A BULLETIN OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

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# Conservation bulletin

## Heritage: Broadening Access

England's historic environment can tell stories of extraordinary diversity and richness. More people than ever before are engaging with these stories and telling their own.

The grave of Myrtilla in the churchyard at St Lawrence, Oxhill, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. The inscribed headstone is unusual in commemorating an enslaved woman: 'Here lyeth the body of Myrtilla, negro slave to Mr. Thos Beauchamp of Nevis. Bapt. Oct. ye 20th. Buried Jan ye 6th, 1705'.

Photo: SCAWDI

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

# Editorial: Your Place or Our Place?

**England's historic environment belongs to us all, but in our diverse society more people need to see how that heritage reflects their past.**

In 2000 *Power of Place* identified that 'the historic environment is a part of everyday culture. It is accessible to everyone. It is around us every time we travel to work, drive to the supermarket or go to school.' However, the report also noted that 'many people believe that heritage provision in England does not adequately represent certain groups'. Removing barriers to access was a key recommendation of the report.

In 2006, Your Place or Mine? Engaging New Audiences with Heritage took place in Manchester Town Hall. Jointly run by English Heritage and the National Trust, it was the first conference of its kind to draw together policy makers and practitioners to discuss one of the biggest issues in the heritage sector today – how do we reach out to wider audiences and tell the stories of the diverse communities who make up our society?

A key message that came across from all the speakers, including Baroness Lola Young, David Lammy MP and Baroness Andrews, Minister of State in the Department of Communities and Local Government, was that we need to put people at the heart of heritage. In David Lammy's words, it is about the 'need to think beyond the buildings, behind the structure … about the people behind heritage'.

This is a good moment to look at how far the historic environment sector has managed to broaden access and what challenges we still face. In this edition of *Conservation Bulletin*, we start with community perspectives – looking at how people have chosen to interpret their own heritage. We move on to a range of initiatives across heritage organisations and to the changing skills demanded by new ways of working. We have tried to provide practical guidance that will help us all to move beyond a theoretical commitment to engaging new audiences and make it part of our mainstream work.

Later in 2007, English Heritage will be launching *Our Place*, the new online professional networking site for people involved in broadening access to heritage (see Levin pp 31–2). In another seven years, will the historic environment be seen by everyone as Our Place? n

Miriam Levin
*Head of Outreach, English Heritage*

Rachel Hasted
*Head of Social Inclusion and Diversity, English Heritage*


David Lammy MP, Minister of Culture at the DCMS, delivers the keynote speech at the Your Place of Mine? conference in November 2006. Organised by English Heritage and the National Trust, the event was the first to directly address the challenge of engaging new audiences with the heritage.



*Conservation Bulletin* is published three times a year by English Heritage and circulated free of charge to more than 15,000 conservation specialists, opinion formers and decision makers. Its purpose is to communicate new ideas and advice to everyone concerned with the understanding, management and public enjoyment of England's rich and diverse historic environment.

When you have finished with this copy of *Conservation Bulletin*, do please pass it on. And if you would like to be added to our mailing list, or to change your current subscription details, just contact us on 020 7973 3253 or at mailinglist@english-heritage.org.uk.

# Everyone's Heritage

**Maria Adebowale** *English Heritage Commissioner*

**England's heritage is built on diversity. But it will only flourish if people from equally varied backgrounds are willing to act as its future stewards.**

I'll let you into a secret. What I really wanted to be was a historian. I wanted to be surrounded by the histories of peoples, artists, communities, politicians, artisans, activists and landscapes. When I think back, the reason I wanted to be part of the heritage sector was the potential to preserve the stories of everyone and possibly everything, from ancient monument to the lives of those both up and down the stairs of stately homes.

The reason I still feel passionate about heritage is its ability to include and value the past, the people and the environments they operated in – social inclusion at its best. English Heritage has certainly been at the heart of embedding diversity and social inclusion into how we understand, engage and protect England's heritage. Our outreach projects are a prime example of how we are working with people and communities to tell and inform others about their rich and powerful stories. Part of this is English Heritage's commitment to research and communicate the harrowing history of enslavement and the slave trade behind some of its properties.

But before I wax too lyrical about the heritage sector and social inclusion, there is more that we can do. When faced with a busy desk and two hundred emails, social inclusion may feel like an extra we just do not have time for. Some of you may even think it has nothing to do with the real business of heritage. So why sign up to social inclusion? There are two main reasons. The first is the moral argument: heritage does not belong to the professionals, it belongs to everyone. We are lucky enough to have been given the mandate to protect heritage not for ourselves but for present and future generations. Morally we are bound to tell the whole story and we have not as a sector been particularly good at this.

The whole story is about understanding, communicating and protecting the narratives, buildings and artefacts that tell of the rich, sometimes painful history of the real England. It is not only about the fine dresses of stately ladies but the tales of men, women and children who were enslaved, who took to the streets to create political change, who tended ancient hedges and farmsteads and who built grand buildings.

The second reason for taking on social inclusion is that England's heritage will only be protected if people from diverse backgrounds are willing to act as its stewards. Of course the sector already has the valued members of heritage organisations like English Heritage and the National Trust. Engaging people in addition to our traditional supporters, however, is crucial to the survival of England's heritage. People from increasingly diverse backgrounds are now a part of our history. They also have the right to be engaged. Engagement means not just paying lip service to social inclusion but ensuring that heritage deals not only with landmarks but the stories behind them. It also means that we provide and encourage opportunities for everyone to access, understand and enjoy the historic environment. Only then can we really expect heritage to be valued and supported.

While I may not have made the best historian, there are hundreds of others who, if we get it right, will not only work in the heritage sector but will value it, be empowered by it and equally importantly be willing to stand up for the real story of England's heritage. n

Keighley teenagers worked with artists and English Heritage's Yorkshire outreach officer to produce digital art, textiles and sculpture inspired by the rubbings they took of Neolithic rock art on Ilkley Moor, and the links between these, rock art from India and Pakistan, and contemporary symbols.

# Communities and Heritage

**In the 21st century people will be more willing to engage with the historic environment if they can do so on their own terms.**

Enormous voluntary effort and enthusiasm goes into community heritage projects, such as community web archives (see Cullen p 8), and the Castleford Heritage Group (see Emerick and Drake pp 5–6). Making connections between such grass roots initiatives and heritage organisations is not always easy, as Barbara Willis-Brown (pp 6–7) points out. But the results of connecting communities with the resources in the care of heritage organisations can be a powerful force for stimulating interest in the local historic environment, as Birmingham's 'Making Connections' project (see Roberts pp 4–5) shows.

People value heritage in different ways. For the heritage sector, the challenge is to balance these different meanings and values, to enable different voices to be heard. Dialogue with communities and working in partnership to achieve this representation, as the Heritage Lottery Fund have done (see Clark pp 13–15), is crucial to maintaining public support. n

Young people from the Youth Offending Team in Great Yarmouth work on sculptures inspired by the local seafaring history of the Middlegate Community Heritage Garden, opened as part of the an English Heritage outreach project in partnership with the local authority and Seachange in 2005.


## Connecting Histories

Sian Roberts
*Connecting Histories Project Manager, Birmingham City Archives*

Connecting Histories (www.connectinghistories.org.uk) is a multifaceted and innovative 30-month partnership project which aims to increase access to archives, provide learning opportunities, and encourage participation by a range of diverse communities in aspects of Birmingham's history.

Since the project started in February 2005 there has been a conscious effort to combine archives, artefacts and the built environment to recognise the different histories, identities and cultures that have shaped Birmingham as a modern diverse city, and, in an age which privileges national and global narratives, to reassert the importance and richness of the local environment. Unsurprisingly, researching the archive collections has generated new knowledges of the city's architectural landscapes. This has included not only traditional places of historical interest such as Edgbaston or the Jewellery Quarter, but also areas important to Birmingham's history of migration such as Handsworth or Sparkbrook.

The project builds on longstanding partnerships and a number of previous smaller scale collaborative projects. This gradual building of trust and credibility has been a key factor in the project's successful interaction with more than 100 local community groups, the vast majority from black and ethnic communities across the city. It is delivered by an interdisciplinary team of thirteen people, including two academic partners based at the Universities of Birmingham and Warwick, and is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Connecting Histories draws together a number of different heritage activities including archive cataloguing, diversifying the archives workforce through positive action training, outreach activity aimed at supporting community cohesion and capacity building in community groups, and undertaking new historical research reinterpreting Birmingham City Archives' nationally designated collections.

An example of the powerful interplay between digital resources and physical interaction can be seen in the involvement of Connecting Histories with the bicentenary commemorating the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. One way in which the large amount of archive research conducted on antislavery organisations and black abolitionists in Birmingham has manifested itself is through the creation of a 'heritage trail' devoted to one of Birmingham's most important 19th-century social reformers, the Quaker abolitionist Joseph Sturge. This trail is available on the website

and has already been used by local groups, Queen's College at Birmingham University, and as part of Heritage Open Day events.

Similarly, outreach work with a variety of groups exploring their histories, identities and relationship to the city has focused on the significance of the local built environment for young people and groups of elders from a range of communities. This combination of digital learning materials and working with the physical landscape offers exciting possibilities for learning about how the past interacts with the present. Archives, libraries, museums, and physical heritage are all interwoven in the urgent need to move forward the debate about social cohesion. By establishing a renewed awareness of the links between place, history, culture and identity, the Connecting Histories project aims to promote a sense of agency and ownership among those who live in Birmingham. n

Birmingham City Council's Connecting Histories project has been designed to promote a new sense of ownership among those who live in Birmingham by focusing on the links between the place and its history and culture.


## The Castleford Heritage Group – becoming legit.

Keith Emerick
*Ancient Monument Inspector, English Heritage*

Castleford in West Yorkshire (population 38,000) is the focus for the most inspiring community heritage initiative in England. Castleford is known chiefly for coal mining, but also for glass, pottery and Henry Moore. It is Roman *Castrum*, and its location on crossings of the Aire and Calder rivers suggests an earlier origin. There is a Roman fort beneath the town and its substantial bath-house has been excavated and reburied. At present the town has no officially designated heritage sites or areas; so why is Castleford important to English Heritage?

Recent English Heritage and DCMS papers on heritage and identity signal a change in what heritage might mean: heritage managers should 'facilitate' rather than dictate what is of cultural significance, whilst the public should know that heritage is about people and the things that are important to them. However because nobody says how 'facilitation' and participation might work, it is the duty of English Heritage, as the national lead on heritage matters, to find answers to this question.

And it was here that the Castleford Heritage Group made a difference. The destruction of the coal industry dealt a severe blow to Castleford, and in their attempts to engage with agencies and institutions, the fact that they had no designated heritage sites meant that the majority of agencies could not respond. Therefore the Castleford Heritage Group spent their energies discussing options for the Roman bath-house, because they felt that it was only by talking about the distant past that agencies such as English Heritage would become engaged – and therefore discussion was always on the terms of those (English Heritage) who defined what heritage was (old and distant). However, it became clear that the heritage discussions were actually about the recent past, and it was this that gave the group a sense of identity and place. I urged them to continue doing this, because they were starting to create an idea of heritage that was about a mix of place, identity, people, memory and history; and by extension English Heritage could see what the heritage manager as 'facilitator' role might be. Throughout this evolution English Heritage gave encouragement, but most of all we said that what they were doing was *legitimate*, that their stories and sense of heritage were as valuable as the distant Romans. n

## Castleford – lifting its head

Alison Drake
*Castleford Heritage Group*

Castleford's heritage is more than our Roman archaeology and artefacts. It is our stories, songs, dances, skills, values and traditions. Our heritage is part of who we are: it gives us our roots and our sense of identity and belonging. We use it to inspire and teach our young people and to enjoy and celebrate being part of a good community. This is why we are involved in heritage.

Castleford Heritage Group took off with a millennium project providing a new town clock. We were a community with its head down, depressed since the great miners' strike. Much of our heritage – buildings, Roman archaeology, artefacts and social and industrial collections – had been knocked down, sold off, covered over

During the annual Castleford Heritage Festival banners from the nearby colliery sites are displayed in the Market Hall, which is also used as a venue for artwork and performance.


or taken away. We came together with an urgent desire to reclaim and celebrate our rich heritage and use it to achieve regeneration. We were fortunate in meeting Keith Emerick from English Heritage and Ray Taylor from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Their support and guidance enabled us to gain confidence, create our vision and set about achieving our aims.

As a catalyst for real renaissance in Castleford, the Group envisaged the creation of a new museum, with local facilities for learning, enjoyment and hands-on activities to enable us to tell our story and raise community confidence and self-esteem. A feasibility study recommended a multi-functional facility including a museum with accessible store, library, art gallery and resource centre. The Castleford Forum was born. We secured funding from HLF for a groundbreaking project to employ a Community Facilitator to refine the community's vision through extensive consultation.

To date, as well as driving forward the Castleford Forum, the Heritage Group has developed many other acclaimed projects, including the Castleford Heritage Festival week, art exhibitions including 'Castleford's Son: Shaping Henry Moore' and an innovative heritage-trails project producing a book and public works of art. We are also working with other agencies to reconnect the town with the river, where, after decades of pollution, we can enjoy our natural heritage and provide improvements such as a fish ladder on the weir. This year we will deliver taster days for Careers Guidance Services using local heritage to motivate prospective students and unemployed adults.

At the heart of all this is the Forum. For

Rag-rug making is a popular part of the Castleford Heritage Festival, not least because of the opportunities to recollect and chat – a vital part of 'heritage'.


Castleford this means more than a brave new building – it is about reconnecting a community with its heritage, an inspiration for the future. n

## A voyage of discovery

Barbara Willis-Brown
*Founder and Director, SCAWDI*

Quite simply, black people are interested in their black British heritage. It is our history, and we want to know more. Therefore, it's essential we put all the baggage aside, acknowledge and park the issues and get on with the business of exploring our collective history.

But engagement is not a tick-box exercise. It cannot be approached half-heartedly following a policy diktat stating 'thou shalt engage'. Engagement requires blue sky thinking, focus and absolute clarity. Examine your rationale, purpose, aims and objectives. What do you hope to achieve? Whose needs/interests do you aim to meet?

SCAWDI, (Sparkbrook Caribbean and African Women's Development Initiative), a highly creative community-development organ-isation, specialises in engagement, inclusion and social cohesion. We start from a people perspective. We design and deliver a wide range of social programmes that support individual and collective 'well-being', ranging from education, sport, recreational activities to the arts. We challenge stereotypes, assumptions and mindsets on both sides. Black people are very interested in heritage, but are neither visible nor reflected in the contemporary 'heritage industry', apart from the odd token reference. Therefore, in order to engage and participate, we created our own entry routes, dismantling the barriers that exclude.

Our initial heritage pilot (2004), This Green and Pleasant Land, created a route enabling

ordinary people, (black, white and Asian) from Birmingham's inner cities and suburbs to explore our surrounding countryside, stately homes and gardens. It proved an instant hit.

It worked largely due to meticulous planning; we understood the need to offer a 'whole experience' to an often indifferent bunch of people. We created and marketed 'a day out in the country, bring a picnic'; we offered transport from door to door; made it affordable, with a stately home and gardens thrown in to the package. Our sports officer even built a healthy 2-km walk into the process. This strategy worked, and, largely due to word of mouth, our trips were over-subscribed. We took detailed feedback from members and analysed their comments, feeding the information into our action plan.

We visited English Heritage sites, National Trust properties, national parks, even engaged in country pursuits. What a revelation – so many participants had never ventured beyond the city, expressing a sense of 'nervousness' almost as if they were encroaching on other people's territory, so disengaged did they feel from 'that world'. Yet people wanted more.

