



INCLUDING AND INVOLVING PEOPLE

Including and Involving People

The task: to make the historic environment accessible to everyone and ensure that it is seen as something with which the whole of society can identify and engage.

3.1 Surveys such as the one conducted by MORI during the *Power of Place* consultation confirm that, while most people acknowledge the significance of the historic environment, there are none the less a substantial number who do not see it as having any relevance to them. This may be because they are alienated by the presentation of individual sites, or because they feel that aspects of the past to which they themselves attach importance have been overlooked or undervalued. Some people may feel that they lack the necessary expertise to engage with issues relating to the historic environment, even in the context of their own immediate locality. Making everyone feel comfortable with their historic environment and achieving a higher level of involvement and engagement must therefore be a high priority for the sector as a whole. Therefore, besides addressing conventional access issues, this chapter explores how the Government and the sector should respond to the public's widening perceptions of what constitutes their heritage, and considers ways of involving and engaging people in decisions which affect their communities.



3.2 The Government regards these issues as so important that it will publish shortly a new policy document *People and Places: A Draft Social Inclusion Policy for the Built and Historic Environment*. The document will set out the objectives the Government is seeking to achieve, identify ways of promoting social inclusion, and offer examples of best practice. It will look in detail at the role the historic environment can play in combatting social exclusion through lifelong learning, volunteering and regeneration. **The Government will follow up *People and Places* by convening a major conference to enable everyone concerned to agree how best to take forward this challenging agenda and to set in hand the action required.**

Main picture:
Somerset House, London.
(courtesy Rachel Clare).

Children in education session at
Sutton House, Hackney.
(courtesy The National Trust)

Volunteer steward with visitor,
Chartwell, Kent.
(courtesy The National Trust)



Including and Involving People

Removing physical barriers

3.3 Over the last decade issues relating to physical access have rightly been high on everyone's agenda. From October 2004, the Disability Discrimination Act will place duties on service providers to make reasonable adjustments to physical features to overcome barriers to access. The historic environment sector has already made excellent progress in improving physical access to sites. The Disability Rights Commission expects that best practice in considering the needs of people with disabilities will soon become normal practice.

3.4 The British Standards Institution published, in October 2001, *Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the need of disabled people* (BS 8300), based on new ergonomic research and replacing guidance published in 1979. The Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions is also reviewing the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations, and the related guidance on access and facilities for disabled people in non-domestic buildings. This will take account of BS 8300 and proposed changes are due to be subject to public consultation in 2002.

3.5 Following its acceptance of the key recommendations made by the Disability Rights Task Force, **the Government will publish *Planning and Accessibility: A Good Practice Guide* to help local authorities, developers and others achieve a more consistent approach to the issue of disabled access.** English Heritage will also update its publication *Easy Access to Historic Properties* to take account of the duties that will be introduced in 2004 by the Disability Discrimination Act, and give advice to owners and local authorities on their application to listed buildings.

Reaching out to people

3.6 The removal of physical barriers is only one aspect of the inclusion issue. Many organisations in the historic environment sector are now seeking to reach out to new audiences in new ways. One example of this can be seen at the Tower of London, where Historic Royal Palaces has worked successfully to develop close links with local people in Tower Hamlets. Reaching out to a non-traditional audience in this way has benefited not only the local community but also Historic Royal Palaces itself, which has been encouraged to review its work from new perspectives. *People and Places* will contain further examples of good practice and suggests ways in which organisations can develop programmes to widen their audiences.

Images of England

English Heritage's *Images of England* will be one of the world's largest, free on-line picture libraries, enabling everyone to explore the rich diversity of England's historic buildings. The four-year project was launched in February 1999 with a grant of over £3 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund's Millennium Festival Fund. It forms a unique partnership between English Heritage and hundreds of volunteer photographers, many of whom belong to the Royal Photographic Society, a key supporter of the project. The volunteers aim to capture 360,000 'defining images' of England's listed buildings, providing a new visual dimension to written descriptions, which cover everything from churches and palaces to garden sheds and horse troughs. Images and text are being posted on the internet to ensure that the information is as widely accessible as possible.

Engaging with volunteers

3.7 The historic environment has a long and valuable tradition of voluntary activity. It would be impossible to enumerate all the people involved in voluntary activity in this sphere; from residents' associations and local conservation societies to the National Trust, the range is enormous, the energy and talent irreplaceable. Volunteering can lead to more active, engaged communities, and offers people seeking employment the possibility of developing skills and self-esteem through work experience. The Government is firmly committed to promoting voluntary activity. In his speech to the Active Community Convention in March 2000 the Prime Minister announced the formation of the National Experience Corps to promote opportunities for people over 50 to be actively involved in their communities. The Government's target of one million more people active in their communities by 2004 includes a substantial proportion in the 50-65 age group. For volunteers of all ages, the historic environment has an important part to play.

