



OPTIMISING ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

Optimising Economic Potential

The task: to ensure that the historic environment's importance as an economic asset is skilfully harnessed.

5.1 Discussions about economics and the historic environment sometimes polarise around emotive sound-bites; theme park Britain, pickled in aspic, and dumbing down spring to mind. But time and experience have shown that a more sophisticated debate is both possible and necessary. Policy-makers need to regard the historic environment as a unique economic asset, a generator of wealth and jobs in both urban and rural areas. With this recognition there needs to be coupled intelligence and creativity. We must value the fabric of our past for its importance in attracting millions of visitors to this country each year. At the same time we must recognise that effective management strategies are needed to ensure that much-visited fragile sites are not irreparably damaged. A high-quality, sustainable tourist product must be our aim and this chapter looks at how we might work better to achieve this.

5.2 Similar misconceptions abound around the relationship between the historic environment and regeneration. Here the debate has tended to focus either on high-profile and culturally led regeneration schemes such as the Albert Dock in Liverpool or on the perceived capacity of the heritage protection regime to block innovative new development. Again, the picture is far more complex and more interesting. What is now clear is that, in many cases, far from obstructing change, the remains of the past can act as a powerful catalyst for renewal and a stimulus to high-quality new design and development. The Government wants to build on this success. It wants to see more regeneration projects, large and small, going forward on the basis of a clear understanding of the existing historic environment, how this has developed over time and how it can be used creatively to meet contemporary needs.

Main picture:
Chatterley Whitfield Colliery,
Stoke-on-Trent.
(Boris Baggs studio)

Conservator working at
Chastleton House, Oxfordshire.
(courtesy The National Trust)

Whitechapel, London.
(courtesy English Heritage)



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A world-class tourism industry

5.3 The historic environment in its fullest sense is the backbone of our tourism industry. A recent National Trust study of the North East showed that the high quality of the natural and built environment is the dominant motivation for holiday and leisure tourism in that area. In 2000 tourism expenditure in the United Kingdom totalled some £75 billion, and the value added by the tourist industry represented around 5% of GDP—larger than the car, steel and coal industries put together. The impact of foot and mouth disease on the tourism industry demonstrated both the importance of the industry to the economy and its interconnectedness with the wider economy.

5.4 Studies such as that undertaken by the National Trust usefully underline this interconnectedness and should prove of value to policy-makers and funding organisations. **The *State of the Historic Environment Report* referred to earlier will provide an analysis of the pressures facing the historic environment, as well as its contribution to tourism and economic regeneration.**

5.5 The Government and the tourism industry have agreed a programme for the long term strategic reform of the industry. Action to reform the tourism industry includes stronger and more coordinated arrangements for the marketing of English tourism to the domestic market, the creation of a single voice for tourism, the Tourism Alliance, and a new focus on training and skills for the sector.

5.6 In *Tomorrow's Tourism*, which was published in 1999, the Government showed how the tourism industry could grow in ways which are socially, environmentally and economically beneficial. A key objective is to increase the spread of overseas visitors across the country. The Government now requires the British Tourist Authority to secure an increase in the additional spend it delivers outside London and also a broader spread of visits throughout the year. In order further to develop a sustainable tourism industry, the Government is keen to assist owners and managers of historic sites to develop the business potential of their properties in a way which ensures a high-quality visitor experience alongside proper maintenance of the physical fabric. **The Government will therefore work with English Heritage to establish a Historic Attraction Advisory Unit which will draw together best practice and advice from across the sector on issues such as marketing, visitor management, customer care and conservation.**

5.7 The move to a more sustainable tourism industry involves looking at ‘success’ in terms other than just visitor numbers. A start has been made with the publication by the English Tourism Council in April 2001 of its sustainable tourism strategy *Time for Action*, together with a set of twenty statistical indicators. These will measure the extent to which tourism stakeholders are meeting the challenge of sustainable development by turning current examples of good practice into established common practice. For instance, one indicator measures the ratio of the land and historic buildings protected by national agencies against the amount of money spent on protection of them. The Government also wishes to see the development of local sustainable tourism indicators to help businesses and local authorities understand better the effects of tourism on the locality.