Funding was and remains a key issue. It is imperative the industry understands our position, that of trying, from scratch, to develop a completely new user base. This requires investment we simply don't have. Most of our members have never visited stately homes or gardens; they perceive it as not for them; they consider it the province of the white middle and upper classes. I've repeatedly raised the need for a yearly 'Community Card' – a simple, effective solution. It works like this: I pay my yearly subscription and it covers everyone on a SCAWDI organised visit.

SCAWDI visitors to English Heritage's Bolsover Castle property in Derbyshire. One of SCAWDI's aims has been to encourage ordinary people from Birmingham's inner cities and suburbs to explore their surrounding countryside, stately homes and gardens. © Vanley Burke

But it's not even on the horizon – perhaps one of my biggest frustrations with the industry is no one yet listens to what we're saying. You consult me about issues of participation, I offer a detailed response, even practical solutions. You tick the box, for you've consulted me. You file my response under 'community consultation'.

In 2006, I designed a follow-up programme, to Connect Black History to the Stately Homes of England – a huge challenge. Delivering this programme helped us to identify a critical missing link – a credible platform or network to support qualitative, collaborative work with like-minded partners. I felt I had to tread carefully with the heritage sector, constantly outlining my proposals, particularly given the nervousness around the dreaded 'S' word (slavery), with all its historical baggage. There was a reluctance among heritage organisations to engage with 'difficult' history like this – something we all need to confront in the 2007 bicentenary of the parliamentary abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

It doesn't need to be like that. Everyone knows slavery happened. Yet it remains virtually the single biggest barrier to uncovering black history today. As a result, we are overlooking a tremendous opportunity to pay homage to those slaves who lived and died in England; to uncover a rich and vibrant tapestry of their lives; to ground them in history, and tell their stories – like that of the still largely unknown Myrtilla, buried in Oxhill, Warwickshire in 1705 and described on her tombstone as a negro slave (see front cover). The media do not have this problem. *The Guardian* and ITV have covered our quest to tell Myrtilla's story.

To attract new black audiences and supporters, the SCAWDI experience suggests heritage organisations should:

• consider the additionality organisations like mine can offer: a wealth of new interpretations and perspectives; the scores of people SCAWDI could muster to work alongside heritage groups

• look for 'bridging' organisations to connect new users and heritage bodies

• think positively – don't be embarrassed by the negativity or racism enshrouded in your historical archives. We won't be offended by the language used, the non-PC terminology.

My specialism is communities, yours is heritage; by joining forces and working collaboratively, we could write a new chapter on black British heritage. n

## Place-making through community archives

Patsy Cullen
*Director, Commanet: the community archives network*

Community archives are a grassroots activity: locally owned, controlled and managed. There are more than 300 community archive groups across the UK, with significant clusters in Yorkshire, South Wales and East Anglia – notably in areas where industry (for example coal mining and steel production) has suffered a rapid decline, or in rural areas. There is no typical 'community'; most commonly it is a geographically based group of people with an interest in recording and preserving their community's cultural heritage. A group may also concentrate on a specific building, for example the Victoria Baths in Manchester, or on a small museum, such as the Cider Museum in Gloucestershire.

A significant driver of interest in community archives in the UK is the government agenda for social inclusion. The 2004 Archives Task Force report *Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future* (www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//A/atf_report_pdf_671 6.pdf) recognised the role of community archives in contributing to community cohesion and acknowledged that 'archives in the community are as important to society as those in public collections'. The process of creating a community archive meets a common need to record individual stories and to consolidate and celebrate social and cultural identity. As one group member has said: 'there is no greater satisfaction than sitting amongst a group that have gathered to talk about the old days and to watch the faces of so many whose memories have been sparked by chatting with each other'. Examples of community archive projects set up with an explicit social inclusion agenda include Beeston (Leeds), CHIK (Cultural Heritage in Kent), Locomotion (the National Railway Museum, Co Durham) and the Peoples' History Initiative (Northern Ireland).

Commanet: the community archives network is a registered charity whose aim is to empower communities to investigate, record and present their history as fully searchable, digitised, collections of photographs, text, audio and video. Archives are stored in a multimedia database and are published as CDs / DVDs and on a website (www.commanet.org). Commanet has also developed an online version of the software in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council. This HLF-funded project will involve some 50 community archive groups in creating CCAN – Cambridgeshire Community Archive Network. (www.commanet.org/ccan)

A 1905 photograph of the Turkish cooling room at the Victoria Baths in Manchester that is now preserved and made accessible through the Victoria Baths Community Archive.
Photo: Victoria Baths Community Archive

Most groups are independent and funded by small grants for software, equipment and training. A notable feature is their sustainability: the original Batley community archive group is still meeting regularly in Batley Public Library after ten years, and is far from being the only long-lived group. Commanet is increasingly involved in larger projects, including Glamorgan County Record Office, Norfolk Market Towns (Adult Education Services), South Cornwall and Coleraine Museums Services. In addition to the UK, the Comma software and approach is used by CHIN (Canadian Heritage Information Network) for its Community Memories project. (www.virtualmuseum.ca).

One of the most significant features of these community archive projects is that the copyright and ownership of the resulting collections remain with the community itself. This model of community ownership has proved effective in giving a sense of control and overcomes any sense of things being 'done to' rather than in equal partnership with, the group. n

Memories of harder times: a miners' picket photographed outside their hut in November 1984.
Photo: The South Emsley, South Kirby and Upton Community Archive

## Romany Gypsy heritage – recording the intangible

Simon Evans
*Broadcaster, film-maker and documentary photographer*

The Romany Gypsies of the past left very little in the way of tangible evidence for today's historians to study. Until the advent of the traditional wooden caravan in the mid-19th century they lived in 'bender' tents and carried all their possessions in light, horse-drawn carts. They left no buildings or towns for archaeologists to excavate. Theirs was an oral culture. Their songs, stories, music and language were passed down through the generations by word of mouth; they left no written records, no works of fact or fiction for scholars to read. This historical invisibility has led to the Romany culture being under-represented and undervalued.

> 'I'd like to be able to go and see the teachers and like say, this is our film, you know what I mean … I think it makes them think like what our life is really about, what our culture is.'
>
> Participant, *Kushti Atchin Tan*, film project with young Romany Travellers

Documenting Gypsy history therefore presents many challenges, which are exacerbated by the fact that Travelling people have traditionally kept their culture to themselves, mainly as a protection against the generally hostile sedentary society. Therefore most of what has been written is by non-Gypsies, and often falls into the trap of perpetuating common stereotypes.

In reality the vast majority of Britain's Gypsies now live a sedentary life in houses or on permanent sites and are unrecognisable as Romany to the majority of the population. The disappearance of the old annual patterns of seasonal farm work coupled with increased legislation against life on the road has all but destroyed a centuries-old nomadic lifestyle. Gypsy culture and language evolved and was sustained by the Travelling as traditional stories and song were shared around the fire in the evenings.

> 'They worked collaboratively, interacting positively with one another. It built up pride and self-esteem about themselves as young Gypsy Travellers.'
>
> Teacher

Many older Romanies are pessimistic about the survival of the culture, but many younger Romany Gypsies remain acutely aware and proud of their cultural heritage albeit within a different social context and lifestyle. In spite of being recognised in law as a distinct ethnic minority it is only comparatively recently that they have enjoyed recognition in schools, museums and other cultural institutions. The pace of inclusion has quickened over recent years, yet a surprising level of ignorance and overt prejudice still remains. One way of assisting the process of inclusion is through the increasing number of heritage initiatives that are happening across the country.

One recent example is a DVD called *Kushti Atchin Tan* ('Good Stopping Place') that I produced, in partnership with the English Heritage's outreach team, with a group of young Travellers in a secondary school in Kent who wanted to explore their history and culture. We worked with two local museums of Romany culture, set up by Romany Gypsy families, which work closely with schools as well as being open to the public. English Heritage and the Minority Communities Achievement Service are now working with the school to produce a teacher's pack to accompany the DVD, which will go into every school in Kent. It will be the first secondary-school resource about Romany Gypsy culture, and will hopefully break down some of the tensions that arise from ignorance between the settled and Romany children. For a copy of the DVD or Teachers' Resource contact cynara.davies@english-heritage.org.uk n

Young people on the Kushti Atchin Tan project learn traditional craft skills at the Romany Life Centre at Cranbrook, Kent, including peg carving, making a bender tent and cooking traditional foods.

## At the heart of the community

Katja Condy
*Heritage Open Days Manager, Civic Trust*
Patrick Burke
*Outreach Officer North West, English Heritage*

Heritage Open Days (HODs) puts local heritage and volunteers centre-stage. When the Civic Trust first launched HODs England-wide in 1994, few could have foreseen that the idea of opening up buildings and places which are normally closed to the public or charge for admission, would have such a sustainable impact. Twelve years on, in 2006, more than 1,300 local organisations staged a total of 3,509 events. It was the biggest HODs programme ever, enrolling some 30,000 volunteers and attracting around 1 million visitors over four days in September. So what is the reason behind this lasting success?

HODs is first and foremost a grass-roots movement. Co-ordinated and promoted on a national level by the Civic Trust in partnership with English Heritage, it has grown organically thanks to the commitment of local people to share their pride and knowledge of their area with others. From civic societies to conservation officers, from property owners to tourism managers, from churchwardens to company directors, the spectrum of participants is as diverse as the variety of buildings that open up every year. Since it is these local organisers who decide what

Esther Morrison, Research Officer at Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, explains why in 2006 the Council decided to co-ordinate a borough-wide event and marketing campaign: 'HODs has no political agenda and crosses all faiths, nationalities and cultures to give everybody an annual opportunity to celebrate what we mean by heritage and to show pride in our local area.' The investment paid off, as the Heritage Services' event evaluation showed. Ninety-six per cent of previous non-users stated that they had a more positive attitude to heritage as a result of their visit, while 68 per cent of Stockport residents attending HODs experienced increased pride in the borough. Or as one Stockport visitor put it: 'It makes you appreciate what you have and how much it has changed.'


Making the most of the Heritage Open Days brand: a banner advertising special Air Raid Shelter tours in Stockport.

is of interest to their community and should be part of the programme, the list encompasses the grand and the humble, the quirky as well as the functional, design classics and disasters. What matters is not so much the architectural merit or historical importance of the place but the experience for the visitor. It doesn't come as a surprise then that in recent years, HODs has more and more become a community festival that celebrates and brings to life the stories and traditions that make places and neighbourhoods so special to us.

Because of its great flexibility, HODs has the power to draw people from all backgrounds and ages into the historic environment. Yet, in the late 1990s it became clear that visitors and participants from BME groups, those on lower income or with disabilities, as well as young families, were disproportionately under-represented. To address this imbalance, the Civic Trust and English Heritage have been collaborating since 2003 on a programme to broaden the diversity of visitors and participating properties. While the Civic Trust launched a three-year Heritage Lottery Fund-supported education programme to develop HODs as a resource for learning for schools and families, English Heritage appointed a team of regional Outreach Officers who would dedicate 50 per cent of their time to making HODs more socially inclusive.

The team focuses on broadening the profile of HODs organisers and encourages them to complement traditional heritage with events that reflect the cultural diversity of their community. Working with local communities to create multi-faith trails in Wolverhampton, Manchester, Leicester and Bradford is typical of the team's approach, examining each religion's relationship to their place of worship and celebrating an evolving cultural heritage Such projects are delivered either through strategic support of established organisers – such as councils, civic societies or tourism professionals – or via grass-roots work with volunteers taking part for the first time.

Whichever path is chosen, getting participants to see the benefits of taking part is crucial. For example, in 2003 Cumbria was still recovering from the devastating impact of the Foot and Mouth outbreak on its rural communities and tourism industry. More specifically, West Cumbria had long suffered from the decline in its industrial base. Many towns were keen to maximise their tourism potential but struggled to be heard next door to the Lake District 'honey pot'. English Heritage Outreach therefore sent an invitation to key individuals across the region, encouraging them to use HODs as an opportunity to get their town onto a big stage for little cost.

Millom, an isolated community on the west coast, took up the challenge. Mandy Penellum from Millom Tourist Information Centre notes: 'In that first year (2004) it was a question of giving it a go. We put together a small festival, hoping that we could develop it as part of an annual events programme. It was all about building confidence, proving to ourselves that we had something worth sharing.'

A programme of training sessions and one-to-one meetings was developed, to guide volunteers through the first year. Confidence increased and the following year, Millom and Haverigg Heritage Open Days blossomed into a full-blown event, with a local castle, a renowned writer's residence and a nature reserve opening as part of a large array of walks and tours. With more than a thousand visitors and unprecedented levels of publicity for the area being attracted, HODs helped Millom contribute to the North West Development Agency-funded Tourism Action Plan and create a stir across the region.

Enthusiasm for HODs continued apace in 2006. In particular, development work with the nearby surrounding communities of Bootle, Waberthwaite, Whitbeck, Whicham, Corney and Kirksanton was undertaken. This time, training and support was supplemented with mentoring relationships between the Millom group and the new participants and a successful event saw 2,000 visitors 'going west' last September. n

Volunteers welcoming visitors at the Heritage Open Day at Kingston Mosque in Kingston-upon-Thames in Surrey.
© Ann Todd

## Heritage and reconciliation in south east Europe

John Sell
*Vice President, Europa Nostra*

Jajce, the capital of the medieval kingdom of Bosnia, the scene of the founding of communist Yugoslavia in 1943, was overrun three times during the war of 1992 to 1995. Each 'conquest' brought destruction – destruction of the symbols of the 'other', destruction of the mosque, the orthodox church, the catholic church. And yet, somehow, over the last ten years heritage has begun once again to symbolise respect and reconciliation.

Heritage is not only a collective memory but also a collection of individual identities. The militant assertion of group identity is generally a response to a perceived threat, whereby a desperate attempt is made to simplify rather than to delight in richness and diversity. This is what happened in Bosnia, where fear drove people into the apparent safety of a so-called ethnic group. Men with similar interests who used to drink coffee together suddenly found themselves only drinking coffee with those whose names demonstrated that their ancestors had once shared a religious tradition now transformed by others into a national identity.

One of the groups of friends who once took coffee together in Jajce shared a common interest in the history and heritage of their town. The war dispersed them so that now only those whose religious tradition was Catholic or Muslim inhabit Jajce. Those of the Orthodox tradition, the Serbs, have all left and live in the neighbouring town of Šipovo. Ten years after the war that group of friends have found each other again and they have found young people who share their interests. They have set up a historical society in Jajce which has become the basis for a project for the regeneration of both Jajce and Šipovo, building on the cultural heritage of the former and the natural heritage of latter.

Their enthusiasm has brought in others from outside, including the British Council who have cajoled the mayors of these two towns on opposite sides of an 'entity' boundary to co-operate with each other. The Commission for National Monuments of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina has begun the process of cleaning and repairing the great medieval fort that dominates Jajce and providing signs and interpretation. Over the last two years I have seen a town and a region that was damaged, depressed, decayed begin to find confidence in itself again.

Heritage lost: the site of a destroyed mosque at Stolac in Bosnia-Herzegovina. © John Sell

What a contrast with Stolac in southern Herzegovina. Before the war it was a town of Catholics, Muslims, Serbs and Jews as well as those of no religion; a town from which all Serbs were expelled, from whence Bosniak men and boys were taken to imprisonment, and women and children deported to no-man's land. All eleven mosques in Stolac were destroyed or seriously damaged in 1993. The site of at least one of them has been used for barbecuing roast pork. Proposals to reconstruct the Čaršijska Mosque, built in 1519 and one the oldest and largest in Bosnia-Herzegovina, have been opposed by Ratko Perić, the Bishop of Mostar, on the grounds that 'lawlessness and lack of culture' would prevail if that were to happen.