3.8 *Power of Place* identified the need for a detailed review of the needs and potential of the voluntary element within the historic environment sector, and the Government welcomes the action now in hand to establish *Heritage Link* to enable all the various voluntary bodies across the sector to work together more closely and effectively.

Helmsley Walled Garden

The Helmsley Walled Garden project was set up to restore and develop a historic garden in Yorkshire that had become derelict, with the main aim of serving the local community. It is now a registered charity and has created a horticultural therapy policy which guides the employment of volunteers and its educational work with visitors. The garden permanently employs a young person with special needs through the New Deal scheme. Many of its volunteers, and all its staff, have some form of disability. Groups of young offenders from North Yorkshire Probation Service visit the garden twice weekly for team-work and confidence-building activities. A local special needs school runs continuous supervised projects with the garden, which is also a popular visitor attraction in the region. The garden, glasshouses, orchid house and pond are now fully revived, and the shop sells organic plants, herbs and vegetables grown in the garden. The garden is situated close to Helmsley Castle, an English Heritage property, and Duncombe Park, a privately owned historic house, and the three owners work in partnership to promote the individual properties together as an integrated attraction.

Including and Involving People

3.9 Both English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund provide funding for voluntary and community groups. Both recognise the contribution of volunteers as value-in-kind in assessing grant schemes. Both are increasing the emphasis they place on capacity-building within the voluntary sector. The Government wants to see this trend develop. It welcomes the fact that English Heritage has increased its small but effective Heritage Grant Fund to enhance financial support for individuals and groups in their work in communities. In addition, the Rural Enterprise Scheme operated under the England Rural Development Programme provides support for community group projects which contribute to the conservation of the rural heritage, particularly where these also produce wider social benefits.

Using new technology

3.10 Information and communication technology, including the Internet, enables historic environment professionals to reach out to new audiences in creative ways. For example, the Portable Antiquities Scheme has a website containing 2,000 images and extensive information about the archaeological finds reported under the Scheme. The website had some half a million hits in 2000, and soon people will be able to e-mail pictures and details of their discoveries direct to the site. English Heritage is working to establish a website that will provide electronic access for all to the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. It aims to have this facility in operation by the end of 2002. The success of interactive sites such as these bodes well for the development of Culture Online, which will enable children and adults to engage with the resources of major arts and cultural heritage organisations in an exciting and informative way.

3.11 The private and voluntary sectors have shown great flair in realising the potential of new technology as a means of disseminating local and community information. *UpMyStreet* and *CitizensConnection.net* are just two of the innovative website-based schemes now fulfilling this function. Such schemes will often be well placed to make available information relating to the local historic environment, such as details of historic attractions within the area which are open to the public. **The Government urges the sector at both national and local level to get together with the operators of local information websites to develop the opportunities for disseminating intelligence about the historic environment.**

3.12 The Hackney Building Exploratory provides a further demonstration of the effectiveness of interactive exhibits in engaging people and communities in issues relating to their local built environment. **The Government will work with the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment to explore ways in which best practice models might be developed elsewhere in the country.**

Hackney Building Exploratory

Hackney Building Exploratory is the first centre in the United Kingdom to explore the local area by means of a hands-on exhibition, and to bring resources focused on the local built environment together under one roof. Set up in one of the poorest boroughs in the country as a prototype for community education, Hackney Building Exploratory provides local people with information about the local area, including the history of Hackney homes, through unique interactive exhibits. These help people to develop a sense of place and encourage them to express their views about their neighbourhood. Residents thus become better informed about their community and better able to participate in decisions about any changes or improvements that are needed. Hackney Building Exploratory has also attracted widespread acclaim from heritage, arts and architecture organisations as a place where professionals can learn from the experience of local residents.

Including and Involving People

Responding to what people want

3.13 As Historic Royal Palaces demonstrated in its work with the community in Tower Hamlets, the inclusion agenda is not simply a matter of going to people and telling them what they ought to know; it is about listening to them and discovering what they themselves are interested in and regard as important. Awards for All, a joint Lottery distributor scheme, gives small grants which allow community groups to initiate their own projects such as, for example, an exhibition of local history, a heritage trail, or a programme to raise awareness of the local cultural heritage. Also relevant in this context is the Heritage Lottery Fund's *Local Heritage Initiative*, operated by the Countryside Agency, which helps groups care for, investigate and explain locally distinctive built heritage and features, characteristic landscape and historic customs and traditions.

