to contribute valuable insights to the

discussion drawing from their understandings and perhaps experiences of 'heritage' in different contexts.

Understanding how heritage as a social phenomenon and process is perceived and valued by individuals could illuminate the forces that shape perceptions of heritage in its wider context. Furthermore, this understanding would underpin how/if these perceptions and values influence differing forms of engagement with heritage resources such as tourism products. The language used in this research, i.e. 'forms of engagement' is suggested as more appropriate than the users/visitors and non-user/visitor distinctions, as this research allows for 'heritage' to be interpreted as an idea, a social process (Smith 2006), as well as an activity i.e. within leisure and tourism. For example, the term 'forms of engagement' reflects the idea that for one person, heritage may relate to very personal ideas that do not involve taking any external action, whereas another person may be very active in their engagement in heritage, participating in events, visiting places etc. It is proposed that conceptualising heritage within a wider social perspective will help to inform the understandings gained in economic, tourism and leisure contexts. Furthermore, it *'...is through understanding the use that places and processes of heritage are put to in the present, the way the present constructs it, the role heritage plays and the consequences it has, that a useful sense of what heritage is and does can be achieved'* (Smith 2006, p.308). This research is interested in all forms of engagement as they become apparent from the data analysis; this way, a wider view of heritage and its relevance for people may emerge.

Summary

This chapter set out to provide an *'overall orientating lens'* (Creswell 2009, p.231) from which to contextualise and position this study. As such, there are a number of research questions or 'gaps' in knowledge that have been developed from the review of the literature and these will inform the different stages of this research:

- *What is the lay or non-expert understanding of heritage?*

- *What types of ideas or things are thought of as 'heritage'?*

- *What importance is placed upon 'heritage' by the participants?*

- *What types of meanings does heritage represent?*

- *Levels of interest and awareness in 'heritage'.*

- *What role (if any) do values play in this?*

An important gap in current knowledge relates to the non-users of heritage and heritage tourism. Therefore this research aims to include this group in order to develop a broader understanding of the different ways in which people value and engage with heritage. As such, it is important not to impose or pre-empt the centrality of action-based heritage typologies, such as heritage tourism, and in turn allow for a discussion that includes both those who may or may not view heritage as something to 'use', 'visit' or 'do'. This focus is justified in light of the recognition that any unmet or latent demand for heritage and heritage tourism (Davies and Prentice 1995; Timothy and Boyd 2003) is likely to reside within the 'non-visitor' category (Urry 1996; Jewell and Crotts 2001) rather than within

current audiences. To facilitate this, this research will take place outside of a pre-defined 'heritage' context in order to add to the current literature which largely focuses on existing users and visitors of heritage sites and attractions. By allowing the participants themselves to determine the parameters of the primary data, this study will offer an insight into the role and importance of heritage from the non-expert, lay perspective.

Furthermore, in order to explore the research questions above, and to foster an inductive approach, this research purposely avoids adopting an academic definition of heritage at the outset. This is to avoid prescribing any framework of heritage that may not fit with the views of those who participate in the research. The absence of a definition in qualitative research can be viewed as a *'virtue rather than a vice'* (Garrod and Fyall 2001, p.1051) and will ensure an open and responsive approach to the research and the multiple meanings and values that arise from the study. The aim of this chapter was to become *'familiar with the background literature without becoming tied to or directed by particular theories or models'* (Haverkamp and Young 2007, p.285). Therefore whilst having reviewed the literature and gained an understating of various issues and debates within it, the aim of this qualitative study is to set aside any preconceptions and strive to be sensitive and open to what the participants themselves understand as heritage; what they view as being important and the meanings and values that shape heritage for them.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The review of the literature highlighted a number of issues which are important to consider throughout the stages of this research, not least in the design of the methodology. In particular, the interpretive, value-laden nature of heritage is an important characteristic as this influences decisions surrounding the epistemology and theoretical perspective of the research design. Values emerge as an important theme and are understood to shape perceptions of heritage for individuals in unique ways (Howard 2003). Furthermore, Timothy and Boyd (2003) suggest that groups across society filters heritage through often different value systems. Considering the literature, it is clear that there is a multiplicity of values (Chung 2009) and therefore a multiplicity of possible meanings that heritage may represent for different people. Exploring and developing an understanding of the different meanings and values of heritage, from the perspective of those outside of academia and the heritage professions, will make a valuable contribution to current understandings of heritage.

This chapter presents a social constructionist, qualitative methodology which was designed to facilitative an open and responsive approach to the ways in which the participants frame 'heritage' in order to gain an emic perspective and understanding of heritage. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the decisions made in designing this research, including its theoretical underpinnings, data collection, analysis and limitations. Furthermore, this chapter will engage in a

'conversation' with relevant paradigms and philosophical debates in order to render the research process *'transparent and accountable'* (Crotty 1998, p.216).

Research Design

There are numerous methodological approaches available to researchers, with many authors positioning key philosophical research ideas differently. For the purpose of clarity, the following sections of this chapter are structured according to the four main elements of research design (Crotty 1998) (Figure 3.1). Creswell (2003, p.5) suggests that these four elements inform *all* aspects of research design *'from the broad assumptions'* to the more *'practical decisions'* of data collection and analysis.
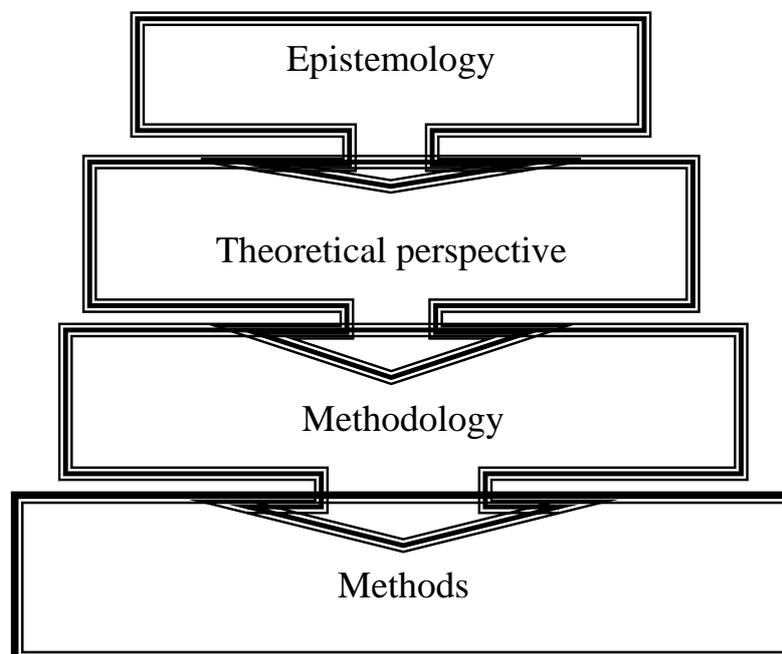
Figure 3.1: The Four Elements of Research

Source: Crotty (1998, p. 4).

Crotty (ibid) calls for the decisions relating to each of these elements to be made in line with the research aim, as this should drive the choices of the researcher. Therefore, each of these four elements will be discussed within the context of this research, in order to illustrate and in turn justify the overall research design.

Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the nature of human knowledge and the idea of *'knowing'*. A key epistemological question asks us to think about *'how we know the world'* (Denzin and Lincoln 1998, p.185). There are numerous epistemological positions within social research, and a brief discussion follows that locates this study within constructionism and discusses the assumptions that underpin this. This discussion serves to further justify the design of the study. Furthermore the interpretive nature of heritage discussed in the previous chapter, calls for reflection here as this influences the epistemological decisions.

Whilst each epistemological position is in reality complex, each has basic characteristics that are generally accepted and these are sufficient to demonstrate which approaches fit within the overall context of this study. For the purpose of this discussion, the basic ideas behind the main epistemological stances are:

 - Objectivism – proposes that there is *a* meaningful reality, independent of conscious thought. The intrinsic meaning of any object is therefore seen to be value-free and its true meaning can be uncovered if researched appropriately.

 - Constructionism – opposes objectivism, holding instead that *'there is no meaning without a mind. Meaning is not discovered, but constructed'... 'different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon'*.

- Subjectivism – meaning is *'imposed'* on an object through a *'subjective act essentially independent of the object itself'*. This is opposed to constructionism which views meaning as the product of an *'interplay'* between the object and the mind that considers it.

(Adapted from Crotty 1998, pp. 8-10)

Whilst these positions cannot be fully understood in such black and white terms, each epistemological stance determines the type of knowledge claims that are available to a researcher and how data can and should be thought about, collected and analysed. Furthermore, the review of the literature highlighted a number of ambiguities in terms of the nature and definition of heritage, and suggested that the *'epistemological fragility'* of history (Jenkins 1991) may equally apply to heritage. The lack of an appropriate theorisation of heritage in the literature reinforces the need to explore some of these issues in more depth. This section discusses the different philosophical approaches to research in order to locate the concept of heritage within the design of the overall methodology. This serves to explain the social constructionist perspective adopted throughout this research and how epistemological ideas influence the design of this research.

Heritage and Social Constructionism

This research adopts a social constructionist perspective, whereby the meanings of heritage come from a negotiation or *'interplay'* between the heritage object, the individual and the social world. In constructionism *'…the categories that people employ in helping them understand the natural and social world are in fact social products'* (Bryman 2008, p.20). In this light, heritage can be understood as a social construction, produced and reproduced through social interaction, shared

understandings and representations, rather than there being a 'heritage' that can be 'known' external to society.

It is relevant at this stage to recognise the different forms of constructionism and the distinctions between them. There is both an individual (constructivist) and social way of understanding this epistemological perspective (Crotty 1998). This research adopts a social constructionist perspective, which recognises that individuals are not constructing the meaning of an object/idea in a vacuum, but are also consciously and unconsciously negotiating with the meanings that have been pre-determined over time and therefore associated with that object/idea of heritage. This resonates with the previous discussion surrounding the interpretive levels of heritage (see appendix A).

This epistemological stance will also be applied to the understanding of values in this research, recognising that whilst values research has predominantly focussed on the individual and psychological aspects of human values (Rokeach 1972 & 1973; Schwartz and Bilsky 1987 & 1990), values also have socially constructed meanings and boundaries. Heritage is socially constructed and *'...governed or regulated by wider social forces and narratives'* (Smith 2006, p.7). In terms of the research aim and objectives, and the understanding gained from the literature, social constructionism is seen as an appropriate framework for this research, the logic being that individuals are often drawing on *'something'* that is either wholly or partially defined for them as having the status of *'heritage'*. Therefore, they must first negotiate with the given heritage (as they understand it) whilst also considering their own ideas and values in relation to it. This fits with the

recognition that *'constructionism frequently results in an interest in the representation of social phenomena'* (Bryman 2008, p.20) and with the conceptualisation of heritage as one such social phenomenon (Smith 2006). Furthermore, related concepts are often theorised within a constructionist epistemology. 'History' is discussed above as being constructed by the historian (Jenkins 1991); whereas 'identity' is similarly understood to be a constructed concept (Jenkins 2003; Turnpenny 2004; Munasinghe 2005) as are 'experiences' (Pennington-Grey and Carmichael 2006) and 'memories' (Small 1999). Indeed, the *'construction of heritage'* (Brett 1996; Macdonald 2006) is an established, albeit *'authorised heritage discourse'* (Smith 2006). Therefore, it is from a social constructionist perspective that this research proceeds in order to further the understanding of heritage.

Interpretivist Theoretical Perspective

Crotty (1998, p.3) describes a theoretical perspective as the *'philosophical stance'* that informs the research methodology. A similar concept is that of a *paradigm*, defined as a *'basic set of beliefs that guide action'* and encompasses the epistemological, ontological and methodological ideas that research is designed around (Guba 1990, p.17; Denzin and Lincoln 1998). There are a number of major theoretical perspectives or paradigms that may be used to inform social research. Interpretivism is the theoretical perspective that informs the design of this study. This section will discuss the rationale for adopting an interpretivist perspective, by highlighting its key characteristics and underlying assumptions and by looking at opposing views where appropriate.

One way to understand interpretivism is to contrast it with its antithesis - positivism. Positivism is often seen as inextricably linked to objective knowledge i.e. if there is one real world (objectivism), positivists would be concerned with knowing the objective categories within that world. This approach can be seen to have an affinity with the natural sciences and often adopts a realist ontology (Flick 2006, p.78). Conversely, interpretivism has close links with a constructionist epistemology and in turn a relativist ontology.

Bryman (2008, p.15) recognises that the chief *'clash'* between positivism and interpretivism lies in the idea of a *'...division between an emphasis on the explanation of human behaviour that is the chief ingredient of the positivist approach to the social sciences and the understanding of human behaviour'*. In terms of this research's aim of understanding heritage and its multiple meanings, the idea of 'explaining' would be at odds with the interpretive, value-laden nature of heritage. With heritage being understood in this research as a value-laden social phenomenon, with a recognised debate surrounding its definition, it was deemed inappropriate to devise a research approach that would require that any reference to 'heritage' be understood in the same way for all participants of the study. For example, if, as is popular within a positivist approach, a survey were to be utilised, then how could it be ensured that each respondent's views were captured in relation to the same thing? Furthermore, the first requirement of a quantitative methodology, such as a survey, would be an *'operational definition...* [as] *your research will be stuck with how you define the phenomenon at the outset'* (Silverman 2006, p.42). This demonstrates that the positivist theoretical perspective and quantitative methodology would not fit with the aims of this

research. Instead this research seeks to move beyond such pre-determined definitions and to place the emphasis on the multiple meanings and values that participants themselves bring to the fore, rather than building on prior assumptions. This research does not wish to impose any frameworks or typologies of heritage upon the participants and as such a qualitative methodology has been designed which will meet the overall aim of this research.

Adopting a Qualitative Approach

This section presents the qualitative methodology adopted in this research and outlines the justification for this approach in line with the social constructionist, interpretive nature of heritage and consequently the way in which this research has been conceptualised. Furthermore, the chapter outlines the rationale for using focus groups as the specific method of data collection and the way in which the method was employed in this study. The approach to the analysis is then discussed followed by the ethical considerations and limitations of the study. Holloway and Todres (2003, p.347) call for a *'goodness of fit'* between the research topic, methodology, the ways in which data are collected, analysed and presented and therefore this section aligns each aspect of the qualitative methodology with the overall research aim and theoretical underpinning of the study in order to be transparent and open about the range of decisions made and the ways in which the different elements of the research fit together.

Such consistency is supported by Creswell (2003) who recognises that epistemological ideas can and should filter down through the different stages of research:

'[In social constructivism]…*individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work… These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas'* (ibid p.8).

This serves to illustrate how the design of a study can affect the types of knowledge that can be generated and the types of analysis that may be appropriate. Given the interest in multiple meanings and values in this study, the qualitative approach aims to embrace the complexity of heritage rather than seeking to over simplify or reduce them into neat categories.

As this study aims to be open and responsive to a multiplicity of meanings, values and understandings that participants may bring to the study, no academic or formal definition of heritage was adopted for the primary research stage. This was to avoid prescribing a typology or framework that may not fit with, or suit, the views of the participants:

'Qualitative researchers try not to impose a rigid, a priori framework on the social world, because they want to learn what constitutes important questions from the participants themselves' (Rossman and Rallis 2012, p.9).

The goal of qualitative research is therefore not to test existing theory but to discover and develop new, empirically grounded theories (Flick 2009). In light of this, this methodology is designed specifically to explore the emic perspective of heritage in order to prioritise participants *own* interpretations and local inside knowledge (Pearce et al. 1996; Jennings and Weiler 2006) of the meanings relating to heritage. This is important given that an *'etic'*

approach would be shaped largely by the constructs generated and designed by the researcher (Pearce et al. 1996, p.4) and as such would not fit with the overall aim of this study.

In qualitative research and in this study specifically, the emphasis is on understanding *'how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences'* (Merriam 2009, p.5). Such research *'attempt[s] to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them'* (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p.3). This approach fits particularly well within this study, whereby the literature review recognised that there is little understanding of what heritage means to people outside of professional or academic contexts, and that heritage itself has a multiplicity of possible meanings, values and interpretations. Furthermore, the purpose of this research is to describe, understand and interpret, rather than predict or generalise and as such, views reality as being socially constructed, with *'multiple realities or interpretations'* possible of any given phenomenon or event (Merriam 2009, p.8). It is this synergy between research design and topic that underpins the choice of a qualitative methodology in this study.

Reflexivity and the Role of the Researcher

It is vital in qualitative research that the researcher understands and reflects upon their active role in driving and shaping their study. Rossman and Rallis (2012, pp.9-10) recognise that from *'early curiosity'* through to the analysis, interpretation and writing up of research, each researcher and their unique *'lens'*,

shaped by their *'personal biography'*, influence the way they view the social world and how they make sense of the research phenomenon.

The personal rationale in the introduction to this study was an initial point from which to highlight the active role I have played in the conception of this study. The rationale explored the way in which my personal and professional experiences shaped my 'early curiosity' in heritage. This interest developed more formally through my undergraduate studies and later through the reading and writing involved in the research process. Reflecting further on the subjective nature of qualitative research, it is appropriate to explore the active role I have had in the design and implementation of this study and ultimately the 'thesis' presented here. Qualitative research is *'fundamentally interpretive'* (ibid) and as such, any other researcher would inevitably have developed different understandings and even different research questions from the same or similar materials. Therefore, the thesis presented here is offered as my interpretation – which could be considered as an additional *'level'* in the inherently interpretive and value-laden nature of heritage. It is from this standpoint that the title of the thesis emerged. *'Understanding heritage'* does not imply the presentation of one *reality* or *explanation* of heritage. Instead, this research strives to present an open, honest and detailed interpretation of the multiple meanings and values that were constructed by the research participants through their thinking and talking about heritage and through their interactions with each other during the focus groups. Flick (2009, p.16) recognises that in qualitative research, the researcher's communication with the field and its members (in this case the interaction between myself and the research participants) forms an *'explicit part of*

knowledge' and is not viewed as a weakness or *'intervening variable'* as it would be in quantitative research. Furthermore, postmodern thinking calls for researchers to openly acknowledge that the research offered is written and shaped by *them*, rather than the objectivist principles of traditional research whereby the authors must remain invisible within the text (Rossman and Rallis 2012, p.46).

Finally, the design of this qualitative study is shaped not only by the nature of the topic but also by the way in which I understand the social world. Neat and tidy categories and typologies do not always seem sensitive enough to reveal the meanings and values that underlie social phenomena and considering the ambiguous nature of heritage, it makes sense to get involved in and to explore the *'messiness'* that qualitative researchers value (Rossman and Rallis 2012, p.8).

The Rationale for using Focus Groups

There are a range of different methods available within qualitative research and this section provides a rationale for the specific choice of focus groups within this study.

> *'Methods are the nuts and bolts of research …the point where the participants and the researcher meet… it is through methods that methodology and epistemology become visible'* (Carter and Little 2007, p.1325).

The choice of focus groups was guided by the research topic and aim and also the overall social constructionist, qualitative methodology. Focus groups (and interviews) have been criticised in the qualitative literature for consisting of *'manufactured'* rather than *'natural'* data, the latter being of particular value to

qualitative researchers (Silverman 2007; Edley and Litosseliti 2010). However, when used within a constructionist perspective and viewed as interactional events, such methods become legitimate sources of qualitative data (Edley and Litosseliti 2010). Furthermore, whilst observation is viewed to be a more appropriate source of *'natural data'* in the social world, given the nature of the topic and the interest in how people understand heritage, observable data sources were simply not available as *'one could record thousands of hours of casual conversation without encountering even a snippet…'* on the topic of interest (Edley and Litosseliti 2010, p.164). Furthermore, as this study wishes to include the views of those who may not view themselves as 'heritage' consumers, visitors or tourists, it would not make sense to observe such visitors/tourists in a heritage setting, and this in any case could not give access to how these people understand or value heritage. Therefore the choice of method in this study lay primarily between those of individual interviews and group interviews which in this case led to the choice of focus groups. Considering that focus groups are *'social enactments'* in their own right (Halkier 2010) and shaped by the interaction and discussion of the participants, this method lent itself well to the aims of this study.

One key benefit is that, in comparison to other interview methods, focus groups can be useful when *'relatively little direct input from the researcher'* is desired and when research seeks to move beyond the *'received wisdom of the field'* (Morgan 1998, p.21). This fits with the debate presented in the previous chapter surrounding the definition and scope of heritage. This research seeks the lay, or non-expert perspective, and as such deliberately seeks to avoid imposing such received wisdom or authorised heritage discourses (Smith 2006). Furthermore,

focus groups allow the scope and nature of the discussion to be decided by the participants themselves and this fosters an emic, or insider, perspective of heritage. Weeden (2005) supports this, stating that a key advantage of focus groups, in contrast to individual interviews, is that focus groups aim to place control of the discussion with the participants as opposed to the interviewer, increasing the amount of insightful information gained. Furthermore, as the participants themselves are encouraged to direct the discussion, the inductive quality of the research is enhanced, which in turn helps to avoid imposing any definitions or typologies of heritage.

A further advantage of focus groups over individual interviews is the access they provide to *'...group meanings, processes and norms'* and their ability to construct socially meaningful data (Bloor et al. 2001, p.4). This is illustrated by the following description of focus groups and the nature of the discussion they generate:

> *'...focus groups can yield data on the uncertainties, ambiguities, and group processes that lead to and underlie group assessments... focus groups can throw light on the normative understandings that groups draw upon to reach their collective judgements'* (Bloor et al. 2001, p.4).

Such shared understandings can be thought of as frames of reference and are an important aspect of the data in this research, as they may illuminate the ways in which heritage is understood and the different meanings and values heritage represents for different people. Furthermore, Weeden (2005, p.179) advocates that focus groups allow participants to *'explore the underlying (possibly unconscious) influences on their behaviours...* [whilst] *the interaction can potentially reveal*

intensely personal views and values'. Furthermore, as Jennings (2005) notes, focus groups are a useful method when seeking to understand the diverse values that relate to a topic of interest. Therefore, a primary benefit of the focus group method in this research is that it can help to illuminate personal meanings and values, whilst retaining the wider social contexts that these meanings are necessarily shaped by and in turn help to shape. This creates a synergy between the method of data collection and the underpinning epistemological and theoretical perspective and will allow for the socially constructed nature of heritage to be explored with sensitivity to both the individual and the shared representations that the participants use to negotiate the topic.

One criticism of the focus group method, relates to the potential for group conformity to stifle the nature of the discussion. Morgan (1998, p.51) recognises that at times within a group, participants may strive to reach a consensus which is *'foreign to the optimal climate in focus groups'.* The design of the focus groups in this study pre-empted these limitations as much as possible by explaining that there were no *'right or wrong answers'* but rather a genuine interest in the range of ideas that participants had (ibid). Furthermore, an individual pre-task activity was designed (see Figure 3.2), so that each participant had time to think through their ideas prior to sharing them with the group, which may have enhanced their confidence and reduced the need to agree with others who may have different ideas.

Finally, focus groups are viewed to be a valuable method when seeking to use *'sociable interaction'* in order to *'yield rich insight into people's life worlds'*

(Warr 2005, p.200). This brings together a number of crucial elements that relate to this research and the choice of method:

> *'...the nature of the talk that is generated in focus groups is a mixture of personal beliefs and available collective narratives that are further flavoured by the local circumstances of participants' lives.* [The data] *can also reveal social and cultural contexts for individual beliefs… It enables focus groups to furnish socially grounded insights into aspects of personal and social life'* (ibid).

Such socially grounded insights will serve to highlight the personal and shared understandings of heritage whilst the interaction between participants will help to minimise the amount of input needed to keep the flow of conversation going as participants 'bounce off' of each other's ideas and ultimately focus on their own interests with regard to heritage.

The Design of the Focus Groups

There are numerous ways in which groups can be brought together for social research and this section will explain the design and implementation of the focus groups within this study.

An early method using groups in research was that of the *'focused group interview'* (Merton 1956) in which a stimulus, such as a marketing advertisement or product sample, was used to direct and maintain the scope of the discussion toward a pre-determined 'focus'. Whilst this method is often referred to as the original focus group method, there are a number of important distinctions that separate focussed group interviews and similar group interviews from the types of *focus groups* used in this study. A particular distinction between the focused

group interview and that of focus groups is that the former generally seeks no meaningful group interaction between participants and the group itself is not viewed as a social unit as such, but rather as a vehicle for carrying out a number of interviews simultaneously. Furthermore, the 'focus' in this method is adhered to fairly rigidly throughout the session and has often been analysed by the research team prior to the members of the group in order to help the team further direct the discussion during the interview. Conversely, focus groups aim to be more open, responsive and less directed in nature (Morgan 1988 & 1998). Furthermore *'the hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group'* (Morgan 1988, p.12). Focus groups can be differentiated further by the suggestion that they do not fall under the *'group interview'* umbrella at all, proposing instead that focus groups are essentially *'group discussions'* (Weeden 2005, p.180). In light of such distinctions, the method used in this study is that of focus groups, with the emphasis on group led discussion and interaction and not therefore on other types of group interview.

Jennings (2005, p.101) advocates a semi-structured approach to focus groups which makes use of a *'conversational style'*, therefore avoiding the more structured approach of rigid question-answer formats which fit within a more quantitative design. In this study, focus groups were designed to give participants the opportunity to discuss their ideas, and for group discussion to enhance the range of understandings gained. Whilst most authors recognise the need for some structure within focus groups, it is the style of the structure that determines whether or not the inductive quality is nurtured or undermined. *'The trick is, of*

course, to introduce sufficient structure to ensure the group continues to address the research topic, while not inhibiting the natural flow of group interaction' (Bloor et al. 2001, p.47). Moreover, the multivocality of the participants reduces the control of the researcher further (Madriz 2003) which in turn enhances the inductive nature of the data.

The research questions or 'gaps' identified by the review of the literature were used to help design a loosely structured focus group topic guide (see appendix B):

- *What is the lay or non-expert understanding of heritage?*

- *What types of ideas or things are thought of as 'heritage'?*

- *What importance is placed upon 'heritage' by the participants?*

- *What types of meanings does heritage represent?*

- *Levels of interest and awareness in 'heritage'*

- *What role (if any) do values play in this?*

These questions were not directly asked of participants, but formed the exploratory topic areas used within the groups. These research questions are purposely 'open' to avoid limiting or restricting the focus group discussion and also provide a basis from which to facilitate the discussion and help to keep the flow at natural breaks in the conversation. Byrne (2004, p.182) advocates the use of open ended, flexible questioning styles to allow for a *'more considered response'* which in turn opens up *'better access to interviewees' views, interpretation of events, understandings, experiences and opinions'*. Therefore, the design of the focus groups placed priority on the meanings and values of the

participants themselves in line with the underpinning research design and aim. The exploratory topic areas in the focus group guide ensured that the content of the discussion was not stifled and that no ideas or interests in relation to heritage would be undermined or excluded by the way the topics were put to participants. Furthermore, the design of the topic questions encouraged the participants themselves to explore and unpick the meanings and range of ideas themselves. This is supported by the recommendation that participants be encouraged to offer their own definitions for the purposes of discussion and that open ended questions are appropriate when seeking to understand the range of meanings attached to a given area of interest (Silverman 2006). This allowed participants to determine the scope and relevance of the discussion and this complemented the inductive nature of this study. Furthermore, Creswell (2003, p.8) suggests that within the social constructionist perspective, meaning is *'typically forged in discussions and interactions with other people'* and this idea complements the key benefit of focus groups, which is the interaction and discussion between the participants.

Individual Pre-Task Activity

In addition to the focus group topic guide, one way to approach the issue of structure within the design of focus groups is to make use of *'task-setting'* exercises (Bloor et al. 2001). Such exercises are designed to give a basis for group interaction without restricting or overly structuring the discussion (ibid). It was decided that using *'props'* in the form of photographs, news bulletins, vignettes etc. (Bloor et al. 2001) would inevitably undermine the aim of this research and would introduce 'heritage' as a pre-defined, shaped idea that would ultimately influence and maybe even stifle interaction and discussion. However, one

important advantage of such exercises is their role as an 'ice breaker' and their ability to initiate group interaction and discussion (ibid). Therefore, an alternative type of activity was needed in this study, one that could retain the ice breaking function. Mariampolski (2001) suggests that using a *'pre-tasking exercise'* can be useful in adding depth and even excitement for participants during a qualitative interview, or in this case focus group. Such a *'sensitising activity'* can *'guarantee better orientated and more highly involved participants'* (ibid p.79). Therefore, an individual pre-task activity was designed for the purpose of this study (Figure 3.2), which invited participants to think about heritage and what it means to them prior to the discussion.

As part of this activity, they were asked to either write down a few words describing their ideas or to bring something along that represented heritage to them. The individual pre-task activity was designed to facilitate the opening discussion, as group members were invited to share ideas and interact from the start. The activity allowed each participant time to think through their ideas prior to attending the focus group itself, and therefore before interacting with other people's thoughts and ideas. Furthermore, given that the focus groups were purposely held outside a 'heritage' context, participants may need a little time to consider their views before discussion began. Smith (2006, p.305) highlights the power of an object or a place in *'invoking, signifying or otherwise connecting with people's wider social experiences, memories and knowledge'*. This was seen as a useful idea that could help participants to channel their thinking around items or ideas that they felt connected to in some way. The researcher tried to avoid the need for a material choice by including a description, an image or an idea of

heritage and to avoid leading participants: it was emphasised that there were no expected 'right' answers. At the point of accepting the invitation to attend, each participant was given this pre-task activity to think about. Some participants admitted feeling unsure as to what 'heritage' meant at this stage, and some asked about what they may end up talking about in the group. These hesitations support the use of such a sensitising activity as it helped orientate participants (Mariampolski 2001) without giving them a definition or explanation as to what heritage might mean to the researcher. This in itself became a valuable topic of discussion among participants and later for the analysis.

Activity for you to think about:

If possible, I would like you to think of something that represents the idea of heritage to you.

For example: what do you think of, when you hear the word 'heritage'?

Then… if possible, either bring this … or a picture / drawing / few words related to this along with you on the day.

Some Pointers:

- Remember: there are *no right or wrong ideas …* it can be anything you feel related to the idea of 'heritage'.

- Please keep this item/idea out of sight until asked to show it to the group on the day.

Figure 3.2: Individual Pre-Task Activity

It is worth noting that the pre-task activity could be compared to the use of a 'focus' in focussed group interviews (Merton 1956), however the key difference here is that the 'focus' is determined by the participants and therefore, each participant had the opportunity to be involved in focussing part of the discussion. The ideas, meanings, objects, or representations brought to light in the discussion were therefore a useful way of enriching the data. Whilst it is recognised that each individual may have consulted numerous sources with regard to this task, i.e. they may have asked friends, family members, used the internet, books etc., this was not seen as a disadvantage, as the ideas they brought to the group gave numerous different contexts or starting points for them to share and discuss with each other.

The Context of the Study

Previous heritage research has tended to be conducted in predetermined 'heritage' contexts such as visitor attractions, heritage centres, museums and gardens etc., with participants engaging with the 'heritage' place whilst involved in the research (Baldwin 1999; McIntosh and Prentice 1999; Goulding 2000a; Chen et al. 2001; Breathnach 2003; Smith 2006). This research diverges from these studies in an attempt to understand heritage in a wider sense in order to add to what has been learnt from specific heritage contexts. This study proposes that in order to achieve an understanding of heritage in an everyday context and of the meanings and values that people hold in relation to heritage, it is necessary to start from the perspective of how people relate to it in their own terms. This idea is incorporated into this research in order to reduce the inevitable bias a heritage context would impinge upon any discussion relating to the meanings and understandings of heritage in a wider sense. Furthermore, given the central aim of

gaining an emic view of heritage, there was a need to avoid prescribing definitions or typologies that may not fit the views of the participants. Therefore, the decision was made not to carry out the primary research in a 'heritage' context such as a heritage site or visitor attraction.

The Study Sample

In total, 8 focus groups were carried out with 47 participants. Age ranged from 19 to 81 years old, with 22 females and 25 males taking part. The sample was made up predominantly of individuals who identified themselves as British citizens, with one Northern Irish, two Scottish and two Welsh participants. A small number of participants identified themselves as having British dual nationalities including one British Canadian. One participant was from Lichtenstein *(Helena, fg2)* and another was Polish *(Irena, fg6)*: both of whom were brought along by an invited participant and the decision was made to allow them to take part on the day. This decision was made in light of the fact that whilst a broadly British sample was desired in the interest of homogeneity, this study does not claim to present British or UK perceptions of heritage and therefore it was felt that a small number of non-British participants would not undermine the aim, and rather than having to send them away and risk causing offence or disruption, they were welcomed to take part. All participants were residents of Bournemouth, in the south west of England and had been for at least one year. The sample was designed this way, to keep a broadly similar cultural base from which to discuss heritage. This was done in recognition of the strong links between heritage and wider ideas of identity (Palmer 2000; Hitchcock 2002; Munasinghe 2005; McLean 2006) and the fact that cross-cultural comparisons were beyond the scope of this research.

Furthermore, in focus groups there is a need to ensure that *'participants will have enough in common to make discussion seem appropriate, yet sufficiently varying experiences or perspectives in order to allow for some debate or differences of opinion'* (Barbour 2007, p.3). Therefore the broadly homogeneous cultural background of participants is counteracted by the varying ages and mix of men and women.

