

SOUTH EAST HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM

MINUTES

Wednesday 11th January 2012, 10.30am, English Heritage Office, Guildford

Present: Chair - Andy Brown (English Heritage)
Minutes - Tiva Montalbano (English Heritage)
Speaker - Charles Wagner (English Heritage)
Judith Martin (Association of Preservation Trusts)
James Cooper (Historic Houses Association)
Andy Smith (Campaign to Protect Rural England)
Duncan Coe (Association of Local Government Archaeology Officers)
Alison Davidson (Institute of Historic Building Conservation South)
Peter Mills (Institute of Historic Building Conservation South East)
Tony Hurrell (Association of Gardens Trusts)
Nino Strachey (National Trust)
Michael Cooke (Arts Council England)
Geri Silverstone (National Trust)
Stuart McLeod (Heritage Lottery Fund)
James Seymour (Natural England)

Apologies: Richard Clarke (SE Protected Landscapes)
Christine Drury (Campaign to Protect Rural England)
Lord Carnarvon (Historic Houses Association)

Attached with these minutes:

- Heritage Counts Dissemination Events Proposal (TM)
- The Localism Act 2011 powerpoint presentation (CW)
- Briefing note on South East Neighbourhood Planning Front-runners (TM)
- South East Protected Landscapes 'Our Land' Project details (RC)

1. Welcome and Apologies

AB welcomed members and informed the group of changes occurring within English Heritage: the organisation is in the process of being restructured and further changes can be expected in the next year. AB's title has now been rebadged to *Planning Director, South East*.

AB also informed the group of changes within the National HEF. John Sell, Chair of the Joint Committee of National Amenity Societies (JCNAS) is now the National group's new chair. This is the first time the chair of the HEF has not been held by English Heritage (although still supported by its secretariat). AB invited the South East HEF to consider following suit.

Action: ALL

Consider putting yourself or your organisation forward to chair this group

In order to improve communication between the two groups, the National HEF has begun putting its minutes on its website:

<http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/historic-environment-forum/>

Minutes from the SE HEF will also be posted at the following address:

<http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/rhefs/>

The National HEF is keen to align its agendas with those of the regional HEFs and would like more information to be trickled up to them from this group. To that end it was agreed that future meetings of the SE HEF would be timed a few weeks before the National HEF in order for information to be passed on in a timely manner.

Action: TM

Schedule the next SE HEF to precede the National HEF by a few weeks

A discussion was had about the relationship between this HEF group and the National HEF. Now that the uncertainty about regionalism is on the wane, it is possible that regional HEFs will play a bigger role going forward. This group felt there was real value in continuing to have meetings where information could be shared and ideas discussed within the specific context of the South East. JC suggested that the National HEF be invited to hold one of their meetings in the SE in order for them to see the particular challenges faced in this region – specifically pressure from development.

Action: TM and AB

Extend an invitation to National HEF to visit the South East for one of their meetings.

2. Matters Arising

Heritage Counts:

- Heritage Counts was launched in October 2011. Many thanks to the SE HEF for all of their contributions. TM is in the process of planning two Heritage Counts dissemination events to run in conjunction with the South Downs National Park in Feb/March 2012. These events will be a networking opportunity for local Heritage Champions and for local groups to find new ways to work together in the context of Neighbourhood Planning. For details see the Heritage Counts Website:

<http://hc.english-heritage.org.uk/local-checklist/>

- A project proposal for the proposed Heritage Counts events accompanies these minutes and any comments are most welcome.
- Heritage Counts 2012's theme will be 'Resilience'

English Heritage Angels Awards:

- This initiative is the beginning of a longer commitment to recognise the contribution made by local groups to the protection and rescue of vulnerable heritage. Two sites from the South East made the short-list for the first English Heritage Angels awards. They were the Worthing Dome and the Smythe Barns at Westernhanger in Kent.

- At the awards ceremony on October 31, the Smythe Barns came out on top in the category of 'best craftsmanship employed on a heritage rescue'. Details here:

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk/English-Heritage-Angel-Awards/shortlisted-projects1/934224/935320/>

- Nominations for the next round of Angels will begin in Summer 2012. It will become clear later in the year if the categories or criteria have changed.

National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP):

- The National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP) is effectively a sector-owned business plan of English Heritage's work. A survey is currently out on the English Heritage website to find out what partners and other bodies in the Heritage sector think of the NHPP. There is a questionnaire and the deadline is Jan 27th 2012. Details can be found here:

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/national-heritage-protection-plan/consultation/>

Action: ALL

Comment on the NHPP Consultation by Jan 27th 2012.

