

Heritage Link Press Release
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Heritage Link shocked at Civic Trust news

Heritage Link is dismayed to hear through the BBC new website that one of its valued members the Civic Trust for England has gone into administration.

The Civic Trust founded in 1957 captured the mood of the nation when quality of life, improving and caring for places where people live and work, won political and popular support. As the umbrella body for over 750 Civic Societies in England, representing over 250,000 individuals it brought the local amenity societies into national policy making. As one of Heritage Link's 78 national members, the Civic Trust has made a significant contribution to policy work and in sharing best practice on planning and heritage matters including heritage protection reform. That special perspective will be sorely missed.

The Civic Trust is best known for the Civic Trust Awards and Heritage Open Days (HODs). Since 1994 UK wide Heritage Open Days have attracted huge new audiences, through visiting or volunteering. In 2008 a record 3,717 places and activities took part. For four days in September, HODs opens up the extraordinary heritage sites on our doorsteps. HODs celebrates England's fantastic architecture and culture by offering free access to properties that are usually closed to the public or normally charge for admission. It is a once-a-year chance to discover hidden architectural treasures and enjoy a wide range of tours, events and activities which bring to life local history and culture.

HODs is so vital in sharing the appeal of our heritage that it must not be lost.

Anthea Case Chairman of Heritage Link said 'HODs is the genie of the heritage world that can't be put back in its bottle. It articulates the emotional response that people have to our wonderful historic surroundings. All that enthusiasm and energy that heritage can generate is brilliantly demonstrated by HODs.'

Notes to Editors

1. Contact: Kate Pugh, The Secretary, Heritage Link, 89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP
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2. **Heritage Link** www.heritagelink.org.uk was set up in 2002 by national heritage groups in England to promote the central role of the voluntary movement in the sector and to make their voice heard collectively and coherently. It brings together 78 voluntary organisations concerned with heritage in England representing interests from specialist advisers, practitioners and managers, volunteers and owners, to national funding bodies and local building preservation trusts. Much of the historic environment is cared for - supported, managed or owned - by these organisations.

3. BBC news item <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8004262.stm> This does not affect the Civic Trusts in Wales or Scotland. Most civic societies in England are charities registered in their own right.