

**Dear readers,**

our work on the Baukultur Report “Public Spaces” was completed before the coronavirus pandemic began across the globe. You will therefore not find any reference to the current state of emergency, which has changed public life so significantly in recent weeks.

As a result of the pandemic we now view our neighbourhoods with different eyes and to some extent have started rediscovering them: long-distance travel for leisure or work is becoming less feasible, with more distances now covered on foot or by bike. The public spaces near our homes have grown in importance and we have started to appreciate them more than ever: well-designed open spaces, accessible for everyone, offer us a place to retreat and are considered invaluable spaces for recreation just outside of our own doorstep. At the same time we see neighbourhoods coming together – being a good neighbour is more important than ever and we experience new forms of everyday solidarity.

The fact that we are living together under coronavirus restrictions and with a new set of social rules has given the topic of public spaces an unforeseeable timeliness. After consulting its board of trustees in April 2020, the Federal Foundation decided not to apply any changes to the text of the document you have before you. The Foundation and its trustees agree that the topic has gained in relevance while the issues raised in the Baukultur Report remain universal in nature. In the light of recent developments, it becomes inherently clear how public spaces function as places of societal innovation. We can use this current phase of reorientation to try new things and to implement these new plans for regular use in our built environment. We can use the time from now until the Baukultur Convention on 19th of May 2021 in Potsdam to reflect on and discuss the Report’s focus topic and to prepare recommendations for action that will help to readjust Baukultur and society as a whole.

**The Federal Foundation of Baukultur  
Potsdam, June 2020**