

# The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future



Cover picture:  
Restoration work on stone statues,  
Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire,  
(courtesy The National Trust)

# The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future

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## Foreword

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### **By the Rt Hon. Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the Rt Hon. Stephen Byers MP, Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions.**

England's historic environment is one of our greatest national resources. From prehistoric monuments to great country houses, from medieval churches to the towns of the Industrial Revolution, it is a uniquely rich and precious inheritance.

But it is about more than bricks and mortar. It embraces the landscape as a whole, both urban and rural, and the marine archaeology sites around our shores. It shows us how our own forebears lived. It embodies the history of all the communities who have made their home in this country. It is part of the wider public realm in which we can all participate.

This historic environment is something from which we can learn, something from which our economy benefits and something which can bring communities together in a shared sense of belonging. With sensitivity and imagination, it can be a stimulus to creative new architecture and design, a force for regeneration and a powerful contributor to people's quality of life.

But this environment is fragile. Successive governments have developed policies to protect it. Buildings are listed and archaeological sites scheduled. Substantial public funding is available for repair and refurbishment. A complex web of relationships has been established between the many national and local bodies which care for the treasures of the past and make them accessible to millions of people from home and abroad.

At the start of a new century it seems timely to look at existing policies and structures and to assess how well they are working and how they can be

improved. The publication of this Statement concludes the most wide-ranging review of policy in this area for several decades. The first stage was led by English Heritage, working with an unprecedented range of partner organisations from within the sector and more widely, and culminated in the *Power of Place* report in December 2000. That report has been of immense value, both in setting an agenda for action across the whole sector and in shaping the Government's own vision, and we pay tribute to all who were involved in its preparation. We welcome too the action that is already in hand within the sector to take forward its recommendations.

We are publishing this Statement at a time when the public's enthusiasm for the past is increasingly evident, not least in the strong media focus on archaeology and history. New, more creative approaches are being used to present historic sites and buildings to visitors and to engage a wider audience. Our heritage continues to be a massive draw for tourists. As such it makes a major contribution to the economy and underpins huge numbers of jobs, importantly in rural and deprived communities as well as in traditional economic centres. There is, however, much more to be done. Indeed this sector can be regarded as something of a sleeping giant both in cultural and economic terms. We need to find new ways of reaching and empowering excluded individuals and communities. We need to develop new policies to realise economic and educational potential through modernised structures and improved service delivery.

Achieving these objectives involves the use of many different policy instruments and the Statement

looks in detail at all of them: funding; legislation; policy guidance; delivery mechanisms; reprioritisation; and partnership working. It makes proposals to enable organisations to work better together and statutory regimes to operate more effectively. It looks at ways of enhancing the historic environment's contribution to education, both within the school curriculum and through lifelong learning, and of replenishing essential conservation skills. It responds to people's desire to broaden the definition of what should be valued and champions the role of historic assets in the development and regeneration processes and as a focus for community cohesion.

This document is far from being the end of the story. On the contrary, it is only the beginning of a major drive to unlock the full potential of our historic assets. The Government is currently carrying out fundamental reviews of both the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, which, once concluded, will shape the development of these two critically important bodies, putting them in strong positions to deliver this challenging agenda. We are publishing a Green Paper on the planning system, proposing measures to make the system more efficient, effective, customer-orientated and transparent. That will make local government better placed to deliver proactive help in developments affecting the historic environment.

This statement encompasses the full range of the Government's interest in the historic environment. Although the lead responsibility rests with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, other parts of Government have a

major interest in the subject and have taken part in the preparation of this document. Not least among these is the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whose involvement reflects the importance of the historic environment for rural areas and vice versa. Indeed, the White Paper *Our Countryside: The Future. A Fair Deal for Rural England*, published in November 2000, included a number of measures and initiatives of direct benefit to the historic environment. And while the Statement applies only to England, we are very much aware that many of the issues it addresses affect the whole of the United Kingdom and we are therefore keeping in touch with colleagues in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Our vision is ambitious. We have set out an agenda which can over time deliver more attractive towns and cities; a prosperous and sustainable countryside; world-class tourist attractions; new jobs; and learning, vibrant and self-confident communities. This is what we believe the historic environment can contribute to contemporary life. This is why we must continue to protect and sustain it, both for our own benefit and that of future generations.