3. The Localism Act and the 'Big Society': Implications for the sector and Q&A – Charles Wagner, Head of National Planning Advice, English Heritage

CW gave a presentation, attached to these minutes, outlining details of the Decentralisation and Localism Bill which received Royal assent in November 2011. Main points and issues discussed as a result of the presentation were:

- Timetable for implementation: some provisions are already in place, but the rest will come into force in April alongside the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by April 2012.
- Neighbourhood Plans: are meant to lay the framework for *more* development in a local area than the LA's Local Plan. Those who grant Neighbourhood Plans will have the power to grant Neighbourhood Development Orders and outline planning permission.
- Definition of Community: Any group can claim to represent an area or community. It is up to the LA to vet these groups, confirm representation and check for overlaps. Questions were asked about who the Neighbourhood Planning Vanguard in the South East were, and whether they had risen up from grass roots or been put forward by their LAs. The answer is both.

Action: TM

Circulate a list of Neighbourhood Planning frontrunners in the South East. (Attached with these minutes)

- The Role of Consultees: English Heritage's concern is to find ways to ensure that the Historic Environment is taken into consideration in the Neighbourhood Planning Process. At the moment, the role of Statutory Consultees (such as EH, Design Council/CABE, Natural England etc) in the

Neighbourhood Planning process is still uncertain. They are lobbying to be consulted on Neighbourhood Plans but only once they are drafted – it would be impossible to be involved with every neighbourhood plan from the very start.

- There is also no acknowledgement of how existing Local amenity Societies can contribute to Neighbourhood Plans. It is hoped that LAs will publish details of proposed Neighbourhood Plans on their websites in the hopes that Local Amenity Societies can get involved.
- Unscheduled Archaeology: There is concern that unscheduled archaeology of national importance might be adversely affected by neighbourhood planning if the LA and its evidence bases are not involved in the process from the start.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Agreements (S106): LAs have until March 2014 to decide how they will charge CILs and what the money will be eligible to be used for (ex. £100 CIL per square foot of residential development and £50 psf of office space.) At the moment, heritage can be shoe-horned into the 'environment' criteria. The Localism Act also makes it possible to use CIL money for maintenance.
- S106 will still exist alongside CIL as a direct means to make a development which would otherwise prove unacceptable, acceptable (for example, S106 money to improve a junction near a new housing development).
- The question as asked as to what this HEF can do to influence CIL and its potential to support Heritage agendas. It was suggested that one way might be to see how CIL can benefit an area's 'heritage infrastructure' (much like green infrastructure), which is not restricted to one site or organisation and can involve a more collective strategic approach.
- A useful bookmark for the latest developments and approaches that organisations are taking to Neighbourhood Planning is the Planning Advisory Service website:

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelid=1089058>

- Placecheck: EH is in the process of pitching for NPPF funds to revive a methodology called 'Placecheck' to create an introductory toolkit for brand new Neighbourhood Planning Groups:

<http://www.placecheck.info/>

- The idea is that Placecheck will be the umbrella under which users can be introduced to more detailed guidance documents such as 'Knowing Your Place' (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/knowning-your-place/>) which deal with more specific considerations such as - in the case of this group - the Historic Environment.
- Guide of Guides: BDOR is working on producing a 'Guide of Guides' to help users understand all the different types of built environment toolkits and guidance documents out there at the moment. Once it is published (by Spring 2012), it will be available on the BDOR website:

<http://www.bdor.co.uk/>

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Penfold Review and Heritage Protection Reform (HPR)

AB opened the discussion by thanking members for their organisations' contributions to the NPPF debate. This helped to ensure that adequate protections for the Historic Environment were not overlooked in the new draft.

EH's formal consultation response was submitted on Oct 17, 2011 in the form of a letter outlining our main points. Attached to the letter was a draft of the NPPF with EH's suggested tracked changes. EH's main points were:

- The NPPF's presumption in favour of 'sustainable development' was not clear in relation to other parts of the NPPF, specially the Historic Environment.
- The current draft policy did not address the full spectrum of 'harm' – only 'substantial harm' which is in effect a reduction of the existing protections afforded the historic environment.
- Neighbourhood Development Orders may pose a threat to undesignated archaeological assets of national importance
- There was no overt acknowledgement in the NPPF to the positive contribution that the historic environment already makes to places
- The presence of National Parks and AONBs were given 'great weight' in the decision-making process, but not the Historic Environment. The tiers of importance need clarifying.

The House of Commons Select Committee for the NPPF has endorsed EH's comments and agreed that more clarity is needed in the document, especially around the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

Timings for the NPPF: Government is currently working through over 13,000 substantive consultation responses on the Draft NPPF with the intention of having it ready to go in April 2012. Minister for CLG Greg Clarke has promised that the nearly-final version of the NPPF will be made public well before April 1, when it is expected to come into force.