3.14 One scheme which has been very good at generating community involvement is the Blue Plaque scheme operated in London by English Heritage for many years now. English Heritage has recently made a start in extending the scheme to a number of other cities: Liverpool, Birmingham, Portsmouth and Southampton. This is a welcome development, but the Government would like to see the scheme extended still more widely and quickly. **The Government is discussing with English Heritage and the Local Government Association how this can best be achieved.**

A broader definition of heritage

3.15 As part of this greater responsiveness to what people want, Government and the sector have begun to work with a broader definition of the historic environment. We are rightly proud of the statutory designation systems which have served to protect our historic buildings, monuments and archaeological sites. Informed decision-making to identify and safeguard the most significant examples of historic fabric will always continue to be a primary responsibility across the whole of the sector. However, the designation system does serve to reinforce the sense that the historic environment can be defined precisely, quantified even, in terms of formally listed buildings or scheduled monuments. These decisions are taken by central government on the advice of professionals within a framework of national criteria but do not always take account of other factors which might be of importance to the local community. Yet the value a community places on a particular aspect of its immediate environment might be a critical factor in getting that community to engage in local planning or regeneration issues.

3.16 The Government wants to ensure that policy-making in this area takes proper account of this wider perception. The historic environment should be seen as something which all sections of the community can identify with and take pride in, rather than something valued only by narrow specialist interests.

3.17 The developing concept of character assessment is relevant in this context. Sophisticated techniques for assessing the character of particular areas are already evolving. These include the Historic Landscape Characterisation programme developed by English Heritage, which complements the Countryside Agency's countryside character assessment programme. The Historic Landscape Characterisation programme, which parallels English Heritage's work on urban archaeological assessments, evaluates the historic significance of landscapes. It identifies management implications and opportunities for change and development, using the historic landscape character to enrich the future landscape.

3.18 This approach can be applied to both the urban and rural historic environment, not to replace existing designation systems, but rather to reinforce them. The process of designating and protecting conservation areas is a good example of the approach. The character assessment process can contribute to a community-led conservation and management plan, as recommended in the White Paper *Our Towns and Cities: the Future*. It is, however, essential that the public is fully involved in the process to ensure that assessments reflect local people's perceptions and priorities.

3.19 **The Government commends character assessment to local authorities both as a useful tool in itself and as a way of encouraging greater involvement by local communities in conservation issues.**

Historic Landscape Assessments

English Heritage is currently engaged in a national programme of Historic Landscape Characterisation assessments to show how modern landscapes have evolved through human action, such as rates of boundary loss, and the relationship between sites and their landscape. These assessments can play an important role in informing decisions on future sustainable uses. The assessments are carried out by County Councils in partnership with English Heritage, using new Geographical Information Systems technology, and the results form part of the Sites and Monuments records used by local authorities in managing the landscape element of the historic environment.

Lancashire County Council and English Heritage are also using the project to contribute to European Pathways to the Cultural Landscape, a European Union Culture 2000 programme which aims to raise awareness of the historic landscape in line with the European Landscape Convention. In North Lancashire (Bowland Forest and the Lune Valley) the project will use historic landscape characterisation assessments and archaeological data to define sustainable management and agri-environmental strategies. Importantly, it will also encourage community participation by recording local residents' views of their historic landscape, thus enabling the community to contribute to landscape management and planning.



PROTECTING AND SUSTAINING

Protecting and Sustaining

The task: to protect and sustain the historic environment for the benefit of our own and future generations.

4.1 The historic environment is as fragile as it is precious. It is not renewable. If we fail to protect and sustain it we risk losing permanently not just the fabric itself, but the history of which it is the visible expression. It is therefore essential that decisions taken at all levels – national, regional and local – have regard to any potential impact on the physical remains of the past. This chapter examines the legislative, policy and funding regimes in place to protect and sustain the historic environment and makes proposals to ensure that these regimes preserve the best of our past, operate efficiently, are free of unnecessary bureaucracy and deliver high-quality outputs.

The framework of protection for the historic environment

4.2 We have a well developed framework for identifying and protecting the physical remains of our past. At its heart is the process of listing buildings of special architectural and historic interest, which has been in operation since the late 1940s and which has saved many of our finest buildings from unsympathetic alteration or destruction. There are currently some 500,000 listed buildings and structures. Listing does not mean that a building must be preserved in its existing state for all time. Its main purpose is to ensure that a building's special interest is taken into account when works are proposed which would affect its character. Around 90% of applications for listed building consent are approved.