Tessa Jowell



Stephen Byers

Tessa Jowell Stephen Byers



A NEW VISION

## The Historic Environment – A New Vision

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**1** The past is all around us. We live our lives, whether consciously or not, against a rich backdrop formed by historic buildings, landscapes and other physical survivals of our past. But the historic environment is more than just a matter of material remains. It is central to how we see ourselves and to our identity as individuals, communities and as a nation. It is a physical record of what our country is, how it came to be, its successes and failures. It is a collective memory, containing an infinity of stories, some ancient, some recent: stories written in stone, brick, wood, glass, steel; stories inscribed in the field patterns, hedgerows, designed landscapes and other features of the countryside. England's history is a gradual accumulation of movement and arrivals, new stories attaching themselves to old. Urban and rural landscapes reflect this layering of experience and develop their own distinct characteristics.

**2** Building materials and styles can define and bind regions, localities and communities just as potently as ethnic background, dialect or sporting loyalties. Historic landscapes or iconic buildings can become a focus of community identity and pride and proclaim that identity and pride to the wider world. The Royal Liver Building in Liverpool, Leeds Town Hall, Lincoln Cathedral, Clifton Suspension Bridge, the Backs at Cambridge, the dry-stone walls of the Dales, to name but a few, are all seen by residents and visitors alike as encapsulating the very essence of place. At a more local level a historic church or park can help define a neighbourhood and create a sense of local cohesion. Once lost, these defining features cannot be replaced.

**3** Internationally, the imprint of history on our environment is a powerful aspect of our image as a nation. And the value of this rich legacy as a magnet for tourists is massive in economic terms.



Main picture:  
Clevedon Pier, North Somerset.  
Newcastle Quayside regeneration.

## The Historic Environment – A New Vision

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**4** The importance we attach to our past shows itself in many different ways. The popularity of television programmes such as Channel 4's *Time Team* and the BBC's *History 2000* season is one indicator. The number of visits made to historic properties is another. In 1999-2000 English Heritage welcomed nearly 12 million visitors to its sites. No other heritage organisation in England can match the National Trust's membership of 2.7 million. Each year more and more people take advantage of Heritage Open Days to see for themselves, free of charge, a vast range of buildings around the country that are normally closed to the public or charge an admission fee. In 1999 more than a million visits were made to the 2,400 participating properties.

**5** The diversity of ways in which people experience or relate to our historic environment is one of its strengths. For some it is a medium for learning about the past; for others a visitor experience; for many it provides employment; for still more it provides a home or place of work; for everyone it is a contributor to overall quality of life. This diversity is reflected in the complexity of interests involved: individuals; communities; visitors; owners; the voluntary sector; business; central and local government.

**6** The interplay between these different interests creates a dynamism which has produced some exciting developments in recent years. Consider, for example, the massive strides taken to increase people's access to the historic environment, both physically and by way of electronic media. Ten years ago the concept of using a website, such as English Heritage's, to help with a school project on Hadrian's Wall would have been unimaginable. And the needs of people with disabilities are increasingly catered for at many sites across the country. Linked with this increased emphasis on accessibility, great strides have been made in realising the educational potential of historic sites, particularly for school-age children, and in developing a more inclusive approach to their presentation and interpretation. Substantial progress has also been made in recognising and harnessing the contribution that historic buildings can make to economic and community regeneration. English Heritage's Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme and the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative have both acted as important catalysts for community-led renewal and as a spur to wider investment, both public and private.

**7** Another important development has been the gradual widening of the definition of what people regard as their heritage and the way in which the national organisations have responded to this. The National Trust's purchase of Paul McCartney's childhood home in Liverpool was perhaps the most high-profile signal of this responsiveness, but the investment in urban parks and gardens and the preservation of back-to-back housing in Birmingham and Manchester are also significant.

**8** Up until now, Government policy towards the historic environment has been expressed mainly through formal planning guidance and the provision of funds to bodies such as English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Initiatives relating to the countryside have also played a significant role. Such functions are crucially important and will continue to occupy a central place in the delivery of policy. But there is a need now for Government both to articulate a more complete vision for the sector and to look systematically at the means of translating the vision into reality. That is what this Statement is about.

- 9** The Government looks to a future in which:
- public interest in the historic environment is matched by firm leadership, effective partnerships, and the development of a sound knowledge base from which to develop policies;
  - the full potential of the historic environment as a learning resource is realised;
  - the historic environment is accessible to everybody and is seen as something with which the whole of society can identify and engage;
  - the historic environment is protected and sustained for the benefit of our own and future generations;
  - the historic environment's importance as an economic asset is skilfully harnessed.

