



ENGLISH HERITAGE

## National Heritage Protection Plan

Welcome to the first of our annual consultation surveys, which will start on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and will close on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

We need your help to ensure that the NHPP remains focussed on the priorities for protecting the historic environment. We recently published the [NHPP Progress Report](#) for May-September 2011 and would like to get your views on the direction and progress of the Plan.

For more information on the NHPP, please access the following link: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/national-heritage-protection-plan/>

Your input to the consultation is invaluable and will help us modify and shape the Plan for 2012 and beyond.

Please complete the questionnaire and return to: [nhpp@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:nhpp@english-heritage.org.uk) by 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

Please note that the text boxes will expand as you type.

<b>Name James Caird</b>	<b>Organisation Institute of Historic Building Conservation</b>
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(Please give the name of the organisation if you are formally responding on behalf of that organisation)

**How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement:**

**Q1.** The NHPP is moving positively towards meeting its aim for identifying threat to, increasing understanding of the significance of, and protection of the historic environment.

Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
1	2	3X	4	5	Don't know

**Q2.** If the answer to Q1 is less than 4 or Don't know: Why do you say that?

The IHBC warmly welcomes the creation of a more inclusive forward-looking planning framework for HE, in partnership with the rest of the sector, through the NHPP. However the legacy of corporate priorities and structures, as well as the limited capacity available now to EH and prospective partners, may well prove to be substantial barriers to success.

In addition, the plan is in urgent need of clearer links to outcomes that deliver conservation and protection on the ground, in line with government priorities in a contracting or slow-moving economy. The

balance in the plan between threat identification, understanding, and protection, as cited in Q1, does not necessarily coincide with:  
...wider public priorities;  
...the needs and appreciation of users of historic places who need to understand conservation outcomes. While the NHPP approach may have helped organise EH's internal priorities historically, the increase of 'understanding' has not been established as a cost effective way of securing 'protection'.

Thus 'understanding' within the planning process needs to be harnessed in a way that allows it to register the very different historic environment priorities that exist outside English Heritage. It may be that if the NHPP cannot evolve in this way it will miss key opportunities and remain as a tool for a substantial if essentially minority interest in the historic environment.

A more outcomes-based approach, tightly integrated with the wider planning processes, and user needs, would be more cost effective, efficient and more easily appreciated by local - and political - interests.

**Q3.** Are the purposes and structure of the NHPP well explained and easy to understand?

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
1x	2	3	4	5	Don't know	

**Q4.** If the answer to Q3 is less than 4 or Don't know: Have you any suggestions as to how this might be improved in the future?

No. See our answer to Q2.

As well as needing a more outcome-based approach, the NHPP needs a more accessible structure, format and appearance - a better public interface - to help the wider sector users understand its objects, explain its operations, and shape its progress.

Also, a more substantial use of non-technical, flexible information and networking opportunities - including a web based interface - should be a priority. The last thing it needs is the confusing word-doc style consultation used here, however understandable that has been for a first survey.

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**Q5.** Within the context of the existing NHPP measures EH has balanced its resources correctly.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
1	2X	3	4	5	Don't know

**Q6.** Do you think there are particular issues that have arisen or are emerging since the development of the Plan which might impact on the balance of resources and that need to be addressed? (e.g. major infrastructure developments, Government disposals, or issues arising from recent planning and localism reforms)

YesX know	No	Don't
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**Q7.** And if yes what are the issues and what could be done to address them?

The plan must have a much more radical approach to its content, as noted below, otherwise it will fail in its advocacy role throughout the
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sector.

The consultation question also needs to ask what these issues might be - not just what can be done to address them.

The progress of the Penfold review must be one of the highest priorities for the sector, alongside the promotion of some sensible and informed responses to the closely related matter of the devastation of the local authority infrastructure. Both may pre-date the plan - depending on what start dates are taken - but they continue to sit outside the NHPP's priorities to such an extent that the NHPP could even damage the prospects of influence throughout the sector where most delivery of protection is carried out.