Main picture:
 Visitors at Corfe Castle, Dorset.
 (courtesy The National Trust)
 Gardens at Hinton Ampner,
 Hampshire.
 (courtesy The National Trust)
 Dry stone wall construction,
 Crinkley Hill, Gloucestershire.
 (courtesy The National Trust)



Protecting and Sustaining

4.3 In parallel with the listed building system, the scheduled monument regime provides a statutory framework for the identification and protection of archaeological sites of national importance. Over 34,000 archaeological sites are currently protected as scheduled ancient monuments, for which prior consent is required in respect of any works affecting them.

4.4 Currently some 9,000 areas of special architectural or historic interest have been designated as conservation areas by local authorities. Designation provides a basis of protection for these areas, for example through tighter planning controls, and consent is required from the local authority for the demolition of unlisted buildings. Separate systems also exist for the identification of historic parks, gardens and battlefields and for the inscription of World Heritage Sites (although in none of these cases do any additional statutory controls currently apply).

4.5 Guidance for local planning authorities on the protection of listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 *Planning and the Historic Environment* (PPG15). Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16) performs a comparable role in respect of archaeological remains. **The Government remains fully committed to the policy principles set out in these PPGs**, although we will undertake a thorough examination of the documents as part of the review of all PPGs being proposed in the Planning Green Paper.

4.6 The Government remains firmly committed to the maintenance of an effective framework of statutory protection for all elements of the historic environment. There is, however, an obligation to ensure that the control regimes are sound in conception and effective in operation. Such regimes must strike the right balance between competing interests and objectives, must be fully transparent and must not involve unnecessary bureaucracy, cost or delay.

4.7 The Government's Planning Green Paper is setting out proposals for a fundamental reform of the planning system, delivering a faster, simpler system, which better serves the interests of both business and the community. It proposes moving swiftly towards standardised application and administration procedures under different consent regimes and encourage the development of a single application point for such consents. **The Government will also initiate a review of the case for integrating the present array of controls into a single regime.** We envisage this encompassing such issues as the integration of listed building and conservation area controls into the planning system; the possible scope for also amalgamating the scheduled monument regime; and the case for including other elements such as historic landscapes, World Heritage Sites and marine archeology.

Listing of modern buildings

4.8 A particular issue arises in connection with the listing of post Second World War buildings. In establishing the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE), the Government has created a powerful expert body able to make judgements about the merits of new buildings. It clearly makes sense also to use CABE's expertise to inform decisions about the listing of modern buildings. **The Government will therefore in future invite CABE to put forward its views on all post-war listing proposals.** CABE's comments will then be taken into account alongside those of other respondents to any subsequent public consultation.

Management tools for historic places

4.9 Management agreements and conservation plans are a potentially useful mechanism for assessing the significance of a listed building or a heritage landscape, deciding how to integrate changes and new needs and considering long-term management and maintenance. Agri-environment schemes, such as those under the England Rural Development Programme, are also important management tools. Management agreements can help speed up the determination of listed building consent applications, while conservation plans are a useful tool for looking ahead and programming major work, resources and funding. Indeed, the preparation of conservation plans for complex sites is a requirement for major Heritage Lottery Fund applications. Agreements and plans are strongly recommended for complex or large-scale properties such as historic parks and gardens in need of landscape restoration. Individual plans should in time provide a means of coordinating and achieving added value from grant schemes and other initiatives. **The Government will work closely with English Heritage in researching the current impact of management agreements and their future potential.**

Management plans for World Heritage Sites

4.10 The United Kingdom currently has twenty World Heritage Sites, of which eleven are in England, three in Scotland, two in Wales, one in Northern Ireland and three in overseas territories. These represent a tremendous spread of sites both geographically and in terms of type. Such a range and diversity of sites requires the establishment of special and appropriate management arrangements. These have been reflected in the work which the Government has put into developing Management Plans for our sites with help from English Heritage, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (UK), the relevant local authorities and many other bodies and individuals. **The Government is working towards completion of Management Plans for England's eleven current World Heritage Sites by the end of 2002.**