For the most part, the groups were formed of participants who did not know each other in order to avoid participants glossing over or rushing ideas or thoughts that may have been obvious to members of established groups. Morgan (1998, p.49) suggests that strangers are more likely to think through and talk about *'taken for granted assumptions'* and it is these assumptions that may reveal the shared frames of references and the multiple meanings that heritage may represent for participants. However, there were a few exceptions to this, with a married couple in one group, and two friends in another group. Each focus group had a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 8 participants, which helped create an informal and friendly atmosphere. These manageable group sizes allowed for a more natural flow of conversation and a sense of getting to know each other. Some authors advocate larger groups of up to 12 participants (Stewart and Shamdasani 1990) however the research aim informed the decision to keep groups small in order for participants to get a full opportunity to discuss their ideas and interact with each other, rather than the discussion taking on more of an interview style. Each group varied slightly in length but ranged from 1 hour 35 minutes to 2 hours depending on the natural breaking point in the discussion, whether the topics had been covered in sufficient depth and how relaxed participants were in terms of time.

Some groups were naturally more talkative than others, often resulting in a longer session.

The focus group literature is somewhat unclear when it comes to deciding how many focus groups are appropriate in a study. Nyamathi and Shuler (1990) propose that *'four focus groups are sufficient, but that consideration of response saturation should be made after the third'*. Similarly, Morgan (1998) recognises that *'the rule of thumb of 3 to 5 focus groups'* is built on the underlying principle of data saturation and that data collection proceeds until the data provides few *'meaningful new insights'* (ibid p.43). In other focus group studies, Zepeda et al. (2006) used 4 focus groups, whilst Murdaugh et al. (2000) used 5 focus groups, and Warr (2005) carried out 8 focus groups. Furthermore, Bryman (2008) summarises a number of studies that utilised a larger number of focus groups ranging from 8 groups to 52, stating that it is the purpose of the study and the amount of cross-comparisons required that will affect the number of groups needed and suggests that once saturation has been achieved, collecting more data will be a waste of time.

Whilst there are no hard and fast rules, Morse (2000) suggests that when determining the sample size in qualitative research it is important to avoid having too much data that results in a superficial analysis, suggesting that a study may be larger but not necessarily richer. However the complexity of a topic can call for a larger number of focus groups to be carried out (ibid). Given the multiplicity of possible meanings and values, and the complex nature of heritage, the data collection involved 8 focus groups as this was when both saturation and

sufficiency was achieved in the data (Jennings 2005, p.111). Data analysis was carried out as an iterative process to help identify when these criteria were achieved. If necessary, further focus groups would have been conducted in order to ensure a sound foundation for the analysis. Data saturation for the purposes of this research was judged to be achieved when no new underlying meanings, values or representations were being constructed during the discussion and subsequent analysis. This is opposed to using the range of 'things' 'places' and 'people' specifically referred to as an indicator of saturation, as for every meaning or value constructed, there were often numerous manifestations of this in the discussion. Therefore saturation was determined by the overarching meanings and values rather than the various examples and contexts used to articulate them. In this study, the 8 focus groups generated over 14 hours of audio tape, resulting in 480 pages of verbatim transcripts and over 130,000 words (see analysis section for an explanation of the recording and transcription process).

The focus group participants were recruited from central locations around Bournemouth during the daytime and early evening. As the researcher was new to this type of activity, a trained recruiter was used to assist in recruiting for the initial groups (Krueger 1998). This helped the researcher gain new skills and to learn appropriate ways of approaching and inviting members of the public to take part. The language of a 'discussion group' was used rather than 'focus group' when interacting with the public, to help communicate and explain the activity without using unnecessary jargon. The recruiters wore lanyards with the Bournemouth University logo and their names clearly identifiable. The use of the university logo was also a way of demonstrating that the research was not

sponsored by any heritage or commercial organisation. Whilst issues such as language and affiliation are closely linked to ethics in research, they are included here to help describe the recruitment process. As heterogeneous groups were desired i.e. with a variety of ages and gender, 2 focus groups were recruited simultaneously on each occasion to allocate potential participants to the group that both suited them in terms of date and time, and also suited the composition of the groups. Therefore if one group was filling up with females only, the next woman would be invited to the alternative group to try and create a balance. This purposive sampling technique is often used in focus group research whereby specific characteristics are sought (Krueger and Casey 2000).

The recruitment process was time consuming and at times disheartening, and it took several attempts to recruit to each pair of focus groups over the course of two days per two groups. The recruiter and later the researcher approached people, seeking a variety of ages and genders and enquired whether they would be interested in participating in the research. Whilst many people were responsive, obviously not all were interested in participating. For those who did express interest, the research was explained alongside the times and dates of the groups. At this juncture, if still interested, each individual was asked a few filter questions regarding residence in the area, and whether they were from the UK. If then invited to take part, they were advised that a £10.00 Marks & Spencer's voucher would be given to them as a thank you for their time and toward any expenses incurred. Participants were advised that the group would take place at the University and would last between 1.5 hours to 2 hours, with refreshments provided.

Each willing participant was given a map showing the time and location of the discussion group and also given the 'individual pre-task' activity to have a think about. Their contact details were taken at this point to help in the follow up process. It is worth noting at this stage that the aim was to recruit about 8 to 10 participants for each group, to try and allow for any *'no-shows'* (Wilkinson 1999). This proved to be a useful strategy as despite follow up calls to all participants (Kruger and Casey 2000) there were usually a small number (on average 2 - 3 per group) who either cancelled at the last minute, or did not arrive on the day. This strategy ran the risk of having larger groups than anticipated, however this was seen as a lesser problem than if too few people had turned up, which would have hindered the possibility for discussion and interaction (ibid).

Focus Group Proceedings

Appendix C shows an advance checklist which was designed to help plan the focus groups and to ensure each element was in place prior to each group. This checklist included important reminders such as booking the refreshments and conducting follow up calls to participants prior to each group. In addition, appendix D shows a room set up checklist, again to ensure everything was prepared before the participants arrived. Simple issues such as having spare batteries for the audio recorder and having spare pens were considered to try and avoid any disruptions during the discussions.

The focus groups were held in a large room at Bournemouth University, above the main reception area. The expense of hiring a location in the town was not seen as necessary, particularly given the need for a 'heritage' neutral location. Morgan

(1998) suggests that the location itself is of little importance when the subject is of interest to the participants. The room was set out to be as informal as possible, with desks set in a circle with refreshments to one side and a large window to the other. The room was purposely chosen for its natural light and its proximity to the central lifts from reception. The participants were welcomed and gathered at the main reception on arrival where there was comfortable seating to use whilst others were arriving and being met. When entering the room, all participants were invited to 'help themselves' to the tea, coffee and biscuits, with the researcher and the assistant doing the same. This was to create an informal atmosphere as opposed to a more formal waiting style service.

Each place was set out with coloured pens and card and participants were invited to make a name card at the beginning of the session. By way of starting the proceedings participants were asked if they would put their names on the card, with the researcher and assistant doing the same. This served the dual purpose of allowing each participant to see each other's names, and also to indicate to the researcher how they would like to be addressed i.e. with a title and surname, first name only etc.

Once everyone was settled into seats with a hot drink and biscuits of their choice, the consent forms were handed out and explained in the simple language of the form (see appendix E) which was then signed by all participants and collected. Participants were informed of the aim of the study and the main elements of the consent form. There were no problems encountered at the stage in the process, with no participant objecting to the use of the recorder. The digital recorder was

turned on and placed in the centre of the table with a small, unobtrusive microphone. The decision was made to audio record the groups in order to facilitate the transcription process (described in the analysis section) and to avoid disrupting the 'flow' of discussion by having to take detailed notes (Krueger and Casey 2000). This allowed the researcher to listen more effectively. The assistant did however make some notes throughout, noting any useful speaker identifiers, different moods, behaviours and types of interactions between participants. These notes were particularly helpful given that focus groups have various speakers and it is difficult to identify and track each voice without some prompts at the beginning to help recognise participants during the transcription process. For example if one participant chuckles at another's comment, the notes helped pick out who was chuckling. These interactional events were particularly valuable and the researcher would have struggled to maintain the richness of the data without additional notes.

Once the audio recorder was running and everyone had a drink, the researcher introduced herself and the assistant (a volunteer member of staff from the university) to the group. At this point, some background information was given as to why participants had been invited along. The tone was kept light and friendly in order to foster a *'conversational style'* (Jennings 2005, p.101) and to ensure no participant felt intimidated by the setting or by the purpose of the research. Everyone was reminded to *'help themselves'* to refreshments at any time during the discussion. The researcher then re-stated that there were no right or wrong answers (Weeden 2005) and that each participant should feel welcome to present

their personal ideas during the discussion, even if they differed to others in the group (Vicsek 2007).

The focus group topic guide (appendix B) was used to guide the process but was not used as a rule book or 'tick box exercise' and each group took on a unique style as different ideas and interests directed the nature of the discussion. To begin with, participants were asked to think of five heritage 'things' or 'ideas' and to jot them down on the note paper in front of them. This mini activity was included in case any participants had not had a chance to do the individual pre-task activity, and also for those who may have thought of something or an idea, but not brought it along with them for whatever reason. This ensured that all participants had something to refer to when asked and also firmly placed the content of the focus groups in the hands of the participants without the need for the researcher to direct the content (Vicsek 2007). This activity also helped to give both the researcher and the other participants some idea of the way participants were thinking about heritage prior to wider group discussion and interaction. This took a few moments and most groups settled down very quickly, some hinting that they were quite enjoying being part of something different, and one or two laughing about being inside a classroom or at the university which they would not normally experience. Kitzinger (1994) discusses the use of activities within focus groups, suggesting them as way in which to enhance participation and creating some basis for analysis across different groups. This was an important consideration given the loosely structured, flexible design of these focus groups, as it is usually the case that more highly structured groups are more easily analysed and compared (Hughes and DuMont 1993).

Prior to discussing what participants had written down for this initial activity, they were reminded of the individual pre-task activity and by way of an ice-breaker, each participant was invited to introduce themselves, their item/idea and *why* this represented heritage to them. It was deemed important that this pre-task be the first item discussed in the focus groups as it served as a way of passing the discussion over to the group at the earliest opportunity, signifying that whilst the topic itself had been given to them, this was their opportunity to bring their own ideas forward. Morgan (1998, p.10) advocates this approach, in that the primary aim of a focus group should be to learn from the participants and to be sensitive to their priorities: whilst *'it is your focus, it is their group'*. This was a very successful aspect of the focus groups as the conversation centred on the ways in which different participants had responded to the pre-task, highlighting different ways of approaching both the task and the wider topic itself. This also served to provide various different contexts from which participants then discussed heritage as they saw fit. Veal (2011, p.245) recognises that in focus groups, the researcher becomes a *'facilitator, convenor or discussion leader rather than an interviewer as such'* and the aim is to encourage interaction between participants as well as the facilitator. The majority of the discussion in the groups was built around these two early activities and gentle prompts were given by the facilitator to ensure everyone took part and had the opportunity to contribute. Chapter 4 of this study includes an in-depth discussion surrounding the pre-task activity and the analysis of these data.

Weeden (2005) advocates the use of a *'funnel strategy'* when conducting focus groups whereby largely unstructured conversation is encouraged during the group

and then towards the end the facilitator can direct the discussion if there are any further topics or themes to be considered. To this end, the latter stage of the focus groups included a small number of activities that were designed to draw together the themes of the discussion and allow participants time to re-emphasise or change their ideas. The activities were purposely kept at the end of the groups as they may have biased or led the discussion had they been introduced earlier. The first activity was to think about heritage in their local area and later an 'imagine if…' style question was also used, whereby participants had some imaginary free time to spend on a 'heritage day' and they were encouraged to share ideas about how they might spend their time. This question was to see whether or not heritage was thought of as 'something to do' and whether or not the participants saw themselves as heritage visitors or tourists without explicitly asking them about such distinctions. Chapter 6 includes a discussion surrounding the ways in which participants engaged with these questions.

The focus group topic guide also included some 'back up' activities which the facilitator could use if the group was particularly quiet or ran out of self-directed topics/themes. These mini activities were therefore not used in every group, but rather they were employed when needed. If groups were interacting well and generally having rich conversations about heritage and how it was important to them, then they were encouraged to continue as they were. However, as the researcher was new to facilitating these types of groups, it was seen as an advantage to have a few extra questions just in case. However these questions were only asked in three groups, one of which was a particularly quiet group and in the other two, because the participants were particularly settled and 'in no rush'

and therefore the extra questions were included. These activities involved the use of some 'heritage' logos and images to explore how the participants responded to these and whether or not they recognised them. It was important that both these activities were done towards the end of the discussion to avoid influencing the participants by introducing contexts that may or may not have been part of the discussion otherwise. This activity served as a platform for discussion surrounding heritage places and organisations and raised some interesting points about participants' views of these, and these will be discussed in chapter 6.

Aside from the mini activities used within the groups, the focus of the discussions was largely directed by the participants themselves and a diverse range of topics and themes were raised throughout the different groups. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 discuss these themes in detail.

Analysis

As defined earlier in this chapter, qualitative research *'attempt[s] to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them'* (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p.3). In this research, qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions and it is through the analysis process that the multiplicity of meanings and values of heritage can be explored and understood. Patton (2002, p.439) suggests that an analytical framework can include *'sensitising concepts, issues, questions and processes'* that are relevant to the research aim which can then be illuminated through the analysis of the data. For this research, the key sensitising concepts were based around the different understandings people may have of heritage and the multiplicity of possible meanings and values that heritage

may represent for participants. Beyond these broad concepts, the analysis took an inductive approach and explored the emergent themes and issues that participants discussed during the focus groups themselves.

Units of Analysis and Focus Groups

It is important to be clear about what constitutes a unit of analysis when designing the analysis of qualitative data and in particular focus group data. Academic literature on the focus group method has consistently called for the analysis to focus on interaction between focus group members. This is apposite given that this interaction is the key characteristic that differentiates focus group data from those derived from other qualitative interview methods (Kitzinger 1994 & 1995; Hyde et al. 2005; Zorn et al. 2006; Wibeck et al. 2007 and others).

Kitzinger (1995) suggests that a number of aims can be achieved through focus group interaction including the ability to identify participants understandings and values in relation the topic. Furthermore, the interaction within focus groups can have a *'yes... but…'* quality (Morgan 1997, p.21) when participants do not necessarily agree with what is said in the group, which allows insight into different perspectives on the same broad topic. When presenting the data within the discussion chapters, an effort will be made to refer to interaction, for example by highlighting if a participant is referring to another participants contribution by picking up on an earlier point in the discussion. This adds transparency as to the nature and flow of the discussion and ensures interactional data is preserved.

When analysing interactional data, the unit of analysis necessarily becomes the group rather than the individuals within the group (Morgan 1988; Stewart and Shamdasani 1990; Kitzinger 1994). Individuals within focus groups cannot simply be treated in the same way as those speaking in one-to-one interviews, due to the understanding that data derived from the group members are not independent of the group itself (Hughes and DuMont 1993). Considering this, emergent themes need to be drawn from across a sample of groups, as opposed to across participants within focus groups (ibid). Therefore themes are developed when they occur across two or more of the groups, rather than within a particular group. This is an important distinction that further sets the focus group method apart from earlier focused group interviews (Merton 1956) and individual and group based interviews. The fact that themes are drawn from across groups adds to their credibility and demonstrates that the issues or topics were pertinent within a range of different discussions.

Whilst it is largely accepted that the interaction within a group and the group itself are the important analytical foci, Morgan has openly revised his thinking on this point since first stipulating that the group, rather than the individual, must be the unit of analysis in focus group research (Morgan 1988). In a follow up to his earlier writings on focus groups, Morgan (1997, p.60) suggests instead that:

> '...most assertions that the group must be the unit of analysis are actually warnings about the dangers of using individuals as the unit of analysis. Although the influence of the group on individual participants is undeniable, this is a far cry from demonstrating that the group should be the unit of analysis in focus group research' (ibid).

Morgan (1997, p.60) suggests that whilst looking solely to the individuals within a group for the analysis creates a *'psychological reductionism'* that treats the group as a sum of its individual members, the alternative, which solely uses the group as the unit of analysis amounts to a *'form of sociological reductionism'*, which views the individuals and the data they contribute are *'mere manifestations'* of the group as a unit and its own group processes (ibid). To avoid these polar extremes, the analysis of focus group data must take into account that:

> *'Neither the individual nor the group constitutes a separable unit of analysis; instead our analytic efforts must seek a balance that acknowledges the interplay between these two levels of analysis'* (ibid).

This is supported by Kidd and Parshall (2000, p.299) who whilst recognising the controversy surrounding units of analysis in focus group research, suggest instead that neither the individual nor the group is the sole unit of analysis, but that either or both of these can provide a legitimate focus for analysis. The important thing is to have an analytical approach that is *'sufficiently flexible'* to recognise when the individual or the group is driving the data at any given stage of the discussion (ibid). This dual analytical focus of both the interaction within the group, and the individuals within the group, necessitates detailed transcripts that identify individual speakers, the context of sections of speech, the group mood, interaction and wider processes, all of which represent valuable data that can shape and inform the analysis.

In this study, both the group and the individual are considered and included within the analysis and interpretation, whilst recognising that the data derives from the social setting of the focus group itself and the interaction of the group members.

Furthermore, the data in the discussion is presented alongside the participants' pseudonym, which focus group they took part in and their age, in order to contextualise the data and to enhance transparency as to whether the data comes from an individual speaker or from an excerpt of interactive talk. The participants' age and gender (identifiable from their pseudonym) are included in the discussion chapters to enrich the data and are not intended to signify comparisons, which would be unsupported by the size of the sample and beyond the scope of this study.

The Transcription Process

In order to explore and analyse the qualitative data, full verbatim transcripts were needed and this was this first step in the analysis process. Therefore, the data in this research takes the form of the full transcription of the digital recordings of the 8 focus groups. This data represents over 14 hours of audio, 480 pages of verbatim transcripts and over 130,000 words. Additional data was embedded into these transcripts at the time of transcription, including any insights into the mood of the individuals and the groups, emotions or reactions and any intonations, emphasis etc. that could be judged from listening to the audio recordings and also from the written notes made during the focus group by both the researcher and the assistant. Furthermore, the transcription was carried out as soon as possible after the focus groups as the discussion and its members were still fresh in the mind of the researcher and the style and tone of the group could be recoded alongside the audio file and the assistant's notes. In terms of the practicalities of carrying out the transcription, Krueger and Casey (2000, p.130) suggest it can take anything from 8 to 12 hours to transcribe a two 2 hour focus group. In this research it took

between 7 and 8 hours to transcribe and prepare 1 hour of audio recording, depending on the number of participants in each group. This was longer than the literature suggested which may be due to the full nature of the transcriptions and the level of detail desired within them. Therefore it took just over 100 hours to translate the audio files into written transcripts ready for analysis.

The transcription was undertaken using foot pedals and transcription software 'Olympus DSS Pro Player' which allowed the audio files to be controlled by the foot pedals. This approach left the researcher's hands free to type and listen, whilst at the same time, using the foot pedals to stop, start and rewind the audio file as required. Whilst the transcription took longer than the literature suggests, care was taken to ensure the transcripts were as rich as possible and also that they were formatted appropriately. Important formatting included using clear speaker identifiers, recording emphasis in speech by using italics, displaying pauses in speech with '…', and with annotations to include emotions, group dynamics and any other information available. Furthermore, heading levels, colours, paragraphs, highlighting functions etc. were useful tools. Lewins and Silver (2007) refer to this process as *'preparing'* the transcripts and as such, Microsoft Word processor was useful in this activity.

A particular issue when transcribing the data was that, due to the nature of focus groups, there were various speakers all with different speech patterns, pitches and speed, and other similar idiosyncrasies which made the transcription slower, as it was important to determine who was speaking and to whom they may be responding. As the transcription was done by the researcher herself this was done

over a slightly longer period than if a research team had been involved, although this had the benefit of a sense of immersion and closeness to the data. Rabiee (2004) recognises that in focus groups, as with other qualitative data, an early process within the analysis is to familiarise oneself with the data. Audio files are listened to and transcripts are read in their entirety several times, in order to *'immerse in the details'* and get a sense of the whole before breaking it into parts (ibid p.657). Therefore, once the full transcripts were prepared in this way, they were re-read a number of times in their original state to ensure familiarity with, and a holistic view of, the data before moving forward with the analysis.

Using NVivo Software

To help inform the decision as to whether computer assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) would be appropriate or useful in this study, the researcher attended a number of training days on the NVivo software package and spent time becoming familiar with the software and what it could do. The process of learning to use NVivo took several weeks and involved workshop activities, training booklets and also simply playing around with the software to see what worked well. Whilst analysing qualitative data does not necessitate the use of computer software, it was seen as a beneficial tool that reduced the use of paper, pens, charts and physical space etc. which would have been a significant aspect of a manual or *'long table'* approach to the analysis (Krueger and Casey 2000).

Whilst CAQDAS software has a number of benefits, it is also important to understand what it cannot do in research. Qualitative software will not identify codes, or emergent themes, and neither will it connect or disconnect these codes

and themes (MacLean et al. 2010). Furthermore, qualitative software will not create a theoretical model or framework or draw conclusions from data (ibid). All of these activities are carried out by the researcher and require *'human abstract thought'* throughout (ibid p.312). As such, it should be recognised that the effectiveness of computer software is dependent on the skills of the researcher (Jennings 2005, p.109). Therefore, as with all CAQDAS packages, NVivo does not replace or reduce the need for the complex thought processes and interaction between the data and researcher that qualitative data analysis requires. It does however offer key tools to assist in these activities:

> *'NVivo has tools for recording and linking ideas in many ways, and for searching and exploring the patterns of data and ideas. It is designed to remove rigid divisions between 'data' and 'interpretation'* (Richards 1999, p.4).

Kidd and Parshall (2000, p.299) found that rather than create distance between the researcher and the data, the use of software facilitated *'closeness'* as any coded text was *'only ever a mouse click or two away'* from its source document. Furthermore, these authors found that the tools of the software enhanced rather than inhibited reflexive engagement with the data. Furthermore, NVivo has the additional benefit of allowing for both hierarchical and non-hierarchical coding schemes to be developed (Lewins and Silver 2007), which was particularly useful in this research as it seeks to remain open to the type and number of themes that may be important to the participants.

Finally, it is useful to note that the data preparation carried out at the transcription stage reduced the amount of *'cleaning-up'* required and helped ensure the

transcripts were compatible with the features and functions of the chosen analysis software (Lewins and Silver 2007). This was important as different software packages recognise structural features in the data (such as heading levels, capitals etc.) in different ways (ibid). Once the transcripts are imported into the software it is increasingly difficult to rectify formatting errors (MacLean et al. 2010). Therefore some planning is needed in order to get the best from the chosen software. Further discussion as to the use of NVivo in this study will be built into the following section to help communicate the context of its role in the analysis.

Thematic Analysis

In order to analyse the qualitative data in a systematic way, a Thematic Analysis was carried out on the focus group data. Thematic Analysis can be understood as a *'way of seeing'* and a way of *'making sense of and analysing'* that allows the researcher to analyse, process and interpret qualitative data (Boyatzis 1998). Furthermore, Thematic Analysis can be defined as a method of *'identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data'* (Braun and Clarke 2006, p.79). This analytical approach involves the systematic development of *'codes'* and *'themes'* interpreted from the data.

There are distinct phases of thematic analysis (see Table 3.1) which can be followed in order to approach the analysis in an ordered and systematic way. As previously described, a full verbatim transcription was carried out of each focus group discussion and as per phase 1, this was then reread a number of times. The codes and themes in this study were data driven and inductive in nature as opposed to being *a priori* or deductive codes (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006).

Whilst the study is interested in the meanings and values of heritage, it makes no attempt to pre-determine or anticipate what these meanings or values may be, nor how heritage is understood and negotiated as a topic by participants. With no definition or framework of heritage provided to participants, the codes and themes developed during the analysis were driven by the interests and foci of the participants themselves and the data obtained from the focus group discussions. Each of the phases was carried out as part of the analysis and NVivo was found to be useful in facilitating each step.

Table 3.1: Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the Process
1 Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2 Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3 Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4 Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), generating a 'thematic map' of the analysis.
5 Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6 Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006, p.87)

At phase 2, *'free node'* coding was carried out to generate non-hierarchical codes (Lewins and Silver 2007) and these were listed in the free node folder and added to as coding progressed by either coding to an existing free node, or creating a new free node as appropriate. Gibbs (2002, p.131) recognises an alternative approach to coding at the early stage of a project, whereby coding may be directed by a particular theory or by the structure of the questions in an interview or focus group guide. However, this would be a largely deductive approach to the early analysis, and as no such theory was being tested and no rigid questions were included in the focus group topic guide, the free nodes function was used to develop ideas as an ongoing process as they were interpreted from the data. At the next stage, the *'tree node'* function of NVivo was used to *'collate codes into potential themes'* (see phase 3, Table 3.1). The *'tree node'* function allows for hierarchical structures to be developed whereby a number of the initial codes may be grouped together into a broader theme that says something about the codes it is comprised of. It is worth noting that this *'tree'* is developed as a work in progress and is continually adapted and shaped as the coding continues. Furthermore, free nodes continued to be created if they raised a new idea and did not as yet have a home in the developing tree node structure. Therefore the phases overlap.

Phases 4 and 5 *'reviewing themes'* (Table 3.1) took place continuously, and required reflexivity and critical thinking to ensure that the codes were sensitive to the data they contained (i.e. the data coded to each node) and also that each thematic grouping of codes was both insightful and meaningful in terms of the data. Again NVivo was particularly useful as the tree node structure was in effect the *'thematic map'* that phase 4 suggests. The names of codes also evolved as the

researcher became more sensitive to the nuances in the data and made decisions about how to present the themes in the overall narrative of the data. Finally it is important to note that phase 6 involves a wide range of analytical tasks not least in terms of building in the interpretation and discussion in order to theorise about the data and the findings. The actual writing up stage is therefore one of the most complex and requires a high level of engagement with the data to ensure this is kept at the forefront, to avoid the literature restricting or dominating the presentation of the data driven themes.

Manifest and Latent Level Coding

For this study, a key strength of thematic analysis is that thematic codes can be attributed to the raw data at a number of different levels, namely the *'manifest'* and the *'latent'* levels of the data (Boyatzis 1998). For example, the manifest level of coding is concerned with what is visible or apparent within the data, i.e. the words or expressions used explicitly by the participants, whilst the latent level of coding looks beyond this, to interpret the underlying meanings of the phenomenon (ibid). An example of the manifest level of the data is related to the pre-task activity question *'what do you think of, when you hear the word heritage'?* In response, participants gave their ideas quite explicitly in relation to that question as they highlighted things or ideas that were of specific interest to them or things that came to mind as relating to heritage. Conversely, an example of the latent level of data relates to the values that emerged during the discussion. Given that participants were not expressly asked to think or talk about 'values' at any time during the research, for the most part this analysis was done at the latent or interpretive level. However there were instances of values being referred to

explicitly in a number of groups and in this case these would be treated as manifest data.

Whilst the process of developing a thematic analysis at both manifest and latent levels is more complex than using one level, it is appropriate given the complex, interpretive nature of the topic. The two different levels enhance the depth of analysis that can be carried out within the study and therefore facilitate the aim of this research which focuses on the multiple meanings and values that shape heritage for different people. Given that heritage is an inherently interpretive and value-laden phenomenon, it is important that the analysis takes an inductive and open approach to where and how participants construct their ideas, and to be sensitive to these, whether the meanings are explicit or implicit within the data. It is therefore important that the analytical claims made within the research are both *'grounded in, but go beyond the 'surface' of the data'* (Braun and Clarke 2006, p.94). Furthermore, whilst both the manifest and latent levels hold *'gems of insight',* it is the *'interpretive analysis of the latent themes* [that] *allows for the fullest sense of the context as a referent or basis for understanding the phenomenon'* (Boyatzis 1998, p.166). Therefore, the thematic analysis in this study took a blended approach and as such carried out code development at both levels within the data.

In using both levels of analysis, a considerable amount of time is spent with the raw data, building codes and grouping these codes into themes and trying to make sense of the complex data. In doing this, the functions of NVivo were useful as it allowed for coded data to be viewed in the context of the full transcription and

also in the context of the code or codes it had been attributed to. The software allows coding with as much or as little detail as desired, and given that focus group data is particularly interested in interaction between participants, much of the coding was done by selecting whole sections of quotations by different participants as they discussed a particular issue or idea. This facilitated the analysis and writing up process, as the code itself included extracts of conversation, rather than one or two snippets of words or sentences that would have lost the interactional and contextual relevance of the data. Whilst the latter approach could be resolved with one or two simple clicks back to its original state in the relevant transcription in order to check or add to the coded section, the former approach led to much more context specific coding that prioritised interaction and the ways in which the participants constructed their ideas about heritage.

A further benefit of the NVivo software is that codes are easily renamed and data can be un-coded or moved if the particular idea the section highlights no longer fits with the way the researcher is thinking about and developing the code itself. Lewins and Silver (2007, p.146) recognise that the *'recode'* function can also be a useful tool in NVivo as qualitative researchers are likely to change their mind during the coding process, as they see things *'in a new light'* or *'identify additional aspects of significance'* about the data as they proceed. This helps when exploring ideas and trying out early codes, but also when revisiting codes and refining ideas about codes and themes.

Massey (2011) recognises that with focus groups, thematic analysis of latent data can occur at three levels; namely the articulated, attributional and emergent levels of the data. The first of these relate to latent data that answer a specific question asked of participants in the discussion by the facilitator; the second relates to data that links to any *a priori* theories or research questions that the researcher may seek in the data; this is therefore not relevant to this study. The third level of latent data, the *'emergent data'* is reserved for data that is unanticipated and contributes new insights into the topic (ibid). Therefore when analysing the latent level of the data both articulated and emergent data will be used whilst the middle level, that of attributional is less relevant given the inductive nature of the study. It is useful to distinguish here between what Massey (2011) calls articulated data and what Boyatzis (1998) refers to as manifest data. As articulated data does not refer to manifest articulations by the participants, but rather data that is generated in response to an articulated question, but within the given answers and discussion, coding remains at the latent level.

Demonstrating Credibility

There are various debates surrounding the question of which criteria are appropriate for assessing the quality of social research. Veal (2011) recognises that the use of validity and reliability for instance, stem from the positivist tradition of research and as such are not always appropriate for qualitative studies. Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose alternative criteria for assessing qualitative research, suggesting 'trustworthiness' as a more useful and meaningful indicator of good research. This concept of trustworthiness can be broken down into four elements (Bryman 2008, p.34): *'credibility'* (to parallel internal validity),

'transferability' (to parallel external validity), 'dependability' (to parallel reliability) and 'confirmability' (to parallel objectivity). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) recommend that for research within the constructivist paradigm, these are the appropriate criteria. Veal (2011) suggests that data collected in a qualitative study has a greater chance of being internally valid (credible) than data gathered in a quantitative way, and that the exchange between the facilitator and the participants in a focus group discussion increases the likelihood that they have understood each other.

Trustworthiness, Thematic Analysis and Social Constructionism

It is important that trustworthiness is evident in the analytical process and the wider research design and epistemology. For instance, when analysis includes the latent level of the data and the development of codes and themes involves interpretive work, then this approach tends to come from a constructionist perspective (Braun and Clarke 2006). Therefore, it is important that in reporting such analyses, this is done in an appropriate way that fits within the epistemological framework of the study. Therefore, to increase cohesion and in turn credibility, the analysis, interpretation and discussion in this study will avoid talking of themes 'emerging' or being 'discovered' in a passive way, which would imply that themes simply 'reside' within the data, but instead will acknowledge the active role of the researcher (Braun and Clarke 2006, p.80). Similarly, Gibbs (2002, p.6) suggests that when researchers use terms such as 'reveal', 'dig down to' and 'pull the veil back on' to describe research findings, this suggests an implicit belief in an underlying reality. From an idealist or constructionist perspective this approach would be rejected as it implies that the role of the

researcher is to discover the *'facts'* (ibid). In this study, the underpinning epistemology is that of social constructionism, and as such it would not make sense to talk of codes or themes residing in the data, or to imply that the researcher has simply identified themes and is presenting them as a single reality. Instead, this study views the data as being actively constructed by the participants during the focus groups, through their interactions with each other and the researcher.

The analysis therefore seeks to understand these constructions and interpret the meanings that they may represent. As such, the researcher actively constructs codes and themes to best fit the data and the views of the participants and, in an effort to be transparent about this process, every theme presented will be set in the context of the group discussion, making extensive use of verbatim quotations to allow the *'voices of the participants to be heard and to be evident'* (Jennings 2005, p.112). Furthermore, given the interest in *'interaction data'* in the analysis, the excerpts from the raw data will include chunks of consecutive or non-consecutive statements by different participants representing multiple or different views within the discussion (Kidd and Parshall 2000). This is particularly important for research in the constructionist theoretical perspective, which should make use of data extracts that contain several participants' contributions rather than relying on isolated manifestations (Vicsek 2007).

Furthermore, Morgan (1997, p.21) highlights that focus group discussions often have a *'yes... but…'* quality… or the *'I understand what you're saying... but for me…'* style of interaction and these types of patterns will be carefully considered

in order to avoid the trap of presenting a rosy, simplistic narrative. This approach will avoid what Silverman (2006, p.47) calls the dangers of anecdotalism in qualitative research, whereby a *'few telling examples'* and *'snippets'* are used to illustrate the analysis without an attempt to deal with any contrary cases. Therefore, by including a wide range of verbatim data excerpts and discussing the interaction of participants, as well as any diverging or different views that may say something interesting about the data, this study aims to be as transparent and as representative of the participant's views and interests as possible.