5.8 When a historic attraction is inadequately managed, not only is there an inevitable risk of damage, but the site loses its appeal to visitors. The English Historic Towns Forum’s publication *Making the Connection – A practical guide to tourism management in historic towns* shows that it is possible to increase visitor capacity and offer rewarding experiences to visitors and local residents alike, whilst at the same time protecting historic fabric. The English Tourism Council plans in 2002 to produce a sustainable tourism tool kit, providing guidance on successful visitor management techniques and on making the link between local distinctiveness and economic competitiveness.

5.9 The use of management plans, involving all stakeholders, provides a very effective way of identifying and avoiding potential conflicts at individual sites. For example, such plans can involve capacity studies at sites with a large concentration of visitors. The management plans now being developed and implemented for our World Heritage Sites provide a useful model for this technique. **The Government strongly commends the development of management plans for other historic visitor attractions.**

Hadrian’s Wall Management Plan

The Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site Management Plan, published in July 1996 to international acclaim, was the first of its kind to be produced in the United Kingdom. Hadrian’s Wall extends over 70 miles and falls within the administrative boundaries of twelve local authorities; in these terms alone the difficulties presented in producing an effective Management Plan were formidable. One of the key aims of the Plan was to establish a sustainable balance between conservation, access, the interests of the local community and the sustainable economic use of the World Heritage Site. Within the overall policies of the Management Plan, the Hadrian’s Wall Tourism Partnership, composed of the principal providers and promoters of tourism on the Wall, including English Heritage, has worked with conservation bodies to establish an Interpretative Strategy and Local Interpretative Plans. The aims have been to improve visitors’ experience and access, along with the value of tourism in the Region, while respecting the overriding need to conserve the World Heritage Site and its setting. A Management Plan Group meets twice a year to assess progress and to monitor the Plan’s effectiveness.

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The historic environment and regeneration

5.10 The contribution of the historic environment to regeneration has been powerfully demonstrated in two key English Heritage studies: *Conservation-led Regeneration* and *The Heritage Dividend*.

English Heritage's research has indicated that every £10,000 of its investment attracts £48,000 of matching funding from private and public sources and delivers 177 square metres of improved commercial floorspace, two new or safeguarded jobs and an improved home. Such developments in turn produce wider social and community benefits. Optimism and confidence grow as neglected but historically significant buildings find sustainable new uses, while improvements to the public realm create a new sense of community pride. English Heritage is now firmly established as a regeneration agency, in particular through its Conservation Area Partnerships and Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes. 60% of the £35 million offered by English Heritage every year in grants for conservation work is aimed at regeneration schemes. Increasingly English Heritage is working successfully in partnership with local authorities and developers to ensure that the regeneration potential of historic buildings and landscapes is realised. The Government regards this as an important part of English Heritage's role as the lead body for the sector.

5.11 Urban renewal is also a central objective of the Heritage Lottery Fund and in particular of its Urban Parks Programme and Townscape Heritage Initiative. By the end of the 2002, the Urban Parks Programme will have provided £255 million to restore and improve parks and gardens in the United Kingdom. The Townscape Heritage Initiative has already allocated £62 million for the regeneration of historic towns and cities across the United Kingdom, including many in deprived areas. In framing its new Strategic Plan the Heritage Lottery Fund is considering the options for promoting the legacy of the past as a contributor to planning and development for the future.

The Historic Dockyard, Chatham

The Royal Dockyard at Chatham served the Royal Navy as a fleet base and centre of shipbuilding for over 400 years. Its closure in 1984 left behind a unique legacy: the most complete dockyard of the Age of Sail to be found anywhere in the world.

Creating a sustainable future for the 80-acre Historic Dockyard site was a great challenge. The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust was established to preserve and interpret the site for public benefit. With the help of Heritage Lottery grants of £10 million, many historic buildings have since been restored and brought back into use, four major galleries have been opened, three historic ships have been acquired for preservation and traditional ropemaking has been preserved in the unique eighteenth century ropery. Over 1.5 million members of the public have visited the site.