Guidance: CLG have stated that published guidance which accompanies existing polices (such as PPS5) will not be struck off until it has been replaced. Therefore PPS5 Guidance will stand once the NPPF comes into force but will need to be 'translated'. It is hoped that new NPPF Guidance for the Historic Environment, endorsed by the National HEF, will be delivered by September 2012.

The Penfold Review has made many recommendations which support the reinvigoration of Heritage Protection Reform (HPR). The sector has already done much of the thinking behind the recommendations of the Penfold Review. Some of the key issues include:

- Review of List Descriptions: Penfold suggested that individual component parts of a building might be listed rather than a blanket listing on a whole building; or that list descriptions might be reviewed retrospectively to define that which is definitely of interest – the group discussed the possibility of applicants paying to have existing list descriptions updated or revised.
- Certificate of Immunity (COI): A COI is a certificate that states that a building is not considered listable for a period of five years (with the caveat that new information which contributes to the building's significance could be unearthed at any time). The recommendation from Penfold is that anyone

should be able to apply for COI for any building – it should no longer be restricted to just the owner.

- Statutory Management Agreements: Penfold suggests that management agreements for deemed Listed Building Consent are a good idea to remove a lot of the red tape and some sites. EH research and pilot projects in this area indicate that HPAs are not the solution for every site, but where the investment is made, they do prove to be good value in the long run.
- Conservation Area Consent for Demolition: Penfold recommends the removal of the requirement for Conservation Area Consent when demolishing unlisted buildings and integrating it into Planning Permission. EH supports this position, provided it becomes an offense to demolish without Planning Permission. There will invariably be questions about the definition of 'demolition' in this regard, and there may be another chance to regain the ground lost after the [Shimizu decision](#) all those years ago.

5. Other News and Updates from around the table

Association of Garden Trusts (AGT): TH reported that the AGT is moving towards a partnership with the Garden History Society on conservation activities. This is in order to utilise the local knowledge of the County Gardens Trusts for their areas and is also due to reduced GHS funding.

City of Winchester Trust, Hampshire Gardens Trust and Hampshire County Council have also jointly published a new publication called 'Winchester and its Setting'. The purpose of the document is to explain that *'the landscape surrounding the whole of the City has an importance that planning authorities should recognise... in Development Plans'*.

TH was also pleased to report that, as a result of HGT research and Eastleigh Borough Council actions, the Peach House in St Martin's Close Bishopstoke (one of the very few remaining) has now been listed. There is an application for Enabling Development in progress on the site to ensure that the building is repaired. Eastleigh Borough Council and the Hampshire Gardens Trust will be working closely on this.

HGT, CPRE and the Hampshire Buildings Trust are collaborating on an 'eyes and ears' initiative to provide early warnings of unsuitable development proposals. This will run in parallel with Mark Harrison's initiative to combat crime and anti-social behaviour as outlined in his talk at the last HEF in June 2011.

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF): SMcL was pleased to inform the group that as of April 2012, HLF will have its largest ever budget across the up - £375million. This is due to the end of funds being diverted to fund the Olympics as well as to unprecedented lottery ticket sales (blame the recession). The HLF's new Strategic Plan 2013-2019 will also be issued in May.

Priority areas are being reviewed in the South East - though the likely priority areas (traditionally coastal towns) are unlikely to change dramatically, the methodology for identifying these areas will soon have new criteria (such as Heritage Need) added to the existing criteria of local deprivation and low HLF spend.

Other HLF news included:

- New application forms coming in Autumn 2012. Existing forms will be revised to be simpler and more consistent
- Microgrants of £3- £10k are being reintroduced – a new equivalent of the ‘Awards for All’ grant which stopped a few years ago
- Repair Grants for Places of Worship (RGPoW) decisions are now being made by the HLF; Administration and monitoring are still being done by EH.
- Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THI) will be renamed and simplified, making it easier to grant aid individual buildings or clusters in an area.
- As of April 2012 application thresholds will be changing - this means sums applied for will have to be much higher before they are escalated to a National sift (£2m minimum).
- Also, ‘Your Heritage’ grant thresholds are going up from £50k to a maximum of £100k and ‘Young Roots’ grants will go up from £25k to £50k.
- In light of increased fund, HLF has also solicited further applications from existing grantees in the Skills 4 the Future fund.

Arts Council England (ACE): MC introduced himself to the group and reported that ACE is now responsible for the functions of the now-defunct MLA. This includes the ‘Renaissance’ Grants Programme. There were 5 applications from the South East. Results will be announced the week of Jan 23rd. This will also coincide with the launch of a new Museum Development Fund. A ‘Strategic Fund’ will also be launched later on in the summer.

Association of Local Government Archaeology Officers (ALGAO): DC reported that no LA Archaeology services had as yet been cut completely but that services had been reduced almost everywhere. Bucks appear to be the most dramatically understaffed at the moment, and also the LA with the most dramatic charging scheme. A government steer on LA charges for planning and development services is still awaited...