Nutt Williams and Morrow (2009, p.579) highlight that an important and related issue within trustworthiness is the need to achieve a balance between what participants actually say and the words they use, and the ways in which the researchers interpret meaning. This balance relies heavily on subjectivity (in the participants' voices) and reflexivity (in the researcher's interpretation of the meaning) (ibid). In this study, the interpretation and resulting themes and sub-themes are presented in the context of the participants' own words and their interactions with each other and therefore achieves such a balance. Therefore, the reader is able to see where the interpretation has come from in terms of the original data. This increases the transparency of the interpretation and affords the reader access to the participants' voices as much as possible within the writing process. This also increases the level of confirmability of the study as the reader can also interpret the data extracts and evaluate whether the interpretation resonates with them.

In this study a blind coder was used to enhance trustworthiness. Barbour (2001) describes this as *'multiple coding'* and suggests that an independent researcher looking at and coding a segment of data can be a *'valuable strategy'* within qualitative research. This multiple coding can be thought of in a similar way to *'inter-rater reliability'* in quantitative research designs (ibid). However, whilst a constructionist epistemology does not call for *'inter-coder reliability'* (Freeman 2006), this process stemmed from a genuine interest in how an independent researcher would interpret the data, which could then further add to the range of meanings and values that were constructed during the research. The independent researcher was a lecturer involved in qualitative research into an unrelated topic, who was not involved in the research design. Blind coding led to a discussion between the two coders about the nature of the data, which served to sensitise the researcher to possible new insights. Furthermore, as Barbour (2005) suggests, the multiple coding activity is particularly good at furnishing alternative interpretations and encourages thoroughness when analysing and writing up research.

Ethical Considerations

Alongside the discussion above, Rallis and Rossman (2012) suggest that for research to be credible, we must also trust in it. Or put another way, an unethical study is simply not a trustworthy study (Rossman and Rallis 2012). Therefore there are a number of important ethical considerations to account for at various stages during the research process. Diener and Crandall (1978) categorise four broad principles that can be useful when designing, conducting and evaluating social research:

1. Whether there is harm to participants;
2. Whether there is a lack of informed consent;
3. Whether there is an invasion of privacy;
4. Whether deception is involved.

These principles were followed throughout the research process alongside the Bournemouth University Ethical Guidelines for Research and the standards set out by the ESRC Research Ethics Framework (2005 cited Bryman 2008, p.127). Each of these principals cover a range of issues and these will be addressed here in turn, in order to ensure transparency in the way this research was designed and conducted.

Principle 1: Think about whether there is harm to participants

Harm includes both physical and mental harm and should therefore be actively avoided when designing research. In this study no participant was put in a position of physical danger and a risk assessment was submitted to the school research committee prior to commencing primary research. Each focus group was held on a university campus, in rooms fit for the purpose. It was confirmed prior to inviting participants that the university insurance would cover any members of the public on site, and that a first aider could be contacted at reception in the event of any accidents or an emergency.

With regards to emotional harm, no sensitive questions or topics were introduced during the research and there was no foreseeable reason why a participant would feel stressed or that their self-esteem would be adversely affected. In addition, Bryman (2008) recognises that care must be taken when maintaining confidentiality of records as although this overlaps with the 3rd principle, harm

may arise if participants' details were to be revealed without prior agreement. Confidentiality was assured and to this end all names were changed to pseudonyms at the transcription stage so that no personal information was preserved within the data. The original audio files were kept in a locked cabinet for the duration of the analysis stage to allow for listening back, and the electronic version of the audio files were deleted once the transcription was completed. At no point are any participants identifiable from this study.

A further consideration was to avoid harm to the researcher, and this was done in a number of ways. Firstly, a trained recruiter was used to help recruit participants for the initial groups (Krueger 1998) which gave the researcher helpful tips about how to safely approach potential participants and ensuring the recruitment took place in bright, relatively busy public spaces. Furthermore, whilst conducting the focus groups, a research assistant was present at all times and the reception desk at the university was aware that the groups were taking place with members of the public at the relevant times. The focus groups took place on campus, in a room easily accessible to reception and hence the university security staff. Finally, the researcher ensured that she had a phone on her during the groups in case of any emergency affecting herself or another participant.

Principle 2: Think about whether there is a lack of informed consent

The full purpose of this study was explained to all participants during the recruitment stage and again at the beginning of each focus group. A consent form was designed and distributed to participants to read and sign (appendix E) and each participant was given a copy of the consent form for their records (see

Bryman 2008). This form gave an overview of the study, made reassurances about confidentiality and explained the purpose of the audio recorder. There was no need to withhold any information pertaining to this study. The sample did not involve vulnerable adults or children and therefore there was no ethical conflict in gaining consent directly from the participants. Participants were advised of their right to withdraw from the study at any time during the process and were advised of what was expected of them in advance i.e. the length of time the focus group was likely to last, the location of the study and contact details for the researcher should they wish to follow anything up at a later stage.

Principle 3: Think about whether there is an invasion of privacy

A further consideration is to ensure that 3rd party confidentiality is preserved throughout the research process (Jones et al. 2012). This was done by abbreviating any quotations if they were deemed to refer to any identifiable 3rd party individual or group. A note was placed alongside the quotation to identify any abbreviated sections of data to make it clear that the participants' words had been edited. This was also done to protect the participant when necessary, for example when referring to their family name or specific place of birth.

Given the group nature of the focus groups, there could arguably be issues surrounding whether or not participants discussed another group member outside of the focus group context. However, no participant raised concern over sharing their experiences with others and it was always clear that they were invited to a 'group' discussion. All participants chose to self-identify by their first names only, therefore no other participant would have access to their full name or other

personal information. All participants were given pseudonyms prior to writing up the research, so no individual is likely to be able to identify another participant if they read the study in the future.

Principle 4: Think about whether deception is involved

There was no use of deception in this study as there was no need to hide the aim, the methods, or the purpose of the study from the participants. It is worth noting however that the word 'values' was not explicitly used when describing the study to participants, but the intentions of the study were made very clear without the specific word, which was paraphrased into more meaningful terms such as 'what heritage means to you', so no deception as such was involved, rather a desire to see if values occurred in the data naturally.

A further consideration relates to the use of an incentive when recruiting participants for the focus groups. The decision was made to offer a £10.00 high street voucher by way of thanking participants, and in recognition for the fact that they were making their own way to the venue, this contributed to reimbursing participants for their travel expenses. This amount was judged to be enough to appeal to interested individuals, but not enough to motivate uninterested individuals. Weeden (2005) supports this approach and recognises that it is highly unusual for participants to give up their time for no remuneration and that a book or shopping token of 5 or 10 pounds is common for postgraduate students compared to 25 pounds from commercial organisations.

Limitations

As with all research methodologies, there are a number of limitations to be discussed. These limitations relate to the different stages of the research design and reflecting on these is an important part of the research process.

One potential limitation of this study refers to the nationality of the researcher. As an Irish citizen, in some ways I was an outsider looking in on a cultural group talking about a heritage other than my own. This could be seen as a drawback given the largely British sample within this study, and may have influenced the data in subtle ways. However, whilst I personally define myself as Irish, I have been a resident of the UK for over twenty years, taking part in school, work and leisure activities and becoming familiar with British culture and heritage along the way. In some cases it was evident that my Irish nationality was considered within the discussion, for instance in phrases such as *'For you Maeve, this may be different'* or *'is that the same in Ireland do you think?'* This suggests that participants were aware of, but not seemingly troubled in any way by my different background. Furthermore, whilst a largely British sample was sought in the interests of cultural homogeneity, participants self-defined their nationality in different ways. For example, the sample included participants from England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Poland, Lichtenstein and one British Canadian. Therefore an Irish researcher did not noticeably create any problems within the discussions. Furthermore, at no point were participants asked to focus on British heritage *per se*, although this parameter evolved during the majority of the groups as participants tended to focus on personal and national understandings of heritage. Moreover, for the most part, the sample comprised of participants who

did not know each other beforehand; with the understanding that strangers were more likely to explicitly refer to otherwise *'taken for granted assumptions'* (Morgan 1998, p.49). This logic applies in much the same way to the 'stranger' or external researcher, as participants were at various times interested to clarify things for me, to ensure that I understood the subtitles, which they may never have articulated with an insider.

One criticism of the research would be the difficulty in moving beyond authorised heritage discourses (Smith 2006) as the sample comprised mainly of participants from within relatively privileged, rather than silenced or excluded groups. However, the inductive, interpretivist research design and the focus on lay rather than expert perspectives goes some way to redressing this imbalance. A further limitation recognised with regard to the sample in this study, relates to the limited diversity achieved. Whilst the sample purposely sought residents of Bournemouth and British citizens, there was no limit on the cultural background beyond this. However, as Bournemouth is a predominantly white, middle class town, this had an impact of the final composition of the groups. It is a recognised limitation that all participants were white and although no income/class questions were asked, it is possible to suggest that none were from particularly disadvantaged backgrounds. This is an important limitation that may have shaped the data in many ways and as such it is important to clarify that no attempt will be made to generalise to the wider British population from the findings of this research. Diversity was achieved however with regard to the age range of the participants (from 19 to 81 years) and with regard to gender (with 22 female and 25 male) participants.

The design of the methodology intentionally called for the primary research to take place away from a pre-defined heritage or heritage tourism context. However, a limitation of this relates to the nature and content of the discussion within the groups. The lay understanding of heritage did not have immediate associations with tourism for many of the participants, and therefore tourism took a lesser role within the discussion that would have been preferable. However, it is by understanding the meanings and values of heritage as defined by the non-experts and in many cases the non-users or visitors of heritage and heritage tourism that the latter can be informed and wider understandings of heritage can be achieved. Therefore, the wider framing of heritage embraced by the participants furnished a number of relevant insights into the latent interest and demand for heritage.

Summary

This chapter presented the interpretive, qualitative research design of this study, which takes an inductive approach in order to privilege non-expert understandings of heritage and the range of possible meanings and values that may be relevant from this perspective. In total 8 focus groups were carried out and the data were subsequently transcribed and analysed using a thematic analysis. A thematic framework was produced to illustrate the main themes and sub-themes developed through the analysis and interpretation. This framework is presented at the beginning of the next chapter, after which each theme will be discussed alongside verbatim data excerpts in order to render the interpretation transparent and to ensure the participants' voices can be heard within the study (Jennings 2005).

Chapter 4:Thinking about Heritage

Presenting the Thematic and Sub-Thematic Framework

This section presents the thematic and sub-thematic framework developed through the analysis of the focus group data. There are 9 themes in total presented and discussed (see Table 4.1) and each theme has a varying number of sub-themes, shaped by the data and analysis. It is important to recognise that the number of sub-themes related to a particular theme does not suggest or influence the significance or relevance of that theme, rather this is determined by the different ways in which the theme was interpreted within the data. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are structured around the thematic framework.

Table 4.1: The Thematic and Sub-Thematic Framework

'Heritage? What do you mean by heritage?'	**Unfamiliarity and uncertainty** *'It's just not one of those things you sit down and think about!'*	**Chapter 4**
'It was fairly obvious to me'	Confidence and familiarity *'For me it was a gut reaction'*	
Heritage as Inheritance	A personal or inalienable inheritance A shared or public inheritance Inheriting a new heritage	
The perceived importance of heritage	Understanding heritage through history Connecting with heritage through history The educational value of heritage Politics of the past and identities of the present	**Chapter 5**
Senses of heritage	Sense of place & belonging A sense and source of pride	
Heritage & security	Sense of belonging National security	
The intangibility of heritage	Using images to explore heritage Stories & storytelling	
Levels of engagement with heritage	Feeling personally connected to heritage Feeling disconnected from heritage	**Chapter 6**
The role of tourism in exploring heritage	Connecting with heritage through tourism Seeking meaningful heritage tourism experiences Using specific interests and skills Seeking familiar experiences	

The Structure of the Discussion Chapters

This chapter presents the first three themes and related sub-themes of the thematic framework. These three themes are grouped together for the purposes of the discussion chapters as they represent the participants' *thinking about heritage* and the different ways in which they responded to the idea of heritage as a topic for discussion.

Chapter 5 presents a further three themes and related sub-themes which are grouped together as they represent *the multiple meanings of heritage* that were constructed throughout the focus group discussions.

Chapter 6 presents three further themes and sub-themes which together represent the ways participants seemed to be *engaging with heritage* both within the discussion itself and also as they related heritage to their everyday lives and their leisure and tourism experiences.

In addition to the above, the discussion chapters include the *values* that participants related to heritage throughout the discussions. Rather than present and discuss these values in a separate chapter, which would be somewhat out of context, these values are discussed as they relate to the wider discussion of each theme, the data itself and the surrounding interpretation.

Introduction

This chapter explores the ways in which participants first responded to the topic heritage and includes a discussion of their feelings and experiences on having been invited to take part in a discussion group about heritage. These initial ideas and feelings became an important focus in the early stages of each focus group as participants reflected, shared and compared what turned out to be quite different first thoughts with each other. This aspect of the discussion highlights the unfamiliarity and uncertainty that some participants felt about heritage, which was in contrast to the immediate confidence of others. This contrast became the natural starting point in a number of the focus groups and showcases the range and scope of the ideas that different participants had about heritage. Importantly, this early part of the discussion seemed to reassure the groups about the aim of understanding heritage as *they* viewed it (an emic view) rather than heritage having been defined for them by the parameters of the research (an etic view).

A number of the themes were developed, highlighting the range of different thoughts participants initially had about heritage. In order to develop these themes, the analysis presented in this chapter was principally done at the *'manifest level'* of the data (Boyatzis 1998) using the words and expressions directly used by the participants. The theme ***'Heritage? What do you mean by heritage?'*** is an example of the manifest level of data analysis as this is a direct quote from a participant and represents a sentiment echoed by other participants during the focus groups. As a direct quote, the meaning is taken directly from the words of the participant and little interpretation is needed in order to derive an understanding from the data. Moreover, most of the words used to analyse and

discuss this particular theme were directly available to the researcher within the data i.e. they were *'manifest'*. Subsequently these words are made readily available to the reader of the study through the use of verbatim extracts from the data which closely reflect the surrounding discussion. Other parts of the sub-thematic framework were developed using the *'latent level'* of data analysis (Boyatzis 1998) whereby the themes derive not from a verbatim quote or other manifest data, but rather from an interpretation of these quotes in order to further understand the meanings within the data. An example of this would be the sub-theme **unfamiliarity and uncertainty** which is developed through the unspoken yet increasingly apparent tone of the data within the particular theme.

Furthermore, the themes and sub-themes presented in this chapter were constructed primarily through the analysis of *'articulated data'* whereby the groups discuss and respond to particular questions posed to them (Massey 2011). In this case, the opening questions of the focus groups asked participants to reflect on the initial thoughts or ideas they had when they heard the word 'heritage'. Which was first mentioned to them as a topic for discussion when they were invited to take part in the research. Furthermore, many participants had some particular contribution planned as part of the advance preparation they had done for the individual pre-task activity. They were invited to discuss their ideas at the beginning of the session by way of introducing themselves and their initial ideas about heritage. Therefore the early discussion in the focus groups tended to be in response to these opening questions.

Table 4.2: Thinking about Heritage

Themes	Sub-themes
'Heritage? What do you mean by heritage?'	**Unfamiliarity and uncertainty** *'It's just not one of those things you sit down and think about!'* Demonstrating a lack of *confidence* about heritage
'It was fairly obvious to me'	**Confidence and familiarity** *'For me it was a gut reaction'*
Heritage as inheritance	**'When I think of heritage, I think literally I suppose, of what, what you've inherited isn't it!'** A *personal* or inalienable inheritance A *shared* or public inheritance The experience of inheriting a *new* heritage

The structure of this chapter follows a discussion of each of the first three themes and sub-themes from the framework (Table 4.2) and these themes are discussed in terms of relevant literature where appropriate to interpret the findings. Furthermore, this chapter will make extensive use of quotations and excerpts of interactive talk in order to ensure that the voices of the participants can be heard (Jennings 2005) within the data presentation and interpretation. Where possible examples will be used from different groups to demonstrate where and how the

themes were constructed. Information such as the pseudonym of the participants, their age and to which focus group they belonged, is included to add further transparency and to add a sense of richness to the data.

'Heritage? What do you mean by heritage?'

In a number of the focus groups, participants discussed how unfamiliar the topic 'heritage' was to them, and that heritage was simply not something they had consciously thought about prior to being invited to participate in the research. A theme of unfamiliarity and uncertainty was developed that reflects the initial ambiguity and doubt that the word heritage represented for these participants.

Unfamiliarity and Uncertainty

An example of doubt is seen in the following excerpt from focus group 2:

> **Annie:** *At first it kind of got me thinking* (pauses…) *because I hadn't previously given it much thought. But yeah, I kind of got thinking. I was interested, as it is an interesting topic, but I've not given it much thought before* (19yrs.)

> **Susan:** *Em... well… I've never really thought about it 'til this came up, and this sort of opens your eyes. I had to think about it. I had to go and look it up in the dictionary to see what it actually meant. Really, my mind went blank!* (70yrs.)

In a different group, this same sense of unfamiliarity comes through from the discussion in focus group 3:

> **Jill:** *I think, because we don't tend to use the word 'heritage' a lot anymore, do we? It's not something you usually say* (19yrs.)

> **Kirsty:** *Unless it's in, err, you know like inheritance tax or something like that?* (20yrs.)

> **Abbie:** *Yeah, I even had to think about how the hell do I spell it, like I never think of it even that much! It was random at first, I thought oh! that's random!* (Uses animated tone here) *Yeah, I didn't even think about it* (pauses…) *because you don't think about heritage* (20yrs.)
>
> **Jill:** (cont.) *…yeah, it's just not one of those things that you sit down and think about!*

Similar feelings were evident for other participants:

> **Jeff:** *I could not think what heritage was, whether it is history or art or the past in general* (38yrs. fg4)
>
> **Sarah:** *It was quite, I think em... I thought it was a quite an interesting topic just because it's not something that you talk about all the time I suppose, just as a* (pauses…) *well not me personally anyway* (laughs) (40yrs. fg6)

These excerpts illustrate that for some participants heritage is something that is not thought about; the word heritage does not have an obvious or immediate relevance for them or for their daily lives. It is important to recognise that heritage is not always seen as being relevant or familiar and that to some, the word itself is anachronistic and *'random'* as Abbie puts it. Furthermore, whilst heritage is not thought about to any great degree by these participants, Sarah also highlights that heritage is not a common topic of conversation. What is also interesting is that for all of the participants who expressed ***unfamiliarity or uncertainty***, each then went on to engage fully and contribute their own ideas to the discussion once they started thinking and talking about the topic.

In the focus groups, participants were given the opportunity to explore their ideas about heritage in a way that made sense for them, their values and their interests. It is interesting that for some participants the discussion and its content was something that they viewed as interesting and important, but the word 'heritage'

itself seemed to be a barrier and one that they did not associate with or relate to in any real way. Indeed, Joe's final input in focus group 2 was to say *'thanks for making me think about this!'* (46yrs.) and similarly in another group the closing discussion included the comment: *'yeah, this has given me new ideas of what heritage is'* (Jill, 19yrs. fg3). These comments seem to suggest a genuine interest in heritage, but one that was either latent or framed in a different way for these participants. This contributes to the understanding of the non-users' view of heritage and heritage tourism which Timothy and Boyd (2003) highlight as a gap in knowledge within heritage research.

The theme of ***unfamiliarity and uncertainty*** highlights that for some people, the term heritage itself may be a barrier that prevents them from engaging in heritage in a more active sense i.e. by visiting heritage sites or attractions. This could well fit with the *'intrapersonal'* obstacles that either a *'lack of educational preparation, desire or interest'* may create for people (Timothy and Boyd 2003, p.282). The excerpts above suggest that heritage may well be a dormant topic, one that is rarely thought about or talked about for some people. This understanding highlights some of the factors that may lead to the non-use of heritage and contributes to the question of how to *'turn this into actual use, overcoming obstacles… that prevent people from visiting heritage sites'* (ibid).

Furthermore, the theme of ***unfamiliarity and uncertainty*** and the initial hesitancy and doubt that relate to these feelings, are important issues for the heritage sector to understand and they raise several management questions for the managers and marketers of heritage sites and attractions, including the challenge of how they

may develop marketing communication strategies that effectively engage any unmet demand from potential audiences. Perhaps using more accessible messages or more familiar, less 'random' words in their communications may have the effect of resonating more widely with audiences who are not familiar or comfortable with the word heritage or what it may mean in a particular context.

A further issue that this theme highlights is that whilst the term 'heritage' was unfamiliar to some participants, this seemed to accompany a ***lack of confidence:***

> **Lucy:** *I think initially it was something a bit hesitant* [the topic], *because although I knew what it meant to me personally, but I didn't know if the word 'heritage' would encompass my thoughts. And I think having printed it out* [the definition she sourced] *and read about it, I think it actually does, yes!* (60yrs. fg5)

Lucy seems to be reassured and maybe even surprised by the fact that the official dictionary definition matched her personal understanding of heritage. This sums up a general sense of *'Heritage? What do you mean by heritage?'* (Joe, 46yrs. fg2), whereby some participants' first instinct when hearing about heritage seemed to be to defer to the focus group facilitator for guidance, perhaps seeking some sort of authority on the subject or reassurance about the desired topics of conversation. It is important to note, that when such a situation occurred, it was reiterated that the research was interested in their *own* understandings of heritage. As a consequence, the groups were actively encouraged and as a result, they often took ownership of the discussion and its direction without fear of saying something 'wrong'. This initial lack of confidence suggests that there are barriers not only in terms of the word or label 'heritage', but also in terms of a potential disconnect between what the participants themselves think heritage is, whether or not they

had given it much prior thought, and what the official meaning might be to an expert on the subject.

This may relate to a general criticism in the literature that suggests that heritage tends to be an elitist or exclusive concept (Merriman 1991; Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Howard 2003) and one usually in the realm of historians or conservationists rather than a topic that the general public could make a valuable contribution to. This may mean that the *'authorised heritage discourse'* which *'privileges the expert values and knowledge'* and dominates professional heritage practices in western society (Smith 2006, p.4) may have become part of the lay understanding and discourses of heritage. That heritage is somehow the realm of the experts and professionals and is defined externally by those who *know* about heritage. By hesitating and asking *'what do you mean by heritage?'* Participants are deferring to an external potentially more authorised or expert view, rather than feeling empowered to respond in the first instance with their ideas or understanding. Furthermore, since it has been recognised that different disciplines and scholarly perspectives often view the significance and meaning of heritage differently (Papayannis and Howard 2007), it seems fair to suggest that if the supposed experts of heritage find the concept challenging, then it may be expected that members of the public find the topic unfamiliar or ambiguous.

This finding resonates with the literature in terms of the challenges raised by the lack of an agreed definition of heritage. Indeed, this theme may support the call for an agreed definition to simplify the concept of heritage (Timothy and Boyd 2003), the logic being that if the heritage sector, including organisations such as heritage

visitor attractions, museums, heritage sites etc., took a more unified approach, then this may filter down to a general public awareness and understanding. It may well be the case that the lack of such a clear frame of reference may be stifling potential within both academic but also importantly within more practical settings (ibid).

This theme of ***unfamiliarity and uncertainty*** in particular ratifies the decision to take an inductive approach in this research, as the emic view of heritage was actively constructed through a process of open and interactive discussion led by the participants themselves. This supports the recognition that in some cases, not all participants are likely to have coherent attitudes ready and waiting for the researcher to come along and access in relation to a given topic or idea (Silverman 2006). This theme would not have been developed, or perhaps accessible at all, had the research utilised a more quantitative approach or if the study had taken place at a 'heritage' site or visitor attraction. By seeking to avoid the bias such a context would bring to the research, the insider or emic perspective of heritage has been nurtured. This theme was also evident at the early stages of organising the focus groups and was something that a number of participants seemed to express when 'heritage' was first put to them as a topic for discussion. This may not have been evident with visitors to a heritage site or attraction as they would inevitably have drawn from the environment they were immersed in at the time, a context previously defined and labelled as heritage for them.

'It was fairly obvious to me'

Whilst the theme above highlights the uncertainty some participants felt when discussing their initial thoughts about heritage, this next theme is constructed around the clear sense of confidence and familiarity other participants demonstrated when asked to reflect on their initial thoughts about heritage and what it was like to be invited to a discussion group on the topic.

Confidence and Familiarity

For some participants, heritage was a topic they felt immediately at ease with and this is highlighted by the succinct answers some participants gave in the early stages of the focus groups:

> **Alexander:** *Obviously heritage is history and the past and way we used to live* (43yrs. fg2)
>
> **Gary:** *For me, it was things that em, are in our history that make us who we are,* (pauses) *I actually thought it was quite an interesting subject. So* [there were many things] *that I think sprang to mind immediately when I was asked about heritage* (27yrs. fg7)
>
> **Olivia:** *Really pleased was my initial reaction. I love history, arts, people and language. So heritage is what has happened to us and how life evolves* (59yrs. fg5)

Similarly in focus group 1 there was a kind of conciseness about the way they discussed their initial thoughts:

> **James:** *Mainly I thought of anything over 100 years old* (pauses) *that is still around, still surviving today* (60yrs.)
>
> **Rob:** *To me, I suppose, heritage is things that we've experienced, that our parents experienced and what we would like to pass on to other generations* (58yrs.)

Likewise in focus group 4:

> **Alex:** *For me it was a gut reaction that heritage was about buildings... I think it's a broad range of things, em... but buildings and that are synonymous with heritage for me* (61yrs.)
>
> **Gareth:** *Well my thoughts initially were less about buildings and things* [picking up on Alex's earlier point] *and more about family and regional identity* (pauses) *that's probably because I'm Cornish* (laughs here and others join in). *Heritage for me is anything that represents or impacts on who we are, our values and our future* (52yrs. fg4)

Whilst Alex and Gareth have different ideas, there is no animosity evident in the style or tone of the discussion; rather they seem genuinely interested in each other's views. This style of interaction is particularly interesting, whereby Gareth picks up on Alex's earlier point, his purpose being to distinguish between their different viewpoints. This highlights the *'yes... but…'* quality that focus group data can sometimes have (Morgan 1997, p.21). By including such data which shows differing ideas, as well as those excerpts that tend towards a consensus, it is hoped that the presented interpretation is thorough and transparent. It is also interesting that at the end of this particular group, Gareth reflected on the day, saying that the differences between participants' views were the key enjoyable element: *'it is always very interesting to view other peoples' views and to share experiences, if you don't find that interesting than I mean, life isn't worth living, is it!'* This shows that for this participant, and others who made similar parting comments, the interaction was not only meaningful and interesting but also enjoyable, showing that heritage can be an interesting topic of conversation when the opportunity arises.

One important thing to focus on within this theme is not so much the types of things or the specific ideas that the participants highlight as being 'heritage', rather it is the style and the tone with which they discuss their ideas. It is interesting that each of the participants that contributed to this theme focused on quite different things, but they all come across with a sense of **confidence and familiarity** about heritage. Phrases such as *'gut reaction'*, *'sprang to mind immediately'*, *'obviously'* and *'really pleased'* characterise these participants' initial thoughts about heritage. This is in stark contrast to those comments in the previous section which were characterised by quotes such as *'my mind went blank!'* and *'I even had to think about how the hell do I spell it, like I never think of it even that much!'* This demonstrates that there were two largely different initial responses to the topic heritage and that different participants had a different journey in terms of preparing for and taking part in the focus groups. Whilst Lucy (60yrs. fg5) looked heritage up in a dictionary and came armed with a definition, Helena (51yrs. fg5) came with a poem she remembered from school, whilst yet others came with a more off the cuff approach, their simple *'gut reaction'* ready to talk and interact with other people about their views and ideas. One participant summed up the essence of this theme by saying: *'it was fairly obvious to me to be honest'* (Gareth, 52yrs. fg4) when discussing his initial reaction to the topic heritage.

Whilst no attempt is made here to create or suggest discrete segments of potential audiences for heritage and heritage tourism organisations to target (the sample and the aim of the study making this route inappropriate). It is possible that the two different types of response can be used to better inform management and

marketing practices within such organisations. For example, as suggested above, some people are ***unfamiliar or uncertain*** about heritage and what it might mean and therefore the word 'heritage' itself becomes a barrier. A ***lack of confidence*** about heritage could also be creating a barrier for some and therefore the sector, or individual organisations, could work to make heritage sound less archaic, more accessible and more relevant for these people. Conversely, there are those who are ***confident and familiar*** with the topic heritage and what is meaningful or relevant about heritage for them. In this instance, more specialist approaches to management and marketing becomes appropriate. What would be important however is that the former did not alienate the latter and vice versa.

At this juncture it is also important to highlight that whilst the discussion refers to the possible management and marketing implications of the findings, the initial thoughts about heritage, for the most part, were not constructed around notions of 'tourism' or 'visiting'. These ideas were not introduced into the focus groups until much later, and it is interesting to note that the participants focus on more intangible and often quite personal associations of what they see as heritage and do not seem to equate the term heritage to 'tourism' or 'visiting' or even 'doing' in the first instance. Furthermore, with the exception of Alex who refers to buildings and James' comment about heritage being something that is *'still surviving today'* there seems to be an emphasis on less tangible ideas at the early stage of the discussion. When reflecting on the topic heritage and their initial reactions to being invited to a discussion group, participants did not refer to places, sites, things to do or to things to see, to any great extent. This is interesting as it raises important questions about the meanings and values that heritage

represents for people away from a tourism context. This is particularly apposite considering that it is away from a heritage tourism context *per se,* that any un-met or latent demand is likely to reside. Therefore it is participants' **initial thinking about heritage** more generally that may help to develop current understandings of heritage.

Heritage as Inheritance

Another theme that was constructed from the early part of the discussion data was the idea of **heritage as inheritance**. Some participants took a literal or semantic approach when discussing heritage, with 'inheritance' being the obvious root. They seemed confident about making links between heritage and inheritance from the outset of the discussion: *'when I think of heritage, I think literally I suppose, of what, what you've inherited isn't it!'* (Alan, 63yrs. fg1). This idea also formed part of the discussion in focus group 2 as seen in the following series of excerpts:

> **Joe:** *I did have a think about it, about my ideas on heritage* (pauses…) *and I thought in terms of heritage as being inherited. It's what has been left behind from previous generations. What previous generations have left for us, that they thought were valuable, that they thought were interesting* (46yrs.)

> **Annie:** *I thought of stuff that I'd been given, like inherited* (pauses…) *from people, and about where I was from and who I am kind of thing* (19yrs.)

And later in the same group:

> **Annie:** *I had like, features and characteristics, em, what you look like and kind of who you are* (pauses…) *your likes and dislikes and certain things you pick up from your parents and your grandparents. With similar, em, traits and features* (gestures to her distinct red hair and

smiles). *To me that's heritage, like what you inherit from them* (19yrs.)

It is interesting that whilst the discussion in this group relates closely to the theme ***heritage as inheritance***, each individual has a slightly different view as to how heritage may be inherited and from whom. Annie, who is quoted earlier as saying that heritage is an *'interesting topic, but I've not given it much thought before'*, goes on to construct a very personal understanding of heritage. Her initial thoughts were of her red hair as a distinct feature that she inherited directly from her family. She has taken an immediate approach to thinking about heritage, which includes her physical characteristics, personality traits, her likes and dislikes. There seems to be a clear sense of identity and close relationships that stem from this connection. Heritage helps to clarify a sense of *'where I was from and who I am kind of thing'*. This personal understanding of heritage is also apparent in another group, in which Kellie expresses that *'heritage is about inheriting my families' ideas and values'* (20yrs. fg3).

Heritage as a Personal Inheritance

For some participants it is clear that their initial thoughts about heritage were on a very personal level, with connections made to immediate family groups and the unique people they are as a result of their inheritance from them. This can be understood through an anthropological perspective of heritage that recognises:

> *'...two possibilities for thinking about heritage... one broadly based in a historical understanding of public heritage and the other a heritage understanding presented through private claims of inheritance'* (Chambers 2005, p.7).

For Annie and Kellie it seems their initial thoughts were of an *'inalienable inheritance'* whereby *'the past is dynamically linked to the present through specific and private claims of inheritance'* (ibid). This way of approaching and understanding heritage, suggests that the inheritance is personally associated with and is not easily separated from its relationship with the present or the future. Heritage in this sense is a *'direct and inalienable inheritance'* which is relevant to everyday life (ibid). Chambers (2005, p.7) suggests that this type of inheritance is one of *'continuous cultural process'* which reveals the meanings of heritage and which *'continues to guide so much of our lives'*. This way of understanding heritage as an inalienable inheritance can be linked to the Gaelic word *'Dualchas'* which refers to the *'more intangible matters of* [one's] *nature, character and duty'* (Macdonald 2005, p.314). This is something that connects and binds us to our heritage, which whilst it may vary in its forms and uses, is *'at its root inalienable, it is kept even as it is passed on (such as from one generation to the next)'* (ibid). Dualchas is further defined as a hereditary disposition shaping a person's bias of character, nature, temper and the manner in which they may imitate the ways of their ancestors (Macdonald 2005). This can be clearly linked to the ideas of the focus group participants in that they view heritage as shaping their values and their characteristics. Annie's idea about heritage including the *'likes and dislikes and certain things you pick up from your parents and grandparents'* very much relates to the idea of Dualchas and an inalienable inheritance. Furthermore, Gareth refers to heritage as *'anything that represents or impacts on who we are, our values, and our future'* (52yrs. fg4) implying a personal attachment to heritage and his identity.