**10** This is a bold vision but an achievable one. The historic environment has much to contribute to the Government's wider agenda of creating and maintaining a sustainable environment alongside economic stability. Improving the quality of life in both urban and rural areas, by allowing people to feel a greater sense of ownership of and engagement with the places in which they live, work and play, is an important theme of the Government's 2002 Spending Review. The historic environment forms part of the wider local environment of streets and public spaces which the Government is committed to improving.

**11** The following chapters set out a detailed programme of action in support of the Government's vision. It is a programme which the Government itself will lead, but its implementation will depend on the partnership and support of a great many others, both individuals and organisations. It will require commitment, unity of purpose and receptiveness to new ideas and ways of working. It will involve making good use of all the available tools: legislation; funding; policy guidance; restructuring; and partnership working.

**12** *Power of Place* demonstrated that the sector could work together to excellent effect. We need now to build on that momentum and harness the commitment and expertise which have already been displayed. In this way we can quickly set about delivering the programme for change set out in this Statement and fulfil the vision of a historic environment standing at the very heart of our national life.



PROVIDING LEADERSHIP

## Providing Leadership

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**The task: to respond to public interest in the historic environment with firm leadership, effective partnerships and a sound knowledge base from which to develop policies.**

**1.1** The review of historic environment policies led by English Heritage and culminating in the *Power of Place* report was overseen by a steering group comprising more than twenty organisations. These organisations reflected the breadth and diversity of interest in historic environment policy and ranged from the National Trust to the Black Environment Network, from the British Property Federation to Groundwork UK. One of the key issues raised in *Power of Place* was the need for firm leadership. Just as the range of interests involved with the historic environment is diverse, so is the need for leadership. This chapter explores the role of leadership and the importance of partnership. *Power of Place* also emphasised that effective policy-making must always be underpinned by good quality evidence and this chapter therefore looks at ways in which the evidence base can be expanded and refined.

### Government leadership

**1.2** The issue of leadership begins with central Government itself. The historic environment is of significance across the whole field of Government policy, spanning economic development, education and training and rural affairs. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has the role of overall champion for the historic environment, while sharing with the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) responsibility for a number of key areas of policy, in particular the regulatory framework. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has a key policy role in respect of rural areas and in providing financial incentives and advice. None the less this is a Statement for the whole of Government. Given the span of issues and Departments which have an impact on the historic environment or vice versa, the Government acknowledges the need to develop a cross-Whitehall approach to promote awareness of the historic environment through all relevant Departments and maximise its contribution to the Government's programme as a whole.



Main picture:  
Hadrian's Wall, Cawfields.  
(courtesy Hadrian's Wall  
Tourism Partnership)

Divers from the Hampshire  
and Wight Trust for Maritime  
Archaeology excavating the  
Alum Bay Wreck off the Isle of Wight  
(courtesy Jonathan Adams)

## Providing Leadership

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To this end:

■ **The historic environment will be included as part of the remit of Green Ministers.**

The role of Green Ministers is to consider the impact of Government policies on sustainable development and to improve the performance of Government Departments in contributing to sustainable development. Drawing specific attention to the relevance of the historic environment will help ensure that it is taken into account in wider decision-making and thereby constitute an element of the Government's support for sustainable development. Green Ministers will also be responsible for ensuring that historic environment policies are taken into account in decisions concerning the use and development of the Government's own properties;

■ **DCMS, as lead sponsor Department, will involve DTLR and DEFRA in discussions about the strategic direction of English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund.**

This will include, where appropriate, agreeing funding priorities;

■ **DCMS will work with the devolved administrations to ensure that, where appropriate, the United Kingdom's interests in international fora are properly represented.**

### Local government leadership

**1.3** The part played by local authorities in the stewardship of the historic environment is of fundamental importance. Like Government, their role can be complex, and covers many different functions: custodian, regulator, grant-giver, rescuer of last resort. **The Government looks to local authorities to adopt a positive approach to the management of the historic environment within their area and the monitoring of its condition. It urges authorities to appoint champions for the historic environment within their management structures.**