Given that Stolac is only 40 kms from Mostar, it is hardly surprising that relations between Bosniaks and Catholics in Mostar are edgy. But things in Mostar are improving. The bridge, destroyed as a symbol of the multicultural character of the city, has been reconstructed and, whether or not that reconstruction has done anything to draw the people of the city closer together, it has certainly brought in the tourists. Perhaps more significant was the awarding of World Heritage status to Mostar in July 2005; an event memorably and movingly celebrated when all inhabitants were invited to walk the bounds of the World Heritage Site together.

In a related event Europa Nostra recently brought together more than 30 heritage professionals from Kosovo and surrounding countries to spend a weekend at the Chateau de Canisy in Normandy. For many of these people this was

Heritage regained: the reconstructed bridge at Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina, now a World Heritage Site.
© John Sell

their first opportunity to speak to each other face to face since armed conflict broke out in Kosovo in the late 1990s. International governmental agencies were sceptical about possibilities for success and wary of the political risk. Europa Nostra, as a non-governmental organisation, took the view that it is part of its job to take such risks and by doing so to demonstrate the positive role heritage can have in promoting reconciliation.

The risks proved worth taking. The Serbian Minister of Culture participated throughout; his Albanian counterpart from Kosovo attended the last day of the meeting. Without being too specific in a delicate situation, it is possible to say that agreements were reached on previously seemingly insoluble issues and that all participants made positive and specific commitments to further joint working.

What do these stories from the south-east corner of Europe have to tell us about heritage as a force for reconciliation? The hope is that if people can see the power that comes from the destruction of heritage they will also understand the power that could come from its continuing existence, and its importance in creating that sense of place and belonging that binds people together. n

## From conservation to communities – the HLF approach to heritage

Kate Clark
*Deputy Director (Policy and Research), Heritage Lottery Fund*

In 1994 the staff of the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) were overwhelmed with post. They had just been asked to distribute funding from the new national lottery to heritage and applications poured in. Twelve years later, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has given more than £3.6 billion to 22,500 projects. The recipients have included nearly 300 public parks, more than 10,000 historic buildings, 1,550 industrial heritage sites, as well as many other projects ranging across museums and archives, landscapes and biodiversity, and intangible heritage. By working with thousands of heritage projects HLF has developed a new approach to funding heritage that puts people at its heart.

At first HLF could only fund capital projects but it soon became clear that sustaining heritage involved more than simply physical repair. Buildings, for example, needed a viable use and one of the key features of HLF's Townscape Heritage Initiative is that it has been able to pay for the work needed to bring buildings back into use. More importantly (and this is true of any kind of heritage) successful heritage projects needed the support, interest and enthusiasm of local communities.

Dig Manchester provided an opportunity for hundreds of people to become involved in archaeology.
Photo: Heritage Lottery Fund

This was something that the Hackney Historic Buildings Trust learnt very early on in their project to conserve the 13th-century St Augustine's tower. Realising that it would take more than the efforts of a small group of volunteers to find a long-term solution, the Trust asked visitors and the local community about what they would like to see happen. 'More use by local schools', they were told. After consulting teachers and talking to other heritage sites they decided to create an education space in the tower, produce an education pack and design a virtual tour for people who could not access the new stairs up to the roof. Aware that they did not have the resources to do all of the educational activity themselves, the Trust trained teachers to lead their own tours around the site.

St Augustine's Tower was just one of the 126 HLF-funded projects led by building preservation trusts. Every one of those projects has delivered benefits for people. HLF has three aims – to involve more people in decisions about their heritage, to conserve and enhance our diverse heritage and to enable everyone to learn about and to enjoy the heritage. Projects can meet either the first or the second aim, but must always meet the third.

We are often asked why we make applicants deal with access and learning and do not simply focus on conservation. Of course conservation is important and HLF has spent around £1.25 billion on the physical conservation of buildings alone in addition to its funding for natural heritage, collections, archives and landscape conservation. But we have learnt over time that our most successful projects are those that have involved people.

The archaeologists at the University of Manchester's Field Archaeology Centre might well support this view. They described Dig Manchester, where hundreds of people took part in three open excavations around the city, as a 'voyage of discovery'. The project was hugely successful, but despite their professional expertise, the unit found that working with community groups required a very different set of skills. HLF has given more than £100 million to projects that focus on archaeology and nearly half of that funding has gone towards projects such as this that

'By bringing history to life in such a creative way, Backstage Past has spread the word about the wonderful heritage and culture Leeds has to offer to everyone in the city. It has fired the imagination of the young people as well as involving their families and shown how a wide partnership across the council can really deliver success.'

Executive member for Leisure, Leeds City Council.

Rural craft skills are an important part of the Life into Landscapes project, an HLF-funded Landscape Partnership in South Devon. Photo: Heritage Lottery Fund

help people to learn more about or become involved in archaeology.

Strong evidence for the benefits of a people-centred approach to heritage has emerged from evaluations of the Local Heritage Initiative (LHI). The programme was based on the belief that local people were well qualified to determine what was of value to them about the heritage of their area. More than 1,300 community groups ran heritage projects that ranged from regenerating brownfield sites in Manchester to documenting black history in Hertfordshire. Around 75 per cent of the funding was spent in the local area, and nearly 40 per cent of the people who took part were new to heritage. People developed new skills in everything from cob building and geophysical survey, to teamwork and leadership.

The programme has shown that community involvement in heritage is important and that community groups can be trusted to deliver projects. Local people often have important insights into what constitutes heritage and can contribute to a broader and more inclusive understanding of why it matters. Indeed, through LHI forgotten or unknown elements of heritage have been reclaimed, local distinctiveness valued and interest in heritage at a local level has intensified. Although LHI has ended, HLF is still able to fund this kind of small community project through Your Heritage (or indeed through the larger Heritage Grants programme).

HLF's Landscape Partnerships have also put communities in the driving seat in heritage projects. Nearly ten years of volunteer time has now gone into heritage as part of the Life into Landscapes project in South Devon. Volunteers have carried out traditional hedge-laying, helped conserve five scheduled monuments and created parish histories. Local people have also taken part in arts events, and a sensory workshop to help improve access to this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which includes many historic landscape features. The project is being run by a partnership of local authorities, volunteers and national agencies that believes in integrating landscape heritage with wider social, community and economic issues.

Thirteen years after it was set up HLF believes it is vital that people have a chance to have access to and learn about their heritage, but we have also learnt that they welcome the opportunity to get involved. At the same time, we have broadened the horizons of our heritage, and now recognise the diversity of stories and places that contribute to it. Conservation remains important, but so is sustaining the heritage in the long term, and that depends on engaging people. n

# Heritage Sector Initiatives

**In the spirit of *Power of Place* heritage organisations of all types are already engaging with a wider range of people.**

In this section we review what the historic environment sector is doing to open its doors and become more inclusive, responding to the challenges we all set ourselves in *Power of Place*:

- find out what people value about their historic environment and why, and take this into account in assessing significance
- work with museums, libraries and archives to widen access
- work with excluded groups to develop access policy and practice.

Here we see some of the innovative ways in which organisations are broadening access, not only the larger operators in the sector, but also those with smaller staff and budget resources. Partnerships to ensure useful futures for historic buildings (see Truman pp 21–2; Lee pp 23–4), opening up under-represented histories (see Guillery and O'Reilly pp 17–19; Hasted *et al* pp 24–5) and interpreting historic places for new audiences (see Wong pp 22–3; Garnham p. 26) are all included here. For the first time, too, we have, in the results of the 'Taking Part' survey (Dawe pp 16–17) robust information about people's attitudes and behaviours in relation to engaging with the historic environment. We can find out about what people like and how they spend their time, before planning services that will meet their needs. n

## Taking Part

Geoff Dawe
*Economist, English Heritage*

Taking Part is a major national survey of attendance, participation and attitudes in the culture, leisure and sports sectors. The main purpose of the survey is to monitor the progress of the sectors in achieving the Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets agreed with the Treasury. For the first time it is possible to produce robust estimates of attendance, participation by different groups and areas, volunteering, attitudes, attendance as a child and to build up a picture of reasons why people do or do not undertake cultural activities.

For the purposes of this article we concentrate on the historic environment and the groups identified in the PSA target – black and minority ethnic groups, the disabled, and those from lower socio-economic groups. Taken together these three groups (and allowing for overlap) account for more than half the adult population. Taking Part and the historic environment PSA target are based on attendance at eight site types:

- a city or town with historic character
- a historic building open to the public (non religious)
- a historic park, garden or landscape open to the public
- a place connected with industrial history (eg an old factory, dockyard or mine) or historic transport system (eg old ship or railway)
- a historic place of worship attended as a visitor (not to worship)
- a monument such as a castle, fort or ruin
- a site of archaeological interest (eg roman villa, ancient burial site)
- a site connected with sports heritage (eg Wimbledon) (not visited for the purpose of watching sport).

The survey intentionally allows an element of self-definition about the scope of what constitutes a visit to a heritage site, for example as part of trip with a different purpose.

The accompanying tables show some selected results from surveys conducted in the period July 2005 to July 2006. Some of the differences in the rate of attendance or reasons for attendance or

Visit by the Brushstrokes group to Spetchley Park, Worcestershire, organised by the Gateway Gardens Trust. Brushstrokes is a church-based group working with deprived families. The Gateway Gardens Trust assists diverse audiences who find it difficult to access heritage. Spetchley Park is a member of the Historic Houses Association.

non-attendance between the priority groups may be due to other factors such as age or income or area of residence of the respondents rather than membership of a particular group.

Information from the Taking Part survey can be used as an input to decisions and policies designed to raise participation to meet the PSA targets for each of the priority groups by 2008. However we recognise that more analysis is required to tease out the real reasons behind responses such as 'not interested' or 'difficult to find the time' and by implication the measures that might be used to overcome the identified barriers.

Future releases of data will include responses to questions directed at young people (aged 11 to 15) about their attendance at heritage sites, and responses to questions about whether people live in what they regard as historic areas or houses. General information about the Taking Part survey and latest results are available at http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Research/taking_part_survey/ n

Table 1: *Attendance to at least one historic environment site by priority group during the past 12 months (percentage of each group)*

| | Percentage | Range[1] |
|---|---|---|
| Priority group | | |
| Black & ethnic minority | 50.7 | 48.1 to 53.1 |
| Limiting disability | 59.5 | 58.0 to 61.0 |
| Lower socio-economic | 57.1 | 55.9 to 58.3 |
| All adults | 69.9 | 69.1 to 70.6 |

1 Range is the 95 per cent confidence interval within which the population level of attendance for each group is expected to be found.

Table 2: *Main reason for attending a historic environment site during the past 12 months (percentage of each group attending)*

| | Priority group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Black & ethnic minority | Limiting disability | Lower socio-economic | All adults |
| Personal enjoyment/ relaxation | 48.7 | 53.2 | 51.8 | 53.2 |
| Accompany children | 7.9 | 6.8 | 9.5 | 8.4 |
| Part of holiday/day out | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.4 | 5.3 |
| Part of a group or tour | 6.1 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 5.2 |
| To attend special event | 3.2 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 3.9 |
| To learn something new | 6.7 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 3.6 |
| To use facilities | 1.0 | 3.1 | 3.9 | 2.9 |

Table 3: *Main reason for not attending a historic environment site during the past 12 months (percentage of each group not attending)*

| | Priority group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Black & ethnic minority | Limiting disability | Lower socio-economic | All adults |
| Not really interested | 25.8 | 22.4 | 31.7 | 29.3 |
| Difficult to find time | 41.0 | 12.1 | 24.8 | 28.7 |
| Health isn't good enough | 6.5 | 40.5 | 15.3 | 13.4 |
| Never occurred to me | 7.4 | 4.1 | 6.8 | 6.6 |
| Lack of transport/ accessibility | 2.4 | 7.0 | 6.3 | 5.1 |
| It costs too much | 4.9 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 3.9 |
| I would not enjoy it | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 2.1 |
| Not enough information | 3.5 | <1 | 1.3 | 1.3 |

## Religion and Place in Tower Hamlets

Peter Guillery
*Survey of London, English Heritage*
Lucy O'Reilly
*The Building Exploratory*

Religion and Place is an English Heritage research project that is exploring the history of architectural provision for religious worship in selected urban locations. The survey takes in post-Reformation buildings of all faiths and denominations, sizes and architectural qualities, relating them to local patterns of settlement up to the present, to include mosques, gurdwaras and mandirs alongside churches, chapels and synagogues. Places of worship are often the most prominent and architecturally distinctive buildings in any neighbourhood, to which local residents have strong attachments, whether they visit them regularly or not. Tower Hamlets in east London, with its especially rich history of religious mix, has been included to represent the capital. Other places being surveyed are Liverpool, Coventry and Leeds. As well as generating contact with new audiences, the investigation of 167 sites in Tower Hamlets has supported conservation initiatives and created records for posterity.

The case-study approach is crucial for the 'place' element of the project, understanding buildings not primarily as artefacts, but more as reflections of distinctive local histories. The long view is also important, to emphasise the fact that across centuries of immigration, persecution and assimilation there have always been established and economically dominant groups alongside emerging and insecure groups. Raphael Samuel observed that 'the built environment is apt to give a privileged place to the powerful, and indeed very often to leave them as the only presence in the field.' This is true, but only up to a point, and it is important to challenge that 'apt'.

The experiences of those who do not now see

themselves reflected in the monumental have precedents. For some, personal or family histories of migration have tended to mean that heritage is sought and defined not in buildings, but in portable objects or intangible cultural forms such as language and music. Some groups at different times have concealed their presence in the face of hostility from the majority, some have been written out of the record; over time some have gradually become more assertive. In Tower Hamlets, the dynamics of resistance/assimilation and discretion/assertion are readily tracked, from 17th-century Nonconformity, to re-emergent Roman Catholicism, on to Anglo- and immigrant Judaism, and to present-day Islam and Pentecostalism. There are differences in experience between groups that need to be recognised, but the connections that can promote community cohesion depend on cross-cultural comparisons. An open understanding of 'English heritage' reveals disparate parts of the puzzle as being interdependent, not as being either 'ours' or 'theirs'.

In response to English Heritage's study of these 167 remarkable places of worship in Tower Hamlets, the Building Exploratory (www.buildingexploratory.org.uk) was commissioned to carry out a pilot project designed to engage a diverse audience in the rich heritage revealed by the research. Religion and Place in Tower Hamlets is a unique and timely project, offering an opportunity for young people to learn about religious beliefs and practice, and aiming to foster a sense of tolerance and compassion in one of the country's poorest boroughs.

The Building Exploratory has developed successful approaches to engaging audiences with their built heritage that are now widely recognised. Building on these methods of engagement, the pilot project used a combination of building visits, meetings with representatives of faith groups and a creative programme run by artists to allow a class of secondary-school students to explore their own thoughts and feelings about faith buildings and their users.

Two artists, working in their chosen medium of paper collage, explored a Sikh gurdwara and a Church of England parish church with students from Mulberry School for Girls. The girls, all from Bengali Muslim families, had their understandings of the places and practices of these two faiths critically challenged. They learned new creative skills and used these to develop their own responses to the buildings and how the respective faith groups use them. The artists interpreted the girls' responses through three-dimensional art-works called faith chests, which are currently on display at the Building Exploratory's exhibition.

The Celestial Church of Christ, Poplar, a conversion of 1984 in the former Anglican Church of St Saviour.
Derek Kendall
© English Heritage

The methodology developed during the pilot was widely applauded for its success at encouraging the young people to engage with the issues and deepen their understanding of other faith groups. The teachers involved were particularly struck by the value of cross-curricular working across the Religious Studies and Art and Design departments and the richness this brought to the project.