National Trust (NT): NS reported that the NT underwent a major restructure in 2011. Most significantly London and Thames & Chilterns have now been merged into the South East, with Hilary McGrady coming over from NT Northern Ireland to head up this new region. NS is Head of Conservation within that. There will be no big headquarters in the region, but five ‘hub’ offices: Polesden Lacey, Scotney Castle, Montisfont Abbey, Hughenden Manor and Queen Anne’s Gate in London.

The NT’s priorities for the region will include doing a small number of large projects well. These include Stowe, Knole and increasing a presence in London (by using smartphone apps, London Open Squares and by partnering with small independent London museums).

Natural England (NE): JS reported on the recent restructure at NE that has dispensed with ‘Regions’ and now has a national structure with a local flavour. It allows resources to be allocated more proactively. Other news included:

- Helen Phillips, NE’s Chief Executive will be leaving soon
- Environmental Stewardship money and buildings funds still exist and will continue to be spent because demand is higher than ever
- Nature Improvement Areas within the South East have increased from 12 to 20.
- Local Nature Partnerships are evolving well. JS is keen to speak to members of this group about engaging with this.
- The Common Agricultural Policy of 2014 is something to look out for – it is going to have a big impact on the delivery of NE’s funding and capacity with regards to the Historic Environment.

- NE is doing a scoping study to consider reviewing the boundaries of two AONBs (in Surrey and Suffolk). It is unlikely that these pilot studies will lead to a national roll-out or review.

Institute of historic Building Conservation (IHBC) South East: The IHBC annual school will be held in Winchester from the 21st to the 23rd of June. The theme this year is 'Significance'.

<http://www.ihbc.org.uk/news/schools/index.html>

The IfA annual conference is being held in Oxford on the 18-20 April. The theme is 'Working in Partnership'.

<http://www.archaeologists.net/conferences>

Association of Preservation Trusts (APT): JM reported that Portsmouth council are offering the Portsmouth Society a Grade II* building. It is unlikely that they will be able to take it on without some form of endowment.

South East Protected Landscapes (SEPL): RC sent apologies but sent details of the South East Sustainable Tourism Project called "Our Land". A project briefing note and flyer are attached with these minutes. The website is:

www.our-land.co.uk

The contact details for the 'Our Land' coordinator are:
Sarah Loftus (07785 932276); email: sarah@our-land.co.uk

English Heritage (EH):

AB reported on an online initiative he has been involved in called 'Communities of Practice'. The 'Historic Environment' forum has a growing membership and interesting threads, discussions and information-sharing opportunities.

TM reported that a new version of 'Constructive Conservation' is going to be produced this year which will focus on the contribution of Heritage to growth. She is in the process of collecting case studies to put forward for the South East.

EH Publications since last SE HEF Meeting:

- 'Heritage and Growth'
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/docs/heritage-and-growth.pdf>
- Heritage Counts 2011
<http://www.heritagecounts.org.uk/>
- Heritage At Risk 2011
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk/>
- Revised guidance on 'Stopping the Rot'
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/stoppingtherot/>
- Conservation Bulletin – 'Saving the Age of Industry'

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-bulletin-67/>

- New guidance on maintaining 'Vacant Historic Buildings'
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/vacanthistoricbuildings-summary/>
- 'Understanding Place: Character and Context in Local Planning'
http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/CSP_vg_final.pdf?1326687073
- 'Caring for Historic Graveyards and Cemetery Monuments'
<http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/caring-historic-graveyard-cemetery-mon.pdf?1326687073>
- Historic Environment Local Capacity Project, 3rd report:
<http://www.helm.org.uk/server/show/nav.21740>
- 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'
http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/The_setting_of_heritage_assets_english_heritage_guidance_October_2011.pdf?1326736646

Upcoming Events in the South East:

Date	Details	Contact
9 Feb 2012	Lime in New Build Seminar The Vyne, Basingstoke	TM
TBA March 2012	Two Heritage Counts Dissemination Events – targeting local amenity groups	TM
18 April 2012	Understanding Significance London	HELM
18-20 April 2012	IfA Annual Conference Oxford	IfA
21-22 April 2012	St. George's Day and Heritage Craft Skills Celebration The Vyne, Basingstoke	TM
25 April 2012	Understanding Significance Location TBA	HELM
14 June 2012	Alliance to Reduce Crime against Heritage awareness raising event Portsmouth	TM
21-23 June 2012	IHBC Annual School Winchester	IHBC
14 Oct 2012	Alliance to Reduce Crime against Heritage awareness-raising event London	TM
15 Nov 2012	Developing and Managing your Heritage Partnership Agreement London	HELM
21 Nov 2012	Marine Planning Location TBA	HELM

6. AOB

Date of next meeting: TBC