The Historic Dockyard has played an important part in the regeneration of the local economy. Not only is it a tourism beacon for the Medway area, but it is also the home for over 100 small businesses employing approximately 1,000 people. Many volunteer groups are active on the site, whilst a substantial residential community of approximately 400 people now lives within the Dockyard's walls. The Trust is also working with Medway Council and the South-East England Development Agency to promote community-based initiatives such as family learning and outreach programmes, including work with excluded pupils in Kent.

5.12 The nine Regional Development Agencies in England promote economic development and regeneration, as well as sustainable development. The Government has recently issued guidance to the Agencies on preparing their corporate plans, which includes asking them to take account of the importance of the historic environment in their regeneration work, for example in making grants to other bodies and in working with Local Strategic Partnerships

5.13 Local authorities, usually working with the Local Strategic Partnership, are responsible for preparing community strategies for their area. They have substantial local flexibility and recent Government guidance on Partnerships suggests that membership should include representatives of the historic environment sector. In preparing community strategies, local authorities and Partnerships could refer to the working guide *Streets for All*, published by the Government Office for London and English Heritage, which provides practical advice on respecting the historic character of streetscapes. **The Government encourages local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships, in preparing their community strategies, to consider the role of the historic environment in promoting economic, employment and educational opportunities within the locality.**

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Good design

5.14 The White Paper *Our Towns and Cities: the future* set out the Government's commitment to the promotion of good design which enhances its context. The historic environment sector should work at all levels to encourage high-quality architecture and landscape design. *Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas*, published jointly by the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment and English Heritage in November 2001, emphasises the importance of high standards of design when development takes place in historically sensitive contexts.

5.15 The Government wants the planning system to encourage new design that responds creatively to its context. Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: *General Policy and Principles* and the report *By Design*, published in May 2000 by the then Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions, in close conjunction with the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment, both encourage closer attention to the principles of good urban design and in particular the need for new development to respond sensitively to each site and its setting.

Neighbourhood Nurseries

The Neighbourhood Nurseries Scheme was introduced by the Department for Education and Skills to create 45,000 affordable childcare places, targeting deprived areas where lack of childcare was stopping parents from working. The Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment became involved in the design of the nurseries. It ran a competition inviting architectural firms to submit designs for a neighbourhood nursery at one of three sites: Bexley, Bury or Sheffield. Three schemes will be chosen, and it is hoped that the architects will form an informal panel to offer guidance and suggestions on design solutions for the new pre-school buildings.