Building on this success, the full project is now underway. For this, the Building Exploratory, will co-ordinate an additional four schools working with four artists to explore eight more of the faith buildings researched by English Heritage and will create eight more faith chests. Funding has been received from English Heritage and Arts Council

Students from Mulberry School for Girls explore the faith chest for the first time. The faith chests were created in response to a series of building visits and artist-led workshops.
© The Building Exploratory

England to support the project, which will also produce a vibrant and informative publication. The publication will allow a wider local audience to benefit from the outcomes of the work carried out in the schools: 20,000 copies will be distributed to school children across Tower Hamlets.

The faith chests will form the core of an exhibition to take place at a community venue in Tower Hamlets in the spring of 2008 and a web-based resource will allow the methodologies and outcomes to reach a nationwide audience. n

## The Untold Story

Laura Hetherington
*Head of Learning, National Trust*
Stefan Wathan
*Head of Community and Youth Involvement, National Trust*
Alex Murphy
*Project Officer, National Trust*

Like most charities the National Trust has had to re-think how it engages with people to ensure that with evolving lifestyle choices and a changing population demographic, we can respond to their needs to maintain levels of support from existing visitors, members and volunteers as well as attracting new supporters. With a membership of around 3.5 million, paying visitor numbers reaching 16 million, and more than 47,000 volunteers, some might argue that the National Trust has no need to reach out beyond its traditional supporters.

But the National Trust has been doing exactly this since its foundation in 1895. At the heart of the National Trust is a mission: 'for ever, for everyone' and while striving to deepen its engagement with traditional supporters, the Trust also recognises the need to reflect the histories and cultures of the people associated with its properties and the aspirations of those living and working in the local community.

Opening the shiny covers of National Trust marketing materials and member magazines or stepping over the threshold of one of our properties will open your eyes to a wealth of creativity, innovation and a passion for working with people to uncover new stories – or perhaps more accurately, untold stories. For example, we are currently collaborating with community organisations to interpret the hidden history of properties and collections that have connections with the slave trade.

Participants at a London Voices workshop – part of the National Trust's new programme to break down barriers to access at its London properties.
© National Trust

The Untold Story was a three-year pilot project that engaged with local communities through the performing arts to develop new interpretation at some of our properties. The pilot helped us to assess how we relate to diverse communities and consider how relevant our interpretation is to a wide variety of people. The project taught us how to listen and respond by telling stories from a variety of viewpoints. In-depth evaluation was essential as was sharing our successes and the lessons learned. Across the organisation, The Untold Story highlighted the importance of building in new ways of working, training and support to ensure that the legacies of such projects can continue into the future.

> 'I'd never thought about how Derby had a history with India.'
> Audience member

At Kedleston Hall, near Derby, the Trust wanted to interpret a collection of Indian artefacts assembled by Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India in the late 19th century. Two miles away an Indian community was searching for ways to keep their own culture and traditions alive in the minds of future generations. As this collection has strong – if not always comfortable – connections to their own cultural heritage, and Kedleston's history has pertinent and sometimes controversial links to the colonisation of India by the British, the Untold Story participants were keen to see this story told.

At the Workhouse in Southwell a wide-range of participants, from young people with experience of homelessness to Gypsy Roma women, participated in a performance project that addressed issues of independence, prejudice and the human right to personal choice. The final performance – *Always Among Us* – painted a vibrant picture of life in a Victorian workhouse, raising contemporary questions about Britain's welfare state, as well as fuelling valuable dialogue about contemporary issues.

Participants with their work at Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire – one of the many local contributions to the National Trust's The Untold Story project. © National Trust

'It brought the property alive and let people see it in the light of modern-day poverty – bringing alive the very real thought that poverty is always with us, it is just different these days.'
Volunteer

Always Amongst Us: performers in costume bring Victorian poverty to life at the National Trust's Southwell workhouse in Nottinghamshire. © National Trust

Two projects have recently started building on the experiences of The Untold Story, both with the aim of encouraging local people to discover what properties have to offer and to share in the development of projects and activities. Whose Story will work from West Midland properties to look at ways of increasing the number of visitors, staff and volunteers from black and minority ethnic groups. London Voices is working in four London boroughs to attract new families to National Trust properties, specifically those families who face cultural, economic or intellectual barriers to access. A programme of research, learning and creative projects will take place at Ham House, Morden Hall Park, Osterley House and Park and Sutton House over the next three years.

The Untold Story demonstrated that people want to hear the stories of those who lived and worked at our properties and that in turn they want to share their own stories and their own experiences. Engaging on a more emotional level with our traditional supporters and bringing to light a property's significance to modern Britain allows people to reflect on their own lives and histories to make sense of their place in society today. n

## The Churches Conservation Trust's work with communities

Crispin Truman
*Chief Executive, The Churches Conservation Trust*

The Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) cares for 340 of the most historically, archaeologically and architecturally important churches no longer used for regular worship (www.visitchurches.org.uk). All across England, they range from the most isolated rural gems much-loved by visitors to large urban buildings suffering vandalism and an uncertain future.

For almost forty years we have been taking on ever more churches but, since 2001, have seen no increase in DCMS and Church funding. We cannot keep going without the support of local communities and volunteers.

That would be reason enough for inclusion to be important to CCT. But it's more than that. Churches are community buildings. Even if they are not needed for worship anymore, parish churches were built by the community and have been used for secular as well as sacred purposes for a thousand years. John Betjeman described the daily use of village churches in the 15th century – the porch as a schoolroom, the nave for social gatherings, the churchyard for brewing ale. Now in the 21st century when so many historic churches are tragically underused, it is right and proper that we should revitalise their societal function and encourage activities of interest to all.

Right and above: At All Saints in Vange, Essex, the Churches Conservation Trust's efforts paid off when local children helped design replacements to vandalised stained glass. Now beautifully conserved, this once-wrecked church is jealously guarded by the community.



So CCT is working with partner organisations to engage excluded groups, young people, older people and black and ethnic minorities. It may take time before the benefits are clear. People need persuading that a cold empty church, however beautiful, has a role to play in their future. Community work is always time – and people – intensive and depends upon members of that community being prepared to contribute and champion the cause. Sustainable funding to pay for adaptation, activities and staff is hard to come by.

In Bristol, the Grade I St Paul's church was saved with Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and CCT money and the energy and vision of circus school Circomedia who now occupy it. In an urban area with high levels of disadvantage, the church is a centre of training and performance for the whole community. BTEC courses bring in young offenders and children who have dropped out of education. Users and audience alike are as diverse as the people who live in the surrounding streets.

At St John at the Gate down the road, the arts college came up with the solution to persistent tagging on the cement-covered alley-way under this mediaeval church. A graffiti art project brought young and disadvantaged people and church heritage together to everyone's benefit.

Bolton All Souls is a huge Victorian church in a predominantly Asian community. It has a lovely interior designed by Paley and Austin, but the redundant building attracts vandalism and arson and has become a blight on the area. The answer has to – and will – come from the community. A group of Asian people have formed themselves into a trust and are working with CCT towards an HLF bid to adapt the building for use by young people.

CCT is not alone: working through a new sector-wide 'places of worship' group we aim, with

the Church of England and others, to ensure that historic churches will in future benefit from and give benefit to all sections of the community. n

The redundant Georgian St Paul's Church at the heart of the disadvantaged St Paul's district of Bristol has become the new home of Circomedia who use circus-based activities to help disadvantaged young people achieve their full potential and progress into training and jobs.



## Black Environment Network (BEN) and ethnic minority access to the historic environment

Judy Ling Wong OBE
*Director, UK BEN*

We love what we enjoy, and we take care of what we love. The beginning of this process is what enabling access to the historic environment is about – putting into place that very first privileged step of the enjoyment of our historic environment. BEN's mission is to enable full ethnic minority participation, to open its benefits to the quality of life of 8 per cent of the British population, as well as to make the prize of their vast missing contribution to the care and protection of the historic environment a reality (www.ben-network.org.uk).

The challenge is for historic environment organisations to put into place an organisational culture of commitment to this work. It means allocating resources and the time of skilled staff who can work effectively with ethnic community groups to open out all that they have to offer. BEN acts as a catalyst and enabler to spearhead and underpin this work. We uniquely position ourselves as a bridging organisation, ultimately doing ourselves out of a job, leaving behind working relationships between historic environment organisations and ethnic groups.

BEN works at different levels to achieve its aims. We sit on key committees such as the Historic Environment Review Executive Committee (HEREC) to represent issues and influence policy. For example, we fuelled the development of the concept of community value within the planning system, moving thinking towards recognising community meaning of buildings and places alongside criteria such as architectural quality. BEN speaks at many conferences and seminars to highlight and promote understanding of what is needed to promote ethnic engagement with the historic environment. At the present time, English Heritage funds us to provide initial strategic advice to historic environment organisations. For substantial detailed pieces of work, BEN acts as paid consultant – an example is the consultation exercise with ethnic groups to inform a strategic approach to providing effective and relevant museums, library and archive services in Milton Keynes. We provide tailored training at cost, and provide a range of downloadable free resources on good practice on our website.

We work in partnership with historic environment organisations to seek resources to jointly carry out focused developmental projects on the ground. For example, the Mosaic project (2001–4) with the Council for National Parks pioneered an access methodology to connect ethnic groups with historic landscapes, while the People and

Chinese elders from the Wai Yin Chinese Society touring the stunning gardens at Arley Hall in Cheshire with Viscount Ashbrook.

Photo: Black Environment Network

Historic Places project with the Historic Houses Association enabled ethnic groups to experience private historic houses. A broad-based vision enables more to happen through linking life interests (a fun day out with friends, new knowledge and skills, food, health, identity, arts and crafts) with the historic environment. Our work on the ground has informed good practice through the development of culturally relevant approaches and key working concepts. An example is multicultural interpretation, in which we propose that all historic properties should make visible their holistic histories without editing out their multicultural aspects.

With limited resources, one of our most important functions is to be a network. Through mutual support and fuelling enthusiasm, a continuing momentum leads us into the future. n

## The Bruce Grove Townscape Heritage project

Graham Lee
*Senior Regeneration Conservation Officer, Haringey Council*

The aim of this project is to refurbish fine Edwardian and Victorian properties (which to qualify must be in a Conservation Area) close to the Bruce Grove junction with Tottenham High Road in north London. Once a thriving town centre with all major multiple stores represented, the location has deteriorated economically and physically over the last 30–40 years as a result of poor maintenance, inappropriate alterations, much under-used accommodation above ground floors or poor quality housing in multiple occupation (HMO). The area encompasses some of the most deprived wards in the UK with a multi-ethnic and transient population. The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), offered the potential to utilise lottery funding for historic building improvement in the central core area.

The Neighbourhood Management Department of Haringey Council commissioned a retail consultant's study of the High Road seven years ago. This identified the primary building use as retail with some residential but acknowledged that the viability for shopping along this full length is unsustainable. The area is still an important focus for local shopping, however, and many of the businesses have confirmed their long term intention to remain in the area.

People come first in any work of this type and extensive consultation with residents and businesses has been essential, organised through both one-to-one discussions and group presentations by the Council and its consultants. Experience shows that a minimum of four visits was required to confirm scheme details with individual shopkeepers and it has been essential to engage support from both leaseholders and freehold owners.

By working with housing associations it has been possible through the THI to replace HMOs with purpose-converted flats and to provide new flats in unused upper floors, together with improvements to external elevations and shop fronts.

Previous grant funding had been in reaction to individual grant applications and properties, with the result that improvements were pepper-potted across the area. A requirement of the THI scheme is that the project concentrates on a very tightly defined location. This has the advantage of encouraging groups of adjoining owners to engage with the scheme, thereby improving total blocks with the accompanying visual and

The Bruce Grove junction with Tottenham High Road in north London as it is now (left)

and how it will look after Townscape Heritage Initiative refurbishment (right)

economic benefits. We believe that the consequent achievement of 'critical mass' will act as the catalyst for further improvement of the area in future. But this is not a quick fix! It takes a long time and careful planning: our Stage 1 application to the HLF was delivered in May 2003 and we expect completion in June 2010.

A requirement of major HLF funding is that the project should include a training plan. For Bruce Grove this contains several elements that will help to encourage diversity in the sector:

- training of local residents, owners and occupiers in conservation planning, repair and maintenance
- training opportunities in construction and conservation work in conjunction with local colleges and project contractors
- links with local schools through the Education Business Partnership to raise awareness of opportunities for careers in building conservation.

A funding mix has been assembled towards an overall project value approaching £5 million, including £1 million from HLF as well as contributions from the European Regional Development Fund, the Housing Corporation through Housing Associations, Haringey Council and the property owners.

Tottenham High Road overall has benefited from more than £2 million of other grant investment during the past 10 years which has been available only to Conservation Areas. All these funds have an economic and community regeneration focus, aiming to preserve and repair the best of the historic built fabric for modern use. Much has been achieved but much remains to be done. n

## Sites of Memory: 2007 bicentenary of the parliamentary abolition of the British slave trade

Rachel Hasted
*Head of Social Inclusion and Diversity, English Heritage*
Emily Gee
*Heritage Protection Team Leader, English Heritage*
Catherine Bloodworth
*Outreach Officer London, English Heritage*

March 2007 saw the 200th anniversary of the passing of the Abolition Act that made slave trading in British ships illegal. The transatlantic slave trade was one of the largest forced migrations of human beings and had a major effect on the history of Africa, the Americas and Europe. The year 2007 offers an opportunity to share our understandings of this legacy.

Staff from across several departments came together to plan the English Heritage programme to commemorate the bicentenary. One clear objective was to ensure that the activities were not tokenistic but had the potential for changing our core working practices to be more representative of the diversity of heritage. A balance of activities during the year and longer-term research was agreed. A second aim was to interpret the bicentenary as a part of British history for a broad audience, rather than seeing it as specifically relevant to black history.

Manilla, a bronze bracelet-shaped trading token, from the wreck of the *Douro*, 1843. Although sunk off the Isles of Scilly 36 years after slave trading was banned for British ships and ostensibly bound for Portugal, divers have found that the *Douro* carried a cargo of goods suitable for slave trading on the West African coast.


Consultation has been a vital part of planning the bicentenary programme. Expertise was needed from a wide range of sources both within and beyond the organisation. At a regional level, different communities have chosen to mark the year in different ways. Some have chosen to focus not on slavery, but the contributions to our shared heritage by groups whose voices are not often heard. In either case, the question of how to open up sites and artefacts to interpretation from multiple perspectives has to be addressed.

The Revealing Significance outreach project, at Rangers House in London, is exploring hidden cultural references in response to objects in the Wernher collection, which include ivories, paintings, sculpture, textiles and ceramics collected around 1900, mainly from across Europe. During 2007 one local school and two community groups are working with a creative facilitator to explore the collection through discussion, writing and the creation of artwork back in community settings. Some of the key themes that are being used to start dialogue around the collection are strong women, African and Asian origins, life and death and mythical creatures. Outcomes of this pilot project may include an exhibition of the groups' work and a new on-site interpretative leaflet documenting the groups' responses to the collection.

Pupils from John Roan School in Greenwich handle objects from Rangers House as part of the Revealing Significance project.


At Kenwood a display of Lord Mansfield's rulings relating to the transatlantic slave trade, alongside information about his personal life, is on view from the end of May until September  This will provide an opportunity for interaction around the themes of slavery and abolition that previously have had limited visibility. Over the summer half term a group of experienced artists and educators led a series of activities designed to encourage new visitors to engage with key themes and to record their reactions to the display.