This understanding goes some way to illuminating the personal level of heritage that is the least understood in the literature (Timothy 1997). By gaining an insight into how people understand and value heritage and the range of meanings it may hold for them at such a personal level, there may be scope to build an understanding of their subsequent motivations to engage with heritage in a more action orientated behaviour such as visiting a site or an attraction (Muller 1991; Crick-Furman and Prentice 2000; Jewell and Crotts 2001). By taking the tourism context out of the primary research at the initial stage, this has encouraged a much wider range of ideas from participants and gives a genuine sense of how they understand and engage with heritage in their own terms. These meanings and values contribute to knowledge gained in a specific tourism context and may form a stronger foundation from which to build demand for heritage tourism.

Heritage as a Shared Inheritance

A short while later in focus group 2, the theme of ***heritage and inheritance*** is explored further. Susan refers back to Annie's earlier comments in order to share her own ideas about heritage as a personal inheritance from her parents and grandparents, and this interaction seems to facilitate her own thinking about heritage. Furthermore, this seems to give a platform for Matt to add a different perspective:

> **Susan:** [I thought] *something similar, em* (pauses…) *heritage is looking after what's been left, for us to carry on and pass on to others. Em, perhaps it's inheritance from your parents, your grandparents, a bit more personal. I think that's about the same as some of the others* (refers back to Annie here) (70yrs.)
>
> **Facilitator:** *and Matt?* (Matt gestures he wants to add something else)

> **Matt:** *As I said earlier, it is things left, em bequeathed to us by our predecessors* (pauses…) *Yeah but the only, the only additional words I'd add is that we wouldn't actually own any of these things. We'd never be in a position to well* (pauses…) *we're never fortunate enough to own 'em, obviously some people are, but the things I thought of, em, the countryside, forests, woodland, the shoreline, buildings and well national parks… they're not personally owned by us* (68yrs.)

Whilst still following the theme of ***heritage as inheritance,*** Matt's initial ideas about heritage (above), rather than focusing on a personal inheritance, instead he talks about things that are shared in society. Highlighting outdoor spaces and common areas such as woodlands and national parks, Matt specifically makes the point that whilst the public may have inherited these resources from previous generations, they do not actually *own* the heritage personally. He emphasises the idea that whilst some people may be fortunate enough to own such things, and it becomes clear that he is thinking more of a public inheritance than a personal one. This is a relevant distinction that relates more closely to the idea of a *'historical understanding of public heritage'* (Chambers 2005, p.7). Whilst inalienable heritage, such as those aspects discussed above, may be inherently and privately meaningful for those involved, conversely, the historical understanding of a more public heritage is somewhat different, and risks the loss of a personal attachment between the people and the heritage in question (ibid). A more historical understanding of heritage may lead to the separation or distancing of the heritage from its 'heirs' and instead may render the heritage as a commodity for the public marketplace (Chambers 2005). In the case of a woodland, a national park or similar, this may relate to how the space is packaged, marketed and then experienced by outside tourists, which may be different to how it is viewed or valued by local communities.

The implication here is that outsider groups, whilst being able to appreciate and benefit from the heritage, may never feel the personal responsibility or motivation to protect and care for heritage resources in quite the same way as an insider group (which may view the space as an inalienable part of their inheritance). This sense of a more historical understanding of heritage is also constructed during the following excerpt from focus group 4, whereby Allison explores her ideas relating to heritage and inheritance:

> **Allison:** *I thought of the word inheritance, first of all when I thought of heritage, but then I* (pauses…) *I thought it's something that we all inherit, not just individuals. Then I thought it's something old as well, I always think of something old when I think of that word, heritage. Then I thought of, for example Stonehenge, historical houses as well, the Roman baths in Bath I thought of that, and err anything historic I suppose* (37yrs.)
>
> **Facilitator:** *So when you thought of inheritance, you thought about what everyone inherits?*
>
> **Allison:** *Well yeah. The word inheritance came to me first of all, I thought of inheritance in terms of what you inherit from your family, you might write down* [in a will] *that these people are going to inherit this building or money, or this object, and you actually specify don't you. But then when I thought of heritage again, and I thought it's not a specific person that inherits, its em, that everyone inherits it. Does that make sense? So, yeah, I just thought of objects, buildings, history, and old, that's what I thought of. Yeah.*

As Allison talks through her initial thoughts about heritage, she clarifies that whilst she started off thinking about an individual view of inheritance (with a more material or tangible interpretation), she then moved away from this idea towards a more collective view of inheritance. In doing so, her language is more of a public heritage: *'something that we all inherit'* as opposed to something she may relate to on a personal level. The idea of *'anything historical I suppose'* helps

to clarify that Allison is taking a more external, impersonal view of heritage as inheritance.

Inheriting a New Heritage

Whilst the data surrounding the theme heritage as inheritance focused on either personal or shared understandings of inheritance, there was one somewhat different case whereby Gareth (following on from Alison above) spoke of his experience of inheriting a new aspect of heritage during a specific life experience:

> **Gareth:** *I think that does depend on your upbringing, you know with me, the whole kind of Royal Navy thing. I served in the Royal Navy, so I've got that kind of stuff behind me* (pauses…) *so, I've got a Falklands medal* [has brought a medal, shows it around the group] *so that affects my view of heritage…. There is a whole kind of second string of heritage been drummed into me there from being in the Royal Navy. From the day you join, you're taught about naval history, admirals and the Navy's heritage and that takes you onto this bigger global scale. And it's kind of almost a second string, you then* (pauses...) *you almost inherit that, you adopt it. It's not actually yours personally, until you join the force, then you're given it, if you like, so you suddenly inherit a bit of heritage that you didn't have!* (52yrs.)
>
> **Facilitator:** *How does that feel when you have experienced something like that?*
>
> **Gareth:** *Initially it's a bit weird, I think because you think 'is this really a part of me?' But after you have been in one of the services for a while, you feel like you own it, you become part of it and it becomes part of you, something you become very proud of, you know. So I think, you can almost, em, dependant on the route your life takes, you can inherit bits of heritage along the way.*

This excerpt explores what it was like for Gareth to have been *'given'* and in turn *'adopted'* a new aspect of heritage as a result of an intense experience such as being in the Royal Navy. This highlights a different perspective from those

presented so far, and Gareth's experience may resonate with the view that heritage encompasses shared values and memories which are inherited over time and which are expressed through various cultural performances (Peckham 2003). For Gareth, being immersed in a culture such as the Navy over a period of time formed a solid base from which to assume the naval heritage as part of his own. A heritage that once was unknown or external to him, about which he initially thought *'is this really a part of me?'* over time came to be valued as a part of him and his identity. This experience may be understood in light of the suggestion that more personal forms of inheritance are gained and shaped by a *'continuous cultural process'* (Chambers 2005, p.7). Such processes of group identity and group membership create allegiances which shape the memories and values that are shared and therefore inherited (Moore and Whelan 2007). This fits well with the conceptualisation of heritage in the literature as a social and cultural process (Smith 2006) and as *'the performance and negotiation of identity, values and a sense of place'* (Smith and Waterton 2009, p.292). This understanding of heritage is not a static one; it is cyclical, an ongoing process that evolves and adapts as people experience or reflect upon different aspects of their lives.

The data used to construct this theme highlights that for many of the participants, heritage and inheritance go hand in hand. Whilst they each had different views as to *how* heritage is inherited and from *whom* (and in the last case *when),* there was a genuine sense of interest in this concept of **heritage as inheritance**. This supports the view that the *'essentially intangible concept of inheritance seems to be central to heritage, and it is this that distinguishes both tangible and intangible heritage from other forms of tangible and intangible culture'* (Grydehøj 2010,

p.77). This would suggest that it is not always the specific context or nature of a particular heritage that is most important when communicating to potential audiences. Rather it is the scope to appeal to this sense of inheritance, which is particularly important when looking to engage local communities, as it is the sense of inheritance that seems to help people feel a valued connection with heritage. It is also by understanding that *'inheritance emanates not from sites or objects themselves but from the complex webs of cultural history contextualising them'* that a greater opportunity for fruitful promotional initiatives of heritage and heritage tourism may arise (Grydehøj 2010, p.87). This fits well with the view in the literature that it is individuals and their unique motivations that define heritage and that these individuals attribute the value they deem appropriate to the heritage they encounter, rather than the value being intrinsically present for them to ascertain in an *'appropriate'* way (Howard 2003, p.7). The theme heritage as inheritance and in particular the understanding of participants' inalienable heritage, illuminates the nature of heritage at this personal level and is a useful perspective for heritage managers to understand in order to effectively engage potential audiences.

This theme suggests that managers of heritage sites and attractions should take on board this lay understanding of heritage as a personal inheritance and in doing so, appreciate the value people attach to certain aspects of their inherited heritage. This approach would also go some way to righting the shift recognised in an early critique in the literature which warned that heritage had moved away from the original emphasis upon heritage as *'values, traditions and ideas'* and instead was more nationalistic, shaped by *'organisationally led motives of status and desirable*

representations' (Yale 1991, p.21). Managers may be able to connect with new audiences through appropriate marketing messages that invite people to think, reflect and explore what heritage means to them, as opposed to having static interpretations with continued *'authorised heritage discourses'* (Smith 2006) which may not resonate with people beyond a historical understanding of public heritage.

Summary

This chapter has explored the first three themes from the thematic framework and in doing so, has made a contribution to a number of questions raised by the literature review. In order to align these questions with the inductive themes presented in this chapter, Table 4.3 presents these three themes and sub-themes alongside the broader questions from the literature chapter.

This chapter highlights the initial ideas participants had about heritage and highlights the different ways in which they responded to the topic. Whilst some were initially hesitant and lacked confidence in the topic, for others it was familiar and there was a sense of confidence about what participants felt they might bring to the discussion.

Table 4.3: Contribution and Relevance of Themes 1 - 3

Themes	Sub-themes	Broader Questions from Literature
'Heritage? What do you mean by heritage?'	**Unfamiliarity and uncertainty** *'It's just not one of those things you sit down and think about!'* Demonstrating a lack of confidence about heritage	
'It was fairly obvious to me'	**Confidence and familiarity** *'For me it was a gut reaction'*	*- What is the lay or non-expert understanding of heritage?* *- What types of ideas or things are thought of as 'heritage'?* *- Levels of interest and awareness in 'heritage'*
Heritage as inheritance	**'When I think of heritage, I think literally I suppose, of what, what you've inherited isn't it!'** A personal or inalienable inheritance A shared or public inheritance The experience of inheriting a *new* heritage	

These themes are interesting as they present a challenge to heritage and heritage tourism managers. It is clear that not everybody understands 'heritage' or has a clear idea of what it may mean in a personal or general sense. Heritage for some is simply *'just not one of those things that you sit down and think about'* (Jill, 19yrs.

fg3). If this is accepted then managers need to stimulate people to think, to explore and to relate to heritage in new ways. One such way would be through the understanding of a personal and inalienable heritage, a heritage that is not easily separated from its relationship with the present or the future. In this sense, heritage becomes relevant to people in an everyday way, rather than being something 'other', something unfamiliar that fails to resonate with them. By exploring the lay understandings of heritage, it becomes apparent that there is a need for the heritage sector to move beyond official, authoritative narratives and to empower audiences to construct their own understandings of heritage and the meanings and values it may hold for them.

Chapter 5: The Multiple Meanings of Heritage

Introduction

Once the initial thoughts of the participants had been shared and discussed within the focus groups (chapter 4), the discussion in each group generally evolved in line with the interests of its members and the types of things or ideas they had introduced to each other at the beginning of the session. Interestingly, participants often referred back to the pre-task activity during the focus groups and also referred to the ideas that other participants had shared. The pre-task activity therefore facilitated interaction amongst the participants and in effect gave various platforms from which they could construct their ideas about heritage. During this stage of the focus groups, there was little need for direct questioning as participants were immersed in the topic and were comfortable with the style and purpose of the group discussion. Therefore, it was possible to keep the facilitation deliberately light in order to encourage this 'handing over' of the discussion to the group members themselves. This helped to place the focus of the discussion in the hands of the participants and in doing so, reduced the need to direct its content (Vicsek 2007), and to encourage participants to interact with each other.

As a result, the themes presented in this chapter, were developed primarily from *'emergent data'* which is largely driven by the *'unasked questions that seem to be addressed in the stories, anecdotes, explanations, and conversations among participants'* (Massey 2011, p.28). This is in contrast to the *'articulated data'* generated in response to the opening questions presented in the previous chapter

(ibid). It is important to note that both articulated and emergent data are used within inductive data analysis and neither implies a deductive approach. Rather they highlight what prompted the data, whether it be an open question used to facilitate the early discussion (chapter 4) or as a result of the discussion as it naturally evolved through the interaction and interests of the participants.

Four main themes are presented in this chapter, developed during the analysis and interpretation, and when grouped together represent the *multiple meanings of heritage* that were constructed by the participants throughout the discussion groups. Table 5.1 illustrates the themes and their related sub-themes and this chapter is structured around a discussion of each of these, bringing in data excerpts and literature where appropriate to help present, discuss and interpret the findings. As such, this chapter explores the different kinds of ***importance of heritage*** that participants constructed within the discussion groups, including the ways in which they construct ideas of history and heritage, the ways in which they connect to the past, and the perceived educational value of heritage and the political implications of this. Furthermore, this chapter explores the various ***senses of heritage*** that participants seemed to construct through their thinking, talking and interactions within the groups. Such senses include those of sense of place and belonging, a sense of security and of pride. As this theme of senses became significant in the analysis, this led to a further theme that suggests that the multiple meanings and values of heritage essentially shape and characterise heritage as being inherently ***intangible*** in its nature and meaning for participants.

Table 5.1: The Multiple Meanings of Heritage

Themes	Sub-themes
The perceived importance of heritage	**Understanding heritage through history**
	Understanding history as facts, as past events and in the *'past tense'*
	Heritage evolves and is an emotion in the present
	Connecting with heritage through history
	'Yeah if it has a history, that's what gives something its' heritage!'
	Heritage has a consequence in the present and for the future
	The educational value of heritage
	'History to me at school was just remembering bloody dates!'
	'We have to teach them, how else will they learn from past mistakes?'
	The need for more engaging ways of learning
	Politics of the past and identities of the present
Senses of heritage	
	Sense of place and belonging
	Heritage and a sense of security
	A sense and source of pride
	Feeling tension about displaying pride
Heritage & security	**Sense of belonging**
	National security
The intangibility of heritage	**Using images to discuss and explore heritage**
	Stories & storytelling
	'It's the stories that get you I think'

The Perceived Importance of Heritage

Whilst each focus group discussion evolved in different ways, as it was directed and shaped by the participants, there were various themes constructed around the types of importance or significance that heritage represented for many participants both within and across the different discussions.

Understanding Heritage through History

In the majority of the groups, the topic of history was explored, and it is interesting to note that participants were articulate about the ways they understood history and how they related history to heritage. For the most part there was little of the uncertainty that was evident in the earlier themes about heritage. This suggests that understandings of history are comparatively strong and clear for the majority of the participants. An example of the ways in which participants explored the topic of history and its perceived importance in relation to heritage can be seen in the following excerpt from focus group 5:

> **Olivia:** *History is different, it's something you can define a date to… em… heritage is something that has come up, that's linked through over the centuries and what we have inherited, the word is from inherit, so heritage is what we are now because of what's happened. That's two different things. History is… well, its dates and events of what happened before* (59yrs.)

> **Lucy:** *I'd say history is past* (60yrs.)

> **Helena:** *And a legacy to pass on* (51yrs.)

> **Lucy:** *I always think of heritage as something you are creating now, it evolves into the future*

> **Molly:** *And it exists now, to some degree it's not gone. Whereas history is something that's past* (56yrs.)

> **Olivia**: *There's a date to it* [history]

Molly: *It's past tense, it's finished*

Olivia: *Yeah, there's a date to it* (repeats this point)

Molly: *It's a finished activity in the past. Teaching in a foreign language, that's in the past*

Clive: *Well there's a bit of both in each isn't there? That's the way I see it. You've got a bit of heritage in history and you've got a bit of history in heritage, but they're not quite the same thing* (81yrs.)

Olivia: *Well in heritage I think it's something you inherit, it comes from inherit the base of the word* (repeats this point), *you know, so it is with us! ...history is much more factual I think, we knew who invaded who and what happened then and then we pad it up with other stuff... but heritage, heritage is something like what you brought there Bonnie* (refers to Bonnie's items from the pre-task activity – a shepherds hook that her Grandfather had carved, some embroidered fabric that her Grandmother had given to her) *it's the bits that are, shall we say personal, the bits that come with your family you know.*

There is a sense that these participants are thinking along the same lines when it comes to history and heritage. The speech interweaves with the different speakers' contributions and yet the overall idea is clear. These participants understand history as something to do with *'the past'*, as a *'finished activity'* with a date and a range of facts associated with it. Interestingly, they do not seem to question the facts of history in the way that the literature on history does. This supports the idea that from a lay perspective, there is *'a belief in a hard core of historical facts'* (Carr 1961, p.16) which is very different to the critique of history commonplace within academia (see chapter 2). Conversely, the participants construct a more complex range of meanings of heritage, as being something that *'exists now'*, as *'something you are creating now, and evolves into the future'*. Heritage is understood as something present and therefore more relevant than history. Overall these participants recognise a clear distinction between history

and heritage within their discussion, with Clive adding an additional dimension by suggesting that there is an interrelationship between the two. History was also discussed at length in other groups, and the following excerpt serves to illustrate how the participants in focus group 6 constructed their understandings of heritage, by contrasting it to what they saw to be a related concept of history:

> **Irena:** *They are not the same, history and heritage* (25yrs.)
>
> **Rhys:** *I don't think you can split them really* (42yrs.)
>
> **Rachel:** *History is so much broader I think, I think it refers a lot to, kind of, people, and erm ... events, as opposed to, like tangible objects* (21yrs.)
>
> **Daniel:** *Erm... history is more specific on the event ...em yeah, specific on the event not on specific items or buildings or... well, heritage is the things that you care about afterwards, after the things actually happened... kind of way after the event* (21yrs.)
>
> **Irena:** *I'd say history is more dynamic because of the events; however heritage would be something... emm, the part of history that's still in real life nowadays. But it doesn't have to be tangible for me* (refers back to Rachel's point), *it's not always physical!*
>
> **Rhys:** *So in the future this pen may be heritage!* (holds up a pen from the table, there is laughing around the room) *... and if you found that this was a pen that had been used here 300 years ago, then yes it probably would be! But... what if it's a pen which may have been bought only a couple of days ago, produced recently?*
>
> **Facilitator:** *So what would make it heritage to you then? Is it the amount of time or something else?*
>
> **Rhys:** *Yeah if it has a history, that's what gives something its' heritage!*

There are a number of key points here, and again the participants recognise an interrelationship between history and heritage. The idea of history being about *'events'* is evident, as it is in the last sequence. Rachel and Irena add a new

dimension, questioning whether heritage is about tangible objects (which will be followed up later in this chapter). A further idea in this excerpt, suggests that for something to have potential as heritage, it must have a history in its own right. Rhys (42yrs.) summarises the discussion on history above by suggesting that *'if it has a history, that's what gives something its' heritage!'*, which suggests that for Rhys and others in the group, it is the historical foundation of heritage that gives it its meaning of 'heritage'. This idea is supported in the literature whereby Davies (2004, p.281) highlights a *'fundamental and inextricable'* connection between history and heritage and advocates that heritage needs to *'grow as time moves on in order to present (and re-present) historical information in a way that will be relevant to future audiences'*. Furthermore, Davies (ibid) suggests that this connection is already recognised in the policies and strategies of the heritage industry, which *'suggests that sound historical scholarship is essential to all worthwhile and successful ventures, both for establishing validity and authenticity and for contributing to public knowledge'*. This seems to resonate with the ideas of the participants in this study, who felt that history informed and shaped heritage in important ways. The participants construct heritage as being the aspect of history that *'you care about afterwards'* as Daniel puts it. This is interesting as it seems that for these participants, there is a clear distinction between both history and heritage, and they actively construct the idea that you cannot have one without the other. This idea is echoed in the following excerpt from within a different group, focus group 7, in which Steven makes a similar association between history and heritage, with Jack adding that heritage is the aspect of history with which you have an ***emotional connection***:

Jack: *Is what we are saying then* (collaborating with fellow group members here), *is that each... aspect, actually, if you look at music it has a heritage... Architecture has a heritage... our cultural behaviour has a heritage... so does every sort of, if you take any… pick a subject at random... can you say it's got a heritage?* (49yrs.)

Steven: *Probably... it probably has history, which would give it a heritage!* (21yrs.)

Jack: *But is history and heritage, are they becoming interchangeable?*

Adam: *I think they are...* (51yrs.)

Steven: *They sort of are… yeah*

Jack: *Or is the heritage the stuff that makes it how it is today, whereas the history is the facts, so the history is the fact and heritage is actually the emotion, the things that make it like it is now?*

Facilitator: *Would you have responded differently if you had been invited to come to a group talk about history then do you think?*

Jack: *I would have*

Tim: *I would have, definitely* (agreement in the room) (63yrs.)

Steven: *It would have probably been events in the past... em which made substantial change to the future...*

Paul: *But isn't that potentially the same? That is what heritage is, if it passes on from generation...* (52yrs.)

Steven: *I suppose they cross over?*

Paul: *But if you'd been asked about history would you have brought along the Beatles?* (asking Jack)

Jack: *Erm... I wouldn't have come to be honest with you!* (loud laughing here – this is a lively group!)

Audrey: *I love that…* (the admission)(54yrs.)

Paul: *So you care more about heritage than you do about history, is that where we are going?*

Jack: *I was just intrigued really I've got bad thoughts about history. History to me at school was just remembering bloody dates!*

Paul: *I've got exactly the same feeling, history to me is... is not*

Adam: *I suppose your right history is just past events where...*

Paul: *It's just events they don't have no meaning to me, they don't have any particular influence over me*

Adam: *Heritage though, affects each and every one of us* (yes's in agreement) *you know it is part of peoples' past, present and future*

Audrey: *It produces a consequence, whereas history... I was just thinking back to you saying about 9/11... See to me, the actual event itself is history in that it was something that happened on a particular day. But for a lot of people, the event has created... has become part of their heritage, and that could be, em a family of you know... who lost somebody in the disaster whose life has changed direction or has been formed by the consequences of how that's affected them... em monetarily, physically, emotionally whatever... em it's the consequences it has had on them, while in this country with let's face it... taking part in the Iraq war... it's the affects it's had on... world travel from the point of view of security changes in the airport... so it was an event for me that is part of history, but potentially its affected different peoples heritage depending on how they have been affected by that particular event. So for me, heritage I think is maybe more of a consequence rather than a ... em...*

Jack: *An actual event?*

Audrey: *An event, yeah!*

Whilst this is a long excerpt, it serves two purposes within this discussion. Firstly, the passage illustrates how effective interaction can be in facilitating participants' construction of ideas. There is a range of complex interactions within this excerpt, with participants questioning both their own and each other's ideas. Paul asks Jack if he would have brought a Beatles album along if he had been invited to talk about history, to which Jack quickly replied no, he wouldn't, because he wouldn't have come along at all. Furthermore, Jack had suggested that *'history is the fact*

and heritage is actually the emotion' which suggests that for him, history is less relevant and a more disconnected idea than heritage. The sharing of ideas and the friendly atmosphere seems to encourage participants to actively shape and direct the discussion. As a result, the participants construct quite a sophisticated understanding of heritage by contrasting it with their understanding of history. Secondly, the use of longer excerpts with sequential quotes helps to open up the interpretation and to allow the *'voices of the participants to be heard and to be evident'* (Jennings 2005, p.112) in the presentation of the data. This is particularly important in focus group research whereby the data is constructed through the interaction and the richness would be lost if the data were cut into small pieces, and presented out of the context of the other voices.

Connecting with Heritage through History

Furthermore, this last excerpt illustrates a number of interesting ideas, and supports the previous suggestion from focus group 6 that heritage is that part of history that *'you care about afterwards'*, as the participants construct a very similar idea that heritage is the *'emotion'* rather than the facts, and that heritage has more of a *'consequence'* to the present than history does for these participants. Audrey for instance, seems to suggest that the past events of history lack a connection to the present, and that it is through heritage that this connection can be felt. A similar idea is constructed by Martin (34yrs.) in focus group 2, when he discusses his understanding of heritage. When thinking about the heritage status of a specific beach (Durdle Door in Dorset) Martin wonders whether a different beach a mile up the coast is any less 'heritage':

> **Martin:** *I just thought more about em, British history and that sort of thing as heritage, for me. I just thought of myself as being British and my heritage being kind of British history and, you know, of hundreds of years before I was born.* (…and a minute later…) *I mean, I guess… my own personal take, and it is only a personal take, is that if I know of the history associated with it,* [the beach], *then I kind of think of it as heritage.*

Martin uses the idea of history to explain the way in which something becomes 'heritage' for him. He suggests that history plays a role in creating heritage and that a sense of heritage is directly related to *'knowing the history'* of something. This is interesting, as it resonates with the excerpts above and the ways participants construct their ideas about history and heritage. However, whilst the participants quoted in the earlier excerpt from focus group 7 suggest that heritage requires some sort of emotional connection, Martin talks in terms of an intellectual connection between the heritage and its history. Furthermore, the last quote from Audrey constructs the idea that a historical event such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks may have created a *new* heritage for both those directly affected (family members of victims) and those indirectly affected (through for example travel restrictions and security issues). This resonates with the earlier discussion about inheriting a new heritage (chapter 4) and further serves the idea that heritage has a consequence for both the present and the future.

There is a multiplicity of different meanings being constructed throughout the discussion about how history forms a link or connection with heritage for the participants. Many participants have centred some of their discussion around history, in order to actively construct their understandings of heritage. Whilst it was not a particular aim to explore the lay understandings of history, the inductive

nature of the study has led to a range of data that provide insights into participants' view of the world. In this case, the data presented here, contribute to a problem recognised by Urry, in that *'it is not at all clear just what understanding of history most people have'* (1990, p.112). From the data, it is clear that participants have quite a well-developed sense of history and how it relates to and shapes heritage. There is little sense that the two concepts are being *'habitually confused with each other'* (Lowenthal 1998, p.x) as the literature suggests. Furthermore, for some of the participants in this study, it seems that history is something separate and largely disconnected from them, in contrast with heritage which they describe as an emotion, something to care about and something that has relevance or a consequence in their present and future.

Conversely, an alternative view is evident for a minority of participants, for example Rachel and Irena quoted above, who seem to connect more to the idea of history as being *'broader'*, *'more dynamic'* and relating to *'people and events'* as opposed to heritage. Whilst this view was less represented in the focus group data of this study, given the small sample size, this view should by no means be disadvantaged or silenced as it may well be relevant for many people. This citing of deviant or divergent views in research is an important part of qualitative research which helps to improve the credibility of the findings (Seale 2004). What is clear, from both of these perspectives, is that history played a pivotal role in providing the foundation from which participants constructed their understanding of heritage, and in some cases history shaped and facilitated their connection to heritage. Furthermore, Irena adds that heritage is the *'part of history that's still in real life nowadays',* which fits with the rest of the interpretation in terms of

feeling more close to heritage, despite the fact that for Irena, history is the more *'dynamic'* of the two.

Kean and Ashton (2009) explore the change in emphasis in the relationship between people and their pasts and recognise a shift in thinking about the ways in which history is created and formed over time. From within the context of public history, these authors discuss the ways in which history has traditionally been treated as a *'body of knowledge by academically trained historians'* which is then given over to the public in an essentially one way relationship (ibid p.1). More recently, the emphasis is placed on the range of shared meanings and different understandings of the past in the present that form and take shape when people take an interest in history (ibid). This suggests that history is no longer the sole responsibility or realm of the expert historian or academic, but rather a dialogue between different voices and people reflecting on their understandings of the past. Whilst the participants in this study are by no means experts in the traditional sense, they were ultimately able to construct their understandings of history in a considered and meaningful way, which they seamlessly related to their understandings of heritage. The interaction in the groups may well have facilitated this process as the dialogue helped participants to voice and unpick their ideas together.

Waterton (2011) recognises that whilst public history is often *'derided as history's poor relation'* (echoing much of the critique of heritage by early academics, see chapter 2), it can provide a useful framework from which to understand the complex ways people connect with the past (ibid). Instead of

viewing history as expert, elitist and exclusive, history can be viewed as a *'social form of knowledge',* and as such does not need to be the sole prerogative of the historian (Samuel 1994, p.8). In this study, heritage can similarly be viewed as a social form of knowledge, a knowledge that is constructed through multiple meanings and values through which the participants actively form connections with history and the past. Furthermore, Samuel (1994, p.259) recognises that despite the *'very bad press'* that heritage has received within academia, heritage remains *'popular with the general public, who seem untroubled by the philippics launched against it'.* This is supported by the ways participants in this study constructed and negotiated multiple meanings of history and heritage, and despite the academic or expert critique of 'history', 'heritage', 'public history' and so on, these criticisms and derisions do not seem to detract from or devalue the meanings that participants draw from them.

The Educational Value of Heritage

Linking in with the previous themes relating to history and heritage, a further theme was developed to reflect participants' interest in education and learning through history and heritage. Many of the participants expressed a sentiment similar to Jack (49yrs. fg7) who said: *'I've got bad thoughts about history. History to me at school was just remembering bloody dates!'* Despite this seemingly negative personal experience, it is interesting that many participants still felt that history and heritage should play a more central role in education within schools:

> **Dan:** *It's like in school, they should try to push it on a bit more, em, I don't think they do enough. Heritage and history, it's not really*

regarded as a top line subject, is it. It's more or less third degree, down the line, but it's more important than people think (60yrs. fg8)

Similarly, the following excerpt from focus group 4 is used to illustrate the ways in which participants constructed their thoughts relating to heritage in education, whilst discussing the slave trade in British history and the Holocaust in German history:

Alex: *No, that's right, it* [the slave trade] *is still part of our heritage though, isn't it* (61yrs.)

Gareth: *And it's not something we can get away from* (52yrs.)

Jim: *Yeah, but it is a selective heritage almost isn't it, in the history books! It's never taught about, the slave trade, in school really. It's sort of passed over isn't it! And of course our country was built on the slave industry wasn't it... that's where all the money came from!* (45yrs)

Gareth: *It's a bit like the Germans trying to write the Holocaust out of their history isn't it, and the history that is taught in schools there, you know?*

Jim: *Well, I mean, if we don't teach our kids about the slave trade... why should they teach their kids about the Holocaust!*

Gareth: *Exactly! But it's a natural human instinct isn't it, to want to, to want to have a heritage, and you want the heritage you've got to be something you can be proud of* (pauses...) *it's human nature isn't it! You kind of want to skim over the bits that might have been a bit shady...*

Allison: *Yeah, and they're the things that you can learn the most from I think! Or what our children could learn from, I'm not saying we should just tell them all the bad stuff* (laughs), *but you can learn a lot from the stuff that you've done wrong I think, and in terms of history, that's really important* (37yrs.)

Alex: *Yes, I don't know... I think that history matters, but maybe it's changed, because certainly when I was a lad at school, we got taught about the slave trade and about William Wilberforce and so on. I don't mean to say that... they didn't necessarily go deeply into the*

causes of it and what it was about… but you did know about the slave trade and transporting the slaves in terrible conditions across to the United States. We were taught about the World Wars and well, it may have come off the school curriculum now? (Defers to other group members here). *All my grandson seems to be taught now is maths and science these days. They don't seem to teach history at all, or when they do, it's all wrapped up in something called 'humanities' I think these days. I see history and geography in particular as being a whole wealth of knowledge and I think that these are what lead on to heritage! If you know about your history and the history of the country, and quite rightly the good and the bad side of it. I think sometimes they might get painted a nice picture, rather than being taught some of the bad things we did. For example, we invented the concentration camps didn't we, during the Boer War in South Africa... you don't hear that too often, it's always associated with Nazi Germany!*

A particular theme within this excerpt is that participants felt the history taught in schools and to some extent written in history books is somehow edited to *'skim over'* aspects of history and heritage. This reflects a certain level of critical thinking and dissatisfaction with history as it is presented to children and young people through the school curriculum. This theme has parallels in the literature that criticises heritage and the heritage industry as presenting a *'bogus history'* (Hewison 1987). But what is significant here is that participants are constructing an understanding of a flawed or limited historical education. Furthermore, it is relevant to note that nowhere in the focus group data was this criticism or limitation applied to the context of heritage or heritage tourism, which is in stark contrast with the wealth of literature that explores the issue of authenticity in heritage tourism experiences (Fyall and Garrod 1998; Goulding 2000b; Chhabra et al. 2003; Breathnach 2006; Bobot 2012; Rickly-Boyd 2012; and others). This suggests that for these participants, the context of education within schools brings about a specific need for a more holistic or balanced approach to history and

heritage. Smith (2006) notes that research carried out at several English Country House sites, into the meaning and nature of the visits from the visitors' perspective, found that despite the dominant *'authorised heritage discourses'* surrounding the educational value of heritage, *'education is almost entirely absent in the discourse used by visitors to discuss heritage'* (ibid p.137). It is significant that in this study, without the constraint or context of a heritage visitor site, the participants actively construct an understanding and interest in the educational value of heritage which may be as a result of the wider definition of heritage they constructed.

Education and Learning through History and Heritage

It is important to clarify that this study seeks to represent and therefore emphasise the understandings and meanings of heritage, *as viewed by* the participants. Therefore whilst there may be inaccuracies in the data (for example in the actual content of the history curriculum in either country discussed) these data are seen to reflect the participants' constructions rather than reflecting any concrete or external 'reality'.