Exporting our conservation skills

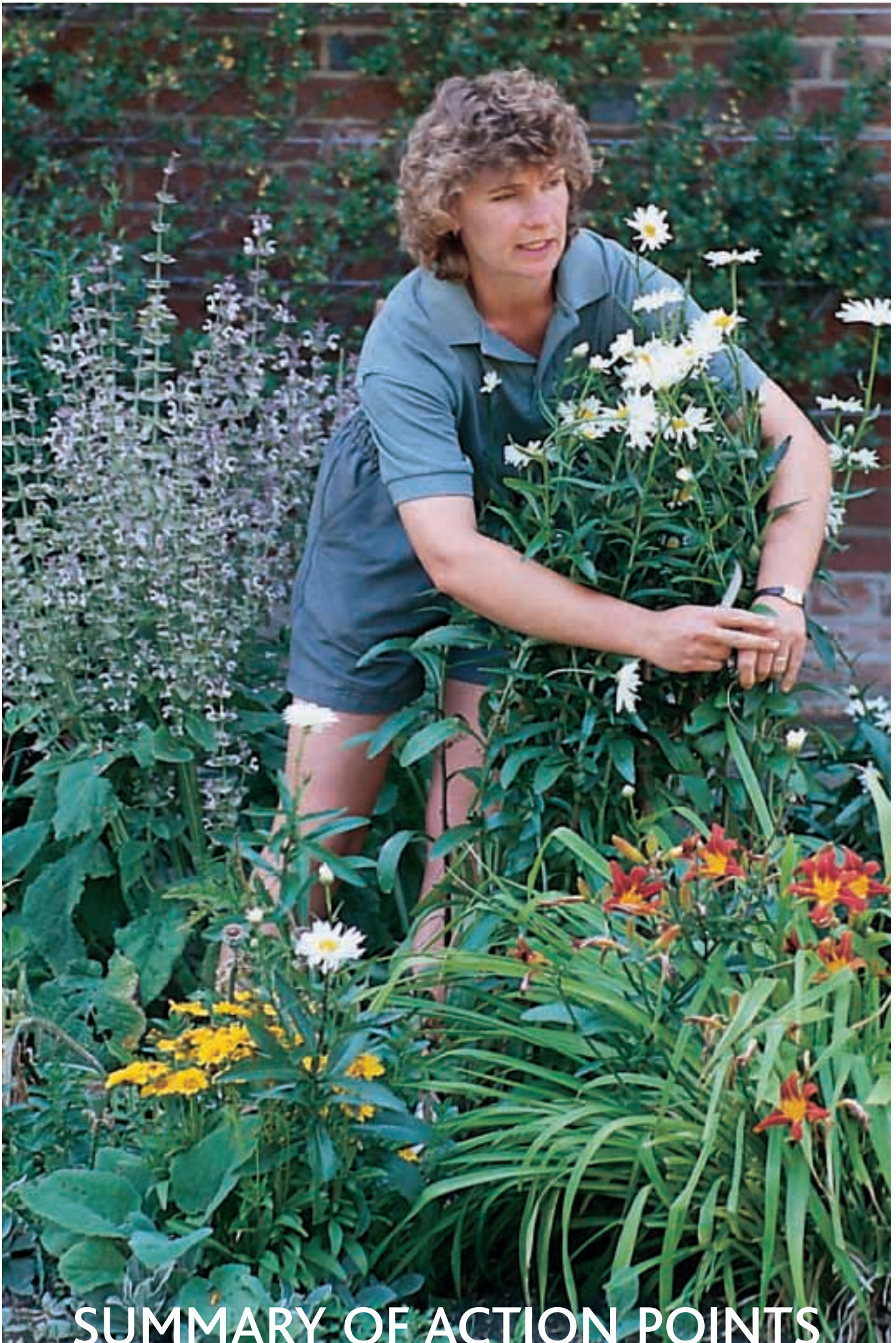
5.16 Conservation work in the United Kingdom has an outstanding international reputation. The Government is keen to promote this further, both in terms of raising the profile of British expertise and helping companies to sell their services overseas, and in taking the lead in important international bodies. A cluster group has therefore been established, under the umbrella of the Creative Industries Export Advisory Group (CIEPAG), comprising historic environment, museum and tourism interests from the private and public sectors, to encourage and facilitate the export of heritage and tourism services. With advice and funding from Trade Partners UK, the group have identified target markets and embarked on programmes of activity which include inward and outward missions and overseas seminars. Where clear opportunities are identified the Group hopes to embark on a three-year strategy.

5.17 There are, however, some barriers to developing this work further. For example, English Heritage does not at present have the statutory powers to work outside England, while the National Trust is limited by both its charitable status and resources. **The Government will seek the earliest legislative opportunity to extend English Heritage's powers to enable it to export its own skills and knowledge.**

Lipica, Slovenia

The United Kingdom has long experience of managing cultural heritage and using it productively for the economic benefits that flow from well-managed tourism. Slovenia's cultural tourism is less well developed yet it has some unique assets and attractions. One of these is Lipica, a cultural monument of European and world-wide reputation, being since 1580 the stud farm from which the famous Lippizaner horses of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna originated. There is a good opportunity to make Lipica a key destination in Slovenia in the future, attracting new visitors to the country. Unfortunately the estate is currently suffering from years of under-investment and weak management.

The CIEPAG cluster group therefore organised a workshop in Lipica to discuss how different heritage and tourism themes could be addressed in order to produce a strategic plan for the site. United Kingdom experts in marketing, equestrianism, tourism and heritage participated in the workshop which it is hoped will both assist Lipica and lead to increased business for United Kingdom firms in Slovenia.



SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Summary of Action Points

Providing Leadership

- **1** The historic environment will become part of the remit of Green Ministers (paragraph 1.2).
- **2** The DCMS, as lead sponsor Department, will involve the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in discussions about the strategic direction of English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund (paragraph 1.2).
- **3** The DCMS will work with the devolved administrations to ensure that, where appropriate, the United Kingdom's interests in international fora are properly represented (paragraph 1.2).
- **4** The Government looks to local authorities to adopt a positive approach to the management of the historic environment within their area and monitoring its condition. It urges them to appoint champions for the historic environment within their management structures and to ensure that elected members have access to training in respect of the historic environment wherever it is needed (paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4).
- **5** As part of its regular series of quinquennial reviews, the Government is examining the role and functions of English Heritage (paragraph 1.6).
- **6** The Government has commissioned English Heritage to formulate a five-year strategy for the development of effective working relationships both within the historic environment sector and with other relevant interests (paragraph 1.8).
- **7** The Government has asked English Heritage to produce a pilot Historic Environment Report during 2002 (paragraph 1.11).
- **8** The Government has commissioned English Heritage to frame a coordinated approach to research across the historic environment sector, with the aim of ensuring that needs are clearly identified, priorities established and duplication avoided (paragraph 1.12).
- **9** The Government will produce a consultation paper on a range of options for enhancing Sites and Monuments Records in the summer of 2002 (paragraph 1.14).

Summary of Action Points

Realising Educational Potential

- **10** The Government will work with English Heritage and the Learning and Skills Council to increase opportunities for those who wish to take their interests in the historic environment further, for example through further and higher education, or vocational courses (paragraph 2.3).
- **11** The Government will explore with English Heritage how best to develop initiatives such as Heritage Open Days and whether this approach might now be extended to the historic environment as a whole in the form of an annual Historic Environment Week (paragraph 2.4).
- **12** The Government will at an early opportunity consider, in consultation with relevant outside interests, how the principle of encouraging children to visit national museums and galleries by providing free access might be extended to the historic environment sector (paragraph 2.7).
- **13** The Government encourages historic environment organisations to get involved in the Creative Partnerships programme (paragraph 2.9).
- **14** The Government will work with the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment to ensure the widest possible circulation of its publications *Our Street: Learning to See* and *From One Street to Another* (paragraph 2.10).
- **15** The Government has asked English Heritage to explore the possibility of producing a document for the historic environment comparable to *Moving Images in the Classroom* (paragraph 2.11).
- **16** English Heritage will work closely with Culture Online in unlocking the potential of e-learning (paragraph 2.13).
- **17** The Government fully supports the project to assess the provision of learning opportunities within the historic environment sector and hopes that it will act as a catalyst for the further development of historic environment education (paragraph 2.14).
- **18** English Heritage will work closely with its partners to develop the place of education within the historic environment sector. The Government will propose targets for increased activity in this area in English Heritage's Funding Agreement for 2002-03 (paragraph 2.15).
- **19** English Heritage will coordinate the work of the Building Skills Action Group and the Construction Industry Training Board and other interests to ensure a coherent approach to meeting skills requirements (paragraph 2.17).
- **20** The Government is exploring with the Learning and Skills Council how some planned Centres of Vocational Excellence could specialise in skills relevant to the historic environment (paragraph 2.18).

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- **21** The Government will encourage grant-givers to give a degree of priority to training in conservation craft skills (paragraph 2.19).
 - **22** The Government has asked English Heritage to work with one or two major education providers to develop courses which will match the skills required within the historic environment sector (paragraph 2.21).