Ecclesiastical exemption from listed building consent

4.11 Ecclesiastical buildings of the Church of England and certain other denominations are exempt from listed building and conservation area controls. Exemption is available only on the clear understanding that each of the denominations concerned will maintain an internal control system which ensures a level of protection for its historic churches comparable with what would apply under normal secular controls. **The Government will undertake a further review of the ecclesiastical exemption to establish that the denominations' internal control systems continue to meet the required standard. It will also bring forward a new Ecclesiastical Exemption Order to make permanent provision for Anglican peculiars and the various other special cases which retained the exemption on an interim basis following the 1994 exemption reform.**

Protecting and Sustaining

Caring for the historic fabric

4.12 English Heritage's recent publication *Informed Conservation: Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation* is aimed at everyone who provides advice on managing change to the historic environment, and emphasises the need for careful judgements about the value and significance of historic buildings and landscapes. **The Government commends this guidance.**

4.13 Work by English Heritage and others in recent years has highlighted the extent to which the need for capital expenditure on the repair of historic buildings arises from inadequate preventative maintenance. There is now increased awareness of the case for shifting emphasis from cure to prevention. As the Urban Task Force identified in *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, more than 90% of the urban fabric that will exist in 30 years' time has already been built. Maintaining this fabric in good condition will need, for the most part, traditional building crafts and skills. More than half the turnover of the building industry relates to repairs and maintenance. We therefore need to ensure that the training, procurement structure and regulatory framework within which the industry operates support the care and maintenance of traditional buildings no less than the needs of a vigorous and diverse new buildings sector. The issue of preventative maintenance was also addressed in the Heritage Lottery Fund's consultation paper on funding options for its next Strategic Plan. **The Government fully endorses the increasing importance attached to the preventative maintenance of historic fabric. In discussions with English Heritage about future funding priorities, it will explore how a shift of emphasis towards preventative maintenance might be reflected in grant programmes.**

Christ Church Old Church, Waterloo, Liverpool

Christ Church, Waterloo, a Grade II* Victorian church, was made redundant in 1982 when the small congregation could no longer maintain it. After ten years, no use had been found for the church, and it had deteriorated as a result of vandalism, theft and neglect. The local community regarded it as an eyesore. A scheme for demolition was put forward, but a non-statutory public enquiry recommended the building be preserved. A rescue package was put together involving funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and the Churches Conservation Trust.

The church was restored to good condition, vested in the Churches Conservation Trust and now enjoys a new life at the centre of its local community. Under the Trust's aegis, occasional services are held, as are many community events such as concerts and meetings, and a group of local Friends has been formed. Joint working by the three heritage agencies enabled an outstanding building to be saved and its future use by and for local people secured.

The public sector's historic estate

4.14 The Government will continue to set an example in the conservation of its own extensive historic estate, and is committed to the maintenance of the historic buildings that Government Departments use and occupy. Government Departments have developed a positive approach to the management or effective disposal of their heritage assets in recent years, developing strong working relationships with English Heritage, other statutory bodies and local authorities. As a result new leases of life have been found for a number of surplus high-profile historic sites. Departments are also required to incorporate sustainability targets into construction procurement, and the Government's Achieving Sustainability in Construction Procurement action programme requires all Departments to promote the re-use of existing buildings.

4.15 The Prime Minister has established the role of Ministerial Design Champions in every Department to promote good and sensitive design in all areas of Government procurement. **The role of the Design Champions will be extended to include the care of any historic estate for which the Department concerned is directly responsible.**

4.16 In considering the disposal of redundant historic buildings, all Departments and public bodies are required to adhere to the strict standards set out in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's guidance *The Disposal of Historic Buildings*. The Government Historic Buildings Advisory Unit, based at English Heritage, will continue to advise and support Departments on issues concerning historic buildings, and prepare a biennial Conservation Report.

4.17 Local government also has a responsibility to set an example in the nurturing of its properties. **English Heritage will issue advice to local authorities on the care of historic buildings, ancient monuments, historic gardens, parks and designed landscapes in their ownership.**

4.18 The Government has made clear that, when a suitable opportunity arises, it will legislate to remove the current exemption that the Crown enjoys from planning control. **This reform will extend to the listed building, scheduled monument consent and conservation area regimes.**

Funding

4.19 Public funding will continue to be available for the care of the historic environment. English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund are the two major sources of such funding. English Heritage's current annual grant-in-aid from the Government is £110.4 million in 2001-02, rising to £121.4 million in 2003-04. The quinquennial review of English Heritage will examine the effectiveness of its funding policies. The Heritage Lottery Fund has so far provided over £300 million each year for projects relating to the historic environment. Following consultation on its new Strategic Plan, the Heritage Lottery Fund is looking at ways to combine both revenue and capital elements in applications from 2002 onwards. The Government welcomes this development. It is important to bear in mind too that other public funding streams, for example the England Rural Development Programme, also bring significant benefits to the historic environment.