Access to information is fundamental to the ability of heritage bodies and communities to interpret our shared heritage. While much research has been undertaken at a regional level, there was no national overview of the connections to the slave trade and abolition in the built environment. English Heritage therefore commissioned Angelina Osborne and S I Martin to research and write a *Sites of Memory* leaflet identifying sites throughout the country associated with this history. The information covers the slave trade and the wealth it brought to Britain, the lives of black people in England as a result of the trade and the monuments of the struggle for abolition. The information is also available at www.english-heritage.org.uk/abolition and we will be adding to it as a lasting resource.

The research for Sites of Memory will also feed into a further project, Designating History, which aims to ensure that information about these links to the historic environment will be available to all who need them in future.

Buildings are listed for their 'special architectural or historic interest', but the latter consideration is often less easy to capture in the statutory record. Many listed buildings are designated for architectural reasons and with little mention of their often extraordinary histories, such as the long association of the Grade II* Holy Trinity Church in Clapham with the Clapham Sect of abolitionists. The list description of a building is valuable on two counts: as the guide for managing change to its fabric, and often as the only piece of documentation conveying to its owner why it is so special. In England and Wales, the proposed reform of the heritage protection system will put improved information for owners at the forefront. Designating History will help English Heritage to identify ways of improving the information offered on the historical associations of sites for the future.

The Designating History project will therefore be looking at a selection of major sites with strong historical links, such as the Grade I Church of St Andrew, Chesterton, Cambridge, which has connections with the abolitionist Olaudah Equiano and his family. Building on existing research, the project will result in a small batch of revised list entries that better flag the historic links to abolition within a site. There is also some scope for new designations, such as that of the recently listed tomb of abolitionist Granville Sharp (died 1813) in Fulham churchyard. Explaining, commemorating and celebrating is as important a part of our work as describing, and doing so aligns us with the Heritage Protection White Paper's emphasis on public engagement and community values.

The bicentenary programme will also include public events at English Heritage sites and a number of partnership projects in different regions. Teachers' resources will be published on our website during the autumn. Initial research on possible links between families associated with English Heritage sites and the slave trade or a bolition movement has been carried out and the potential for taking forward more detailed investigations is being evaluated.

There has been considerable value in the focus that the bicentenary has given to work across several departments of English Heritage, bringing national media attention and helping to spread the message that heritage is as diverse as the population. The challenge now is to ensure that the long-term legacy of 2007 is embedded in the way we plan for the future. n

## Historic Houses Association: enjoyment, learning and discovery

Frances Garnham
*Assistant Director, Policy and Campaigns, Historic Houses Association*

The Historic Houses Association (HHA) represents an astonishing variety of Britain's built and cultural heritage. HHA properties are highly individualistic and diverse, ranging from imposing palaces and castles to small houses and gardens, the vast majority of which continue to be lived in as family homes. They offer a rich variety of opportunities for enjoyment, learning and discovery. Our philosophy is to widen and deepen these opportunities. At its heart, this is simply about linking people and places. Whilst some of the buildings are regarded as iconic symbols of Britain's unique heritage, they are also local resources for spiritual refreshment, learning and recreation, meeting friends, bringing communities together and places to have fun.

At Doddington Hall just to the west of Lincoln, a Heritage Lottery Fund grant has helped to fund interpretative tools for visitors with visual impairment. In partnership with visually impaired people, reinterpretion of the hall has been developed specifically by and for visitors with sight loss to make it more accessible for all.

Last year, Eastnor Castle in Herefordshire joined the Anglo Sikh Heritage Trail, which draws together UK locations and artefacts relating to the Sikh community into one inspirational project. Eastnor holds the first private collection of Sikh artefacts to be included on the trail and provides a tangible reminder of the intimate connections between the British and Sikh nations.

> 'People care passionately about our heritage but we need to invest in it'.
> Historic Houses Association

One of the HHA's most successful partnerships is with the Gateway Gardens Trust, which connects a diverse range of community groups with the social and environmental heritage of historic parks and gardens. Working with, amongst others, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, older people, women's groups, inner-city children and those affected by rural poverty, partnerships have been carefully created to ensure that visits develop into meaningful and sustainable relationships. This has been done by matching groups and gardens with great care and, together with the participants, by designing the shape and substance of the visits and activities on an individual and personal basis. The Gateway Gardens Trust is a dating agency *par excellence*, helping to grow and nurture these relationships.

Gatka martial arts at Eastnor Castle to mark Anglo Sikh Heritage Week in September 2006.


The gains from these kinds of targeted community work are significant: they challenge perceptions on both sides, help to identify and remove barriers and open up understanding of what historic houses, gardens, collections and estates have to offer and to gain. They provide connections between places and communities, support our understanding of our individual and shared identity and help people to discover and explore what is on their doorstep. At Doddington, owner Claire Birch was unsure about the value of the new tour until she went round the house with a visually impaired visitor. 'Every room felt and smelt completely different to him, and some of the things he mentioned were incorporated in the audio guide such as the smell of wood smoke from the fireplace and beeswax.'

However, there is still a significant gap between the proportion of the overall population engaging with heritage and those from priority groups. To close this gap there is a need for investment to increase capacity, develop and share skills and extend outreach programmes to support both the communities and the heritage providers themselves.

But the biggest threat of all is to the places on which all of this depends. There is a compelling case for investment in the fabric of our heritage, public financial support for which has fallen dramatically over recent years. With careful investment, we can secure a unique bequest to future generations of architecture and history that touches each and every one of us.

The HHA has just launched its new website. Visit www.hha.org.uk and click on Learning and Outreach. n

## Rethinking Disability Representation in museums and galleries

Debbie Jolly, Jocelyn Dodd and Richard Sandell
*Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, University of Leicester*

Rethinking Disability Representation is a new project, initiated by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) at the University of Leicester that is exploring innovative ways of interpreting disability and representing the lives of disabled people – ways which are purposefully designed to frame the way audiences engage with the issues they encounter. It builds on RCMG's earlier findings from research entitled *Buried in the Footnotes* (www.le.ac.uk/ museumstudies/research/Reports/BITF2.pdf). This identified that the potential for disability representation and understandings of disability heritage remained largely under-explored in the museum sector. Indeed, at a time when many were increasingly concerned with issues of diversity and equality, few had thoughtfully engaged with the representation of disabled people's heritage due, at least in part, to a lack of confidence in dealing with perceived sensitive, often contested materials and interpretations.

Rethinking Disability Representation is developing new approaches to the display and interpretation of objects and collections linked to disability using a 'social model' perspective. By equipping the nine partner museums involved with an understanding of disability issues and politics and enabling them to share ideas and existing good practice within the project, a new confidence in the ways disability can be addressed within interpretation is emerging. This is enabled by close working partnerships with key experts in the disability field – a Think Tank of disabled activists, artists and cultural practitioners – and work with local disabled communities.

Working with RCMG and the Think Tank, each of the nine partner museums is developing interpretive projects – exhibitions, displays, educational resources – which contribute to the project's overall aims, to:

- uncover material evidence held within museums collections that can contribute to a broader understanding of disability experience
- explore the potential meanings of the material evidence to 'tell stories' linked to historical and contemporary disability experiences
- develop innovative approaches to displaying and interpreting the material
- evaluate the impact of these interpretive projects on both disabled and non-disabled audiences
- disseminate the findings widely to inform mainstream practice in museums, heritage organizations, and more broadly within the arena of disability rights.

For example, *A Whitby Fisherman's Life – 'Stumper' Dryden through the Lens of Frank Meadow Sutcliffe* focuses on the work of disabled fisherman Robert 'Stumper' Dryden through Sutcliffe's exceptional photographic images to illuminate the life of the local 19th-century fisherman, with additional historical material telling 'Stumper's' story.

19th-century fisherman Robert 'Stumper' Dryden and Tom Langland, photographed by Frank Meadow Sutcliffe.



'This project represents a great opportunity to unearth and celebrate the contribution that disabled people have made to British history. I hope it will also inspire confidence in the contribution that disabled people are making today, and in Britain's future.'
Bert Massie, Chairman of the Disability Rights Commission.

The RCMG project is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, the University of Leicester and contributions from participating museums. n

# Sectoral Skills and Training

**If we want a heritage that is accessible to all we will need to take a fresh look at the skills and diversity of our workforce.**

How are we equipping ourselves to meet the challenge of engaging new audiences? There are specialist skills, whether for consultation or direct involvement in heritage projects, which we need to recruit and foster (see Levin and Hasted pp 36–7). Although there is no substitute for dedicated outreach staff, the competencies involved in managing diversity and communicating with all members of the public are increasingly important for heritage professionals.

Sharing our existing skills through training initiatives such as the Embracing Difference seminars run by Heritage Link (Dove pp 28–9), or the Your Place or Mine? conference (Levin pp 31–2) is essential. Several short articles drawn from the experience of successful projects also offer 'How to …' guidance on some of the key areas for broadening access (see pp 32–6). The launch of the *Our Place* online professional networking site later this year will provide a forum to develop our practice together, wherever we may be working.

The best guarantee that heritage is accessible to all and valued widely is a workforce that reflects the make-up of the population we serve. How is the sector planning to diversify its own workforce in the future? One example, the Accessible, Inclusive Archaeology project (see Phillips and Gilchrist p 30) offers a practical methodology for challenging assumptions about the abilities that people need to participate in the profession. As Deborah Lamb suggests (see pp 38–9), tackling workforce diversity is perhaps the greatest challenge facing us in the future. n

## Embracing Difference: the Heritage Link Diversity Programme 2006–2008

Angela Dove
*Diversity Programme Co-ordinator, Heritage Link*

The two-year Heritage Link Diversity Programme funded through English Heritage national capacity building programme. Its key aim is to help voluntary heritage organisations to increase ability to engage the whole community in their heritage.

We have put into practice a ground-breaking series of diversity events, called Embracing Difference, which are being rolled out across six English regions, engaging regional community organisations and voluntary sector heritage organisations.

Invitations to participate are sent out to a broad spectrum of voluntary heritage organisations. We particularly encourage smaller organisations, often volunteer based, who may subscribe to the idea of diversity but lack confidence and need support to formulate ideas and projects that engage new audiences. Local community groups are also invited, including associations for asylum seekers and refugees, ethnic community organisations, mental health groups, disability arts groups, youth organisations, faith groups, and many more. The launch of the Diversity Programme coincided with the Your Place or Mine? conference and benefited from the extensive learning and networking opportunities offered by this major heritage event.

Our focus has been on delivering highly participatory events, with input from expert practitioners in heritage work as well as arts and business organisations. We use purpose-designed and innovative materials, including a table-top thinking tool which encourages dialogue on diversity issues, and activities that help participants formulate their own realistic and fundable diversity project proposals, furthering their own communities of practice.

> 'It could be said that diversity means respecting and valuing differences yet it may be equally about valuing what we have in common.'
> Heritage Link

A major challenge is ensuring that the distinctive make-up of each region is reflected, and this involves actively reaching out to grass-roots community groups. Essentially we are encouraging creative partnerships in which community groups feel confident enough to initiate and be fully involved in heritage projects. What people have to say is paramount, so we have listened carefully to feedback and reincorporated these views into the design of the programme.

The first two Embracing Difference pilot events in the West Midlands and in Hartlepool resulted in several distinctive and creative diversity project proposals. Participants were encouraged to

think in new ways about diversity issues, in a day packed with confidence-building activities and networking opportunities.

The next event will be in the East Midlands, and further events are planned for the South West, South East, and Yorkshire and Humberside regions. More details about events will be added to the diversity section of the Heritage Link Website, together with useful tools and case studies: www.heritagelink.org.uk/diversity.asp. To express interest in participating in these events, e-mail me at: angela.dove@heritagelink.org.uk

By the end of the two year programme our aim is to have stimulated and supported a series of diversity projects initiated by regional voluntary organisations. Our programme takes a broad view of what diversity means in the 21st century. Cultural diversity is a social fact and the heritage sector is uniquely placed to positively engage with the widest possible audiences, including all ethnic and cultural groups, people who are on low incomes or are unemployed, people with disabilities and special needs, youth and elders, refugees and asylum seekers, and the gay and lesbian communities.

The success of the pilot events, and the project proposals that emerged from it, indicate that this approach has much to offer the sector. n

Heritage Link's Diversity Programme is bringing voluntary heritage organisations and community groups together to explore ways of engaging new audiences.
© Heritage Link

Life is good when things turn out better than expected.

When the Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages (ASHTAV, www.ashtav.org.uk) received an invitation to join a Heritage Link workshop on embracing diversity in Birmingham I can't say I looked forward to it. As I live nearest I attended as a duty. I feared lest there were an attempt to make ASHTAV feel guilty about our predominately white, elderly (well, mostly retired), middle-class membership. However, over a 30-year career with a major international company there had been many courses and workshops that I attended with initial cynicism, but from which I subsequently benefited. And so it turned out with this one.

Just like ASHTAV meetings, Heritage Link sessions are great for networking and there were a few old friends, also in the heritage business, with whom to talk. So the mingling over coffee, whilst assembling, started the day well.

The presentations were good, some inspiring, but not of great relevance to ASHTAV members. Surveys have shown that very few of the ethnic minorities who work or visit small historic towns and villages actually live in them; they tend to commute. During the course of the day it dawned on me that what ASHTAV members need to do to embrace diversity is involve young people, for they are the section of our communities that need embracing. The lessons on involving ethnic minorities equally apply to young people.

I left the workshop, determined to run a seminar in Crewkerne to get ASHTAV members involved with engaging young people. I was inspired by the speakers and am confidant members will leave the ASHTAV seminar similarly inspired to do something in their own communities.

Dan Wilde

## Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology

Tim Phillips and Roberta Gilchrist
*Department of Archaeology, University of Reading*

The idea that people with disabilities may participate in fieldwork is not thought to be something that is practical. This is a misconception as quite a number of people involved in field archaeology have some form of recognised disability. Such prejudices must also be considered within the context of the recent disability legislation, which makes it illegal to discriminate against disabled people with regards to employment and access to education and services. Fieldwork training is a key element of an undergraduate archaeology degree and, although much has been done to make on-campus teaching inclusive, less effort had been directed at making fieldwork accessible. The Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology (IAA) project was set up to redress this imbalance.

The aims and objectives of the project were to:

- increase the awareness of disability issues in archaeology
- improve the integration of disability in fieldwork teaching
- increase all students' awareness of the transferable skills gained through fieldwork training
- develop a self-evaluation tool kit to encourage all students to reflect on their developing skills and abilities.

The tool kit was developed with the help of disabled and non-disabled students through controlled tests and field trials on training excavations. All students can use it to evaluate their potential abilities to participate in fieldwork. For disabled students tasks that may need to be modified, or where assistance may have to be provided, can be identified. After the completion of fieldwork, individual abilities and skills can be evaluated at different levels of attainment. The tool kit can be used after successive periods of fieldwork, thus allowing individuals to identify areas of strength and weakness and track their developing abilities and skills.

> 'I found the process of self-evaluation a useful exercise, especially the section on transferable skills. I am unsure if I was totally objective, but it did make me think about how and why I was doing particular things. I also enjoyed being part of the self-evaluation project; it felt like people were taking an interest in me personally'.
> Julian: heart condition

> 'I felt very comfortable doing the self-evaluation and preferred it to being evaluated by another person. It gave me the opportunity to look at the things I had been doing, and how well I had been doing them, and this helped to fix the experiences in my mind.'
> Evelyn: dyslexia/dyspraxia

The project team has collected a number of case studies based on interviews with disabled students and professional archaeologists. A set of guidelines of good practice for including disabled students in fieldwork training has also been produced. These are partly based on the experiences of the project team, but mainly on the actual experiences of disabled students and archaeology departments. The guidelines also contain advice on making archaeological excavations accessible to the general public. These resources can all be found on the project website.