Nevertheless, it is interesting that there remains controversy over the question as to whether or not topics such as the Holocaust should appear on the British Curriculum. Lord Baker, the *'architect'* of the UK national curriculum in the 1980's, recently went so far as to say that if he were in a position to, he would ban the topic of Nazism from the curriculum altogether (Lord Baker cited Rowley 2011), stating that the current framework leaves children ill-disposed to thinking favourably about present day Germany, and should learn *'our history first'* (ibid).

This adds a new facet to the participants' ideas, as they did not recognise or discuss any potential tensions that may arise from the broader, more historically focussed education that they seem to advocate. Instead the participants took the view that it is the very mistakes or *'bad stuff'* in history (such as the slave trade and the Holocaust), which gives the most opportunity for children to learn, likening this to the idea that in life you one can *'learn a lot from the stuff that you've done wrong'* (Allison, 37yrs. fg4).

One difficulty that is recognised by participants is that history is simply not engaging in the way it is presented to children and young people at school:

> **Kirsty:** *Yeah, I was thinking about historians, as the people who, like when I think about my history lessons at school, the people that were teaching me those lessons must have been so so obsessed with things! And like say Stonehenge, and* (pauses…), *they must love it, they must find it so interesting, and it just does not get me at all!* (20yrs. fg3)

For Kirsty, the idea that heritage and history should be more central in the curriculum (discussed in focus group 3 in similar terms to those cited earlier) raises the memory of her own classroom experiences of history. She describes her teacher as being *'obsessed with things'* and like a *'historian'* and it is fair to suggest that whilst the teacher may have been enthusiastic about their subject, Kirsty did not feel personally engaged with history at school. What is also interesting is that for Kirsty, the word *'heritage'* prompted the initial thought of *'inheritance tax'* (see unfamiliarity theme, chapter 4) and she did not feel connected to either the idea of history or heritage at the start of the discussion. A similar theme to this is constructed around a perceived lack of engagement in history education, illustrated by the following excerpt from focus group 4:

Alex: There is a great children's author called Terry Dearing and there's a programme on telly. He wrote books called em... Horrible Histories and Horrible Science. And Horrible Histories is actually shown as a children's programme, it was on this morning at eight o'clock. It's all about world historical events and em... the Saxons, the Vicious Vikings, the Terrible Tudors, and it is about all the despicable things that they used to do! (61yrs.)

Gareth: *My children loved those!* (52yrs.)

Alex: *Yeah! It's got all the 4 King George's and how mad they were, and the terrible things that Henry VIII did, how he killed everyone that ever worked for him* (group laughter, Alex is animated and telling a story here), *and you know, it shows historical figures as being quite malevolent and evil quite a lot of the time, and even looks at Victorian times and how children were treated and abused in factories and stuff like that. Maimed and disfigured and killed at the ages of six and stuff you know* (pauses...), *and also, another one that it covers is World War II and exactly how that started and the terrible conditions people had to put up with. But it's all done in a very humorous and fun way to let kids enjoy it. In fact, I love it too, I watch it all the time* (lots of laughter in the room, Alex is very animated here)

Gareth: *Yeah, but it gets them interested. I mean, my nieces and nephews love all those Horrible Histories. But you know, I love it as well, for if nothing else, it gets them interested!*

Alex: *While you actually learn quite a lot as well* [as well as enjoying it]

This excerpt suggests that there is a perceived lack of interest or engagement in history and heritage in the younger generation, which is supported by Kirsty and Jack who reflect on their own experiences of history in school. The participants' view is that history and heritage should be enjoyable and fun which suggests that they attach a strong ***educational value to history and heritage***. Furthermore, for Alex and Gareth, the *'Horrible Histories'* are seen as a valuable way for them to share the experience of learning with their grandchildren, who are being entertained yet also learning about the *'despicable'* things that happened in the

past. It is clear that for these participants, *'learning bloody dates'* as Jack puts it, is not the only way to teach history and they recognise the value of more *'fun'* ways of engaging young people in learning about the past.

The themes developed in this section, surrounding the need to develop a broader, more engaging curriculum in relation to history and heritage, have direct relevance to current UK educational policies. The DCMS and the Department for Education (2012) have recently launched a joint initiative entitled *'Heritage Schools',* in response to the findings of an independent review of Cultural Education in England (Henley 2012). As part of this initiative, the Department for Education has allocated £2.7m in funding to English Heritage to implement the initiative for an initial 3 years (Atkinson 2012). The initiative will fund nine 'heritage broker' roles, responsible for drawing up lists of potential heritage sites for school visits, and to work with teachers in order to help them use aspects of local heritage in delivering the current curriculum (ibid). The idea of encouraging school visits to heritage sites, rather than learning from teachers and books in the classroom, fits well with the themes discussed in this section and may be seen as a more active and engaging way of teaching children about heritage.

However, Maurice Davies (2012), Head of Policy and Communication at the Museums Association, criticises the 'Heritage Schools' initiative for its very limited budget of less than £1m a year, as well as its seeming focus on the built environment and its consistent reference to the idea of *'our national story'* which lacks a sophisticated understanding of heritage and fails to represent the diversity of contemporary England. Davies condemns English Heritage for moving away

from its previous, much broader understanding of heritage with its emphasis on the *'many voices'* as opposed to *'one national story'* to a more *'superficial, rather thoughtless official version'* of heritage (ibid) (see James 2006 for an evaluation of the *'Your Place or Mine'* Conference that showcased English Heritage's previous narratives). The fear is that despite the potential of the Heritage Schools scheme for engaging young people in their heritage through their local environment, the way in which it has been structured risks reinforcing a limited and exclusive, official heritage (or AHD) and as such may undermine the objectives it sets out to achieve. Furthermore, with limited funding for the scheme, alongside the previous 32% reduction in central funding to English Heritage and the subsequent closing down of English Heritage's Outreach Program (Atkinson 2012), it will be a significant challenge for Heritage Schools to make an impact at the desired scale.

As a comparative snapshot, there are a range of other schemes in place that aim to encourage links between heritage and education in schools, both across the UK and in Ireland. For example, Historic Scotland (2012) provide free educational visits to a whole range of heritage sites and also offer a 'Heritage Education Travel Subsidy' that schools can apply for, which if successful, covers up to 75% of the cost of travel for school trips up to the value of £250 and prioritises disadvantaged schools. In Wales, a different approach is taken, whereby 'The Welsh Heritage Schools Initiative' (2000) draws funding from a range of private and public sponsors (including the Heritage Lottery Fund and The Welsh Assembly) in an effort to encourage schools to use the local heritage to enhance wider skills such as literacy, numeracy and information technology skills. This

initiative runs an annual competition that encourages schools to set up heritage related learning projects and encourages schools to engage with their local communities in the process (ibid). Furthermore, the 'Heritage in Schools' scheme operated by The Heritage Council in Ireland, has similar objectives but is structured around 165 'heritage experts' who are available to visit schools across Ireland, each visit being co-funded by the school and the Heritage Council (Heritage in Schools 2012). In 2011, a total of 1,595 school visits were carried out, reaching 118,620 children (The Heritage Council of Ireland 2012), a half day costing between £60 and £100, or £35 and £60 respectively for a disadvantaged school (Heritage in Schools 2012). Given that the Heritage Schools scheme is only currently being launched in England, and is therefore in its infancy, it will be interesting to see whether it is successful in engaging children and young people in their heritage.

Whilst these different schemes are disparate in terms of how they are structured and implemented, and do not represent the whole picture, they share common characteristics in terms of emphasising the *educational value of heritage* and aim to engage school audiences with heritage in more enjoyable and practical ways. However, one quite different approach to engaging young people with heritage may centre on the potential of technology and ICT. Ott and Pozzi (2011) recognise that despite the fact that the international cultural heritage sector has widely adopted the use of technology (for instance in order to digitise archives, to manage its resources, or in interactive displays), and whilst many other subject areas have embraced technology, the learning and teaching methods for cultural heritage have largely not followed this trend. The authors therefore call for a new

era in cultural heritage education. Suggestions include the potential use of mobile technologies, collaborative learning environments, and virtual reality techniques (such as avatars manipulated by students to navigate around archaeology sites) and so on (ibid). Whilst this is some way off in terms of school based heritage learning, it may be that technology offers potential for interactive learning to engage younger audiences in ways that are enjoyable and educational and may relate more to the lifestyles of children and young people.

Politics of the Past and Identities of the Present

Another interesting aspect of the above focus group excerpt is the empathy evident between the participants' recognition of the British desire to *'skim over'* its slave trade heritage and their German counterparts who may wish to do the same with the Holocaust. There is little sense of animosity within the discussion, rather, there is a tone of *'it's human nature'* and that everyone would want a heritage that they can be proud of. Participants recognise that whilst they do not associate personally with certain aspects of their heritage, they recognise this as being *'not something we can get away from'* and therefore part of their heritage nonetheless. This incongruence hints at a dissonant heritage (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Ashworth 2002) and yet the participants agree that it is important to teach this history and in turn learn from it. Furthermore, when a particular heritage is linked to an atrocity such as the Holocaust, Ashworth (2002, p.363) recognises that there is a greater difficulty:

> *'It would seem self-evident that mankind would prefer to forget unpleasant pasts rather than deliberately remember an atrocity. There must therefore*

> *be compelling reasons and convincing explanations that justify the deliberate act of remembrance of past trauma'.*

Ashworth suggests that in many cases the represented people may not wish to remember, interpret or present certain aspects of their history, and the defence often used when presenting *'atrocity heritage'*; that it seeks to educate and in turn avoid recurrence of the event it commemorates, is an unfounded argument (ibid p.364). This argument has a parallel in this thread as a similar logic is used by participants when suggesting that there should be more emphasis on the darker aspects of history within schools: *'We have to teach them, how else will they learn from past mistakes?'* (Jayne, 26yrs. fg1). Ashworth would seemingly argue that if the history is not adopted as *'heritage'* by the people it supposedly represents, then there may well be an argument against *'deliberate acts of remembrance'*. The latter is particularly problematic when the act of remembrance of ultimately dissonant heritage, translates into a heritage tourism context as this then maintains what might otherwise be discarded or left to ruin.

Macdonald (2006) suggests that there is an ongoing discord in Germany between the nation's struggle to accept its past and record its events for present and future societies, whilst reconciling this with the need for a national identity that is undefined by this narrative. For example, a case study of the Nazi Party rally grounds in Nuremberg questions how heritage and material culture related to fascism, racial hatred and political radicalism can be appropriately interpreted and presented (ibid). Ideas of heritage, education and tourism become important when seeking an appropriate medium to communicate such dissonant, yet value-laden and emotive aspects of the past. Furthermore, one theme prevalent within the

literature is the need to construct and maintain a national identity that reflects the chosen values of the *present*, which, in the context of heritage is a key underlying political driving force. However, for the participants within this study, no such tension or paradox is highlighted, and the perceived ***educational value of such dissonant heritages*** seems to overrule any desire to forge a national identity away from the aspects of history they do not associate with personally (i.e. the slave trade). Whether this would be the case if the aspect of history they were discussing was closer to living memory (as in the case of the Holocaust and Germany) is not possible to establish from the data in this study, other than to recognise that participants empathised with German people who may feel the same way about editing aspects of history in order to construct a heritage they can relate to.

A further example of such dissonance can be found in the so-called *'communist heritage tourism'* phenomenon experienced in parts of Romania where there is a desire to *'airbrush out this period of the country's history'* (Light 2000a, p.145). In this context, difficulties have arisen as communities wish to forget the aspect of the past that paying tourists specifically seek, resulting in little desire to interpret and communicate its relevant narratives through tourism. This dissonance can therefore be seen to create further conflict between the desire to create new representations of Romania, its people and culture, and the wish to harness the potential income generated by such tourism activity. This idea of *'air brushing'* echoes the participants discussion, which constructs the idea that certain aspects of history are purposely *'skimmed over'* in order to *'paint a nice picture'* of history and heritage. The parallel challenge for tourism is to develop strategies

that can satisfy the demand for such dissonant aspects of heritage tourism such as *'communist heritage tourism'*, without *'compromising the post-communist identities'* of the relevant nations and their people (Light 2000b, p.157). However, a further difficulty highlights that all too often, such national narratives purposely reinforce the AHD (Smith 2006), and are determined by an elite few in order to reflect a desired national image whereby aspects of the past are actively chosen and presented as 'heritage', and consequently, images deemed less favourable are de-selected (Munasinghe 2005). This author suggests that the *'politics of the past'* have fundamental implications for the personal and collective values of a society and in a case study of Lithuania, such political endeavours were judged to have resulted in *'dissonance'* and *'social disharmony'* (Munasinghe 2005, p.251). Furthermore, the economic drive to harness heritage resources for the purposes of tourism, is taking place at the expense of *'less affluent locals'*, with the values reflected through heritage tourism bearing little relation to the values of the people or the place (ibid).

It is clear that identity is an inherently political issue within heritage, specifically in relation to the construction, interpretation and presentation of heritage for wider audiences, and as such heritage is both subtly and overtly influenced by constructs of personal and national identity at every juncture. This *'reminds us of a basic axiom of identity formation*: *that it is never constructed by the 'self' alone, but also in relation to the images and visions held by others'* (Macdonald 2006, p.23). For Romania, this means striving to replace the communist identity constructed externally by a foreign political power, in order to enable the construction of a national narrative the people can feel close to. For Germany, the struggle is to

construct a national identity that can foster pride for its people internally, whilst engendering respect externally by ensuring the past is not forgotten. These efforts are further complicated by the perceived responsibility to conserve aspects of a specific period of history for the record, regardless of the level of dissonance, or whether it perpetuates negative impressions of national identity either internally or overseas. Furthermore, as Alex and the participants in focus group 4 suggest, the national narratives of history and heritage taught in schools, which have parallel narratives in other heritage contexts including tourism, are constructed through *'painting a nice picture'* and as a consequence, identities are constructed around edited versions of history: *'we invented the concentration camps didn't we, during the Boer War in South Africa... you don't hear that too often, it's always associated with Nazi Germany!'* (61yrs. fg4). The participants seem to value the need for a more holistic and representative history and heritage education and seem to suggest that nations should take on more responsibility for representing the *'bad stuff'* as well as the good.

Senses of Heritage

A further theme developed during the analysis and interpretation of the focus group data represents the notion that there are multiple ***senses of heritage***. This is built around various contexts and examples of 'heritage' which participants used when discussing and exploring their understanding of heritage. However, whilst the contexts or examples themselves seem disparate and wide-ranging, the ways in which participants constructed their ideas around these, suggest that there are various different ways of gaining a 'sense' of heritage. Furthermore, the different

senses of heritage explored below represent a multiplicity of meanings and values that shape participants' understanding of heritage.

Sense of Place and Belonging

Within the overarching theme of the multiple 'senses of heritage', a particular sub-theme is that of *sense of place.* This phrase was used explicitly by a number of participants in their discussions about heritage, whilst at other times the meaning was more implicit and hence interpreted from the data. For example, in the excerpt below from focus group 2, Joe uses the phrase *'sense of place'* unambiguously in his description of heritage, whilst Susan's contribution is an example of a more latent level of meaning for the same theme:

> **Joe:** *It's not, I mean it's not just the museums and the big churches* (pauses…) *but I mean in a town, heritage is just certain things that give you a sense of place, a sense of being there really* (46yrs.)
>
> **Susan:** *Well my home town is Edinburgh, and of course everybody knows about the castle em, and this picture* (pauses to show a small, framed oil painting around the group…) *well you can see the castle from almost every part of Edinburgh, 'cos it stands out quite so well, very well! So I think of Edinburgh really, 'cos that's the one I've been brought up with. I mean I looked out the window and there it is, you know? You go down Princess Street, there it is! Yeah, em go shopping, there it is! Wherever you go, you can see it* (pauses…) *it really does dominate* (70yrs.)
>
> **Joe:** *Yeah, I was a year in Edinburgh and it's* [the castle] *very much part of the place isn't it really* (46yrs.)
>
> **Susan:** *Mmmm, yeah! I think everybody who lives in Edinburgh identifies with it, and there's the one o clock gun you know, which I think is all quite unique to that castle. And this picture em... is part of a prize that I won when we were doing art in class, where we had to em, well we had money from the school, and those who were em artists won a prize, you could spend about 10 and 6 pence and this is what I bought with mine, so this to me says Edinburgh to me!*

Whilst Susan does not say the phrase specifically, the theme *sense of place* is interpreted from her description of Edinburgh and her associations with the castle. Susan passes around a picture she has brought of the castle as her example of heritage, and is clearly attached to the place and how the castle *'dominates'* the landscape of the city. Susan talks about growing up in the city and the fact that she could simply look out of her window and see Edinburgh Castle, which she feels *'everybody'* living in the city must identify with. This excerpt constructs an understanding of heritage as being part of the feeling of being in a place. For Joe, heritage is a *'sense of being there really'* and qualifies that it is something more than the museums and the big churches that create such a sense of place for him. Joe also interacts with Susan's idea, agreeing that the castle is *'very much part of the place'*. For Susan there is a sense that the castle defines the place for her, and is an intrinsic part of her understanding of heritage. For Joe and Susan, their understanding of heritage seems rooted in this idea of a *sense of place* as they understand it.

It is important to recognise that the ways in which participants refer to concepts such as sense of place differ somewhat to formal definitions in the literature. Whilst this study is primarily concerned with the socially constructed view of heritage as understood from the lay perspective of the participants, it is useful to consider the literature in relation to these concepts. For the participants above, the term *'sense of place'* is used unproblematically in the interaction between the Joe and Susan, and the phrase and its meaning seems to have a common meaning or representation from which they can talk and share ideas. Conversely, in the academic literature, 'sense of place' is much more complex and would not wholly

fit with Joe's understanding and use of the term. Joe suggests that for him, *'heritage is just certain things'* in a town that give you a sense of place, he does not however seem to imply that he means a specific town that he is particularly attached to. Rather, he gains a sense of place from the different aspects of heritage of any given place. Jones et al. (2000) recognise that a 'sense of place' as defined in the literature refers to a *'geographically specific'* place. These authors also distinguish between a sense of place, which they view as geographically specific, as opposed to ***'sense of belonging'***, which has boundaries within the individual rather than being place specific (Jones et al. 2000, p.386). The latter understanding fits more closely to Joe's idea that the heritage of a place creates a *'sense of being there'* which perhaps is not so much related to a specific place, but is more a feeling that can be mobilised to facilitate a sense of heritage from different places.

Whilst Susan does not use the term explicitly, her description of her home city fits with academic conceptualisations of *'sense of place as lived experience'* which can *'refer to the subjective and emotional attachments people have to place'* (Agnew 1987 cited Graham et al. 2009, p.16), and the ways in which places are experienced in everyday life (ibid). This is related to the concept of *'rootedness'* which forms through the experiencing of a place over a longer period of time (Jones et al. 2000): for Susan, living and growing up in Edinburgh has created a sense of place which has become part of her sense of heritage.

There is *'no single theory of sense of place'* and as such the term has been used in many ways within the academic literature (Graham et al. 2009, p.3). Sense of

place can be differentiated from related concepts such as landscape and space in the understanding that *'places'* are specifically constructed through memory and through repeat encounters (Butz and Eyles 1997), whilst landscape and space are more generic, less personal and do not imply any particular interest or affection (ibid). Furthermore, Graham et al. (2009) highlight that the historic environment can play an important role in creating a sense of place; in Susan's case Edinburgh Castle plays a *'dominant'* role in creating the sense of place. Furthermore, Meinig (1979, p.3) suggests that *'our personal sense of place depends on our own experiences and sensibilities* [which is] *unique to each of us'*, and the concept is therefore a *'subjective and personal interpretation of an aspect of a more objective, albeit personally viewed, landscape'*. Whilst the historic environment is physical, and can be viewed by many different people, a sense of place is personal and is shaped by an individual's engagement with it.

A similar sense of place is constructed by Gary when he describes his associations and feelings about Wembley Football Stadium which he identifies as being the most important and relevant aspect of heritage for him:

> **Gary:** *Firstly I thought of Wembley, its' tradition, culture, history. It is traditional, Wembley, to one culture, to one group of people and one country, yeah, like I said, when I thought of heritage I thought of Wembley. I didn't think I needed to bring a picture or anything* (refers to fact that some others have brought pictures along)*, everybody knows what Wembley is and what it's there for basically! Yeah I used to live just down the road from it actually, you could see it from my doorstep! So that is the first thing that came to my head. Well it's there! I've lived in quite a few places, but yeah, I'm originally from Finchley so, em, yeah. Also, I think of the football world generally. Like even all foreigners and foreign footballers, they know about the history of Wembley and stuff* (27yrs. fg1)

Facilitator: *And what does Wembley represent to you in terms of heritage?*

Gary: *Sport, English history, like football history and predominantly football* (pauses….) *I know it* [Wembley] *has been used for other things, but yeah. I mean it's something a lot of people can relate to! Like everyone looks forward to the FA Cup every year, well a high proportion of people anyway, not just in this country but worldwide. But also people in this country who've got an affiliation with the FA Cup and also, yeah, well the World Cup 1966!*

Alan: *Which is sporting heritage isn't it!* (63yrs.)

Thomas: *Yeah, and this football thing, it also sort of relates to supporting the underdog, and with the football matches and also fairplay...I mean fairplay is peculiar to the English because that word... doesn't come out in any other language...* (45yrs.)

Gary talks about the fact that he grew up *'just down the road'* from Wembley, and when discussing his childhood and growing up a few streets from the stadium, Gary notes the physical and social aspects of the stadium and the fact that he could see it from his doorstep. This echoes Susan's memory of *'looking out the window'* and seeing the castle. Gary is passionate about his chosen heritage but feels that bringing a physical image of Wembley wouldn't add to the discussion, because he feels everyone already has a strong image of Wembley in their mind. Furthermore, in a similar way to Susan who suggests that *'everybody who lives in Edinburgh identifies with the castle'*, Gary constructs the broader idea that *'everybody knows Wembley'* not just those who live in its vicinity. For Gary, Wembley is something that *'a lot of people can relate to'* including English football fans, *'foreigners'* and *'foreign footballers'*. Gary is proud of the idea that these 'outsiders' know the history and the significance of the place and its role in English football history. Wood (2005) recognises that whilst sport is an important aspect of British cultural life it has not received much attention in the *'nation's*

heritage equation' and has been under researched to date in the heritage literature. Furthermore, there is a need to understand the *'wide range of values and benefits that flow from sports heritage'* which can hold meaning to people of all ages (ibid p.143). Values such as *'fairplay'* and *'supporting the underdog'* may also be linked to sporting heritage and the desire for others to *'know the history'* and significance of sporting places. The excerpt above, including Gary's discussion surrounding Wembley and the sense of heritage that he gains from the place and its associations, suggests that there is scope for further research into this aspect of heritage. Furthermore, sport was also constructed as part of the participants' understandings of heritage in focus group 8:

> **Henry:** *It's like the village green which is quite nice, where everyone can play cricket and then we've come to sports* (pauses…) *there's a lot of sporting heritage, I mean we've given the world cricket, football, golf and tennis. Now that I think about that, heritage for me, it's what we've given to the world as well. We've got Wimbledon coming up, we've got cricket, and we've got rugby. I don't know if any of you follow rugby? I used to work in Finland and I mean it's only 100 years old there! You know, and we've got a stadium, the biggest things they build now are football stadiums, you know it's ridiculous, but it's also good. I mean, we've got the Olympic Games coming up and that should bankrupt us a bit more but so what!* (45yrs.)
>
> **Aidan:** *It's a good thing?* (picking up on the idea of the cost of hosting the Olympics) (63yrs.)
>
> **Henry:** *Well absolutely! You know, especially in the East End* [of London]*, you know that can give the people there a bit more em, well self-respect, and a bit more hope and they can regenerate that area and that will become part of their heritage as well.*

Whilst this excerpt does not relate to sense of place specifically, it does suggest that sporting heritage can play a role in creating and facilitating a sense of place. Henry seems to suggest a potential for sporting events such as the Olympics to

create new senses of place through regeneration and development, whereby people can feel ***pride and hope*** in their new sport related environment. Furthermore, Henry constructs the notion that heritage can also represent *'what we've given to the world'* and this suggests that heritage, and specifically sporting heritage for Henry, can play a role in defining the nation and its contribution internationally.

There is a growing interest in the role of sport and sport history in the heritage tourism literature. One possible catalyst for this may be the increasing need for mega-events such as the Olympic Games to demonstrate a legacy beyond the duration of the event itself. Wood (2005) evaluates the opportunities that the 2012 London Olympics brings in facilitating the value and role of sport related heritage tourism and recognises a growing interest in and demand for sporting heritage experiences. One study explored Twickenham Stadium and the ways in which it was represented to visitors through official stadium tours (Ramshaw and Gammon 2010). This research found that tour guides often used a variety of *'home'* narratives in their construction of the place (ibid). These narratives include the representation of Twickenham as the *'spiritual home'* of rugby, the *'literal home'* of the national rugby team and also the *'home of particular notions of English identity'*. Such accounts were used to elevate the stadium to its status as an international tourism destination (ibid), and this resonates with the way in which Gary constructs his understanding of Wembley. Furthermore, Ramshaw and Gammon (2005) suggests that sport can play an important role in the construction of place identity and that there is a further role for nostalgic sports events in destination image. This would relate to Gary's reverence for the World

Cup 1966 which seems to hold a certain status within his wider associations of Wembley and English sporting history. Whilst Ramshaw and Gammon (2005) uses the term *'nostalgia'* to specifically refer to certain types of sporting events, they suggest that the term *'heritage'* is more appropriate in this context as it is a more encompassing term that represents the complex associations of sport related heritage tourism.

Heritage and a Sense of Security

A further sense of heritage, relating to the idea of a **sense of belonging** takes a different perspective. Differences in the ways people understand heritage and the meanings and value that shape heritage for them, were reflected in the ways in which participants constructed their ideas about a sense of belonging. In this case, rather than linking to a sense of place in terms of a geographical location, participants talked about a sense of belonging gained from heritage at a personal level:

> **Thomas:** *My heritage is a feeling of belonging, because I know where I've been, where I'm going* (pauses…), *who I am now, yeah. I'm not wandering around in a vacuum!* [It's] *a sense of belonging, and of protection as well. Because I have got a UK passport, made in china* (he jokes), *and so I know who I am* (45yrs. fg1)

For Thomas it seems that heritage represents both a personal and a national sense of belonging. At the manifest level, he uses phrases such as a *'feeling of belonging'* and a *'sense of belonging'* and at the more latent level, he seems to value the sense of security that is gained through knowing *'who I am'* and the *'protection'* he feels from this sense of belonging. This theme has been labelled loosely in line with the motivational value group of 'security', which includes the

values of *'national security'* and a *'sense of belonging'* (Schwartz 1992; Spini 2003). This relationship between the way a participant understands heritage and their sense of belonging is also constructed by Annie, albeit it at a more latent level and within a different context:

> **Annie:** *So, I brought a necklace that my Granddad gave me before he died, belonging to his Great Aunt… who was kind of a special person to him… so I feel really special to be able to have it. And also, I got given this Libra necklace from my Gran, she's the same star sign as me... she gave it to me, which I quite like, because it was special to my Grandparents. So, so for me, it makes me feel special to have them, and because of the importance, where it was relevant to my Gran and to me, it's nice to have it, because she passed it on to me* (19yrs. fg2)

Whilst different aspects of heritage are being discussed, the underlying values seem to transcend specific contexts. In these two excerpts, heritage is linked to memories and more personal aspects of identity. A sense of belonging and its related value type security (Schwartz 1992; Spini 2003) can be interpreted from the latent level of analysis, as each individual places emphasis on the importance of heritage to them personally.

A Sense and Source of Pride

Alongside the role of heritage in creating a ***sense of place*** and a ***sense of belonging***, there is also a theme relating to a ***sense of pride*** constructed by the participants during their discussions. Gary is proud of the fact that it is not just *'people in this country, but worldwide'* who appreciate the value of Wembley and its football heritage. Thomas feels proud of the ***values*** that are represented by football sporting heritage and Susan seems proud when she talks about the

uniqueness of Edinburgh Castle. This theme of pride and heritage was developed

from a range of date in a number of different groups:

> **Rhys:** *You've got to face it, that what to you might be a good thing* (gestures around), *to me could be a bad thing, but it's still our history. People often seem to want to knock this country's history and heritage because of its empire and personally I'm very proud of it* (pauses…) *it's something I think we should be very proud of and I would certainly say make the most of it, because I think we've got one of the best of them! But some people often don't seem to want to enjoy it* (42yrs. fg6)

> **Gareth:** *…it's a natural human instinct isn't it, to want to, to want to have a heritage, and you want the heritage you've got to be something you can be proud of* (pauses...) *it's human nature isn't it! You kind of want to skim over the bits that might have been a bit shady...* (52yrs. fg4)

These participants recognise that whilst history may not always represent

something that makes them feel proud, on the whole Rhys and Gareth feel pride in

their heritage. However, there was evident tension surrounding this idea which is

illustrated by the following excerpt from focus group 3:

> **Kellie:** *Heritage to me is about where I come from, my beliefs and values passed down through my nationality… no not my nationality, my culture and my family. My heritage, interestingly I wrote English instead of British, which I guess is wrong. I just always do! It's just always English. I don't know, there is a bit* (pauses…) *well you know when people say 'don't say that!' but I just feel, well like my Mum, she's a teacher, a secondary teacher, and she says well 'you have to say British really'* (does an impression of a 'mumsy' voice… some laughing around the group) *but I don't like that, 'cos I would never, you know say that, it doesn't feel natural! Just like I would never go and have a Union Jack flag, I would always want a St. George's flag, that's what I mean... yeah. Well we are English and yet we're not allowed to say we're English! Well oh and like the Saint George's flag is like, meant to be a symbol of racism now…* (20yrs.)

> **Sarah:** *What? Really? But that's more about a sense of belonging!* (it is clear that Sarah had not thought about this before) (40yrs.)

> **Kellie:** *Well yeah, it's been talked about and it is seen as racist! And like everyone should know the national anthem as well, I mean like, I can't say that I know every word off by heart…but…*

> **Jill:** *I'm quite proud to be English…* (19yrs.)

And a little while later in the same group…

> **Kellie:** *Well I just keep thinking of, well, when you said heritage* [as a topic for the discussion], *then all of a sudden I became the most English person in the world! So, 'cos I mean, it's not like having a, you know, a t-shirt with the Queen on or something really silly, but I feel really English!*

> **Hannah:** *Yeah it's like British heritage, I don't know what this means but I hear it a lot!* (19yrs.)

Whilst a ***sense of pride*** is seemingly valued by participants, for Kellie this pride is countered by the perceived tension of English versus British national identities. This excerpt represents a wide range of instances in the data whereby pride in heritage was discussed hand in hand with more political ideas of correctness. As Palmer (2000, p.331) recognises, *'questions of identity and belonging rarely, if ever, produce answers that can be applied to all people and all situations'* and that this is particularly the case for English national identity within wider British discourses. Furthermore, McLean (2006, p.3) highlights that despite an increasing interest in identity within cultural studies, *'there has been little discussion and even less research into identity negotiation and construction in heritage'*. For Kellie, heritage is a personal sense of who she is and of her sense of English identity. Yet she feels that 'English' is not an acceptable way to represent herself to others, or even to her own mother; whilst using 'British' *'doesn't feel natural!'*

for her. Whilst it is generally accepted that individuals may draw on more than one identity depending on their personal circumstances (Palmer 2005); it seems clear that for Kellie, Jill and Hanna above, they feel personally engaged with their English identity and disengaged from ideas of British and Britishness. They do not seems to have different identity 'hats' in which they can change their identity with the occasion or their mood (ibid), and they feel alienated from wider discourses of Britishness.

Building on this discussion, a further construction of heritage and the politics of feeling proud is evidenced in the following excerpt from focus group 4:

> **Gareth***: I think one of the other words no one has really mentioned yet, that goes, I think goes in with heritage, is patriotism and it's kind of like a rude word in this country* (52yrs.)

> **Allison:** *We're not allowed to say really are we... we're not allowed to be patriots...* (37yrs.)

> **Gareth:** *No no, exactly! When putting the English flag up, it's dangerous, and I think it's because an awful lot about what is patriotism, such as pride and about serving your country, has kind of got hijacked by the extreme right-wing in recent years, and now it's almost like 'oh should I fly a cross of St. George's flag, should I be flying a Union flag', should I really be that proud to be British or English even for that matter. So I think that patriotism is part of our heritage, but we're almost ashamed of it now... and I think that's a big problem.*

> **Alex:** *You wait 'til the World Cup starts!* (61yrs.)

> **Gareth:** *Yeah then we'll become flag-waving patriots for those few brief weeks* (sounds of agreement and some laughing here)*. But if you think of other countries like America, they're not frightened to fly their stars and bars outside their houses or in their street, and the Aussies, or the South Africans. Not like to the extent that people are in this country and particularly in England. Not so much in Cornwall* [his home]*, Scotland or Wales, where they will fly the flag, they are not*

scared to fly their flag, but particularly in England… we've almost become ashamed of it.

Alex: *Yeah, I think Kevin's right. I mean, you got certain occasions, like the World Cup when the flags all come out and it's like last Friday, it was quite interesting walking around the streets with my dog, and a number of St. George's flags were actually flying around people's gardens or at the side of people's cars and that sort of thing, it was quite uplifting but really quite unusual.*

Jeff: *Yeah, I fly it as well for the 21st or St. George's Day, but that's my wife's birthday actually so we always celebrate St. George's Day (38yrs.)*

Alex: *It's actually a reminder isn't it – 'cos we always get asked the question why don't we celebrate St. George's Day, like the Scots celebrate St. Andrew's and the Irish celebrate St. Patrick's Day, why don't we do that? I think gradually that's getting through a bit, I actually get quite surprised, pleased actually, to see so many flags flying for St. George's Day.*

Interestingly, the political conflict or tension participants felt, when discussing feeling proud to be English in the context of other 'British' identities, was mirrored in a similar tension around feeling proud to be British in the context of 'non-British' and international perspectives. For the participants above, there is tension surrounding the waving of flags despite the fact that other nations do not have the same hesitation in displaying their own pride and identity. Furthermore, these participants feel restricted in their use of such symbols, which they feel may be 'dangerous' or seen as 'racist'.