Resource Centre for physically disabled adults: St John's Workhouse, Boston, Lincolnshire

The Grade II listed entrance building of a former workhouse, designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, has been rescued from dereliction by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, with a loan from the Architectural Heritage Fund and a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Despite difficulties and delays throughout the extensive renovation, the building has now been handed over to the Social Services Directorate. An existing day centre will be re-housed in purpose-built accommodation with activity rooms, a computer resource area and a training kitchen to help physically disabled adults acquire life skills and independence. The building is also available to other community groups in the evenings. The project has been an integral part of the rejuvenation of this part of Boston, and over 250 local people visited the building on a recent Heritage Open Day.

Protecting and Sustaining

4.20 *Power of Place* recommended a single VAT rate of 5% for all building work, particularly so as to remove any VAT incentive to make alterations rather than repairs to historic properties. The Government will take this recommendation into account carefully when considering the future VAT treatment of building work.

4.21 The Government has made proposals to the European Commission for a reduced VAT rate of 5% for repairs to listed places of worship. The Commission has indicated that this will be considered in its general review of reduced rates for VAT which will take place in 2003, and the Government will continue its discussions with the Commission on this issue. **In the meantime, the Government is introducing an interim grant scheme which would have the same effect, by returning in grant aid the difference in costs between VAT at 5% and at 17.5% on eligible repairs to listed places of worship. This measure, which has been welcomed by those responsible for such buildings, will come into operation by the end of 2001. Grants will be available for repairs begun on or after 1 April 2001.** The scheme will constitute a substantial increase in support for the historic environment; current estimates suggest that it could be worth around £30 million to the sector.

A role for the private sector

4.22 Collaborations with other cultural disciplines can help promote historic sites, especially where they have the potential to host other cultural activities. Music, art and drama events, for example, can bring a fresh dimension to sites and attract more visitors and income. However, the historic environment sector has not yet exploited the full potential of commercial sponsorship and other private sector relationships. An Arts & Business report *Funding and Friendships*,

commissioned by the Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies with funding from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and published in February 2001 concluded that there is an opportunity for the sector to increase its funding base by developing partnerships with the private sector.

4.23 Arts & Business is willing to undertake further work in this area, in particular by developing a long-term model of partnership between the historic environment sector and private sector organisations. The Government will give active support to this initiative. A working party has been set up at the initiative of the Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies, and the Government welcomes this as a means of widening the debate and involving stakeholders. **The Government is prepared to make resources available to support further assessment of the scope for private sector funding. It hopes that other organisations within the sector will make a similar commitment, so that the work can go forward in partnership.**

The rural historic environment

4.24 The beauty, diversity and historic importance of our countryside are easy to appreciate. In the post-war period intensification of farming practices has posed threats to the rural historic environment. The current crisis in the farming industry poses new threats. The foot and mouth disease experience has underlined that landscape quality, diversity and character, along with heritage-led regeneration, are fundamental to the vitality of the rural economy. The Rural White Paper *Our Countryside: The Future. A Fair Deal for Rural England*, published in November 2000, recognised that the quality of landscapes, wildlife and habitats, recreational amenity and our

historic and cultural heritage are all equally important, and pointed out the value of the historic environment in promoting rural regeneration. In turn, programmes such as the England Rural Development Programme show how promoting rural regeneration can benefit the historic environment.

4.25 The Government remains committed to radical reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. It wants to see a change of focus away from production-orientated subsidies which risk degradation of the environment towards a more sustainable, modern, adaptable and environmentally responsible farming industry. This process has already started, with the launch in October 2000 of the England Rural Development Programme. This is a seven-year programme with funding of £1.6 billion aimed at developing more sustainable, diverse and enterprising rural economies, and protecting and enhancing the rural environment. Its ten component schemes include several with immense potential to secure benefits for the historic environment.

4.26 In particular, the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS), the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme (ESAs) and the Rural Enterprise Scheme support activities which include improving the management of ancient monuments, restoring historic parkland and landscape features, and conserving traditional rural buildings. Indeed, the CSS and ESA have been used for these purposes for more than a decade. Expansion of these schemes, and the European Union's LEADER+ rural development programme, provide even greater potential to secure important benefits for the historic environment and enhance its contribution to rural communities. Traditional farm buildings, for example, represent both an irreplaceable heritage of vernacular architecture and a major resource capable of sensitive conversion to alternative economic use. Such conversion can limit the need for new build and rural land-take, whilst at the same time contributing to a more diverse rural economy. Of course, not all traditional buildings are suitable for adaptive re-use and their significance needs to be judged before decisions are made.