Including and Involving People

- **23** The Government will publish shortly a new policy document *People and Places: A Draft Social Inclusion Policy for the Built and Historic Environment*, and convene a major conference on the role the historic environment can play in combatting social exclusion (paragraph 3.2).
- **24** The Government will publish *Planning and Accessibility: A Good Practice Guide* on planning and access for disabled people to help local authorities, developers and others to achieve a more consistent approach to disabled access (paragraph 3.5).
- **25** 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 (paragraph 3.11).
- **26** The Government will work with the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment to explore ways in which best practice models of engaging people and communities in issues relating to their local built environment might be developed (paragraph 3.12).
- **27** The Government is discussing with English Heritage and the Local Government Association how the Blue Plaque scheme can be extended (paragraph 3.14).

Summary of Action Points

■ **28** The Government wants to ensure that local policy-making on the historic environment takes proper account of the value a community places on particular aspects of its immediate environment. 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 (paragraphs 3.16 and 3.19).

Protecting and Sustaining

■ **29** The Government remains fully committed to the policy principles set out in PPGs 15 and 16 (paragraph 4.5).

■ **30** The Government remains firmly committed to the maintenance of an effective framework of statutory protection for all elements of the historic environment (paragraph 4.6).

■ **31** The Government will initiate a review of the case for integrating the present array of heritage controls into a single regime (paragraph 4.7).

■ **32** The Government will invite the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment to put forward its views on all post-war listing proposals (paragraph 4.8).

■ **33** The Government will work closely with English Heritage in researching the current impact of management agreements and their further potential (paragraph 4.9).

■ **34** The Government is working towards completion of Management Plans for England's eleven World Heritage Sites by the end of 2002 (paragraph 4.10).

■ **35** The Government will undertake a further review of the ecclesiastical exemption and 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 (paragraph 4.11).

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- **36** The Government commends English Heritage's publication *Informed Conservation: Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation*. The Government fully endorses the increasing importance attached to the preventative maintenance of historic fabric. The Government will explore how this might be reflected in English Heritage's grant programmes (paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13).
 - **37** The role of Ministerial Design Champions will be extended to include the care of any historic estate for which the Government Department concerned is directly responsible (paragraph 4.15).
 - **38** 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 (paragraph 4.17).
 - **39** The proposed removal of the Crown's current exemption from planning control will be extended to the listed building, scheduled monument consent and conservation area regimes (paragraph 4.18).
 - **40** The Government is introducing an interim grant scheme which will have the effect of reducing to 5% the VAT rate of 17.5% for repairs to listed places of worship. This will come into operation by the end of 2001, and grants will be available for repairs begun on or after 1 April 2001 (paragraph 4.21).
 - **41** The Government will 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 (paragraph 4.23).
 - **42** In order to secure the maximum benefit from the Rural Development Programme, and the LEADER+ programme, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and English Heritage will continue to work closely together (paragraph 4.28).
 - **43** 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 of public parks (paragraph 4.33).
 - **44** The Government looks to English Heritage to ensure that the necessary high standards are maintained in the examination and recording of archaeological sites (paragraph 4.35).
 - **45** The Government will extend the definition of treasure in the Treasure Act 1996 to cover hoards of prehistoric base-metal objects, thereby giving protection to an important new category of finds (paragraph 4.36).
 - **46** The Government will examine the marine archaeology legislation as part of the review of statutory controls (paragraph 4.38).
 - **47** 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 (paragraph 4.39).

Summary of Action Points

- **48** 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 (paragraph 4.43).
- **49** The Government is considering additional 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 these issues (paragraph 4.44).

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- **50** The *State of the Historic Environment Report* will provide an analysis of the pressures facing the historic environment, as well as its contribution to tourism and economic regeneration (paragraph 5.4).
- **51** The Government will work with English Heritage to establish an Historic Attraction Advisory Unit, to draw together best practice and advice from across the sector on issues such as marketing, visitor management, customer care and conservation (paragraph 5.6).
- **52** The Government strongly commends the development of management plans for historic visitor attractions (paragraph 5.9).
- **53** The Government encourage Local Authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships, in preparing their community strategies, to consider the role of the historic environment in promoting economic, employment and educational opportunities within the locality (paragraph 5.13).
- **54** The Government will seek the earliest legislative opportunity to extend English Heritage's powers to enable it to export its own skills and knowledge (paragraph 5.17).



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