> *'The National Flag, the National Anthem and the National Emblem are the three symbols through which an independent country proclaims its identity and sovereignty, and as such they command instantaneous respect and loyalty. In themselves they reflect the entire background, thought and culture of a nation'* (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983, p.12).

Ashworth (2007) recognises that the *'use of heritage by national governments as an instrument for the creation and promotion of the nation-state and the legitimating of its government is hardly a novelty'*. Furthermore this political use of heritage is by no means restricted to discourses of Britishness and little is known about how such political uses can impact on engagement with heritage and heritage tourism experiences. It is particularly interesting that Kellie had some of the strongest feelings against using what is an unnatural term to her, 'British'; yet Kellie was one of the more engaged participants when it came to discussing her understandings of heritage and her wider enjoyment of heritage through tourism, to the point that another member of the group teased her as being a *'heritage geek'* (Kirsty, 20yrs.). Kellie's proud response to this was: *'yeah I am, and I'm glad!'* (This idea of engagement in heritage and tourism is the focus of chapter 6).

The themes discussed here relating to heritage and pride, suggest that in order for people to experience their identity through tourism, the narratives used by sites and attractions must appeal at the personal level. For example, what the place can *'tell me about my history, my roots'* (Palmer 2005, p.14). If this is the case, it may well be problematic when English narratives are used either interchangeably or superimposed by British ones. As Hannah suggests, she often hears the term 'British Heritage' but does not know what it means for her. She does not associate or engage with British heritage in the ways that the Authorised Heritage Discourses (Smith 2006) and those who are empowered to cultivate such discourses might hope. The concern is that *'dominant groups in society frequently construct definitions of identity to serve their own ends'* (Palmer 2005, p.8) and in

doing so may perpetuate the AHD and alienate those who have different or competing senses of identity.

Whilst the senses of heritage discussed in this section represent many different ideas and different aspects of heritage, they share a common theme in that they are inherently intangible ways of understanding and engaging with heritage. Participants' variously constructed a complex understanding of heritage that represents a multiplicity of meanings and values.

The Intangibility of Heritage

As with the previous theme and sub-themes, the theme in this section has been constructed through a seemingly wide range of different ideas, representations and contexts that on the surface look disparate and unconnected. Building on the analysis and interpretation above, whereby participants construct *senses of heritage* through places and ideas such Wembley Stadium, Edinburgh Castle, a British passport, and a necklace inherited from a grandparent, the theme presented here is that of the inherent *intangibility of heritage.* As these examples illustrate, the participants in this study constructed an understanding of heritage that, for them, was intrinsically linked to senses of self, belonging, pride, place and time, each of which demonstrate and emphasise the intangible nature of heritage. This *intangibility* seems to transcend the specific context or example of heritage being discussed, which may or may not have been tangible in its own right. A stadium, a castle, a passport and a necklace are all tangible places or things, yet the participants' connections with these as 'heritage' is rooted within more intangible associations and representations that these places or things represent for them.

This theme of the intangible nature of heritage is explored further in this section and focuses on the ways in which participants construct their understandings of heritage through the use of images, stories and rich descriptions.

Using Images to Discuss and Explore ideas of Heritage

In response to the individual pre-task activity, a number of participants chose to bring along a picture or photograph to the discussion to share with the group. One example of this is a printed photograph of the local town that Alexander brought to focus group 2. When asked why he had chosen this particular item, he offered the following insight into his understanding of heritage:

> **Alexander:** *Yeah, I found this old photo* (pauses…) *it's just a print, of Bournemouth back in 1897... Sort of because I was born in Bournemouth, so I, it's just fascinating to look at. Obviously, the buildings and the people, just the way of life. That was actually what you saw in people, the way they lived. It's one of those old Francis photos... it's just sort of, to me* (pauses…) *just encapsulates heritage in Bournemouth. Because obviously, it's not that old* [the town]… *so it sort of shows to me, not just the representation of the buildings, but em... the people as well. They* [the people] *are our heritage, this is our past'* (43yrs.)

This explanation by Alexander of why the photograph represents 'heritage' to him, is rich with intangible meanings, which the physical object itself does not seem to hold for him. The phrase *'it's just a print'* suggests that it is not the photograph itself that represents the heritage value for Alexander, but the imagery and ideas that it helps to communicate or reveal. Furthermore, whilst Alexander describes tangible elements represented within the image, such as the buildings in the picture, he seems to place the emphasis on more intangible aspects of heritage, represented by the *'people and the way they lived'.* He *s*uggests that

'they [the people] *are our heritage, this is our past'*, and in doing so, constructs an understanding of heritage that is largely based on intangible ideas of heritage. The picture itself may not be 'heritage', but in effect, it facilitates the discussion and helps the participant to share his understanding of the meaning and significance that heritage represents for him. This is something that the image cannot do on its own, as it is the participant's voice that interprets and presents the meanings that *he* sees as important. This process can be understood through the suggestion that it is often the tangible aspects of heritage that *'evoke'* the intangible representations that give heritage its meaning, and that tangible heritage serves as a *'point of contact or occasion for our own imaginative, empathetic work'* (Byrne 2009, p.246). Whilst Alexander is not presenting the image itself as heritage, the role it plays seems to be one such *'point of contact'* through which he can imagine, think and talk about heritage. Byrne (ibid) suggests that people play an active role in the interpretation and transformation of heritage meanings and values and that this process takes place largely within the intangible realm of evocations and imaginings. This understanding resonates with the way in which participants' constructed the meanings and values of heritage in this study and suggests that this process is both ***interpretive and intangible*** in its nature:

> **Alan:** *You should probably recognise this* (has brought along a picture of Corfe Castle, Dorset. Some smiles of obvious recognition, whilst some others clearly not sure). *Do you know who the artist is? You can probably guess?* (Directs this to room, he is obviously attached to this picture and sounds knowledgeable about it) (63yrs. fg1)

> **Rob:** *Err... it's not Constable?* (58yrs.)

> **Alan:** *Nope!* (Waits a few seconds, for effect)

Jayne: *Turner?* (26yrs.)

Alan: *Yes! It is... its Turner! Yeah he travelled in Dorset, made some sketches of it. He even did one of Poole. A cart and a horse entering Poole* (is animated, seems familiar/at ease with his chosen topic)

Facilitator: *So what is it about this that represents heritage to you?*

Alan: *Well the castle itself* (pauses…), *it's symbolic really, really of conflict between monarchy and parliament and the fact that we've got, leisurely, the oldest parliament in the world! Em, the fact that its Turner who has done it, so you've got a legacy there, em well an artistic heritage if you like, so it just sort of speaks of various aspects* (pauses…) *and I was born here, em, yeah. So it just sort of came to mind, yeah... and the literature as well. Em... well I don't know about archaeology, but the architecture is, bearing in mind what's left of it, but* (breaks off laughing… Note: Corfe Caste is a ruin and parts of it are in scaffolding at the time), *but yes you've got the, if you like the, artistic aspect as well as the place itself.*

For Alan, the picture itself seems to hold meaning as heritage. This is slightly different from the last example, whereby the picture was *'just a print'*, yet the excerpt is similar to the extent that the image can be seen to facilitate the thinking and talking about heritage. Furthermore, Alan interprets a varied range of **intangible representations of heritage** from his understanding of the picture. Whilst significantly, the image itself is of a castle ruin set in its rural village context, Alan actively constructs ideas such as conflict, legacy, artistic heritage and literature: these are intangible in essence and none appear explicitly in the image. The complex range of meanings represented within the excerpt reflect the importance of intangible dimensions of heritage, which are often constructed around a tangible heritage item such as the picture that Alan had chosen. In this light, intangible elements of heritage can be viewed as a *'tool through which the tangible heritage could be defined and expressed* [thus] *transforming inert landscapes of objects and monuments turning them into living archives of cultural*

values' (Munjeri 2004, p.18). Corfe Castle is therefore being transformed from a static landscape into a living archive through the intangible meanings and values that it represents for Alan. Therefore, it may be that by exploring more material aspects of the wider historic environment that an understanding of 'heritage' can be constructed (Lowenthal 1985; Smith 2006). These physical environments can play an important role in facilitating and evoking a sense of 'heritage' for both individuals and groups. Furthermore, whilst it took years to be recognised as such, intangible heritage provides the *'larger framework within which tangible heritage could take its shape and significance'* (Munjeri 2004, p.18).

It is suggested that the act of choosing their own images from which to explore and discuss heritage, without direction or restriction from specific research parameters, has illuminated the sense of ownership and attachment participants feel in terms of the meanings and values of heritage. In particular, when presenting their ideas surrounding the individual pre-task activity, participants were engaged in what 'heritage' was and the aspects they wanted to focus on and why. This seemed to be the case whether or not they had initially felt familiar or comfortable about the topic 'heritage'. In discussing the pre-task activity, participants seemed to feel empowered to take ownership of the discussion, in order to shape, construct and share their own ideas of heritage.

Whilst the examples above are of photographs and images that participants chose to bring along to the discussion groups, the example below presents a different use of an image, whereby Annie describes a picture that represents heritage to her, that she could not bring with her as it was at her parents' house:

Annie: *Em, there is this picture of me at Corfe Castle, and that's what 'heritage' brings to mind for me. It's a picture of me, in my buggy, when I'm about 2 or 3, and my Dad's there as well and he's got a camera around his neck which is so typical of him, and he's kissing my knee and you can see the castle in the background* (pauses…) *and it's just a really nice picture, but at the same time it kind of brings the, em… the kind of national aspect of heritage into it as well as the personal. The picture kind of combines them both for me. That's the kind of image I've got of heritage, and of Corfe Castle and of when I was little* (19yrs. fg2)

For Annie, this picture *'brings to mind'* or *'evokes'* a sense of heritage. As such, she constructs quite a personal understanding of heritage which reminds her of spending time with her father who she remembers often carried a camera around his neck. However it is also the fact that Corfe Castle is *'in the background'* that makes this picture 'heritage' for Annie, who further articulates her understanding of heritage as having both a personal and a *'national aspect of heritage'*. What is interesting is that the way in which Annie constructs her understanding of heritage is consistently rooted within very personal meanings and values, including her previous understanding of heritage as being her inherited features and characteristics, her red hair and her personality (see chapter 4). The image she describes above seems to facilitate Annie's thinking and talking about heritage in very similar ways to the images and pictures other participants brought along with them to the group. These examples reflect the value of images in research, which can be useful tools in helping participants to actively construct, share and discuss their ideas about heritage. This would further support the use of the individual pre-task activity in this study, as it encouraged participants to reflect and think through the meaning of heritage and the ways in which it may be important to them. Furthermore, the images that participants brought along, such as Alan's picture of Corfe Caste, Alexander's print of his home town and so on, were self-

selected and this is a key distinction that further enhances the inductive quality of the study.

There is growing interest in research that makes use of visual methods in exploring participants' perspectives or understandings of phenomena, including a number of studies that make use of photographs within heritage and tourism literature. In particular, Garrod (2007) explores the potential for using photographs in heritage tourism research, suggesting that the analysis of images collected by tourists themselves, rather than those selected and used by the industry, can be a useful tool which very few studies have employed to date. Such Visitor-Employed Photography (VEP) can inform appropriate planning and management of heritage tourism and the resources of the historic environment (ibid). Furthermore, Jacobsen (2007) highlights the potential of VEP for understanding tourism landscapes, which is particularly useful when research seeks unprompted responses about what visitors feel is important or significant about specific landscapes. Such unprompted and therefore visitor-generated themes and visuals of heritage sites, gained through the use of VEP, can facilitate the development of more meaningful representations of heritage sites, which can then be used to greater effect within promotional materials (MacKay and Couldwell 2004). The ways in which participants in this study actively negotiated and constructed their understandings of heritage through the use of self-selected images, photographs and even in one case a description of such an image, yielded rich insights into their understanding of heritage and the meanings and values it represents for them. The intangible nature of heritage and the value of images in facilitating discussion about heritage would therefore support the idea that visuals

methods of data collection and analysis have significant potential within qualitative heritage and tourism research. For the participants, the images were tools through which they could articulate and shape complex representations of heritage. This would lend itself well to a heritage site or attraction whereby VEP or similar methods could be employed when looking to inform and develop appropriate meaning based marketing communications, which could then more effectively present heritage tourism spaces and experiences to potential visitors. This suggestion is further supported by the increasing interest in visual methods within qualitative tourism research, including the value of Visual Autoethnography in exploring the *'embodied performances of tourists' experiences'* (Scarles 2010). Furthermore, images were found to be valuable tools which helped bring a more tangible dimension from which participants could begin to construct, understand and discuss the more intangible aspects of heritage.

The Role of Stories and Storytelling

A further sub-theme developed through the analysis and interpretation of the data contributes to the overall theme of the ***intangibility of heritage.*** This sub-theme was developed through the participants' use of ***stories*** in constructing understandings, meanings and values of heritage. Stories can be understood as a narrative form of discourse (Polyani 1985) and as a central medium through which people reconstruct and interpret their experiences (Hughes and DuMont 1993). Furthermore, stories can be understood as a *'fundamental element of* [the] *social interaction'* that takes places within focus groups, and are used by participants to *'amuse, inform, illustrate and explain'* their perspectives to their fellow group members (ibid p.793).

It is important to recognise that by exploring and constructing their understandings of heritage through the use of stories, participants are in effect selecting, interpreting and in turn communicating the *'meaning they intend the listener to take from the story'* (Bailey and Tilley 2002, p.575). Such meanings should be considered as a construction between the participant and their social world and therefore are most appropriately understood from within research that takes a constructionist perspective, rather than from any research design that seeks to find an objective reality (ibid). Given the design of this research and the social constructionist theoretical perspective adopted, stories can be a meaningful and useful form of narrative data. Within this study participants' stories illustrate the different ways in which they construct the meanings and values of heritage. This can be seen clearly from the following data excerpt of a discussion surrounding a famous landscape that one participant was particularly attached to:

> **Dan:** *Well I've put Cerne Abbas, I don't know if anyone's been?* (pauses…) *there you've got that giant on the hill… a massive chalk cut out… and below there you've got the church in the village and you've got the old stocks there and then... if you go right through the graveyard, the cemetery to the back, there's a natural spring!* (pauses…) *And there's a story to that, do you know the story?* (refers to the group here). *Well, in 1300 'n something, the Abbey there was in 1300 and something, they say a Saint came to the village as it was being built and he struck his em, his staff on the ground… and he said to the villagers who were going to stay there - there was no water in the area, and they wanted sheep and cows and stuff - so he said 'what do you want, water or wine?', so they said water... and the saint hit the ground with his staff and this spring came up! And that spring feeds the village still now. Not that they drink it they're on the mains now, but it does run right through the village and down alongside the streets and it's as clear as crystal! How it stays like that is quite amazing, plus you've got the big valley haven't you, as you come through to come into it, it's marvellous isn't it…* (60yrs. fg8)

It is interesting that Dan starts off his story by describing the place through the tangible aspects of the heritage evident within the landscape. He highlights both cultural and natural elements which come together to create a clear image of a 'heritage' place for him. However, as the story continues, Dan becomes more animated and more engaged and it becomes clear that the story acts as an intangible glue that holds these elements together for him. It is also the story of the Saint and the legend of the village spring which holds meaning and interest for Dan:

> **Dan:** (con't…) *but it's the stories that get you I think, I've always got to research something, 'cos its more interesting the more you track back, the more interesting it becomes! 'cos most people go there and they look at the giant and that's it, you know, 'oh yeah, big giant, pagan times, err… very nice...' but what does it mean., they don't know, they didn't look any further you know. I've got to go noseying around, to understand it, and so I went in the cemetery… and course I found this spring...this natural spring...and I found an old board up on a tree, and it said Saint Andrew, or someone?* (Looks around at the group, is less sure on this aspect of the story, no one corrects him or interjects, they seem interested to hear more) *Well anyway, someone was supposed to have come there in pagan times, maybe before the giant was there, maybe after I don't know, but em yeah. It's said that villagers were living there, but there was no water and of course for the animals you know they had to get water from Dorchester, 20 odd miles away and em, and the Saint offered them the choice, water or wine and now they have water there!*

This excerpt, where Dan tells of his experience visiting a local heritage landscape is noteworthy as it has a story within a story. Dan constructs an image of a landscape that has, for him, a variety of tangible attributes: the *'massive chalk cut out'* and the *'big valley'* alongside the church and the cemetery and the spring itself. However, it is through the more intangible association of the local legend that Dan feels engaged and this creates meaning and value that ties together the

intangible and tangible aspects of the heritage experience. This suggests that it is by interacting and thinking about heritage beyond the tangible representations that fosters a deeper understanding of heritage and its multiplicity of possible values and meanings. This supports the literature which proposes that heritage becomes valued through the beliefs, emotions and imaginations of the individuals and groups involved (Timothy 1997; Byrne 2009). For Dan, the intangible legend of the Saint and the spring, a story which he stumbled across on a small plague *'up a tree'*, evokes the meaning of the wider heritage that he is engaging with, seemingly more so than the chalk giant that makes the landscape famous in the first instance. This seems to be similarly the case for Daniel in focus group 6, whereby he uses a story to construct his understanding of heritage:

Daniel: *Er yeah, the main things I think about heritage, is historical items that have like stories behind them, myths and legends that make them important. Erm also, traditions, old traditions and old beliefs that are important as well* (pauses…) *because most of the things that we discuss here have distinctive features and stories behind them, that sort of thing. And that's what makes them special and different and you remember them so.* (Pauses…) *I think it's just like the Giants Causeway, it has a story behind it, to sort of make it more... em… Well, the natural thing and the stones, they aren't sure how it was formed and things like that, so it makes them more interesting and gives it something more special... well the Giants Causeway, I wouldn't be that impressed with, if it wasn't for the stories behind it! That sort of thing has made it more...* (Pauses) *I don't actually know the story that well* (laughs… sounds as if he is shy to relay a story) *... well basically its some battle and there's some giant and it sort of causes... I can't really describe it!* (21yrs.)

Rhys: *Well* (picking up where Ryan finishes), *there were two giants weren't there? One in Scotland and one in Ireland and one is having a fight with the other one and he wants to build a causeway. I can't remember whether he builds a causeway and the other one knocks it down or... he doesn't build the causeway. I can't remember what it is, but they want to have a fight and the idea is ones building a road out to the other that's in Scotland and neither one gets there, or its been...*

knocked down during their battle or something along those lines?
Anyway… that's the idea... maybe. Well I think it is the story that gets
people as opposed to anything else! (42yrs.)

For Daniel, his understanding of heritage is centred on intangible ideas of stories, myths and legends that make an aspect of history important and memorable. Daniel does not describe the landscape in his story, in fact the exact details do not seem to be as important and something he *'wouldn't be that impressed with, if it wasn't for the stories behind it'.* Interestingly, Daniel seems suddenly shy when it comes to telling a potentially lengthy story within the group, which may hint at a possible limitation of the focus group method here as his shyness seems to stifle him. Furthermore, neither Daniel nor Rhys who continues the story, sound fully confident about the details of the story, yet both clearly suggest that it is the story rather than the landscape that holds their interest in terms of the heritage. Rhys goes so far as to say that *'it is the story that gets people'*, which echoes Dan's comment above (focus group 8) when he suggests that *'it's the stories that get you I think'.*

Interestingly, these stories seem to be used in a different way than the images used in the previous section. The stories are, in themselves, intangible representations of heritage, whereas for the most part, the images were of more tangible representations of heritage through which participants discussed intangible ideas and meanings. It could therefore be suggested that the point Byrne (2009, p.246) makes about tangible heritage giving rise to the *'occasion for our own imaginative, empathetic work'*, may also be prompted by intangible forms of heritage such as the stories, myths and legends through which participants engage with more tangible aspects of heritage. The *'point of contact'* can be tangible

(ibid) or intangible, with both offering the potential to construct meanings and values from the other. The stories facilitate participants' engagement with physical or tangible aspects of the environment (Cerne Abbas, the fresh water spring and the Giants Causeway), whereas the images seemed to facilitate engagement with more intangible aspects of heritage such as childhood memories, artistic legacies and past political conflicts. In both instances, the images and the stories facilitate more interpretive levels of thinking and talking about heritage and in turn helped participants construct meanings and values from heritage.

Bouchanaki (2003, p.5) suggests that there is *'interdependency'* between tangible and intangible heritage and that these are in effect *'two sides of the same coin',* relying on each other to understand the importance and meaning of each. Furthermore, with increasing interest in intangible forms of heritage, this interdependency calls for greater priority to be placed on the *'message'* of heritage as presented through heritage sites and attractions. Moreover, this *'message'* requires managers *'to identify the ethical values, social customs, beliefs or myths of which intangible heritage is the sign and expression'* (ibid p.1). This includes taking a 'meaning' based approach to achieving effective communication with heritage audiences, which would go some way to redressing the problem that *'the meaning of heritage that is portrayed and promoted by the heritage sector is not the heritage that many people relate to'* (MORI 2000, p.9). Understanding the ways in which people access and construct what are ultimately intangible, interpretive meanings and values from both tangible and intangible forms of heritage. In addition to understanding the ways in which these meanings and values form and shape perceptions of and engagement with heritage for different

people, the management and marketing of heritage sites and attractions can ultimately build more meaningful relationships with their potential audiences.

Whilst the two examples above involve participants talking about stories, myths and legends, another use of storytelling was evident in the ways in which participants talked about their own experiences. In the following excerpt, Olivia tells the story of a recent visit to a heritage attraction:

> **Olivia:** *Well, I went the other day to Hampton Court Palace, em on Saturday, and I had the most amazing day there, where I met Henry VIII and his wives and I was involved with him and his wedding* (lots of laughing here, Olivia emphasises 'involved with him' in a suggestive and entertaining way). *So you are invited to his wedding ... and erm... and it was marvellous! You have time with her, the wife to be, and time with him, and then he makes comments about who you are and how you think and how you've evolved! And this is very interesting, the idea of how we've changed or not changed, and I said to Henry 'what about the church?' and he said 'ah! He says, well you know God told me to become King, and you know, the Pope, no nothing to do with the Pope, not really in these days, no and regards Luther, well!' And you know the whole thing was brought alive!! I would go back to Hampton Court Palace as it was such an exciting experience* (59yrs. fg5)

For Olivia, the visit to Hampton Court Palace was rich with intangible meaning, and she describes the experience of interacting with *'Henry'* and being immersed within a narrative as part of the visit. Interestingly, Olivia does not refer to any material aspect of the heritage site during her story and instead focuses on the role playing experience and the ways in which *'the whole thing was brought alive'*. By telling the story of her visit, Olivia also constructs quite a personal narrative that emphasises the ways in which she personally engaged with the heritage presented. The experience was valued at an emotional and intangible level and takes on the

feel of a story. She is painting a picture almost, rather than sharing a more general description of the visit and the types of things she saw and did. This can be understood through the suggestion that heritage experiences are both emotional and subjective and that in this context, heritage can be understood as a form of cultural production (Park 2010). This approach to understanding heritage resonates with the participants' constructions of heritage within the focus groups and the themes explored within this chapter.

Each of the images and storytelling examples, whilst exploring different contexts and experiences, shared a common interest in the intangible nature of heritage. This is not to say that they were only interested in intangible heritage, but that both the tangible and intangible forms of heritage that they discussed were valued at a personal, interpretive level, shaping an understanding of heritage that was intangible in its essence. Furthermore, there is a growing body of literature focussing on intangible aspects of heritage (Deacon 2004; Ahmad 2006; Lira and Armoêda 2009; Smith and Akagawa 2009; Freeman 2010; Park 2011), and also exploring various aspects of intangible heritage tourism (Alivizatou 2006; Vidal Gonzáles 2008; Liang 2008; Zhang et al. 2008; Caponero and Leite 2010; and du Cros 2011). Interestingly, Smith & Akagawa (2009) question the focus on, and relevance of, what they call the *'polarising debate'* between tangible and intangible heritage. They propose instead, that *'heritage'* only becomes so *'when it is recognisable within a particular set of cultural or social values, which are themselves intangible'* (ibid P.7). This stance supports the idea that all heritage is intangible, and that there is a multiplicity of possible meanings and values that heritage may represent for different people. From the analysis and interpretation

of the data in this study, the findings would support the call for heritage to be considered *'not so much a 'thing' as a set of values and meanings'* (Smith 2006, p.11).

The theme of the ***intangibility of heritage*** can be supported by the recognition that it is society's norms and values that are at the core of understanding heritage (Munjeri 2004). Furthermore, Vecco (2010, p.324) recognises the benefit of understanding heritage through the *'capacity of the object to arouse certain values'* and supports the increasingly accepted fact that *'heritage is no longer defined on the basis of its material aspect'*. It may be fair to suggest that the values that people impose on heritage are just as meaningful, if not more so, than the inherent values that experts and professionals judge as residing within heritage resources, places and ideas. Smith and Waterton (2009) stipulate that heritage cannot, and should not, be defined by its materiality or non-materiality alone. Rather it is what is done with heritage that creates the scope for differentiation. These authors suggest that regardless of the specific context of heritage, be it tangible or not, the essence is the same, i.e. *'what heritage is - is the performance and negotiation of identity, values and a sense of place'* (ibid p.292). This supports an earlier call for heritage to be understood as a process (Howard 2003) and as a *'set of values and meanings'* (Smith 2006, p.11).

The ways in which participants engaged with heritage through the use of various images and stories, helped them to construct, share and discuss the intangible meanings and values that heritage represents to them. This would support the idea that all experiences of heritage are unique at their core (Timothy 1997), and

therefore heritage is necessarily a personally defined concept (Howard 2003). Such a move away from the intrinsic value of heritage, towards the individual and social values that shape heritage, would necessitate the acknowledgement of the *'culturally determined'* nature of heritage (Papayannis & Howard 2007) and of heritage as a social production (Park 2010).

Summary

This chapter has explored a further four themes and related sub-themes and in doing so, has made a contribution to a number of questions raised by the literature review. In order to align these questions with the inductive themes presented in this chapter, Table 5.2 presents the relevant themes and sub-themes alongside the broader questions from the literature. Participants constructed a wide range of multiple meanings and values in relation to their lay understandings of heritage within the focus group discussions. The ***perceived importance of heritage*** explores the range of ways in which participants understood and value heritage. Within this, participants were particularly expressive in their discussions surrounding the nature and value of history, the ways in which they viewed the two concepts and how they differentiated between them. History was constructed as being something in *'the past tense',* involving past events and facts, whilst conversely, heritage was constructed as evolving, relevant and as an emotion through which they engaged with the past. Furthermore, a particular theme was developed around participants' perception of the educational value of heritage and the need to present balanced interpretations of the past. Participants felt that the *'bad stuff'* was just as important, if not more so within an educational context.

Table 5.2: Contribution and Relevance of Themes 4 -7

Themes	Sub-themes	Broader Questions from Literature
The perceived importance of heritage	**Understanding heritage through history** Understanding history as facts, as past events and in the *'past tense'* Heritage evolves and is an emotion in the present **Connecting with heritage through history** *'Yeah if it has a history, that's what gives something its' heritage!'* Heritage has a consequence in the present and for the future **The educational value of heritage** *'History to me at school was just remembering bloody dates!'* *'We have to teach them, how else will they learn from past mistakes?'* The need for more engaging ways of learning **Politics of the past and identities of the present**	*- What is the lay or non-expert understanding of heritage?*
Senses of heritage	 **Sense of place and belonging** **Heritage and a sense of security** **A sense and source of pride** Feeling tension about displaying pride	*- What types of ideas or things are thought of as 'heritage'?* *- What importance is placed upon 'heritage' by the participants?* *- What types of meanings does heritage represent?*
Heritage & security	**Using images to discuss and explore heritage** **Stories & storytelling** *'It's the stories that get you I think'*	*- What role (if any) do values play in this?*
The intangibility of heritage	**Sense of belonging** **National security**	

Further themes were developed around the multiple *senses of heritage* that were valued by participants. Heritage plays an important role for participants in terms of building a sense of place, a sense of belonging and a sense of security. Furthermore, participants constructed ideas of tension and conflict surrounding their desire to feel proud about their English and/or British heritage and identity.

Finally, a theme was developed to reflect the increasing personal and interpretive constructions of heritage for participants as they negotiated their own and each other's understandings of heritage. Within this, participants used images and stories as ways to construct complex ideas about heritage in different ways. Ultimately this theme builds on a range of ideas that together construct the *intangibility of heritage*. Whilst Bouchanaki (2003, p.5) suggests that there is an *'interdependency'* between tangible and intangible heritage, the findings in this chapter would support further emphasis on the intangible nature of all heritage.

The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 5.2 together represent the multiplicity of meanings that heritage represents for the participants. The findings of this chapter uphold the view that there is a multiplicity of possible meanings (Howard 2003) and values (Chung 2009) that heritage represents.

Chapter 6: Engaging with Heritage

Introduction

To this point, the discussion chapters have focused on the different ways in which participants understand heritage and the multiple meanings and values that heritage represents for them. This chapter builds on the previous two, by exploring the different ways in which participants engage with heritage in both an everyday sense and within their preferred tourism experiences. Moreover, this idea of engagement relates to many of the themes explored in the discussion so far. For example, participants were actively engaged in the process of thinking and talking about their understandings of heritage throughout the focus group discussions; and they constructed ideas about engaging with heritage through history, through senses of place and belonging, and through the use of images and stories. To explore the theme of engagement in more depth, this chapter highlights further ways in which participants seemed to be ***engaging with heritage*** through their understandings of heritage and the types of heritage tourism experiences they value.

The themes and sub-themes discussed in this chapter (see Table 6.1) have been developed through the different levels of engagement, interest in and awareness of heritage that participants explored during the focus groups. Furthermore, by choosing to locate this study outside of a predefined 'heritage' context, this research seeks to move beyond user/non-user, consumption/non-consumption and visitor/non-visitor dichotomies that are commonly used in heritage tourism research. Focusing instead on the multiple meanings and values that shape

people's understanding of and engagement with heritage as it relates to their lives in a broader sense. Smith (2006, p.33) recognises the limitation of using categories such as consumer, visitor and tourist when looking to understand heritage and its wider relevance, and argues that the latter term *'tourist'* is unsuitable as it implies a *'foreignness'* and a *'passing through'* dimension, which undermines any *'active sense of engagement'* that people may gain from their uses of heritage. Similarly, the idea of *'consumption'* further devalues the concept of heritage, and renders it a *'thing that is passively and uncritically consumed'*, further reinforcing the AHD and losing the *'sense of action or engagement on the part of non-expert users of heritage'* (ibid p.34). Despite the contested nature of the different labels, whether it is consumer, visitor or tourist, this study seeks to emphasise the ways in which the participants themselves construct their ideas about heritage and the meanings they take from them.

When developing the themes, as with previous chapters, the focus here is not on the wide range of different *things* or *places* that participants identified as *heritage* in the course of the discussion. Rather the themes focus on the different ways in which participants seemed to be engaged or disengaged with the idea heritage and the meanings and values heritage represents for them. As such, this chapter explores the different perspectives participants used to construct their ideas about heritage and the resulting levels of engagement that were shaped by these in relation to their everyday lives and through their tourism experiences. Interestingly, for some participants there seemed to be a genuine sense of personal engagement with heritage as they understood it, whilst for others there was a sense of disconnectedness and a lack of engagement with heritage.

Table 6.1: Engaging with Heritage

Themes	Sub-themes
Levels of engagement with heritage	**Different perspectives of heritage** Feeling personally connected to heritage *'Heritage is who I am'* Feeling disconnected from heritage *'It's not my heritage'* Heritage is not interesting now, but I may want to take an interest later
The role of tourism in exploring heritage	**Connecting with heritage through tourism** Seeking meaningful heritage tourism experiences Using specific interests and skills to engage with heritage Seeking familiar heritage tourism experiences **Feeling disconnected from heritage tourism** *'Heritage is for geeks, the elderly and retired people'*

Levels of Engagement with Heritage

This theme has been developed around the different perspectives participants used when constructing their ideas about heritage. For some, heritage was an idea they associated with on a personal level, and for these participants heritage was something they felt close to and which had personal meaning and value. For others, heritage was more distant and an idea they felt disconnected from. For these participants heritage was less relevant and something that they did not feel engaged with.