4.27 English Heritage is working closely with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on the administration of the LEADER+ programme, which supports local community partnerships in improving quality of life, environment and economic prosperity. The partnerships receive funds to undertake small-scale innovative projects which address their local development needs. One of the four key themes of LEADER+ is to encourage communities to make the best use of their local natural and cultural resources.

Protecting and Sustaining

4.28 In order to secure the maximum benefit from the Rural Development Programme and the LEADER+ programme, DEFRA and English Heritage will continue to work closely together.

4.29 English Heritage's 1998 *Monuments at Risk Survey* showed that the intensification of arable cultivation since the Second World War has been the single biggest cause of damage or destruction to archaeological assets nationally. Moreover, the Government's *Soil Strategy for England* recognises that, besides containing archaeological remains, many soils are themselves of archaeological significance and are yet exposed to a number of risks. DEFRA continues to sponsor research and development projects which seek to address key issues relating to the management of the rural historic environment and English Heritage is carrying out further research, as identified in the Implementation Plan for the *Monuments at Risk Survey*. DEFRA and English Heritage will continue to co-operate on research into these topics.

Historic parks, gardens and open spaces

4.30 High-quality public spaces are central to the Government's "liveability" agenda which is itself at the heart of one of the cross-cutting reviews in the 2002 Spending Review. Public spaces create the basis for the buildings in our towns and cities; they are the syntax that articulates our streets. As much as buildings it is open spaces that define our environment and shape the landscape of our surroundings. But more than that they help to determine the quality of life in urban areas; they constitute urban lungs in which people congregate and spend time. Often these spaces are identifiable symbols of the town or city itself and maintaining them to high standards not only reflects the confidence with which the community sees itself but can be effective springboards for more widespread regeneration and urban renaissance.

4.31 Many public parks and open spaces are historic places but these are often in need of major refurbishment. Progress has been made, principally as a result of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Urban Parks Programme. None the less much remains to be done, as was made clear in the recent research study *Public Parks Assessment*, funded jointly by the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Countryside Agency.

4.32 Concerns expressed by the House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee in its 1999 report on public parks led to a major Government programme to regenerate our parks and help create new ones. The Urban Green Spaces Task Force is expected to report on this in 2002.

4.33 The Government is also supporting the Urban Parks Forum in promoting best practice among park managers, marking the first stage of a drive to improve management and maintenance of all our public parks. **One of the Royal Parks Agency's key objectives, following its change of status to Non-Departmental Public Body in April 2002, will be to take a lead in raising standards of training in conservation and maintenance.**

Southampton: revival of the green heart of the city

Southampton's tradition of open public land is founded on five contiguous parks on the medieval Lammas lands in the heart of the city, laid out by the local authority in 1840s. The parks provided serpentine scenic walks, long avenues, innovative bedding displays, statues and monuments for the citizens to promenade around, and a large open space for organised sports. In recognition of their importance, the parks are listed Grade II in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Interest.

With the help of £3.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Victorian layout of the paths has been restored, as have the fine bedding displays and ornamental tree planting. The eight listed monuments within the parks have been given new life, most significantly the Cenotaph, and lost areas for flower display reclaimed. Contemporary designs for railings by local artists re-establish the boundaries of the parks and reflect Southampton's maritime influence, while a new fountain has been paid for by the people of the city. A modern sculpture by Paul de Monchaux provides contemporary interest, continuing the tradition of statues within the park. A new bandstand will host musical events and the refurbished sports facilities will bring energy and pace to the landscape.

4.34 The Government wants new partnerships to bring our parks and open spaces into the new century; the New Opportunities Fund, local authorities and private and corporate sponsors all have a role here. An integrated approach, involving strategic planning and development control through to revitalisation and long-term commitment to site and facility management, as well as innovative design and collaboration with artists, architects and the local communities, are crucial to success. As a potential complement to the Heritage Lottery Fund's work and under its Green Spaces initiative, the New Opportunities Fund intends to commit, by 2004, £125 million to projects across the United Kingdom which aim to enhance the quality of life of local communities by bringing improvements to urban and rural community spaces.

