

Scoping Study on the Socio-Economic Benefits of Heritage in the National Parks

1. How would you define the role of your organisation with respect to National Parks?

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) is the professional body of the United Kingdom representing conservation specialists and historic environment practitioners in the public and private sectors. The Institute exists to establish the highest standards of conservation practice, to support the effective protection and enhancement of the historic environment, and to promote heritage-led regeneration and access to the historic environment for all.

The IHBC has over 1,500 members whose professional roles vary from educators, archaeologists and historians to planners, surveyors, architects and project managers. The 2006 IHBC-EH Phase 1 survey of conservation professionals in England's Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), which covered identified IHBC members working in 8 of the 9 National Parks in England mainly as Building Conservation or Historic Building Officers, (Quantifying Local Planning Authority Conservation Staffing, 2006/7). There are also members working in National Parks in Scotland and Wales. Thus the IHBC has a role in setting and maintaining the professional standards of historic environment conservation across the National Parks.

2. What are the key elements of heritage that you associate with National Parks?
 - Cultural heritage, including industrial heritage
 - Historic landscapes
 - Archaeology
 - Vernacular buildings
 - Historic towns, villages and other settlements & settlement patterns
 - Country houses and estates
 - Registered and unregistered Parks and Gardens
 - Structures and buildings in the landscape
 - Layers of history through human intervention on the natural environment
 - Natural heritage & bio-diversity
3. What do you think are the key issues for the historic environment in National Parks over the next 20 years?
 - Balancing conservation and perceived changes to building stock needed to tackle and mitigate the impacts of climate change
 - Resources- ensuring that there is sufficient funds to employ enough qualified professionals to protect, enhance and promote the Cultural Heritage, and sufficient investment in the training of professionals to secure a professional resource for the future
 - The apparent lack of importance Cultural Heritage has at national level
 - Traffic & transport- (a) balancing an increase in traffic with the conservation of our Cultural Heritage (b) DfT's standardised Highway regulations, for

example the increase in number and types of highway signs, will have a detrimental impact on historic settlements and landscapes

- Encouraging and promoting the re-use of the existing historic building stock rather than replacement
 - Creating and providing the fiscal infrastructure to promote sustainable management of the parks (including whole-life costings attached to development and change, and appropriate changes in tax regimes including VAT
 - The loss and conversion of agricultural buildings
 - Retaining local distinctiveness
 - Sourcing indigenous materials for the repair of historic structures e.g. stone slates
 - Meeting the demand for skilled craftsmen, particularly those with knowledge of the local vernacular. Retaining and providing training in traditional building skills
 - The impact of mineral workings on the historic landscape
 - Preserving and enhancing Conservation Areas as certain permitted development rights lead to the erosion of a Conservation Area's character
 - Securing funds for and investment in the repair of listed buildings and unlisted buildings within Conservation Areas
 - Securing funds for environmental enhancements
 - Providing Affordable Housing and ensuring a high standard of design
 - Changes in legislation presaged in the Heritage and planning White Papers, and others
 - Promoting inclusion and accessibility
 - Developing sustainable tourism strategies
4. What do you think are the main challenges faced by policy makers with respect to heritage in National Parks over the next 20 years?
- Insufficient governmental direction that results in a lack of policies in the regional spatial strategy. This in turn leads to a difficulty in generating coherent policies in the Local Development Framework
 - Balancing conservation and perceived changes to building stock needed to tackle climate change.
 - The sustainable management of the Cultural Heritage- balancing conservation with recreation, for example tourism and other leisure activities.
 - Lack of an appropriate financial infrastructure to promote sustainable development (inside and outside national parks)
5. What do you perceive the socio-economic benefits of heritage in National Parks to be?
- Direct employment
 - Indirect employment
 - Healthy environment and well being
 - Close to areas of deprivation

- Brand image of being in National Park
- Visitor spend
- Cultural enrichment
- Natural environmental impacts, including reduced carbon emissions attached to traditional construction and conservation-friendly development strategies and biodiversity arising from exploiting traditional designs

6. Has your organisation carried out any recent research which relates to this area?

If so, could you please provide the reference, and if possible a copy of the publication, or weblink?

No -

7. What research agendas do you envisage to be important and useful in this area over the next 5 years?

- The impact of designation on the historic environment of the surrounding area which is outside the National Park to ensure that this is not degraded as a result of an outward push of inappropriate activities and uses or a more laissez faire attitude.
- The impact of National Park status on the control of inappropriate alterations to historic buildings through permitted development.
- The impact of national park status on new design

8. Are there other issues not already mentioned that you feel are relevant or that you feel we should be aware of at this early stage in the study?