The tool kit will be available as a downloadable resource on the project website: www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/access-archaeology/inclusive_accessible n

A wheelchair user surveying: the 'reasonable adjustment' in this case simply involved lowering the legs on the level tripod. © Margaret Matthews

## Your Place Or Mine?

Miriam Levin
*Head of Outreach, English Heritage*

Your Place or Mine? Engaging New Audiences with Heritage was a conference that took place in November 2006 in Manchester Town Hall. Jointly run by English Heritage and the National Trust, it was about increasing practical skills and knowledge amongst peers. It was also about debating the big questions around broadening access to heritage: Whose story are we telling? Do we need to redefine 'heritage'? Should heritage have a social responsibility?

More than 350 delegates from a wide range of heritage, cultural and community organisations took part in twenty practical workshops, six debates and six site visits. Topics ranged from how to engage young people with heritage to new ways of embedding culture change across organisations.

This was a conference about people and their interaction with heritage. It was about how the heritage sector can empower them to trace their own stories, or work with them to reinterpret historic buildings so that different, and sometimes difficult, stories can be told. Importantly, community members shared the platform with practitioners, as equal partners and experts in the field.

The conference was important in the process of professionalising the community heritage field because for the first time it brought people working in the area together on a large scale to discuss the 'why' and 'how' of their work. Outreach workers usually occupy singleton posts but at Manchester hundreds of people were able to spark ideas, network, find project partners and share horror stories.

This was also the sector's first opportunity to hear about the wealth of inspiring and innovative projects that are happening across the country. Individual outreach projects can sometimes feel as if they are only having a small local impact, but together they add up to something powerful happening across the country.

Importantly, no printed conference proceedings have been produced. Instead, an interactive conference website went live during the event itself (www.english-heritage.org.uk/yourplaceormine). It contains reports from each session, as well as downloadable handouts, audio interviews with speakers and delegates, photos and an evaluation report. Crucially, it allowed delegates and non-attendees to continue the debates begun at the conference through the blog.

After the poet-in-residence had said her piece and the 40-strong community choir had sung the song they had written for the conference, Maria

At the end of the Your Place or Mine? conference, delegates were invited to leave their thoughts about what they had learnt on the Evaluation Tree. Evaluation also included face-to-face mind mapping, feedback forms and What Next? response cards and a study of the likely impact of the event over the coming year.

Interactions from the floor during the Big Debate: Should Heritage Have a Social Responsibility – one of the key events of last November's Your Place or Mine? conference.


Adebowale, the conference chair, concluded Your Place or Mine? by saying that it is not actually about your place or mine, but about 'our place'. Heritage is created by everyone and belongs to everyone. The conference reinforced the determination of people who work to engage new audiences with heritage to make this a reality for all. n

### What next?

The most common request from delegates to Your Place or Mine? was 'more opportunities for networking'. English Heritage is following this up by creating *Our Place* – the heritage sector's first online professional networking website. Aimed at people in heritage, museums or archives who work with communities or in the areas of social inclusion and audience development, it will be an interactive, multimedia resource through which people can network virtually with other professionals, find project partners and suppliers, highlight events, discuss issues in forums and create interest groups. The website will also contain good-practice case studies and toolkits – resources for people who may not work in the field but want to know how to engage communities with heritage. Development has already started and the site will be launched in autumn 2007.

## How to . . . run a community heritage project

Kath Graham
*Outreach Officer South West, English Heritage*

Setting up and running a community heritage project is a fine balance between careful planning and flexibility. Using a checklist at the start of each project can help with planning. Here are some ideas to get you started.

**Find partners for your project.** Tap into networks, such as those organised locally by the voluntary sector. The local authority is good place to find these. Allow time to develop the project ideas with your partners.

**Consult with participants.** Do this as early as possible to ensure the project fits what they want and always look for opportunities for participants to 'do', rather than to 'be done to'.

**Researching and planning.** Allow time for this, ensure your aims are realistic and make a project timetable, linking your action plan to a timescale of activities.

**Consider all the funding options.** Include the possibility of partner contributions, in-kind resources and low cost options, as well as making a bid to external sources.

**Set up a steering group.** Include representatives of all the partners and others who may contribute expertise that will help the project.

**Consider accessibility.** Of buildings, resources, publicity, activities and transport well in advance.

**Health and safety.** Build them in to your plan, carry out risk assessments and implement child and vulnerable adults' protection systems.

**Managing your staff.** Consider how you will utilise and support staff within your organisation, by tapping into existing skills or providing training or staff development opportunities.

**Evaluation and Documentation.** Think about these at the beginning of the project, not the end, and build it into the activities and sessions.

**Publicity**. Develop a plan for publicising the project.

**Decide how to celebrate.** Will you start the project with a launch event, or end it with a celebration?

**Make a record.** Produce a lasting document of the project, for both participants and funding bodies (eg in the form of a booklet, postcards, website or DVD).

**Developing skills.** Build in skills training to encourage sustainability (eg planning trips, organising projects, technical skills, IT, photography) and from the beginning of the project think about how you will sustain links with either the partner organisation or the individual participants, or both.

**Self-monitoring.** Re-evaluate the project at regular intervals, and make adjustments to your aims and objectives as required.

**And finally.** Remember that going through the process of establishing a common framework of understanding is usual when setting up a new group, or a new working relationship. n


Local people sharing views and information on the changes that the Housing Market Renewal programme will make to their area of Oldham. This community event was organised by DAWN Arts – a partnership between English Heritage's Outreach Department, AKSA Housing Trust, Groundworks, Action Factory Arts and local groups.



## How to . . . diversify your volunteers

Clifford Davy
*Head of Diversity, BTCV*

BTCV was established in 1959, and for most of its life operated as a typically white, middle-class organisation dedicated to conserving the countryside. During the 1990s, an internal debate about the 'people' side of our activities alongside the 'conservation' side gathered pace – driven partly by a growing consciousness of sustainable development principles, and partly by research evidence that the poorest communities experience the poorest quality environments.

BTCV is becoming known as an organisation that is making significant strides in advancing diversity within environmental volunteering. Our success in increasing the diversity of volunteers is due to a combination of appropriate local action and strong organisational commitment. Some hints and tips we would offer include the following.

**Organisational commitment.** Lead from the top, setting clear goals and measuring progress via:

- a Strategic Plan explicitly mentioning inclusion and diversity
- a Position Statement explaining the organisation's values and how it intends to put them into practice
- visible CEO and Trustee backing
- an Equal Opportunities Policy actively implemented by a dedicated working group
- dedicated programmes – validated by external evaluation, celebrated through national conferences, DVDs, and case studies
- good practice resources for staff
- annual snapshot diversity surveys and target setting
- routine day-to-day diversity monitoring, through a management information system which enables data capture and reporting.

**Local action.** Combat 'institutional discrimination' by actions such as:

- volunteers being individually welcomed and given a thorough induction
- flexible arrangements being in place to accommodate choice and personal circumstances
- active and targeted recruitment, and retention
- the contribution of volunteers being measured, recognised and celebrated
- volunteers receiving support, management and other resources to work safely, and effectively
- voluntary opportunities providing skills development, learning and fun


BTCV used to be a white middle-class organisation. More recently it has local action and strong organisational commitment to dramatically increase the diversity of volunteers.
© BTCV

- staff receiving training on cultural diversity and equal opportunities
- staff having access to appropriate resources and support.

BTCV's diversity toolkit, *Environments for All*, is available to download from www.btcv.org/ handbooks. This handbook is a practical guide to effective community action; it deals with a wide range of issues and focuses on making sure that everyone can get involved.

Today BTCV brings people to nature on a scale and to a breadth of socio-economic profile unmatched by any other environmental organisation. BTCV has been able to make significant progress in advancing diversity because the organisation as a whole has embraced this as a key value. Stating our values matters. But living our values matters more. n

BTCV is bringing people to nature on a scale and to a breadth of socio-economic profile unmatched by any other environmental organisation.
© BTCV

## How to . . . market to new audiences

Anita Dinham
*Diversity and Access Manager, Audiences Central*

**Be honest.** Conduct an audit of your previous work including past culturally diverse programmes, products, methods used to identify and target new audiences, responses and how these were integrated into mainstream marketing strategy.

**Identify your audience.** Who do you want to attract? Research where you will find them. Look at whom your product may appeal. Using a culturally specific piece of work or work programmed to suit an identified community can be used as a hook, If you have consulted with your target audience before, demonstrate that you value their contributions by applying their suggestions where possible.

**How will you reach them?** Use communication methods that are familiar to your communities to help broker relationships. Use print, community and mainstream radio stations, local newsletters and newspapers and email networks, as well as word of mouth.

**Publicity.** Consider the images that you will use. Do they relate to the target audience? Are they appealing, representative or offensive? Are the font and colour accessible? Choose a designer who understands how diverse communities can be an active part of your audience.

**Do you need culturally specific languages?** Be careful here. If you use culturally specific languages on publicity, potential audiences might think that the product is also going to be in the same language. Be explicit about what will actually be in those languages. Always use a reputable translator – you do not want to alienate your new audience before you have even met them by having something translated wrongly.

**Be nosey!** Keep yourself in the loop. Keep a diary of events, get yourself on invitation lists and email circulations, be seen at community events. You will soon pick up on culturally specific protocol, and importantly, you will have a good time meeting new people and can spread the word about your event.

**Tying in.** By keeping your events diary up to date, you will be aware of culturally specific events to tie your product in with, or dates to avoid as communities are more likely to attend events organised by themselves.

**Create ambassadors.** Working with people who are from your identified new audience can create an inroad. A team of ambassadors will be able to represent your organisation and be advocates either on a short-term or long-term basis. They should be fully briefed about the product so they can answer questions, such as are there any opportunities for female-only access?

**Leave enough time.** Please, please, please leave enough time to market your event – 16 to 12 weeks including planning, thinking space, marketing and distribution should give you enough time to fill in the gaps. Crisis marketing will only leave you frazzled!

**Do your homework!** One size doesn't fit all. If your marketing does not work, look at what went well and what did not. Keep in contact with your audiences once a relationship has been established: you do not want to be known as an organisation that only wants to increase its BME audiences at Diwali or Black History Month. n

Women from the Newcastle Blind Society visited several Neolithic rock-art sites in Northumberland as part of an English Heritage outreach project. Working with an artist, they produced tactile art works in response to their experience, which are now on permanent display.

## How to . . . do meaningful community consultation

Suzanne Carter
*Outreach Officer West Midlands, English Heritage*

Increasingly heritage organisations are consulting with communities, rather than just professionals, on how to improve facilities, attract new audiences and improve access for all. This guide offers some advice on what things to consider when setting up a sustainable community consultation project (on any budget) that is meaningful, not only for you and your organisation, but for the groups and individuals who take part, and all future audiences.

**What do you want to gain from consultation?** There might be specific issues for which you want to find solutions, or more general questions you would like answers for. Consult widely within your own organisation so the outcomes of the consultation are useful for everyone and can inform strategies, policies and practice where appropriate. Building relationships with local people will be of great benefit to your organisation.

**What's in it for me?** Why should people volunteer their time, experiences and opinions for you? Apart from the knowledge that they may be influencing change, think about what incentives you can offer them in return (free entry, great days out for friends and family, membership).

**Don't be afraid to ask for help!** Get advice on reaching your target communities from people who know them best, before your invitations go out! Get in touch with your local authority, regional heritage organisations or search the internet for local groups. Be honest and transparent about your reasons for doing consultation. Also, think about your timescale: allow for a lead-in time of three to six months to develop a project, longer if a promotional campaign is involved.

**One size doesn't fit all.** Design consultation sessions with the different community groups in mind. You may need to think more creatively to engage young people or meet access requirements of disabled consultees. Remember, questionnaires are not suitable for every-one: ask the group's advice. Getting the right food in for lunch, picking the right venue, and making sure that the requirements of your participants are met will add great value to their experience and your project.

**Expect your assumptions to be challenged!** Difficult as it will be, try not to make assumptions about the outcomes of the consultation. What you envisage and what your participants recommend may be very different. Try not to build expectations, and be realistic about what can be achieved as a result of their input. Often the simplest solutions are the cheapest and have the greatest impact!

**Your opinion is valued.** Keep in touch with your participants and let them know about any successes and developments that have resulted from the project.

Over two years, English Heritage has worked with groups of disabled people on a consultation project to improve access for all at Witley Court in Worcestershire. Disabled people fed back their views and recommendations, which have led to physical and interpretative changes to the site. © Jonathan Lee

## Engaging communities with heritage – a specialist role

Miriam Levin
*Head of Outreach, English Heritage*
Rachel Hasted
*Head of Social Inclusion and Diversity, English Heritage*

People who engage with heritage are, in general, not representative of the profile of the population around us. As heritage belongs to all and there are countless stories to tell, one role of heritage organisations is to ensure that all these histories are heard, shared, celebrated and debated. It is about democratising both the definition of heritage and the ability for everyone to access it.

Outreach posts are vital to addressing this need as they open up a space where heritage

organisations and community can come together to understand what the other values about the past. People who work in outreach, audience development, access or community engagement can help heritage bodies to engage new audiences, consult with people and facilitate the engagement of communities in local decision-making. For community groups, the heritage outreach role is a critical one as it provides an opportunity for people to develop projects exploring their own history, learn new skills and inspire a new understanding of, and relationship with, heritage.

Heritage outreach is a growing professional field. Though a history, heritage management or museum studies degree can be very useful, it is not as crucial as the ability to engage and inspire people who may never have felt any connection to the heritage around them. Other core skills include:

- project management, including managing freelancers and budgets
- seeing the bigger strategic picture into which project work fits
- working in partnership – most outreach is a process of negotiation with partners.
- excellent communication skills – feeling confident talking to a wide range of people and being an ambassador for heritage
- self motivation – many outreach workers occupy singleton posts
- creativity and imagination to devise projects and work flexibly as people's needs change.

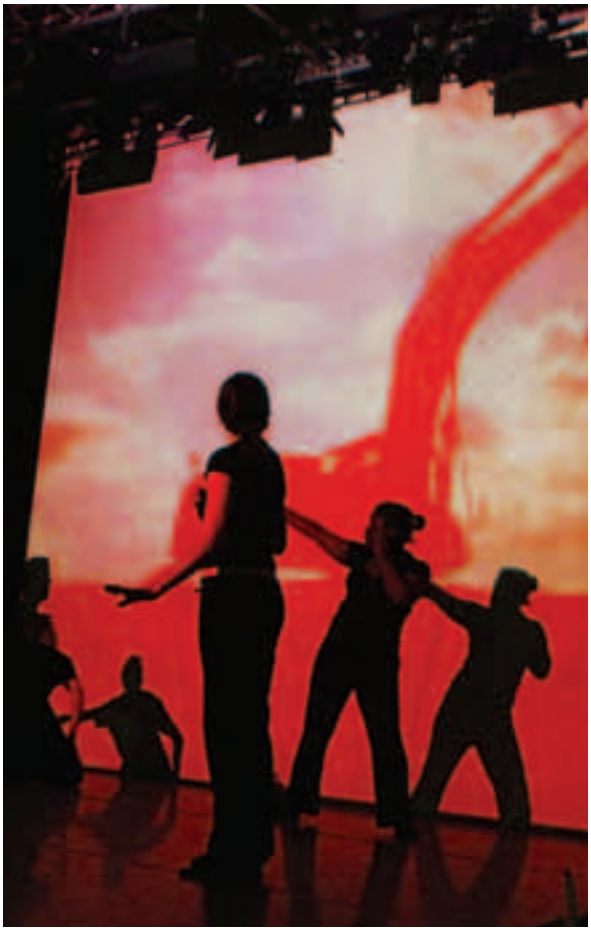
An informal poll of English Heritage's Outreach Officers returned these further vital abilities:

- willingness to learn about different cultures
- confidence to work against the grain and take risks
- flexibility to not know what each day will bring
- enthusiasm to become an expert in fields you never imagined
- patience and sensitivity to build trust.