Archaeology

4.35 Archaeological remains from all periods are an integral part of the historic environment. They range from prehistoric sites such as Stonehenge, through to industrial heritage and Second World War defence sites, and even defence structures built in the Cold War. The scheduling system affords statutory protection to archaeological sites of national importance. However, PPG16 makes clear that regard must also be paid to sites and finds of local significance when development proposals are under consideration. There has in recent years been a huge growth in commercially run archaeological contracting firms competing for projects to record sites and advise on the potential impact of development proposals. **The Government encourages this growth industry but looks to English Heritage to ensure that the necessary high standards are maintained in the examination and recording of sites.**

Protecting and Sustaining

4.36 The Treasure Act 1996 significantly improved the protection of the movable archaeological heritage, leading to a tenfold increase in the reporting of finds of significance. The Government has recently published the recommendations of a review of the Act. This proposes a number of improvements, including an extension of the definition of treasure to cover hoards of prehistoric base-metal objects, thereby giving protection to an important further category of finds. **The Government will shortly bring forward an Order to give effect to this extended definition.**

4.37 The Portable Antiquities scheme, which the Government has been funding with Heritage Lottery Fund support, promotes the voluntary reporting of all archaeological finds. It has been described by the British Archaeology Awards as the most important new initiative in archaeology. In 2001 alone, more than 15,000 new finds have been publicised on the scheme's website.

Marine archaeology

4.38 A prodigious collection of underwater archaeological sites and shipwrecks surround Britain's coastline. The Government wants to protect these sites, and improve access for archaeologists and trained enthusiasts without disrupting the natural processes that shape and maintain the coast and seabed. The legislation protecting marine archaeology was introduced nearly thirty years ago as an interim measure. There is now a need to reassess it in order to ensure that it can meet present-day requirements. **The Government will therefore examine the marine archaeology legislation as part of the review of statutory controls proposed earlier in this chapter.**

4.39 **Meanwhile the Government will seek the earliest legislative opportunity to extend English Heritage's remit to include the seabed out to the 12-mile limit of territorial sea around the coast of England.** This will enable English Heritage to take responsibility for maritime archaeology and bring the arrangements for England into line with the rest of the United Kingdom.

The international historic environment

4.40 The United Kingdom's high international reputation for its commitment to protecting the cultural and natural heritage was reflected in its election in October 2001 to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, which oversees the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The Convention provides for the identification and protection of natural and cultural sites of outstanding universal value. Of the 690 sites currently inscribed as World Heritage Sites, the United Kingdom has twenty, eleven of which are in England. A new Tentative List of twentyfive candidates from the United Kingdom for World Heritage status was sent to UNESCO in 1999, from which nominations will be made over the next decade. Two sites from the Tentative List (Blaenavon Industrial Landscape in South Wales, and the Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda) were inscribed on the World Heritage List in December 2000, and a further four sites (New Lanark, Saltaire, Derwent Valley Mills and the Dorset and East Devon Coast) are due to be considered for inscription at the next meeting of the World Heritage Committee.

4.41 Under the Convention, members of the twentyone nation-strong Committee are entitled to serve for six years, but in the interests of achieving a more rapid turnover of members from across the world, the United Kingdom has announced that it will voluntarily relinquish its seat on the Committee after four years. Membership of the Committee will enable the United Kingdom to demonstrate its commitment to sustaining the world's heritage by offering our skills and knowledge on a global scale. In particular, we will continue to support the current reform programme in order to make the Convention more effective in achieving its conservation objectives. We are also looking at the possibility of entering into a bilateral agreement with the World Heritage Centre under which we would aim to provide advice and support for management teams at World Heritage Sites overseas (particularly at endangered sites in developing countries); training opportunities, for example at United Kingdom World Heritage Sites, for those engaged in conservation work overseas; and an annual scholarship to enable a student from a developing country to benefit from first-hand management experience at one of our sites.

4.42 The United Kingdom also plays an active role in international bodies such as the European Union and the Council of Europe. We have long been a signatory to the Council of Europe Convention on the Architectural Heritage, and recently signed the Council of Europe Convention on the Archaeological Heritage (the Valletta Convention). An increased presence in Europe should also help United Kingdom organisations to benefit from European Union programmes.

4.43 **The United Kingdom will be a fully committed member of the World Heritage Committee and will play a full and constructive part in other international fora.**

4.44 The Government has announced its intention to accede to the 1970 UNESCO Convention, which provides for the return of certain categories of cultural objects illegally exported from other countries. **The Government is now considering other measures to combat the illicit trade in art and antiquities, including a new criminal offence of trading in illegally removed cultural goods. It is also planning a campaign to raise awareness of the issues, as recommended in the report published in December 2000 of the Illicit Trade Advisory Panel.**