For example, by being excluded by what is pitched as a 'sector plan' suggests that the sector does not see these issues a priority. In fact, they sit outside the prospective sector plan that is the NHPP only because of the definition of the NHPP stipulated by EH in Q 1 above and related communications, such as the NHPP website.

A more imaginative approach to the sector plan is required, one centred on what needs to be done to address the problems in the protection of the historic environment. The IHBC sees no reason why EH should not provide suitable sector capacity and leadership in this area through the NHPP.

See also the answers to Q2 and 4.

In particular also, the NHPP Advisory Board needs a more representative selection of historic environment user interests if it is to provide the kind

of direction that is needed in the shorter term, especially until more appropriate platforms for discussions on the NHPP are in place.

**Q8.** Are you and/or your organisation already involved in contributing towards the NHPP?

YesY  
know

No

Don't

**Q9.** If yes what role has your organisation had? (Please tick as many as apply)

- a. Put forward a project proposal/design for NHPP and this project has started
- b. Put forward a project proposal/design for NHPP which has been agreed but not yet started
- c. Delivering a NHPP project as a lead partner  
Y
- d. Delivering a NHPP project as a contributing partner
- e. Member of a NHPP project steering group  
Y
- f. Commented on a specific NHPP project proposal/design  
Y
- g. Taken part in a NHPP project as a consultee  
Y
- h. Contributed financially to a NHPP project  
Y
- i. Commented on overall NHPP direction  
Y

j. Delivering a project which meets a NHPP measure but is not directly funded by it

Y

k. Other (please specify)

l. None of these

**Q10.** Would you be interested in increasing your involvement or becoming involved in the first place?

Yes Y	No	Don't know
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**Q11.** If yes, in what capacity? (Please tick as many as apply)

a. Put forward a project proposal for NHPP

Y

b. Delivering a NHPP project as a lead partner

Y

c. Delivering a NHPP project as a contributing partner

Y

d. Member of a NHPP project steering group

Y

e. Taking part in a NHPP project as a consultee

Y

f. Contributing financially to a NHPP project

Y

g. Commenting on overall NHPP direction

Y

h. Delivering a project which meets a NHPP measure but is not directly funded by it

Y

i. Other (please specify)

**Q12.** What would make it easier for your organisation to contribute towards the NHPP?

A more accessible interface with the NHPP, a wider constituency

represented on the steering group, and a more inclusive assessment historic environment priorities incorporated in it, all of which are closely related.

**Q13.** Can you suggest better ways for linking up organisations around NHPP objectives?

Yes; an appropriate web-based platform, which we could be happy to advise on.

**Q14.** Does the frequency of the communication you receive about the NHPP meet your needs?

Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	Don't know X

**Q15.** Does the content of communication you receive about the NHPP meet your needs?

Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
X					

**Q16.** If the answer to Q13 is less than 4 or Don't know, what other content would you wish to receive?

It is impossible to tell until there is a clearer understanding in place of what the actual operations are, and what capacity is available. However the IHBC is confident that the staff are making every effort to secure the successful delivery of the NHPP. The concern is more whether EH as a whole has the capacity to achieve its success.

**Q17.** Would you be willing for projects you are working on which meet NHPP measures but aren't funded by it to be included in our bi-annual NHPP reports?

Yes Provided inclusion brings with it beneficial project endorsement  
No Don't know

**Q18.** Do you have any further comments on the NHPP?

The thinking underpinning the NHPP represents a radical and welcome shift in EH's corporate approach to the wider sector, and one that is

both extremely welcome and greatly admired.

The NHPP is also recognised as being a huge challenge, especially as EH is going through substantial cutbacks.

It is to be expected that the plan will take some time to develop, and for corporate styles and structures to change. So all comments offered here are intended to encourage the current trajectory, to contribute to the positive progress of the plan as a tool for the wider sector, and to ensure that English Heritage delivers the best value for money to the wide and diverse interests that help secure the conservation of the historic environment.

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**Thank you for taking the time to complete our  
questionnaire.**