Organisations determined to engage with new audiences should invest time and resources in dedicated outreach posts. Outreach workers can then create good-practice projects and support other colleagues' work in engaging with new communities. But this is not the sole solution to broader engagement. Developing the skills of all staff is vital – engaging with people and opening up institutions is something with which every member of staff should be involved. For example:

- Share your information – think beyond the academic; ask which popular publications which will reach a wide audience.
- If you are looking at an area's historic character, use oral history to build local perceptions into your analysis.
- Involve communities in decisions that will affect their local historic environment.
- What stories would interest non-typical visitors at your historic property? Don't know? Ask them, and build this into your interpretation.
- Take time to explain to people what you are doing, why, and how they can get involved.

Not everyone is confident doing this, so the key is to work in partnership with people who are. Find the experts in community engagement, whether the outreach worker in your organisation or the gatekeepers to community groups such as community development workers, youth workers or agencies such as Age Concern and Connexions. n



Young people from the Foyer housing project in Swindon perform *Memento Mea*, a drama inspired by the Roman site on which they worked as volunteer archaeologists during the community archaeology dig run by English Heritage and Swindon Borough Council.

# Towards a More Open Heritage

**Deborah Lamb** *Director of Policy and Communications, English Heritage*

**If we want people to engage with their shared heritage, now and in the future, we need first to capture their interest.**

Much of this issue of *Conservation Bulletin* has focused on specific examples that show communities redfining their heritage and illustrate what the historic environment sector has done to build its capacity to respond. However, it is important to keep in mind the bigger picture. Heritage is hugely popular, as evidenced by the large number of TV programmes (almost 9,000 hours of transmitted heritage television in 2005–6, see *Heritage Counts 2006*) and the enthusiasm for Heritage Open Days, which are the largest mass-participation event in the country. Heritage is, arguably, one of the most accessible cultural experiences and is literally all around us. It cannot, with any justice, be called elitist.

And yet, as the Taking Part survey makes clear (see Dawes, pp 16–17), there is a significant gap between the extents to which different people participate. We still need to understand more about what the Taking Part figures indicate and analysis is on-going. Obviously, heritage will not be top of everyone's list, but when 45 per cent of BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities participate compared with a national average of 70 per cent, we must ask ourselves why is this the case and does it matter?

While heritage may attract some people more than others, it is difficult to believe and to defend that it is less appealing to certain groups of people due to something inherent either in our heritage or in people's ethnicity or economic circumstances. Surely all of us involved in protecting and explaining the nation's heritage believe the beauty, inspiration and education it provides can be enjoyed by everyone.

This suggests that the problem may lie in the way the historic environment is presented, interpreted and marketed, including by organisations outside the sector such as schools and the media.

We also need to be clear why this matters and why we should care. The simple fact is that our historic environment will depend on future generations to look after it. The long-term survival of our rich and diverse heritage will need continuing broad and popular support. But the population who provide that support and legitimise public intervention is changing. The population is aging, with people of pensionable age set to rise from 18.7 per cent in 2005 to 23.9 per cent by 2025. One in six people in Britain is disabled in some way. Family structures are changing, with more women in paid work and more men spending time with their children. The ethnic diversity of the population is increasing, with net inward migration and a higher birth rate amongst some settled minority groups. We need to ensure that heritage is accessible and valued in a time of change. The historic environment needs all the help it can get.

This edition of *Conservation Bulletin* has highlighted many examples of what we can do to make a difference and broaden support for our heritage. I would also like to touch briefly on the things we should not do and attempt to lay to rest a few myths.

The challenge for those of us in the historic environment sector is to understand the knowl-

Muslim students from the Mulberry School for Girls take part in a visit to the Gurdwara Sikh Sanghat at Harley Grove in East London. Built in 1854–5 as a Congregational chapel, this listed building was later used as a synagogue before becoming a spiritual centre for the local Sikh community.

Learning conservation and horticultural skills in the Victorian walled garden at Luton Hoo in Bedfordshire. The English Heritage Outreach Department is working in partnership with Luton Borough Council and BTCV to provide traditional craft skills training for young people excluded from mainstream education.


edge, beliefs and traditions of the diverse communities who created it and the values of today's communities whose support is needed for its continued protection. That understanding will help us manage and tell the stories of our heritage in a way which makes it accessible to a wide range of people and enriches the story for everyone. But how do we get there? My view is we should not be paralysed by fear of causing offence or by the complexity and unfamiliarity of issues. We need to be to be confident in the value of expertise and courageous in dealing with accusations of political correctness.

An artefact embodies multiple values, reflecting the experiences and culture of different people, but this does not mean the role of the expert is irrelevant. As experts we need to listen to other points of view, engage in debate and open our minds to different ways of looking at things and new evidence. This is nothing new and it is not difficult. Crucially, though, we need to remain confident about the value of the expert in informing and educating people about the significance of the physical remains of the past. This is a two-way conversation from which everyone learns, and the result is informed and active participation in caring for the historic environment today and in the future.

As well as being confident we must be robust in challenging accusations of political correctness. English Heritage has recently been criticised for awarding blue plaques to 'obscure' black figures and for focusing some of our work on the 2007 bicentenary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade this year. Only ten blue plaques out of a total of 800 are dedicated to people of African descent. These and other figures commemorated under the scheme should perhaps be more widely known; one of the key roles of the blue plaques scheme is the part it can play in making people aware of the figures who have shaped Britain's history. That is part of the joy of blue plaques – to discover something unknown and unexpected while walking down the street and to connect with the history all around us. Personally, I see no reason why, as a white woman, the history of black people in this country is any less part of my history than castles and medieval churches. That is the universal value of the physical remains of the past. It is something we all share, just by being here.

> 'I see no reason why, as a white woman, the history of black people in this country is any less part of my history than castles and medieval churches.'

One of the major issues for the future is to achieve a greater diversity amongst those of us who work within the sector. This will not only help generate support from a broader spread of the population but also enrich everyone's experience through a wider range of perspectives and values. But how do we get there? My personal view is that simplistic employment targets are not helpful. They can be dismissed as tokenism and can discredit the whole process of recruitment and appointment. It is far more important to look at the ways in which people enter historic environment professions and how we can inspire a whole new generation, in all its diversity, to study history and archaeology. Workforce diversity is closely tied up with issues of broader appeal and the way the historic environment is perceived. This is not an excuse for doing nothing. This issue of *Conservation Bulletin* has highlighted many of the things we can do to change perceptions, including our own.

We need a different approach but one which uses the skills and expertise we already have. This is vital if we are to have the skilled professionals as well as the committed volunteers and supportive public who will care for this country's extraordinary historic environment in the future. n

# A Welcome White Paper, But What Next?

**Sarah Buckingham** *Head of Heritage Protection Operations, English Heritage*

**The government's White Paper for the heritage sets out a radical but welcome agenda for reforming the way we protect and manage our valued historic environment.**

The Government's White Paper *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century* was finally published on 8 March 2007. It sets out the framework for a radical reform of the way we protect and manage the historic environment, coupled with clear encouragement to get on with making reform happen.

Modernising the management of the historic environment, bringing it into the mainstream of environmental management, has long been advocated by English Heritage. These aspirations are shared by most of the historic environment sector, and the White Paper has been welcomed, with a remarkable, indeed impressive, degree of support.

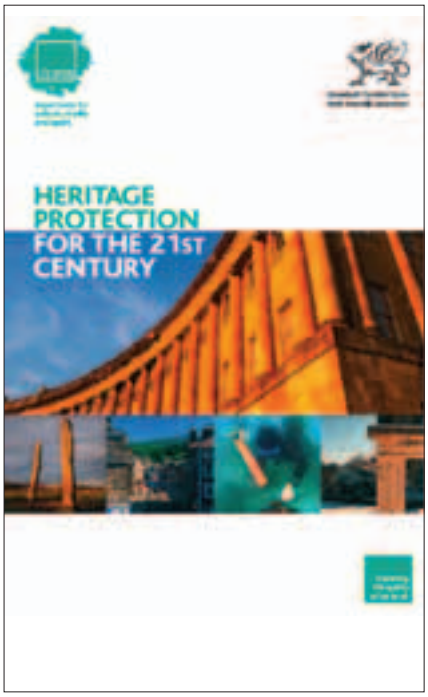
Having worked in close partnership with government on the preparation of the White Paper, both the main thrust of reform and its detailed components are warmly endorsed by English Heritage. What is particularly welcome is the fact that this is a vote of confidence in a mature sector, ready to play its role in the reformed planning system and in developing sustainable communities, cornerstones of government's environmental policy. English Heritage is given an explicit mandate to take a lead in implementing reform and partnering the sector into a new era. Provided English Heritage and local authorities are given the resources effectively to take up major new responsibilities and the challenging agenda for change, it is a task that all should relish.

However, the White Paper is a milestone, not a destination, and we can afford neither inertia nor complacency. We have to sustain the momentum for reform. It is extremely heartening, therefore, to report that DCMS is now, assisted by English Heritage, working with speed on the preparation of a Heritage Bill. It is planned that this will be published in draft for pre-legislative consultation in late autumn 2007. The White Paper also requires English Heritage to begin work immediately on the new system in areas such as policy development, capacity building, designation reform, and heritage partnership agreements. Much can, indeed must, be achieved, in advance of the legislation being enacted.

The scope of change is huge and complex, and affects the whole sector. A strategic framework is needed to ensure that the different components of reform are co-ordinated and carried forward, and that the whole sector is engaged – all parts will have to be agents, rather than recipients of change. English Heritage is now developing such a framework.

Finally, we have to acknowledge that reform rooted in political priorities and initiatives will inevitably carry an element of risk. While there are some elements – not least a change of *dramatis personae* at the top – we can do little to control, in others we have more agency. We can start to change our outlooks and practices in anticipation of reform; we can make some reforms happen now; but, most crucially of all, we can insure against risk by sustaining the present consensus. Solidarity will be particularly important as the Heritage Bill sails the choppy waters of Parliament. We have all come a long way, and much has been gained, so there is, otherwise, so much more to be lost. n

*On page 46 Mike Harlow, English Heritage's Legal Director, takes a closer look at the likely mechanics and timetable of the reform process.*



# **News** from English Heritage

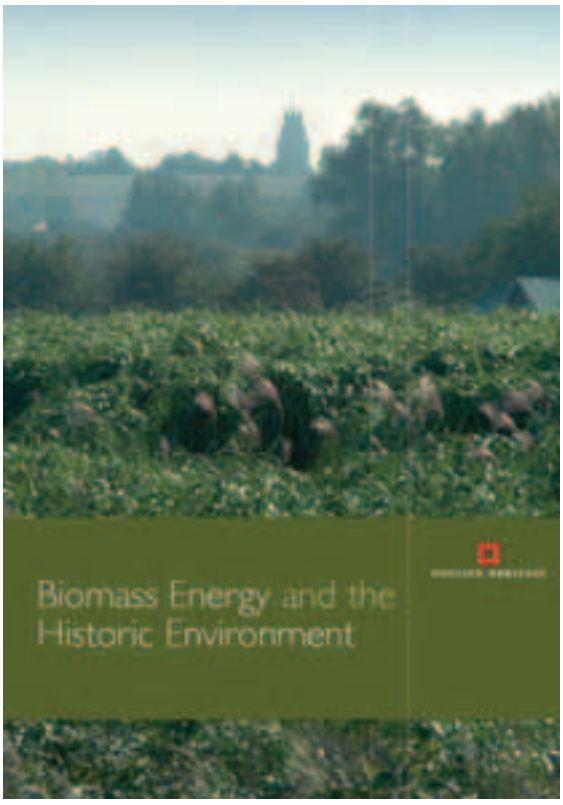
## Biomass energy and the historic environment

In December 2006, English Heritage published guidance on the implications for the historic environment of energy production from biomass, as part of its growing range of guidance on climate change and its impacts.

Biomass fuel includes a wide range of plant materials and biodegradable waste, but particular attention is currently focused on energy crops, grown specifically for the purpose of energy generation. These include short rotation coppice woodland and exotic grasses, such as Miscanthus, which can grow to more than 3 metres.

The guidance addresses concerns about the potential archaeological and landscape impacts of biomass crop production. It is intended for developers of biomass energy projects and those, including local authority planners and their historic environment advisers, involved in strategic planning for renewable energy, in the determination of project-specific applications, and in the grant-aiding of new projects. The guidance is available at: http://www.helm.org.uk/server/show/category.11122

*Contact*: Steve Trow, tel: 0207 973 3018; email: steve.trow@english-heritage.org.uk




## HELM and Historic Environment Champions

Historic Environment – Local Management (HELM) is English Heritage's capacity building programme for historic environment professionals and non-heritage professionals. HELM was identified in the DCMS White Paper *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century* (published in March) as a key means of building capacity in local authorities and promoting understanding of the proposed new heritage protection system.

Historic Environment Champions provide leadership for heritage issues within their local authority. A well cared for and managed local historic environment improves everybody's quality of life, and Champions can make a real difference in unlocking this potential. In April 2007, almost 60 per cent of Local Authorities (227), four National Parks and the Greater London Authority had at least one elected-member Champion.

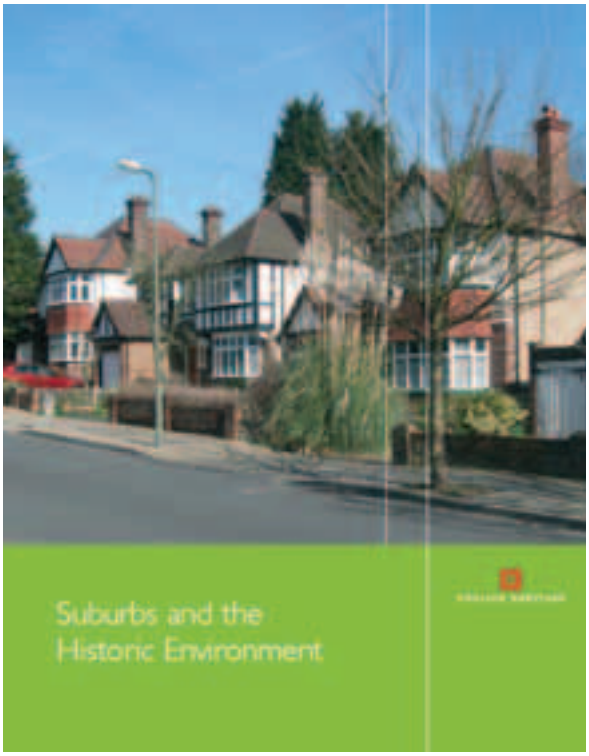
Through HELM, Champions can keep up-to-date, develop skills, share ideas and build partnerships. In July 2007 there will be four conferences on Heritage Protection Reforms. These will focus on the strategic issues, steps towards implementation and how Champions can support these. For more about Historic Environment Champions, to read the latest publications or see if your local authority has a Champion, visit the HELM website (www.helm.org.uk) or email: champions@english-heritage.org.uk.

*Contact*: Adina Gleeson, tel: 0207 973 3841; email: adina.gleeson@english-heritage.org.uk

## Suburbs

Many suburbs remain attractive and sought-after places to live more than a hundred years after they were built. *Suburbs and the Historic Environment* is aimed primarily at local planning authorities and examines the trends that are putting pressure on local character and identity in many historic suburbs. These include higher housing density in new development, the buoyant housing market and consequent demand for new houses and piecemeal and incremental change.