Feeling Personally Connected to Heritage

For many of the participants, their understanding of heritage was constructed around very personal narratives that suggest a sense of personal connectedness with the idea of heritage and its relevance. To an extent, this theme builds on aspects of the heritage as inheritance theme (chapter 4), in particular for those whose initial thoughts centred on heritage as a personal inheritance. For example in focus group 2, Annie previously described heritage as being an important part of who she is, her unique characteristics, her personality and even her distinctive red hair. Similarly, in focus group 3, Kellie talked about how heritage to her, meant inheriting the ideas and values of her family. Whilst these quotes are in the context of inheriting something from the past, they also reflect a personal sense of engagement with the idea of heritage. This personal level of engagement was constructed by a number of different participants as they negotiated the meanings and values that heritage represents within the focus groups. The following is an

excerpt from focus group 5 that illustrates some of the ideas used to develop this theme:

> **Molly:** *Okay, I did bring some stuff along, but the immediate first idea I thought about was not something I have here, because I don't have it, but I would have loved to have brought it. It's something my grandfather made which is a shepherd's hook! But as I say, I don't have it, it's not here, but emmm, he had carved it himself as he was a Shepherd, and he carved the top from the horns, sheep horns and they're really quite beautiful! But I did bring some other things* [pauses…] *now these are also an important part of heritage for me, as well as my name too, which is a large part of my heritage* [abbreviated here as focuses on specific name and would be identifiable from the story]… *so my name comes from the Scottish side of my family, and then there's the family tartan too! And then this is what I feel defines me, this comes from the other side of my family, these were made by family members* [passes around some small pieces of fabric], *I don't know exactly who made them all. Mostly my grandmother, I think. But this part of my family is German Polish and these are textiles, so textiles are important to me as an individual and I like them. This one fascinates me in particular, I believe my grandmother made this one...* (56yrs.)
>
> **Helena:** *It's gorgeous!* (51yrs.)
>
> **Molly:** *Yes, it is isn't it, and the embroidery and crochet,* [again abbreviated to preserve anonymity] *and well my grandmother's family in Poland, they used to grow their own flax and make their own linen, so my personal heritage is very strongly related to the land for them, and with my grandfather being a Shepherd!*

And a few minutes later:

> **Lucy:** *Well I'm what I consider to be Heinz 57 varieties really, because I'm Scottish by birth, my mother was Welsh and my father was Goebbels and my great-grandfather was Irish so! So I can honestly say I have a bit of everything in me* (some laughs here), *and for me, heritage is a sense of background, and also a sense of values and traditions that have come down through my family to me, and hopefully, I have managed to pass on to my children* (60yrs. fg5)

> **Olivia:** *Yes it is, it's about family. I've brought something, it's very personal, a bit like Molly, it's this musical box that my grannie and mother left me, made in Switzerland. I'll give you a - I don't know if it's going to play - it's very old* (it starts to play music), *but it brings back a lot of my childhood, and it is one of my earliest childhood memories, was this little erm musical box! As this is heritage isn't it, it's what we remember from when we were little and what we will pass on to our future children* (59yrs.)

For these participants, heritage was something that made them think about family and the things they valued from their family history and ancestry. For Molly there was a whole range of things that she related to as heritage, including her family name, tartan and handmade fabrics that she felt *'defines'* who she is as an individual. She describes how her personal heritage is related to the land on both sides of her family and she is personally connected with and engaged with her personal understanding of heritage. Similarly, Lucy constructs the idea of heritage as a *'sense of background'* and a *'sense of values and traditions',* a heritage that she has gained from her family and which she hopes to pass on to her children. Olivia echoes the latter sentiment in describing heritage as things from her childhood that she wishes to pass on to her children. Again for these participants heritage is of personal relevance and something that they engage with in a connected and meaningful way.

The ways in which participants personally engage with heritage fits particularly well with the understanding of heritage as *'a sign and symbol of people's ethnicities, nationalities and identities but subject to different meanings and multiple interpretations'* (Park 2010, p.117). Significantly, whilst each participant had a different way of describing their ***personal***

connectedness with heritage, they variously emphasise ideas of identity, nationality, family and the inherited values that shape their lives in the present. For Lucy, heritage is about her diverse ancestry, or as she puts it, the *'Heinz 57 varieties'* that come together to make her who she is. This fits with the suggestion that heritage is symbolic and *'better understood as both a material and socio-psychological testimony of identity'* (ibid). Indeed participants' personal engagement with heritage seemed to be intrinsically linked with their sense of self, their background and their personal values. This is particularly relevant given that it is the personal aspects of heritage that are least understood in the literature (Timothy and Boyd 2003). For the participants represented in the above excerpt, heritage was both meaningful and relevant and they demonstrated a clearly personal level of engagement through their discussion.

This theme goes some way to illuminating the lay perspective of heritage and the *personal connectedness* with heritage. Both Lucy and Olivia feel that heritage and the values they relate to heritage, links them to their past and also to their children and future generations. This finds a parallel in the idea that heritage can be a particularly useful tool in *'intergenerational communication'* whereby heritage facilitates the sharing of values and beliefs between generations (McDonald 2011, p.789). Adding a new dimension to this perspective, this theme is further illustrated by Thomas's understanding of heritage:

> **Thomas**: *Heritage is who I am basically. I mean I've just mentioned I was working a lot in central Europe and one thing I had, as part of my heritage, was a sense of humour, you know* [pauses…] *you know it's*

very important, if you're in a foreign country to maintain your identity and you can do that through a sense of humour as well! (45yrs. fg1)

For Thomas heritage is about his British sense of humour which he feels sets him apart and helps *'maintain his identity'* when away from home. Interestingly, Thomas is cited earlier (chapter 5) talking about heritage and the British sense of fairplay where similarly he feels that heritage is about his values and the different characteristics that make him British. Rather than inheriting values from his immediate family, Thomas seems to be relating more to national and shared values of the British identity. Spending time abroad gave Thomas a heightened need to maintain his sense of heritage. This resonates with the understanding that at its core, *'heritage differentiates; we treasure most what sets us apart'* (Lowenthal 1991, p.7). For Thomas, his sense of humour sets him apart and differentiates him from his international colleagues. This resonates with the idea that heritage is of particular *'...concern to all people who believe in something, or who simply believe they are different'* (Howard 2003, p.1). Interestingly, this latter idea of engaging with heritage when overseas does not come out strongly in the data, as the majority of the groups framed their discussion around personal, local and in some cases national discourses. Whilst no geographical limit was intended, it is possible that the way the research was designed, with a largely homogenous cultural group, may have influenced this dimension of the data. However it is interesting that no participants drew from their wider travel experiences in order to bring different ideas to the discussion.

Feeling Disconnected from Heritage

Whilst the above section emphasises the personal connectedness that some participants felt with heritage, this section explores a sense of disconnectedness that a small number of participants felt:

> **Jeff:** *Well I feel I have very little heritage, I mean you* (gestures to Gareth) *have quite a lot of heritage with the Navy and things, but I don't think I have that much heritage at all! The things* [I had thought about] *were, well I mean, they aren't personal, they are industry and buildings and literature, but it isn't personal. Yeah, it's not my heritage, I mean I used to be interested in cars, you know, so obviously I was interested in the car industry. But we don't have a car industry anymore, but it's not something personally relevant, it's not mine. I mean I didn't bother when they sold the car industry off, I mean they sold everything else off!* (38yrs. fg4)

Jeff picks up this point again a little later on:

> **Jeff:** *London as well, of course the war is something big, because my family were bombed in London, people in Poland killed and that sort of thing, that's still is part of my personal heritage, but I don't think there is much that I feel close to, that I would em* [fight for] *as there's not much heritage left really. I don't think there is that much heritage in this country left!*

Similar ideas are explored in other groups:

> **Audrey:** *But also some of that is very disconnected from normal everyday people. I mean I've done my share of traipsing around National Trust properties and gawping at portraits and porcelain* (some laughing here). *But it's always been very detached because I'm never likely to live anywhere like that, for any of it to mean anything you know* (54yrs. fg7)

> **Daniel:** [Heritage] *is something outside and you can take more of a personal interest and find out more if you want. It can be forced on you as in my town* [Northern Irish Landmark removed to preserve anonymity as small town] *it's everywhere. But you don't have to take the personal interest in it. You know? Heritage isn't that important to*

me, it's just that you have to take an interest in it if you want to. I haven't taken much interest in at the moment, but I might later on so, it's just something I can do if I want (21yrs. fg6)

For these participants there seems to be a disconnectedness that they feel in relation to heritage and it is clear that they view heritage as less relevant to them than those cited in the earlier section. Jeff feels that there is *'very little heritage left'* and none that he feels personally attached to. Interestingly, Jeff refers to Gareth in the group as being an example of someone who has *'quite a lot of heritage'* compared to his own feeling that whilst heritage exists, it is *'not my heritage'*. It may be possible that as Gareth talked at length of his Naval heritage, Jeff felt he didn't have a similarly strong example at that particular point in the discussion. However it is clear that for Jeff, heritage is in the past rather than something he feels connected to in the present.

There is a similar sense of disconnectedness in Audrey who despite having done a lot of *'traipsing'* and *'gawping',* the words she uses suggests that the experience lacked meaning and relevance for her. For Daniel, heritage is something *'forced on you'* whereas he feels it should be something actively chosen or sought out. Interestingly, a further dimension of Daniel's ideas relate to the notion that whilst heritage isn't that important to him now, he qualifies this by saying that *'I might later on, so it's just something I can do if I want'*. This latter point relates to the *'non-use value of heritage'* which recognises that whilst some people may not currently visit or use heritage sites, they value the potential of future access and are willing to contribute to its management in the meantime (Bedate et al. 2004, p.102). Whilst the non-use value is generally used as an economic tool used to value heritage resources (Navrud and Ready 2002), and this may not be the case

in Daniel's case, he does suggest a latent interest in heritage and the potential to become interested at a later date, despite feeling disengaged from his own heritage and that of his hometown in the present.

Connecting with Heritage through Tourism

A further theme developed through the analysis of the focus group data relates to the different ways in which participants engaged with heritage through tourism. This engagement was expressed in various ways, including participants' interests in different types of heritage visitor attractions, cultural and natural heritage sites and historic villages, towns and cities. This theme is constructed of data from both unprompted open discussion during the focus groups, i.e. *'emergent data'* and in response to a small number of topics and open questions used to facilitate the discussion, i.e. *'articulated data'* (Massey 2011, see appendix B). To promote transparency, when quotations are used, the type of data and what prompted them will be included in the discussion to make it clear which data came from unprompted *'stories, anecdotes, explanations, and conversations among participants'* (ibid) and which came from facilitated discussion. The topic guide was used at junctures where the natural flow of the discussion abated, or in order to introduce a topic that had not arisen naturally during the discussion. These questions were not used in a rigid way; rather they were presented as topic areas for participants' to construct their ideas around.

Seeking Meaningful Heritage Tourism Experiences

This theme is built around two sub-themes; the first being the desire for a heritage experience which relates to **specific interests or skills** that participants may have,

and the second being the interest some participants had in re-visiting familiar heritage places and *seeking familiar heritage experiences*. These ideas were constructed by participants in a number of contexts, specifically within the discussion surrounding the idea of a 'heritage' day within which, participants were asked to consider what they might like to do if they had some free time and could have a 'heritage' day. Many different ideas came up from this stage of the discussion and a range of excerpts and quotes are used here from focus group 1 in order to illustrate the way these themes were constructed:

> **Alan:** *Well I'd like to go to Kingston Lacy, em help out with the gardening and the restoration* (63yrs.)
>
> **Jayne:** *Oh... do you?* (26yrs.)
>
> **Alan:** *No, no, I mean I would, I was thinking something along those lines, something I would like to do on my heritage day, because I keep a garden you know, and I enjoy walking, so I could help out, then go around the grounds too, enjoy the walk.*
>
> **Jayne:** *Oh I see! Em well I'd like to go to Winchester, to go explore it a bit more. I've been before and I love it there. The Cathedral is one of my favourite places, em* (pauses…). *I love exploring the medieval town and there are so many museums and houses to visit. So there are all these old favourites to go back to, and there's also the cathedral precinct especially, that's a part of town that I've never had a chance to explore that I'd love to go and actually have a whole day where I could just go and really kind of get into it!*
>
> **Rob:** *Well,* (pauses…) *for me, it would be Swanage and Corfe. Maybe I'd even combine the two by using the steam railway! Because they're both very interesting, very interesting villages, they're made of Purbeck stone! I'd like to look at the architecture and the style of the roads and the buildings, maybe go on Swanage pier too* [note: the participants have started going around the table in a circle] (58yrs.)
>
> **Thomas:** *As for me, I'd go to Salisbury, because there's emm, there's a fantastic market centre there and then you've got Salisbury Cathedral, so you can walk around and then I'd stop for lunch along the river parts, that would be my choice really!*

> **Gary:** *Well I'm going to Wembley! Maybe I'll watch England play a match!* (Lots of laughing here, Gary sticks with this choice of Wembley as his heritage, there is a sense that he expected a laugh here) (27yrs.)

These quotations illustrate a wide range of interests that participants had when thinking about spending time on a 'heritage' day, and for the most part, each participant had a clear idea of how they might spend their day. The two themes *specific interests or skills* and *seeking familiar heritage experiences* will be explored in turn in the following sections. However, at this point, a brief discussion about the nature of interaction is relevant here. In the above excerpt, it is interesting to note that the interaction between the participants seemed to fall into a 'turn-taking' style that had a different feel from most of the other interaction within the groups. This taking of turns was also evident at the comparable point in other groups, when talking about the idea of having a heritage day. It is possible to reflect that the *'articulated data'* constructed in response to the introduced topic, created for the group the sense that each participant should contribute their ideas equally or in a more structured way. This was in comparison to the more natural feeling of interaction evident in the *'emergent data',* whereby the participants talked more freely whilst directing the topics and their input for themselves.

This change in the style of the interaction was not anticipated in relation to the use of topics within the focus groups as this was not something that featured prominently within the literature. However, Lehoux et al. (2006, p.2098) recognised a similar experience in their analysis of focus group data, whereby in some cases *'participants naturally tend to fall back into the normal empathic*

conversational turn-taking that is grounded in years of social experience'. Furthermore, Lehoux et al. (ibid) suggest that *'focus groups should be conceptualised as social spaces'* implying that this social practice of talking turns in conversation is not always avoidable or necessarily negative.

Furthermore, whilst the turn taking was noticeable at one or two junctures, this was always a passing trend as participants usually addressed a new topic for the first time and then proceeded to talk in a more detailed, less organised way. Generally the turn taking did one circle and then the interaction continued as before. Furthermore, this turn taking style of interaction was preferable to the more traditional two way dynamic of individual and other group based interviews, whereby the interaction is directed between researcher and participant, rather than between different participants (Kitzinger 1995, p.299). This reflection is included here in recognition of the fact that interaction is the primary goal of focus group research and yet it is rarely analysed, reported or explored by researchers.

Using Specific Interests and Skills to Engage with Heritage

Some participants valued the idea of using their ***specific interests or skills*** as a way to engage with heritage tourism experiences. For instance, active involvement was of particular importance to Alan, whose idea for a heritage day involved *'helping out'* with the gardening and restoration at Kingston Lacy (a country mansion in Dorset). It seems that Alan seeks an experience in which he can use his own specific interests and skills, in his case gardening, in order to spend time doing something he likes within a heritage context. This suggests that he would enjoy a more 'hands on' experience at the local heritage site, doing

something personally relevant to him. Similarly, Gareth (52yrs. fg4) decided that for his heritage day he would go on a diving experience to see a submerged shipwreck followed by a visit to the Shipwreck museum on the Isle of Wight in order to learn more about specific wrecks and their history. His ideal heritage experience would therefore combine his love for diving with his chosen aspect of naval and marine heritage. It is notable that both Alan and Gareth have taken a very personal approach to thinking about their heritage day, starting with their own specific *interests and skills* and spanning outward for an appropriate context within which to gain a meaningful or enjoyable heritage experience.

This is a useful insight that may help inform the types of events that heritage sites and attractions could host in order to engage potential audiences. For example, by understanding the different interests and particular skills of visitors and non-visitors and how these may relate to meaningful experiences, heritage visitor attractions could develop innovative and interactive experiences that appeal on a more personal level. This engagement would go beyond the AHD and its conceptualisation of heritage as something visitors are *'led to'*, *'instructed about'* but ultimately *'not invited to engage with more actively'* (Smith 2006, p.31). Furthermore, engaging with heritage through the interests, skills, meanings and values of the potential visitor or tourist would further shape understandings of heritage as a *'process'* (Smith 2006; Gilmour 2007; Smith and Akagawa 2009; West 2010) rather than a product *per se*. The idea of using *specific interests or skills* in order to have meaningful heritage tourism experiences resonates with the suggestion by Howard (2003, p.4) that it is people and their motivations and values that define heritage and that *'every visitor to official managed heritage,*

arrives with a personal baggage containing a heritage which they regard as more important'. Therefore heritage is more usefully understood as a process, which in order to understand *'we need to grasp where all stakeholders are coming from and what values they bring to it'* (ibid p.12).

Related to this, there has been increasing interest in the nature of experiences in tourism (Snepenger et al. 2004; Uriely 2005; Jennings and Nickerson 2006; Voase 2007; Pearce 2012 and others) and a growing focus on the idea of *'co-creating'* tourism experiences (Mossberg 2007; Ek et al. 2008; Binkhorst and Den Dekker 2009; Prebensen and Foss 2011). Significantly, Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2003, p.12) recognise the importance and benefits of empowering individual customers so they can *'construct their own consumption experiences through personalised interaction, thereby co-creating unique value for themselves'*. It is possible to suggest that Gareth may have reached this level of co-created value whereby his experience of having been in the Navy (see chapter 4, inheriting a new heritage), his love of diving and his interest in viewing shipwrecks come together to construct his own unique experience of heritage. This resonates with research that explores the *'social and participatory nature of tourist experiences'* and the ways in which tourists seek experiences, participation and authenticity (Selstad 2007). For Alan and Gareth, the opportunity of a 'heritage' day raised ideas of active participation and engagement, using their own interests and skills as a base from which to seek meaningful heritage experiences. This would support the move away from the view of tourists as being *'relatively passive'*, to a focus on a *'more interactive'* model of the tourists and their experiences (ibid).

Seeking Familiar Heritage Tourism Experiences

The second of the two sub-themes is discussed here, based around the participants' ideas of re-visiting familiar heritage places and seeking *familiar heritage experiences.* A number of participants' ideas were positioned around more traditional tourist activities such as visiting historic cities, towns, villages, cathedrals and museums and travelling on a heritage railway to name a few. Significantly, many of the participants chose places they had been to before and/or experiences that they have previously had. For example, Jayne talks of visiting her *'favourite places'* and Gary, who spent his childhood growing up around and going to Wembley stadium, would choose to go there if given the opportunity to have a 'heritage' experience. Furthermore, Dan (60yrs. fg8) who spoke of his time at Cerne Abbas (chapter 5), would for his heritage day, choose to *'go back and study the Abbey some more, then climb the hill of the Cerne Giant as I to enjoy walking and climbing'.* These ideas were further constructed from a range of participants ideas, for instance Sophie expressed a wish to go back to Brownsea Island where she spent childhood summers:

> **Sophie:** *As a child I often went on holiday there, we took boat rides and well they've got the open air theatre there! I would love to book you know a play, preferably Shakespearean and watch the theatre there. I would take my daughter to a play, share the experience you know, that I loved so much* (49yrs. fg2)

Whilst in focus group 4:

> **Jim:** *I would choose to go back to the Sammy Miller motorcycle museum as it has great bikes from the British motorcycle manufacturing period, maybe 1901-1960 and has famous racing machines. I like looking at all the historic and vintage racing motorcycles, that's a purely personal part of heritage that I enjoy, which is part of our heritage, of great British racing history* (45yrs.)

Jeff: *Well, I've actually got something similar, but I'd, I'd actually go to London, because I love to go to London! So I'd probably go to the Natural History Museum, or the science museum* (pauses…) *well the science museums are great and I haven't been there for a long time so, I would like to go back there* (38yrs.)

It could be suggested that Sophie sounds somewhat nostalgic when she reflects on childhood summers at Brownsea Island, as did Gary reflecting in chapter 4 about his memories of Wembley when growing up. However, nostalgia has not been developed as a theme in its own right as it did not feature significantly within the participants' constructions of heritage. Indeed, when talking about history, there was more focus on the *'bad stuff'* and learning from the past, than any suggestion of rose coloured glasses or a nostalgic, idealised understanding of the past or heritage. Furthermore, Poria et al. (2009, p.92) suggest that nostalgia is a limited concept when seeking to understand heritage tourism, as the *'naïve'* and *'romantic'* view of the past that nostalgia affords cannot fully represent the *'more complex phenomenon'* of heritage tourism. Furthermore, Sophie explained that as part of her trip back to the island, she would like to take her daughter to an open air play, and to put this into context, Sophie had previously talked about her daughter sharing her love of the theatre:

Sophie: *Oh for me, heritage is the Globe Theatre in London, that's important because our family like the theatre. My daughter lives in London at the moment and she's aspiring to be an actress, so the Globe I think represents something really amazing for us, and I was glad when it was built. And emm the theatre itself is wonderful, it has a lovely exhibition there that explains all about the original building and I think it's just a must for people to go and see, we should preserve it at all costs.*

This further insight into Sophie's interest in Brownsea Island, suggests that the desire to go there is just as much about the experience of the heritage she values in

the present; rather than as a solely nostalgic drive to relive an aspect of her past. Therefore, whilst nostalgia has been used as a focus in a number of heritage tourism studies (Goulding 1999b & 2001; Ramshaw and Gammon 2005; Knudsen and Greer 2011) the theme here centres on the idea of *seeking familiar heritage tourism experiences*.

One way of understanding the participants' interest in *seeking familiar heritage tourism experiences* may relate to a *'relatively new'* aspect of travel which explores the experience of individuals *'returning to previous places of significance and familiarity in their lives'* (Pearce 2012). Whilst Pearce is primarily concerned with travel to past homes and familiar places (VHFP), in particular, places where a person may have lived or spent a considerable amount of time. He also raises questions for *'the role the past can play in shaping people's travel motivation and identity quests'* whereby people travel to places intrinsically linked to their ancestry or family history (ibid p.1027). There may be scope to build on these emerging research foci in terms of the ways in which people seek familiar experiences in the context of heritage tourism. Furthermore, Pearce (2012) makes conceptual links between this 'new kind' of VHFP tourism and travel, with concepts such as memory, emotion and time perception which may resonate with and be transferable to a heritage tourism context. Further research could fruitfully explore the underlying meanings and values that shape people's choice to return to familiar heritage places over seeking novel or new experiences.

Similarly, Prentice and Anderson (2007) call for further research exploring heritage and the *'consumption of the familiar'*, suggesting that it is the cultural capital that a visitor brings with them to a heritage site or attraction that ultimately influences their experiences, more so than the *'largely consistent product offering'* of the heritage tourism industry (ibid p.667). This may go some way to explaining the participants' interest in choosing familiar heritage places to visit as it is the meaning and values that they bring with them that shape their experiences, and hence different places may hold quite similar representations and or benefits. Moreover, this supports the previous theme of the **intangibility of heritage**, in that it is the meanings and values important to the individual that define heritage from a personal perspective, which then leads to a personalised engagement with heritage and the historic environment through tourism.

A further way of understanding the participants' interest in revisiting familiar heritage places is found in the suggestion that those with a preference for familiarity in their tourism experiences generally tend to be characterised as *'low sensation seekers'* and less likely to take risks compared to *'novelty seeking tourists'* (Lepp and Gibson 2008). In their research, these authors found differences in the preferences and behaviours of tourists when choosing and evaluating international tourism destinations (ibid p.742). However, whilst research into *'low'* versus *'high'* sensation seeking is generally built around travel decisions and tourists perception of risk (Fuchs et al. 2009), there may be scope to explore the underpinning values that shape interests in more **familiar heritage tourism experiences**.

Interestingly, participants' choice of familiar tourism experiences resonate somewhat with more traditional tourism typologies such as Cohen's (1972) tourist roles, in which those tourists seeking the *'familiar'* were more likely to be categorised as either *'Organised Mass Tourists'* or *'Independent Mass Tourists'* (Lepp and Gibson 2008). The types of familiar experiences sought by some participants do, to an extent, represent organised or facilitated tourism choices; for instance going to a favourite museum, visiting a historic town or visiting a heritage site. Furthermore, if *'familiarity seekers'* are indeed the most risk adverse in their international travel and tourism choices (ibid), this may present challenges on a more local, regional and national scale in terms of how heritage visitor attractions and heritage sites can seek to engage and appeal to potential audiences.

Feeling disconnected from heritage tourists

Whilst the above two themes suggest a connectedness with heritage tourism experiences, for some participants this feeling was absent. In focus group 3, participants constructed a number of ideas relating to who they felt would visit heritage places or attractions. This discussion was not prompted in the same way as the heritage day topic, rather this excerpt illustrates a conversation that arose from a number of participants' reference to their disengagement or disinterest in heritage, which led them to consider who *was* interested in heritage:

> **Hannah:** *I'd say it's more the elderly, maybe tourists, retired people and yeah, families. Maybe very English people and,* (pauses…) *well historians too! It wouldn't be the younger generation or the city people* (19yrs.)

> **Kirsty:** *It's for traditional ones, tourists and retired people. I imagine someone older, like a geek, or yeah a historian.*

> **Jill:** *Yeah, it wouldn't be the city slickers, 'cos it's more for people interested in history and conservation I think* (19yrs.)

> **Kirsty:** *I imagine that the younger people are distracted by more modern attractions.*

Later in the same group, talking about Stonehenge:

> **Hannah:** *Yeah, you see, I don't value that at all* (Stonehenge), *I just see it as a bunch of rocks that landed there like that and no one's moved them* (19yrs.)

> **Kellie:** *No but I, no…* (feels very differently - Kellie was most engaged with heritage throughout focus group 3)

> **Jill:** *They didn't land like that, they moved them!* (Responding to Hannah).

> **Hannah:** *No but, that's what I mean, that's what I mean* (pauses… unsure) *I just see it as a load of people that have put these rocks there and they mean nothing…*

Reflecting on their initial thinking about heritage, Jill had suggested that *'it's just not one of those things that you sit down and think about!' w*hilst Kristy's initial thought was of inheritance tax (chapter 4). It may be that the lack of awareness of heritage has ultimately led to a lack of interest in visiting heritage sites or attractions. When thinking of the kinds of people who may enjoy doing such things, words and phrases such as *'geek'* and *'tourist'* and *'retired people'* are their immediate associations. There is a sense that they see themselves as being from a more modern generation with a different set of *'modern'* attractions to cater for their interests.

Timothy and Boyd (2003) recognise a number of obstacles that prevent people from visiting heritage sites. Of the obstacles they identify, it would seem that for the three participants above, there is an *'intrapersonal obstacle'* which stems from

either a lack of educational preparation, desire or interest (ibid). Furthermore, there are *'psychological constraints'* evident in the excerpt above, whereby heritage is perceived as boring, touristic and an older person's pastime (Timothy and Boyd 2003). For the most part, participants defined heritage themselves and therefore engaged with that heritage in their own, personally relevant ways. However, in focus group 3, heritage was seen to be *'random'* and something that *'historians'* and *'geeks'* might be interested in. McDonald (2011) recognises that there is a continued lack of studies that explore the meanings of heritage from the perspective of those who do not visit heritage sites. This study goes someway to understanding that for some, heritage is simply not seen to be relevant, and if heritage visitor attractions wish to engage with this audience they need to find ways of further exploring the different barriers that impede their engagement. The Minister for Tourism and Heritage in the UK (Penrose 2011a) has sought to address the concern that for some people *'our history and heritage is something to be embarrassed about. Something that is somehow not cool'*. It can be suggested that despite Government intentions, for some people heritage remains irrelevant and uncool.

Summary

Considering the diverse scope of ideas that the participants and groups had about heritage, and the multiple meanings and values that heritage represents for them, it is to be expected that any subsequent engagement with heritage, for example in the sense of visiting heritage places, sites or attractions, will be shaped by personal experiences, interests and values.

Table 6.2: Contribution and Relevance of Themes 8-9

Themes	Sub-themes	Broader Questions from Literature
Levels of engagement with heritage	**Different perspectives of heritage** Feeling personally connected to heritage *'Heritage is who I am'* Feeling disconnected from heritage *'It's not my heritage'*	*- What importance is placed upon 'heritage' by the participants?* *- What types of meanings does heritage represent?*
The role of tourism in exploring heritage	**Connecting with heritage through tourism** Seeking meaningful heritage tourism experiences Using specific interests and skills to engage with heritage Seeking familiar heritage tourism experiences **Feeling disconnected from heritage tourism** *'Heritage is for geeks, the elderly and retired people'*	*- What types of ideas or things are thought of as 'heritage'?* *- Levels of interest and awareness in 'heritage'*

This chapter contributes to the call for research that explores the consequence that heritage has upon people's lives (Smith 2006). For some participants heritage was viewed to be of particular relevance and had an immediate and personal consequence in terms of their identity, their sense of values and their unique

backgrounds. Conversely, for others, there was little perceived relevance of heritage and there was a lack of connectedness that rendered heritage as something other, something external and something of little consequence to their lives. For the latter group, they felt a lack of engagement and had little personal interest in heritage.

Heritage tourism provided some participants with the opportunity to use their own specific interests and skills in order to have personally meaningful tourism experiences. Participants sought active participation in heritage tourism and valued experiences that engaged them on a personal level. Significantly, the findings in this chapter suggest that participants valued familiar heritage tourism experiences that gave the opportunity to revisit favourite places more so than any desire to seek new or different experiences.

Finally, a contribution of this chapter further illuminates the barriers to engaging with heritage. For some participants, heritage tourism was seen as the pastime of *'geeks'* and of the older generations and for these participants heritage did not offer the types of experiences they valued; instead they would prefer activities which they perceived as more 'modern' and hence more relevant for them.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Introduction

The aim of this research was to explore the ways in which people understand and value heritage through a focus on the lay rather than the expert view. This was considered important in order to move beyond the emphasis on expert knowledge within heritage discourses and to privilege non-expert understandings of heritage. To achieve this, the *emic* or insider perspective was prioritised in order to access and understand the multiple meanings and values that shape heritage for different people.

The review of the literature (chapter 2) highlighted several important considerations that shaped the design of this study, in particular, the ongoing debate surrounding the appropriate definition of heritage (Timothy and Boyd 2003; Ahmad 2006) and the impact such ambiguities have had on both theory and practice (Harrison 2012). A conceptualisation of heritage emerged that recognises the interpretive nature of heritage and the multiplicity of possible meanings (Howard 2003) and values that heritage may represent for different people (Chung 2009). Moreover, the literature review recognised an increasing need to *'...embrace a far wider concept of what heritage is and why it matters to people'* in order to engage with wider audiences (Cowell 2009) and secure a sustainable future for the heritage industry.

A significant question raised by the literature review, was the need to understand the non-user or non-visitor view of heritage and heritage tourism (Timothy and Boyd 2003; Bedate et al. 2004). This study contributes to this by including the views of those who do not necessarily engage with heritage or heritage tourism and who do not tend to visit heritage sites or attractions.

In order to achieve the aims of this research an interpretivist, qualitative methodology was designed and primary data were collected in the form of eight focus groups with 47 members of the public. The decision was made to carry out these focus groups away from a heritage setting in order to add to current knowledge gained through research within 'management' contexts; such as tourism, heritage tourism and visitor attractions (Baldwin 1999; Poria et al. 2001 & 2006; Leask et al. 2002; Fyall et al. 2003; Timothy and Boyd 2003; Fisher 2006) and heritage management (Hall and McArthur 1998; Carter and Bramley 2002; Fairclough et al. 2008). This approach further enhances the inductive quality of this study as the data gained were not biased by a pre-defined heritage context and therefore allowed participants to frame heritage in ways that were meaningful and relevant to them.

The focus groups were audio-recorded, transcribed and subsequently analysed through a thematic analysis (Boyatzis 1998), and a thematic framework was developed to represent the lay understandings, meanings and values of heritage. This chapter will present the main findings of this study and the implications they have for practice and theory.

Main Findings

This study makes an important contribution to knowledge by clarifying the lay understanding of heritage and the multiple meanings and values that shape engagement or non-engagement with heritage and heritage tourism. The main findings of this study inform an understanding of heritage as a complex, value-laden concept that represents a multiplicity of different meanings and values, and it is these meanings and values that shape understandings of and interest in heritage. By reporting the emic view of heritage, this study has responded to calls for an understanding of the non-expert view of heritage and for the inclusion of those individuals who do not currently use or visit heritage sites or attractions.

This study found that for many of the participants, heritage was an unfamiliar topic and one they had not consciously thought about prior to taking part in the research. Furthermore, for these participants heritage was not viewed to be the subject of normal or everyday conversation. The theme *'Heritage? What do you mean by heritage'* was developed to reflect the way in which some participants sought reassurance about the nature of the topic, rather than feeling confident or empowered to put forward their own ideas. This finding suggests that from a lay perspective, there is, to an extent, a feeling that heritage is something defined externally by those experts and professionals who 'know' about heritage. Whilst the literature has made progress in this regard, increasingly seeking to move beyond official narratives of the AHD (Smith 2006) and conceptualising heritage as a personally-defined and value-laden phenomenon (Howard 2003), this has not filtered down into more common understandings of heritage. Therefore, for some, heritage remains in the realm of expert knowledge.

Additionally, this study found there to be a lack of confidence amongst some of the participants in relation to heritage, and this shaped some of the early thoughts and ideas within the focus groups. Heritage was seen as something *'random'* which lacked relevance for participants' lives. A number of the participants expressed uncertainty about what heritage might be or mean and how they could contribute to a discussion about it. This finding contributes to the understanding that there are intrapersonal obstacles that may prevent people from engaging with heritage (Timothy and Boyd 2003; Timothy 2011). It supports the suggestion that for some people, *'a lack of education and experience keeps them away'* (Timothy 2011, p.36). Moreover, this lack of confidence and awareness about heritage was seen to create a barrier that rendered heritage and heritage tourism unfamiliar and something some participants had no immediate or obvious interest in.