The document presents a series of case studies where local authorities have come up with innovative and successful solutions to suburban planning issues. It sets out English Heritage's advice on sustaining historic suburbs, and contains a check-




list for local authorities to consider when developing strategies to successfully manage change in such areas. Printed copies are available from English Heritage Customer Services (quoting 51323) on 0870 333 1181 or at customers@english-heritage.org.uk.
*Contact*: Tim Brennan, tel: 0207 973 3279; email: tim.brennan@english-heritage.org.uk

## Coastal towns

The English seaside is unique, but many of the fragile remnants from its heyday are not well understood and appreciated. Work is underway on a policy statement provisionally entitled *Regeneration in Historic Coastal Towns*. This will look at the economic and social issues facing coastal towns and communities, and how the historic environment can play a part in the efforts of local authorities to regenerate them.

Publication of the policy statement will coincide with a two-day English Heritage conference on the future of the England's seaside resorts. Seaside Heritage: Colour Past, Bright Future will be held on 16 and 17 October 2007 at St Mary in the Castle, Hastings, East Sussex. For more information and booking details, please visit www.english-heritage.org.uk/seasideheritage or contact Helen Charlton of Sussex Arts Marketing on 01273 882 112 or at helen.charlton@sam-culture.com
*Contact*: Tim Brennan, tel: 0207 973 3279; email: tim.brennan@english-heritage.org.uk

## European Heritage Heads Forum

The second meeting of the European Heritage Heads Forum (EHHF), whose secretariat is provided by English Heritage, was held in Prague on 10–11 May 2007. The heads of 21 European heritage agencies came together to discuss significant issues affecting the cultural heritage sector. The concluding statement agreed that EHHF should:

- Refresh its commitment to HEREIN and encourage the Council of Europe to ensure that HEREIN meets the heritage sector's current needs.
- Make available current research on thermal efficiency and historic buildings.
- Work towards publication of case studies illustrating the economic and social benefits of investment in the historic environment.
- Propose ways in which members of EHHF can influence the development of EU legislation, recognising cultural heritage.

The next meeting will be held in Copenhagen in May 2008.
For further information visit the website www.ehhf.net
*Contact*: Alexandra Coxen, tel: 0207 973 3849; email: alexandra.coxen@english-heritage.org.uk

## *Heritage Counts 2007*

*Heritage Counts 2007* will look at the trends in key indicators of the state of the historic environment since 2002. It will also explore the theme of learning and skills. Drawing on material from across the historic environment sector, it will explore the sector's contribution as a learning resource for schools. It will assess the policy response to concerns over shortages of some skills that may adversely affect the sector. It will look at the skills needed within local authorities to enable them to deliver the Heritage Protection Review and specific issues around the skills and training needs of volunteers.
*Contact*: Peter Robinson, tel: 0207 973 3730; email: peter.robinson@english-heritage.org.uk

## Tall buildings and World Heritage Sites

Revised English Heritage and CABE *Guidance on Tall Buildings* was published in June 2007. It updates the original document of March 2003 to reflect changes to the planning system and the experiences CABE and English Heritage have had in evaluating planning applications for tall buildings.

Central to the revised guidance document is

Clevedon's Grade I listed pier has been the focal point of this historic seaside resort since it was first opened in 1869. During 2007 English Heritage will be using a major conference and new policy guidance to highlight the social and economic challenges now facing England's coastal towns.


the recommendation that local authorities adopt a 'development plan-led' approach to tall buildings. This calls on local authorities to devise a development plan specifically related to the construction of tall buildings. These plans should be explicitly clear about where tall buildings should and should not go and must identify these areas in advance. Local authorities should also consider commissioning detailed urban design frameworks, to inform the decision-making. This will also include the need to assess impacts on important views and skylines.

Owing to their high profile and local impact, tall buildings should set exemplary standards in design and sustainability, and the revised guidance places sustainable design and construction as a crucial facet of these design standards. The document makes it explicit that proposals should exceed the latest regulations for minimising energy and reducing carbon emissions over the lifetime of the development.
*Contact*: Charles Wagner, tel: 0207 973 3826; email: charles.wagner@english-heritage.org.uk

## Socio-economic value in the Yorkshire Dales National Park

In 2006 English Heritage, in partnership with Defra and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, commissioned an evaluation of the social, economic and public benefits of different programmes of repair to traditional farm buildings and drystone walls in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

In the six-year study period more than 500 farm buildings and 191 km of drystone walls were repaired. It is estimated that these works created 74 jobs in the National Park and its wider local area, and resulted in a total injection of between £7.08 million and £9.12 million to the local economy – with every £1 spent on repair work on buildings resulting in a total output within the wider local area of £2.48. Copies of the full socio-economic reports are available at www.helm.org.uk
*Contact*: Sarah Tunnicliffe, tel: 0207 973 3620; email: sarah.tunnicliffe@english-heritage.org.uk

## Places of worship fabric needs survey

This summer, English Heritage is publishing the results of a survey on the repair and maintenance needs of listed places of worship in England. Based on a sample of places of worship in six areas of the country, the reports build on a similar study conducted in 1994 (*Conservation Bulletin*, July 1998). The initial findings were a key part of the *Inspired!* campaign launched in May 2006 and the full reports now provide a valuable overview of the state of our historic places of worship, thirty years on from the introduction of grant aid for churches.

The first report, looking mainly at Anglican churches, estimates the total repair needs for the 14,500 listed places of worship as £1.42 billion over the next ten years, with the bulk, £925 million, needed within the next five years. The second report widened the sample of non-Anglican places of worship, but reaches almost identical conclusions about the scale of repair needs. For copies of the reports, go to www.english-heritage.org.uk/inspired/ or email churches@english-heritage.org.uk
*Contact*: Richard Halsey, tel: 0223 582776; email: richard.halsey@english-heritage.org.uk

# The National Monuments Record
## News and Events

The NMR is the public archive of English Heritage. It includes more than 7 million archive items (photographs, drawings, reports and digital data) relating to England's historic environment. Catalogues are available online and in the NMR search room in Swindon.
Contact the NMR at:
NMR Enquiry & Research Services, National Monuments Record, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ
tel: 01793 414600; fax: 01793 414606
email: nmrinfo@english-heritage.org.uk
web: www.english-heritage.org.uk/nmr

### New acquisitions

*English Heritage acquires the Aerofilms Collection*

A nationally important collection of oblique aerial photography has been acquired by the English Heritage NMR, in partnership with the Royal Commissions on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and Wales. The Aerofilms collection has been purchased from its owners, Blom Aerofilms, with the generous support of the English Heritage Development Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and the Friends of National Libraries.

The collection of over 800,000 images is the best and most significant body of oblique aerial photography of the United Kingdom remaining in private hands. Dating from 1919 to the 1990s, its chronological and geographical coverage is unique, and presents an unparalleled picture of the changing face of Britain in the 20th century.

Aerofilms was the first commercial aerial photographic business in the United Kingdom. The photographs taken by the firm cover the countryside, industrial and urban landscapes, archaeological sites and historic buildings, and chart the growth of new towns and the spread of motorways across the landscape. Almost every community is represented, many with a series of views taken over the decades showing how cities, towns and villages have changed and grown.

The prints, negatives and documentation that comprise the collection will now be transferred to the specialist archival storage provided in the appropriate country, by the English NMR and its partners in Scotland and Wales. This will help ensure not only that the collection can be used and enjoyed by the public, but also that it is preserved for future generations of researchers.

St Paul's Cathedral in 1950 – one of the 800,000 historic aerial views from the Aerofilms collection that will soon be accessible through the National Monuments Record.


The transfer and initial sorting of the collection will take some months, and we will not be able to provide public access to the material while this is taking place. As soon as we can allow access we will provide details on the websites of the NMR and its partners in Scotland and Wales, and in subsequent issues of *Conservation Bulletin*. In the meantime, for any further information please contact:
For England (English Heritage): Mike Evans, Head of NMR Archives, email: mike.evans@english-heritage.org.uk
For Scotland (RCAHMS): Lesley Ferguson, Head of Collections, email: lesley.ferguson@rcahms.org.uk)
For Wales (RCAHMW): Hilary Malaws, Head of Information Management, email: hilary.malaws@rcahmw.org.uk

### Online resources from the NMR

*Images of England*

*Images of England* is a 'point in time' online image library recording England's listed buildings. It is unique not only because of the comprehensive breadth of its subject matter but because it is one of the largest free image libraries on the internet with over 290,000 images currently viewable on the website (www.imagesofengland.org.uk).

There are two ways to explore the website, by Quick Search and by Advanced Search. The Advanced Search will give you the best set of results and help you to streamline your searches. You need to register to use the Advanced Search; it's quick and easy to do and free of charge.
*Contact*: Julie Swann, tel: 01793 414420; email: julie.swann@english-heritage.org.uk.

Bandstand on Grand Parade, Eastbourne, East Sussex – one of the 290,000 Images of England now available online. IoE 471323
© Michael Nash LRPS

### *ViewFinder*

*ViewFinder* is an online picture resource drawing on the NMR's national photographic collections (www.english-heritage.org.uk/viewfinder). It contains more than 45,000 images with a programme to add more each year.

Some 2,500 photographs from the Bedford Lemere collection have recently been added to the site. The commercial firm of Bedford Lemere & Co (1867–1944) quickly built up a reputation as pre-eminent architectural photographers, and was employed by a wide range of architects, builders, interior decorators and their clients to document their work. The collection is a key source for images of the built environment in England from 1870 until the Second World War, since it constitutes very full national coverage and is of the highest quality. Many of the images added recently are of domestic interiors of the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. Other interior shots include shops, offices, restaurants and factories.
*Contact*: Andrew Sargent, tel: 01793 414740; email: andrew.sargent@english-heritage.org.uk

### *PastScape*

*PastScape* is the publicly accessible online version of the national database of monuments recorded at the National Monuments Record (NMR). It is regularly updated to reflect enhancement on the datasets carried out by English Heritage staff (www.pastscape.english-heritage.org.uk).

Improvements have already been made to the site's navigation, appearance and content. Work will continue to be implemented this year, and any feedback on the site is welcomed. In the meantime the site continues to be regularly refreshed with new content. New monument records relating to the Northampton boot and shoe industry have been added this year. The enhancement work on lidos and outdoor swimming pools has been completed. Regional aerial survey investigators have also contributed new monument records for the County Durham Archaeological Assessment and The Yorkshire Coast and Humberside Estuary Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment.
*Contact*: Louise Goldie, tel: 01793 414725; email: louise.goldie@english-heritage.org.uk

Most domestic interiors photographed by Bedford Lemere & Co were in affluent houses. This exception, photographed in May 1890 in Sloane Gardens House, Chelsea, depicts one of the thousands of one-room apartments which sprang up to accommodate City workers. BL10075
Reproduced by permission of English Heritage.NMR

Using archives to provide opportunities for young people with learning difficulties. Students at Swindon College study maps of the town. © English Heritage.NMR

## Outreach

### *Life skills workshops*

In partnership with Swindon College, the National Monuments Record has been exploring how its resources can be used to provide new learning opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Four workshops were run with a group of seven students aged 16–18 on a life skills course at the college. The group explored the development of an area of Swindon through using maps, aerial photographs, plans and census returns. By working together to create an exciting display of their work, the young people were able to contribute to a wider community event.

Building on the successful outcomes of the workshops and the links developed with the teaching staff at Swindon College, further workshops are planned. These aim to provide opportunities to develop student experience, build confidence and develop basic skills by working with unique and stimulating material in a supportive environment.
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# Legal Developments

## Heritage Protection Reform

**Mike Harlow** *Legal Director, English Heritage*

**Streamlining England's heritage legislation will bring many benefits, but will involve a lot of hard preparatory work for the historic environment sector.**

The White Paper published in March is a relatively finished article. There has been a long lead-up to it and there are only a couple of issues where further consultation is requested by DCMS.

Progress from a White Paper to an implemented and settled regime is a political process and therefore unpredictable, but it might run something like this:

- 'Heritage Protection Bill' is drafted in the next few months.
- 'The Bill enters pre-legislative scrutiny sometime early in the next parliamentary year (autumn 2007).
- 'Heritage Protection Act' is passed in 2008, say.
- When the Act is brought into force it is likely it will replace the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 and the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 which will all be revoked to a degree – most probably in full.
- The Act will not come into force until considerably after it has been passed – maybe two years later.
- The Act will be supplemented by a 'Heritage Protection Order', which will provide more detailed regulation (for example dealing with Class Consents etc). Much of its content will be known at the time of passing the main Act, although it may not be passed at the same time. Upon the Act coming into force, the guidance within PPG15 and PPG16 will have to be replaced to reflect both the new regime and the new language – a new 'PPS 15', if PPSs still exist by this time.

There may need to be some changes to English Heritage's own constitution under the National Heritage Act 1983 to reflect its new role within the regime.

At the moment the process seems to have good momentum of its own. We are now also aware of the contents of the Planning White Paper, announcing substantial reforms to that system. Reforms in administration of the planning system are obviously going to have some reflection within reforms to the processing of historic asset consents.

It is hoped that the Act may be passed within the 2007/2008 Parliamentary session. If that is achieved, then the sector has something like three years from now in which to fully prepare itself for the implementation of the new law. As well as all the regulation and guidance to come from central government, there will, of course, be a great deal of necessary rewriting of policy and guidance by English Heritage and others within the sector. Then there will be an immense learning process for all to go through to fully assimilate the new regime and their roles within it.

'We should see less fighting for protection; fewer casualties of failure and, most thrillingly, an increase in the care and use of historic sites.'

There will be many invisible benefits to our heritage generally if the resulting code of protection is sufficiently clear that it sinks gently into the consciousness of Joe Public without Joe needing to be a lawyer to understand it. We should see less fighting for protection; fewer casualties of failure and, most thrillingly, an increase in the care and use of historic sites. If as a result of hard work and clear thinking the conservation sector needs fewer lawyers from 2010 onwards then the world will be a better place for all sorts of reasons.

*Mike Harlow became English Heritage's new Legal Director in February 2007. He can be contacted at michael.harlow@english-heritage.org.uk*

'The Act may be passed within the 2007/2008 Parliamentary session. If that is achieved, then the sector has something like three years to prepare itself for the implementation of the new law.'

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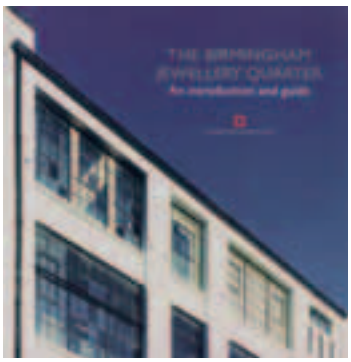

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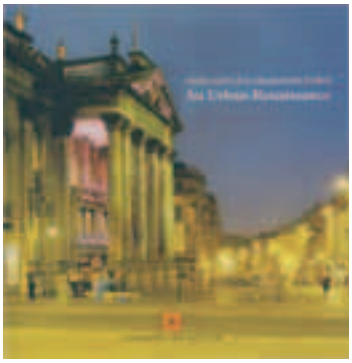

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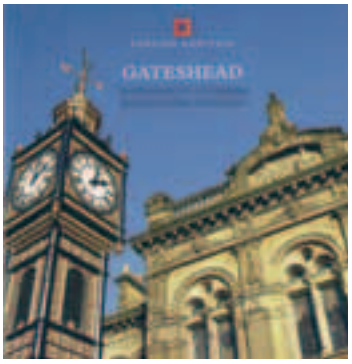


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