This study also highlights that for many participants there was a latent interest in heritage that they were surprised to discover during their participation in the research. This idea is characterised by comments such as *'thanks for making me think about this'* and *'yeah, this has given me new ideas about what heritage is'*. This latent interest contributes to the limited understanding in the literature surrounding the non-users of heritage (Timothy and Boyd 2003). For these participants their initial hesitancy about the topic evolved into a new found interest in heritage as they discussed and shared ideas within the group. The unusual invitation to discuss heritage within the focus groups, alongside the preparation participants' undertook as part of the individual pre-task activity, seemed to awaken this latent interest, suggesting the potential for a dormant interest to be stimulated.

It is clear from the nature and tone of the focus group discussions that heritage can be an enjoyable topic of conversation given the right circumstances. The design of this research, which actively encouraged participants to define and shape the discussion themselves, led to an understanding of heritage that captured a wider range of meanings and values that participants ultimately felt engaged with. This suggests that many people may well be interested in heritage, but as *they* understand or frame it, as opposed to the ways in which it is presented to them by the heritage sector.

A further finding relates to the recognition that for other participants, 'heritage' was, in contrast, an immediately recognisable and familiar topic that they felt comfortable discussing. This suggests that for some, heritage is *'fairly obvious'* and in turn, both interesting and relevant. A related finding highlights that from the lay perspective, heritage is often seen as synonymous with inheritance. This may be a useful understanding when seeking to engage new audiences, as they may relate or respond to ideas of a personal or shared inheritance. Furthermore, this may be particularly useful when seeking to engage local residents in a meaningful way, more so than is currently achieved in practice (Garrod et al. 2012). By viewing local heritage as part of their inheritance, residents may be encouraged to feel more personally connected and engaged with the heritage of their local area.

Interestingly, this study found that many participants' initial thinking about heritage was not constructed around active ideas of 'visiting' heritage places or 'doing' heritage things. As such, the lay understanding of heritage does not

immediately relate to contexts such as heritage tourism and much of the initial thinking about heritage centred on more intangible ideas including participants' understanding of heritage as a personal and/or shared inheritance. This is a significant finding and it is unlikely that these insights would have been gained from research at a heritage site or attraction. Furthermore, this is particularly important given that any un-met or latent demand for heritage (Davies and Prentice 1995) is likely to reside within more general understandings of heritage rather than from within established heritage audiences.

Whilst heritage was an unfamiliar topic for many, participants were on the whole articulate and confident about their understanding of history and how this may relate to heritage. This study found that the term 'history' was one that participants felt immediately at ease with and a number of themes arose from the discussion surrounding history and heritage. For the most part, history was viewed as a static, fact-based representation of the past, valued more for its educational role than for its relevance to the present or future. Conversely, heritage was understood as an evolving, emotion-based representation of the past and as such, heritage was valued for the significance it was felt to hold for both present and future generations. Furthermore, this study found that history was valued for its active role in shaping heritage and in facilitating both emotional and intellectual connections with heritage. Ultimately, history and heritage were understood as different and clearly distinguishable ideas and there was little sense that the two were *'habitually confused with each other'* as Lowenthal suggests (1998, p.x).

Moreover, this study found that the lay understanding of heritage is intrinsically linked to lay understandings of history. For instance, in order for something to become 'heritage', it would need to have a history in its own right. This supports the suggestion that whilst history and heritage are different ideas, there is a *'fundamental and inextricable'* connection between the two (Davies 2004, p.281). For participants, heritage required a historical foundation that facilitated engagement with both history and heritage. A related finding highlights that participants valued the need for a balanced historical education that explores both the positive and negative aspects of history and heritage. Furthermore, there was a recognised need for more engaging ways of teaching history that move beyond the perceived focus on learning dates towards the potential for learning from past mistakes. This study found that whilst participants recognised the desire to emphasise the proud moments of history and heritage, they also valued a holistic approach and emphasised the educational value of *'dissonant heritage'* (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Ashworth 2002).

A further finding of this study relates to the various senses of heritage that were important to participants. For participants, heritage plays a fundamental role in creating a sense of place, both in terms of forming attachments to particular geographical locations such as home towns and places of personal significance (Jones et al. 2000) and also in catalysing a feeling of belonging which can be mobilised to facilitate a connection to heritage through different places (ibid). Graham et al. (2009) recognise the important role that the historic environment plays in creating a unique sense of place, which this study upheld. A related finding emphasises the security values that heritage represents whereby

participants' sense of belonging to a nation and a nationality fostered a feeling of safety and protection. These security values further illuminate the lay understanding of heritage and the multiple meanings and values that heritage represents within this.

This study also found that heritage evokes a sense of personal and national pride. However, whilst a sense of pride itself was valued at a personal level, there was an associated tension that participants felt when seeking to display this pride externally. Some participants, whilst feeling proud of their English identity, felt alienated from wider British discourses. This supports the literature which recognises that dominant groups and national governments often use heritage to construct and promote particular identities for their own political agenda (Palmer 2005; Ashworth 2007). The findings in this study suggest that these political constructions do not always serve the people or the nation themselves. This research found that the label 'British' does not resonate with those who view themselves as 'English' despite an awareness of political correctness surrounding these issues. This tension was seen to create a conflict whereby participants may wish to celebrate their national pride, yet feel stifled and unable to do so due to wider political discourses.

In addition, this study found that despite the diverse range of heritage things and ideas that participants contributed to the discussions, the meanings and values these represented were resilient across different 'heritage' contexts. Whether participants spoke of Wembley Stadium, Edinburgh Castle, a rural landscape, a necklace, their personality or their national identity, the meanings and values

constructed were relevant beyond the specific example used to illustrate them. This finding contributes to current understandings of heritage and helps to further illuminate the ways in which non-experts understand and value heritage. Furthermore, whilst many tangible examples of heritage were identified and discussed throughout the focus groups, the participants' connected with, and in turn valued these things through more intangible associations and representations. Participants used stories and images to help *'evoke'* the intangible representations that gave heritage its meaning for them. These tools became *'points of contact or occasion for* [their] *own imaginative, emphatic work'* (Bryne 2009, p.246). This finding supports the call for heritage to be understood as a set of values and meanings (Smith 2006 & 2009) and embraces the understanding that heritage can represent a multiplicity of possible values for different people (Chung 2009). Furthermore, this study found that whether specific aspects of heritage were tangible or intangible, all heritage is ultimately intangible as it is subjectively shaped and defined by those engaging with it. This further supports the suggestion that it is individuals and their unique values that shape perceptions of heritage (Howard 2003).

A further finding of this study relates to the different ways in which participants engaged with heritage. For some participants, their understandings of heritage were constructed around very personal narratives and associations including their values, childhood memories, family names, family history and ancestry. These participants connected to heritage on a personal level and as such, heritage was seen as something meaningful and relevant for them. Furthermore, heritage was understood as a way of maintaining one's identity in order to *'differentiate'* from

others (Lowenthal 1991, p.7). The personal connectedness that some participants felt with heritage contributes to the lay understanding of heritage and upholds the suggestion that heritage is a useful tool in *'intergenerational communication'* whereby heritage facilitates the sharing of values and beliefs between generations (McDonald 2011, p.789). A related finding highlights the disconnectedness that some participants felt with heritage. For these participants, heritage was viewed as something impersonal which lacked meaning for them. Whilst they recognised different types of heritage, these were not seen as personally relevant and as such, heritage remained on the peripheral as something that other people were interested in. These findings contribute to the personal level of heritage which is the least understood in the literature (Timothy and Boyd 2003) and which this study illuminates.

This study found that for the participants, tourism offered a range of perceived opportunities when seeking to have meaningful heritage experiences. In particular, a number of participants sought heritage experiences that combined their specific interests and skills with the chance to experience heritage in a more interactive way. These participants sought 'hands on' experiences that allowed them to explore heritage in a way that was personally relevant and meaningful. This finding upholds the view that heritage uses do not generally seek passive experiences and would value the opportunity to engage more actively with heritage (Smith 2006). This finding resonates with the perceived value of more *'social and participatory'* tourism experiences (Selstad 2007) and as such, any specific interests or skills held by individuals and groups could be used to actively engage them in participatory heritage tourism experiences.

A further finding relates to the recognition that, when given the choice, many participants value the opportunity to have a familiar heritage experience; one that they have previously experienced and enjoyed. Participants talked of exploring favourite places and visiting favourite museums and did not seem to seek the opportunity to gain new or different heritage experiences. This is an interesting finding that further contributes to the lay understanding of heritage and the different ways in which people engage with heritage and heritage tourism. This finding relates to research exploring a new type of tourism concerned with travel and tourism activities based around visiting home and familiar places (VHFP) (Pearce 2012). This research contributes to the ideas of VHFP, albeit in the slightly different context of heritage visiting, by further illuminating the ways in which people seek familiarity in their tourism experiences. Moreover, this study contributes to the need for research that explores the *'consumption of the familiar'* (Prentice and Anderson 2007, p.667) within a heritage tourism context. In this study, participants seemed to conform to the tourist type of *'familiarity seekers'* who are understood to avoid risk in their travel and tourism choices (Lepp and Gibson 2003). Nonetheless, these participants were personally connected to their ideas about heritage experiences and the familiarity they sought did not seem to equate with either a lack of interest or a lack of perceived options. Many participants had an immediate idea of where they would like to go, suggesting that for some, heritage can facilitate both familiar and meaningful tourism experiences.

Finally, this study found that for some participants their lack of awareness about heritage in turn led to a lack of engagement with heritage tourism. Furthermore,

these participants felt disconnected from the idea of 'heritage' and 'heritage tourists', the latter being conceptualised as geeks, historians and older people: ultimately people other than themselves. For these participants, heritage tourism activities were not seen as relevant or engaging and they sought to differentiate themselves from these by suggesting their interests lay in more 'modern' tourism activities. A related finding suggests that for some, the word 'heritage' itself creates barriers to engagement and this further contributes to the understanding of non-users or non-visitors of heritage and heritage tourism. This supports the suggestion that for some, heritage is simply viewed as an '*uninteresting and uninviting*' idea (Timothy 2011, p.36) that does not relate to modern lifestyles.

In summary, this study highlights that for some people there are intrapersonal obstacles to engaging with heritage which are rooted in their perception of heritage as expert knowledge and as something which lacks relevance for them and their lifestyles. For others, heritage is a meaningful idea that has immediate relevance to them. Whilst heritage was found to be inextricably linked to history, it was heritage that resonated much more widely with participants in terms of its perceived relevance and consequence for present and future generations. Furthermore, this study found that both tangible and intangible aspects of heritage were valued *through* their intangible associations, such as the senses of heritage that can be gained from them and the stories and images that bring them to life.

Ultimately, the participants in this study constructed a complex and wide ranging understanding of heritage shaped by a multiplicity of different meanings and values. This study found that there are varying levels of engagement with

heritage, from those who feel personally connected and engaged with heritage to those who, conversely, feel disconnected and disengaged with heritage as it is emically defined.

The findings of this study can be related to both practice and research and as such a number of implications are outlined below. This thesis provides a robust basis from which managers of heritage sites and attractions can derive an understanding of the different ways in which heritage is understood and experienced from a lay, rather than expert perspective.

Implications for Practice

This section identifies a number of implications that form the findings of this study, which are relevant to the managers of heritage organisations, sites and attractions.

Heritage managers should find ways of encouraging conversations and debate amongst current and potential audiences:

This recommendation derives from the finding that for some people heritage is simply not a topic that is given much thought; nor is heritage a regular or familiar topic of conversation. The findings suggest that this lack of thinking and talking about heritage may be shielding a latent interest in heritage as it is emically defined and understood. Therefore, if heritage sites and attractions could stimulate discussion about heritage and the ways in which their site may relate to broader lay understandings of heritage, this may awaken a latent interest in heritage, converting potential audiences into demand and engagement. This study found that when given the opportunity to think and talk about heritage, it was seen as an interesting and enjoyable topic of conversation, one that fostered engagement with those so called non-users of heritage that may otherwise not have been established. If managers could find ways of stimulating everyday conversations about their heritage site or attraction, this may help to convert latent demand.

Social media sites represent one such opportunity through which sites and attractions could stimulate and encourage everyday conversations about heritage. Some Facebook examples include The British Museum, The National Gallery,

National Museums Scotland, The National Trust and English Heritage. These pages have thousands of 'likes' and the news and stories posted there have therefore developed a dynamic, easily reached audience for their messages and activities. However the biggest challenge lies in attracting audiences to these pages and ensuring that the content is relevant and meaningful in order to spark the interest of potential visitors. Such sites are only useful once an audience is engaged, therefore focussing on conversation-starting topics within their official posts could be one way to create an online buzz about their site and hence stimulate new interest and in turn new audiences.

Heritage managers should find ways of breaking down barriers to engagement by developing more accessible marketing messages:

The findings suggest that for some people, there are real barriers to engaging with heritage and taking part in heritage related activities. Heritage is seen as *'random'* and anachronistic, lacking relevance for people and their everyday lives. Heritage organisations, sites and attractions need to do more to break down barriers and to encourage people to get involved in shaping the heritage they present. One potential barrier relates to the word 'heritage' itself, which was unfamiliar to many of the participants. Communicating the underlying meanings and values of heritage rather than the more tangible or physical aspects of sites and attractions, and focussing on the ways in which it may relate to modern lifestyles and society may help to engage wider audiences. One suggestion would be to focus on marketing and branding communication as opposed to radically changing on-site interpretation and communication. At no point in the focus groups did participants

discuss or highlight negative experiences at sites and attractions, which suggests that once there, they enjoy and value the heritage presented. The challenge therefore relates to getting new audiences to the site itself and this could be done through more relevant and meaningful marketing initiatives. It is important to note that whilst the word heritage may be unfamiliar and hence a barrier for some people, this may not apply to all. Therefore it would be important not to alienate current audiences for whom heritage is already relevant and meaningful.

A further suggestion relates to the understanding that some people value the opportunity to incorporate their own unique interests and skills into the experiences they seek therefore sites and attractions could try to establish ways of building on these interests in order to offer more flexible and bespoke services. Hosting interactive events that highlight different aspects of the site may be one way to do this without undermining the permanent interpretations and displays.

Heritage managers should emphasise the ways in which their site or attraction may relate to either a personal or shared inheritance:

The findings of this study include the recognition that for many, heritage is synonymous with the idea of inheritance. By incorporating this idea into the management and marketing of heritage, it may be possible to build meaningful relationships with potential audiences. In particular this may be a valuable approach to use when seeking to engage local residents whereby they may be encouraged to think of heritage as their inheritance and something directly relevant to them. This would foster a sense of ownership and may lead to more rewarding heritage experiences for these individuals and groups which in turn

may better meet their needs and interests. Presenting locally relevant narratives and establishing clear links between past and present residents may be a fruitful way to engage local people in what is effectively *their* heritage. Furthermore, facilitating the co-creation of heritage experiences and involving local residents in the development and presentation of the heritage in their area may well empower individuals and groups and lead to long term engagement with local heritage.

There is a need to empower potential audiences in order to move beyond the 'expert', impersonal view of heritage and its related activity:

Heritage sites and attractions should embrace a wider understanding of heritage in order to move beyond official narratives in order to allow the visitors themselves to define and shape their own interpretations. This would nurture a more personal understanding of heritage for both the industry and its consumers which may translate into more meaningful relationships. Heritage users and visitors should be actively encouraged to critique and interpret elements of heritage sites and attractions in order to empower them to take on a broader, more engaging understanding of heritage and what it means to them. By presenting questions and alternative narratives, sites could empower audiences to think and talk about the site and its possible meanings. Furthermore, many participants were hesitant and lacked confidence when it came to the meaning of heritage and hence it is important for sites to openly challenge the expert view and give opportunities for the lay understanding of heritage to be voiced alongside established narratives.

Whilst history and heritage are perceived as fundamentally different; heritage should be presented and interpreted alongside a recognisable historical narrative:

Despite the fact that people view history as static, and something to be understood in the *'past tense'*, there is a need for heritage to provide a link to history. Participants valued the emotional and intellectual connection that history brings to heritage and engaged with the interrelated nature of the two concepts. Therefore historical scholarship and interpretation remain an important consideration for heritage sites and attractions and should be maintained alongside any present day or futuristic initiatives. Furthermore, the perceived educational value of history means that any opportunities to learn from past mistakes and the *'bad stuff'* in history is of particular interest and should be incorporated into heritage communication and interpretation messages. The idea of learning from the past in order to protect the future is one such example that sites and attractions could build into their interpretation and communication strategies and is a message that may resonate with audiences in terms of history and heritage.

Heritage sites and attractions in England specifically, should emphasise both English and British narratives to avoid alienating those who do not adopt the latter as part of their identity:

Including a wider understanding of what it means to be English and/or British, within heritage communication and interpretation strategies could well engage English audiences who may feel disconnected from the notion of a British identity. Furthermore, if heritage sites and attractions could find ways of facilitating a sense of pride among those who value their English identity, without

arousing tension in a British audience, this may relieve some of the conflict that people feel with regard to celebrating and engaging with heritage beyond a personal or internal level. Again this would broaden potential audiences and engage new people with heritage and the heritage sector.

English Heritage may need to do more to successfully distinguish itself from broader heritage contexts as at no point in any of the focus groups did participants recognise or refer to this organisation or its role in presenting and caring for England's Heritage. The aims and values of this organisation could therefore be communicated more strongly to English audiences who feel under-represented within wider British heritage discourses.

Implications for Research

This section identifies a number of implications for future research based on the findings of this study. Such research would further contribute to the understanding of heritage and its multiple meanings and values.

To explore the ways in which the expert or official narratives of heritage have informed and shaped the lay perspectives of heritage:

Further research is needed to explore the ways in which authorised heritage discourses (Smith 2006) filter into and shape lay perspectives of heritage. This study found that participants' had a tendency to defer to the perceived 'expert' view of heritage. This suggests that earlier critiques heritage, as being an elitist and exclusive phenomenon, may still resonate with non-expert audiences. Further

qualitative research could usefully deconstruct some of the lay perspectives of heritage in order to determine how expert views have come to be privileged within wider audiences and in turn explore the basis and nature of such 'expert' narratives, the logic being that in understanding these processes, further distancing can take place to encourage and privilege lay perspectives of heritage.

To continue the debate surrounding definitions of heritage and heritage tourism in order to establish a clearer frame of reference for all stakeholders:

Whilst there is clearly merit in moving beyond *'lengthy definitional debates'* (Garrod and Fyall 2001, p.1051) and *'definitional niceties'* (Wheeller 2009, p.84), the findings of this study suggest that there is justification for research that further clarifies the personal, interpretive nature and relevance of heritage. This would be useful from both an academic and practical perspective and would help to *'simplify the concept'* (Timothy and Boyd 2003) and to build more solid relationships between the two. The logic being that if heritage academics and heritage practitioners can adopt a common framework from which to advance, this may in turn become a frame of reference that helps to demystify heritage within a more general or non-expert perspective.

To employ more creative methodologies in order to further explore the intangibility of heritage:

The findings of this research suggest that for some, the intangible nature of heritage was difficult to articulate and the use of images and storytelling seemed to allay problems in self-expression. Further research could fruitfully employ

more visual strategies in order to access and understand the intangibility of heritage and the multiple meanings and values it represents. One suggestion would be to explore the potential for research within the Performative Social Science perspective (see Gergen and Jones 2008). This would involve more creative forms of communication that may further illuminate the meanings and values of heritage. Furthermore, Performative Social Science research sits within an interpretive approach and therefore would privilege the emic perspective of heritage. A further suggestion is that images are particularly useful within focus group based heritage research, as they help to introduce a more tangible dimension to the discussion, from which participants can construct, understand and discuss the more intangible meanings and values of heritage. Therefore one suggestion would be to use Visitor Employed Photography (Garrod 2007) as a tool for understanding heritage and its multiple meanings and values. Encouraging people to think and talk about heritage through their own selected imagery would further illuminate their understandings of heritage.

To explore the ways that personal meanings and values of heritage shape heritage tourism experiences:

The findings of this research emphasise the importance of personal understandings of heritage and they ways they influence an engagement with heritage. There is scope to build on these findings by exploring how personal understandings of heritage shape and influence heritage tourism experiences. This would add a further facet to current understandings of heritage and heritage tourism by privileging the personal interpretations that different visitors make of

the same heritage sites and attractions. Furthermore, research could explore how personal understandings of heritage inform and shape an individual's choice of and preference for tourism experiences.

Further research could explore the ways in heritage relates to and in turn satisfies the need to feel secure, i.e. through values such as sense of belonging and national security:

This study found that heritage can provide a sense of security, of protection and of belonging for some people. These values can be generally grouped together into the motivational value group 'security' (Schwartz 1992; Spini 2003) and further research is needed to understand the ways in which heritage facilitates this sense of security and how this could be translated into communication and interpretation at heritage sites and attractions.

Further research is warranted in order to understand the ways in which potential heritage tourists' specific interests and skills could be utilised within the supply of more interactive heritage tourism experiences:

This study found that some participants sought meaningful experiences with heritage through their own specific interests and skills. This fits with the call for less passive, more interactive heritage experiences (Smith 2006; Selstad 2007). However more research is needed in order to understand how this might be relevant from both supply and demand perspectives and how this may be implemented in practice. Research could explore the types of interests or skills that may be relevant and the type of experiences that these would suit.

Furthermore, research should explore the extent to which heritage managers are engaged with the idea of facilitating interactive and potentially bespoke heritage experiences, and research could question whether there sufficient motivation on behalf of heritage managers to warrant similar research with wider audiences.

To explore cross-cultural, lay understandings of heritage and the meanings and values heritage represents for different people:

Given the largely homogenous sample within this study, there is a need to explore how heritage is understood and valued within and across different cultural groups. Such research could compare and contrast the meanings and values that are important in different contexts. This would further the lay understanding of heritage and the multiple meanings and values of heritage. Furthermore, this would help inform the marketing of sites and attractions to wider audiences and help to build a more diverse heritage visitor profile.

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List of Appendices

Appendix A: The Interpretive Nature of Heritage

The Inception Level	'Heritage' comes into being, primarily from the resource base of history	**Who** is empowered to make decisions as to **what** is of value, i.e. heritage managers, curators, government officials, heritage organisations etc. **How** do their decisions, selections and inevitable de-selections affect what messages/images/values/meanings are communicated. **Why** are some aspects of the past chosen as 'heritage' whilst others are left to history books, or forgotten over time? Who decides and what shapes their decisions. People at this level may be archaeologists, architects, academics, experts in nature and society, politicians etc. Less often, it may be a community group, layperson or special interest group, but the level of support, both in terms of its perceived value and relevance and in terms of funding, often result in officially recognised heritage taking precedence over any smaller ventures.
The Interpretive Level	The subjective, interpretive nature of all 'heritage'	An understanding of heritage as *a* representation of a **selected** past for present day purposes, as **an interpretation** rather than a record of past actuality. Incorporating the suggestion that, whether or not such processes are consciously recognised, '*society filters heritage through a value system that undoubtedly changes over time and space and across society*' (Timothy and Boyd 2003).
	The interpretation tools used within heritage management	Secondly, whilst this research proposes that the 'interpretive' nature of heritage influences all levels of heritage, from its inception to its consumption, it is situated centrally in order to incorporate the heritage management understanding of interpretation as a tool in the presentation and communication of heritage both for audiences and for posterity. For example, the way in which a heritage expert or professional **understands** a

		particular resource, ***interprets*** its significance, and ***chooses*** an appropriate way in which to present it etc. all create a context for its relevance and meaning. The very methods chosen to communicate this, i.e. the location, words, images, access, lighting, sounds etc. are all subjective and can therefore be understood as value-laden, interpretive processes. Furthermore, since the interpretation stages are often carried out by different people to the inception stages, there may be further values, biases, judgements that influence whether or not the originally intended meaning is carried forward, changed or displaced.
The Consumption Level	Whereby heritage presented as a 'product', 'attraction' 'site' etc. is experienced or engaged with by the heritage tourist or visitor.	The perceptions of those individuals who encounter aspects of heritage and the understandings they have at each point along the way. When and how does a decision to partake in heritage related activities occur and what informs these decisions. What perceived benefits are there and how do different individuals and groups derive such benefits. How is this notion of 'heritage' understood by non- specialist audiences and how do they engage with this. Do they question the heritage, or passively consume what they view. Do they take on board the meanings assumed by those at previous levels, or do they actively seek their own understandings. Who are the consumers of heritage, what do they value and how do their own values affect how they perceive and understand heritage. Baldwin (1999) and Storey (1999) support the thesis that meaning is not inherent, just because someone intends it to be communicated in a certain way. Meaning is created at the point of consumption by the individual. Furthermore, Baldwin (1999) suggests that many heritage audiences are not '*cultural dupes*', as suggested in some texts, but are often more active in their interaction with heritage resources. This view has parallels within tourism literature, for example, Urry (1990) work on 'The Tourist Gaze' and Uriely (2005) who recognised the possible a ***'multiplicity'*** of experiences. Daengbuppha, Hemmington and Wilkes (2006) also

		challenge the notion of passive consumers, suggesting that visitors to heritage sites '*manipulate contexts*' to enable them to reconcile what is communicated with what they wish to experience. These authors recognise that much heritage tourism research to date has been positivist and that the nature of the visitor remains ambiguous.
		Questions remain as to what drives differing interpretations/perceptions of heritage, particularly when there is evidence to suggest that the same heritage resource/experience is interpreted differently by different people (Timothy 1997). How meaning is derived from heritage and how/why this differs between individuals and groups is linked to these notions of active consumers with individual motivations and desired benefits and the role of their values when engaging with heritage.
The Non-Consumption Level	Recognising those individuals and groups who do not consciously seek out or interact with aspects of 'heritage'. Who may not view themselves as heritage tourists or visitors but may engage with heritage, as they view it, in different ways.	What perceptions and understandings of 'heritage' are held by society and what factors are involved in relation to those who do not see themselves as a heritage visitor or tourist? Are their perceptions of the heritage and its potential benefits different to those who do engage with heritage and are there differences in the values that shape these perceptions? Are there groups who do not value such activities and therefore actively choose ***not to engage*** in past-related activities, or ***value the past in a different way*** than the 'heritage industry' and other forms of heritage allow for, therefore seeking out their own benefits through different forums. Alternatively, as much heritage literature and government agenda maintain, are there groups that would like to have access to such resources, but for a plethora of reasons feel excluded from mainstream representations? i.e. heritage as an elitist, politically biased and socially exclusive resource is a view that has been long held i.e. Merriman (1991) and Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996). If so, understanding how these people value heritage may help to bridge these social, economic or intellectual divides.

Appendix B: The Focus Group Topic Guide

Action	Notes
Introduction: ■ Tea, coffee & biscuits – everyone helping themselves and settling in. Participants invited to create a name card for themselves and prop it up in front of them so that everyone can refer to each other easily. ■ Introduce the benefit of audio recording the session and the rationale for doing so (solely for transcription/re-listening later), reassure about confidentiality and gain permission to record the session. Issue and explain the consent forms which are to be completed at this stage (each participant gets two copies – one to sign and hand back / one to keep for their records). ■ The researcher/facilitator introduces herself and the background/aims of the research. Introduces the research assistant (a volunteer from the university) who will be helping out and taking some notes during the discussion. ■ Emphasise that there are *no right or wrong answers* and that all opinions are valid and interesting.	Name Cards - allow participants to self-identify to the group – (also prompts me on how they want to be addressed) i.e. With Mr / Mrs/ Miss or with abbreviated name etc. Reiterate that no individual will be identified at any time outside of this room, recording simply to aid the write up and to ensure accurate representation of discussion Aim to create an open, non-judgemental and friendly environment.

Opening Activity ▪ Participants are asked to think about and jot down their initial **thoughts when the word 'heritage' was first mentioned to them** as the topic for discussion, and then to **list up to 5 things or ideas** that they think of as 'heritage'. ▪ Participants are asked to put these notes aside for a few moments, whilst the next activity is introduced.	These thoughts give participants a change to jot down their initial ideas – before they hear everyone else's. Also useful if some/all have not done 'pre-task activity' as will give them something to talk about.
Icebreaker – participants introduce themselves and their ideas ▪ Participants are invited to introduce themselves and to talk about **the pre-task activity** that was distributed when they were invited to take part. They are encouraged to say what their initial thoughts were when they heard about the topic and to shoe or explain what they did for the pre-task activity. They are asked to explain to the group what the item/idea is, why they chose it and how they feel it represents heritage to them. If hadn't done pre-task activity – then to tell us the ideas they had jotted down. ▪ Once everyone has spoken, the discussion is opened up to **encourage interaction** – to give them the floor. If conversation dries up – facilitator can **summarise main points and bounce them back to group** etc. If anyone particularly quiet give them opportunity to join in/prompt them – refer them to their notes if anything different etc. Only use words/ideas/things that participants themselves introduce into the discussion. ▪ The facilitator refers participants back to their initial notes – anything different to add? Is the discussion going where they expected? General open questions to get them talking and thinking but importantly interacting with each other. ▪ Facilitator summarises main themes at quiet junctures – ask participants if there is anything they would like to add / change etc.	The ice breaker is to get everyone talking and sharing ideas. The pre-task activity' is to set the scene for the following discussion. What ideas did they have / how similar or different to each other / how they initially responded to the topic etc. Avoid leading/directing discussion.

Another opportunity to have refreshments – 'help yourselves any time'

Levels of Interest or awareness of heritage

- Participants are asked to think of their local area to see if there is anything they would describe as 'heritage'. They have few minutes to jot down ideas.

- They are invited to share their ideas – do they have similar/different types of things/ideas/places etc. Why are these things 'heritage' to them? Have they been there before etc?

- Participants invited to think about heritage and their time. Do they like to do 'heritage' things, visit 'heritage' places etc, again invited to discuss/share ideas.

- If you had some free time, and could have a 'heritage' day – what might you do? Who with? Why?

To bring in new dimension – without having to give 'heritage' themes.

To try to understand what aspects of heritage participants feel connected with in their area and what feelings they have towards it.

Now they have had time to think about heritage generally – add dimension of heritage as an activity – are they heritage tourists/visitors etc.

Additional topics to facilitate discussion - To use if needed:

Awareness of Heritage Organisation – PowerPoint Activity

- Participants are referred to leaflets with logos on them and asked to identify any of them that they are familiar with. Logos are shown on PowerPoint to give colour / bigger size etc.

- They are asked to name the organisation and jot down anything else they think of that they associate with the image. These are then discussed ... which ones are familiar / which ones less so / what associations do they have with these organisations etc.

- Participants invited to share ideas about these organisations and how familiar they are. Some discussion can be around what these organisations are about/do … any perceived benefits of becoming a member/using their services etc…?

Awareness of Heritage Places – POWERPOINT

- Participants are referred to the images of places and asked to identify any of them that are familiar. Similar task to above… name the place and anything else they think of that they associate with the image. These are then discussed ... to see what is identified by different participants.

To gauge awareness of heritage organisations… which ones are recognised, what themes/relationships they have with them…

How do they relate to the activities/orgs etc.? What is the level of understanding of the types of things these orgs do etc…

Summary

- The facilitator summarises the main points of discussion – bringing together the ideas, themes etc.

- Then invites participants to add anything they feel we have missed out or not covered as they would like.

- Participants are invited to reflect on the day – was it what they expected? Did the discussion go as they had initially thought it would etc.

- Prompted to complete a short 'about you' leaflet – again confidential etc.

- Closes Discussion – THANK – YOU ☺

- Envelopes with voucher to thank participants for their time/expense. Just a token £10. But very grateful for them for coming along.

Appendix C: Focus Group Advance Checklist

Checklist	Reminders
Choose accessible, pleasant room	Book in advance through university system
Book refreshments in advance	48hours through university system
Do Risk Assessment	As per university policy for on-site activities
Follow-up phone calls to participants	48-24hrs in advance. Re-confirm details / meeting point.
Incentive vouchers	In personally labelled envelopes

Appendix D: Focus Group Room Set up

Checklist	Reminders
2 x USB port audio recorders + mini microphone	To be checked before the start. Bring spare batteries.
Coloured card for name places	Felt tip-pens in centre of table
Pens and note paper	At each place setting
Consent forms	x 2 per participant (incl. a copy for them to keep)
Focus Group Topic Guide	At facilitators place
'About you' Leaflets	At each place setting
Set up refreshment table	To one side of room
PowerPoint Slides	Set up in advance, but screen off at start

Focus Group Consent Form

Bournemouth University

Today's discussion group forms part of a larger study into the different ways that people understand heritage. The research is being carried out as part of a university student research project and is not sponsored by any heritage organisation or governing body. The aim of today's session is to discuss what ideas you may have about heritage and to share and discuss these ideas and experiences together in the group.

By participating in the discussion, you agree to the following:

- I understand that this focus group research is for the purpose of a PhD study about heritage, and is organised by Maeve Marmion, a registered student at Bournemouth University.

- I grant Maeve Marmion permission to document the discussion, through audio recording and later through writing up the discussion. I understand that anything discussed written within this session is to be used solely for the purposes of this research.

- I understand that my personal details and anything I discuss or write in today's session is to remain confidential any anonymous throughout the research process, including its analysis and documentation.

- I agree that the content of the discussion and any written information related to today's session may be read, quoted and distributed for educational and scholarly purposes.

Name of participant: ………………………………………………………………

Signature participant: ………………………………………………………………..

Date: …………………………………………..

Contact Details: please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any assistance or further information in relation to this research. Feel free to keep a copy of this form for your records.

E-mail: mmarmion@bournemouth.ac.uk

Post: Maeve Marmion, PhD Research Student, School of Services Management, Dorset House, Talbot Campus, Bournemouth University, BH12 5BB

Thank-you for your participation in this research, it is very much appreciated.