**1.4** All local authorities stand to benefit from the skills of properly qualified conservation staff. The Government therefore supports the work currently being done by English Heritage and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation to assess current levels of conservation staff within local authorities. Elected members should also have the best possible training to enable them to make high-quality decisions on local historic environment issues. The issue of training is included within the guidance for councillors published as part of the Modernising Planning initiative and will be further considered in the Planning Green Paper. **The Government urges all local authorities to ensure that elected members have access to training in respect of the historic environment wherever it is needed.**

## English Heritage

**1.5** In 1998 the Government merged English Heritage with the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England and gave English Heritage the status of lead body for the sector. The intention was to create an organisation which would assume a leadership role as advocate for the sector, in implementing and interpreting Government policy and in developing strategic initiatives to benefit the whole sector. It was in this capacity that English Heritage was commissioned by the Government to lead the process which resulted in *Power of Place*.

**1.6 As part of its regular series of quinquennial reviews, the Government is once again examining the role and functions of English Heritage to assess its fitness for purpose.**

This presents an excellent opportunity to consider the extent to which English Heritage has developed its leadership role and how it might further develop its capacity in this respect. It also offers an opportunity to consider afresh how service delivery (to local authorities, owners and developers and other interests) might be improved. The Government and English Heritage regard the quinquennial review as the occasion to refocus the organisation in a way which will enable it to deliver the vision set out by the Government in this Statement, besides taking forward the agenda for the sector already formulated by *Power of Place*. The first stage of the review will be completed by the spring of 2002 and will inform the Government's 2002 Spending Review.

## Working in partnership

**1.7** The process which produced *Power of Place* demonstrated, if demonstration was necessary, that the historic environment sector has immense reserves of energy and commitment. It also confirmed that the sector is diverse and spans a huge range of interest groups, not all of whom would regard themselves as being primarily in the heritage business. It brought home more than ever the importance of the historic environment sector developing close partnerships with other interests: for example, the natural environment sector, the tourism industry and those involved in contemporary architecture. Just as the Government needs to bring together the various Departmental interests in the historic environment, so the sector needs both to strengthen its internal relationships and be prepared to work outside its traditional boundaries.

**1.8** English Heritage and its partners on the cross-sectoral *Power of Place* Steering Group are considering how best to build on the partnership working established during that process and harness the energies of the sector as a whole. **The Government has commissioned English Heritage, in consultation with partner organisations, to formulate a five-year strategy for the development of effective working relationships both within the historic environment sector and with other relevant interests.**

## Providing Leadership

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### Stonehenge World Heritage Site

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, English Heritage, the National Trust, English Nature, the Highways Agency, Wiltshire County Council and Salisbury District Council are all partners in an ambitious project to restore the dignity and isolation of Stonehenge, our greatest prehistoric monument, and enable people to enjoy and appreciate it fully.

When completed, the scheme will reunite Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments in their natural chalk downland landscape setting and provide radically improved visitor access to the World Heritage Site. To help visitors appreciate and interpret the monument and its setting, a new world-class visitor centre will be established outside the boundaries of the Site. This strongly led and coordinated approach will help ensure that Stonehenge is preserved and managed in a way befitting its international importance.

**1.9** This strategy will need to cover partnership working at both national and regional level. At regional level the Government will want to see English Heritage building on the work of the Regional Cultural Consortia and reflecting the move to greater regionalisation more generally.

### Expanding the knowledge base

**1.10** For all organisations concerned with the historic environment, a solid evidence base for policy-making is an essential. For grant-givers such as English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund, good quality research is vital to inform the direction of resources. For the Government and local authorities as legislators and regulators, evidence is crucial to the process both of framing policy and of evaluating its impact.

### Mapping the seabed

The Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology is involved in a number of projects which involve the mapping of underwater historical and archaeological material dating from different periods.

One scheme is a survey of the rich archaeology that has accumulated in Langstone Harbour over the centuries, including worked flints from the Mesolithic Age, flints and pottery from the Bronze Age, and a fully submerged circle of timbers from AD 740-780. The aim is to collect together a wide range of data covering as many aspects of the Harbour's history as possible. Central to this recording process is the development of a Geographic Information System as a means of holding, manipulating and displaying this diverse data in a way that will be accessible through a set of maps. This will enable records of the nature of the artefacts and their location to be combined with historical and environmental context information, thereby creating a rich multi-media research and interpretation tool. It will also allow the data to be easily accessible on the Internet.

**1.11** One of recommendations in *Power of Place* was that the Government should commission regular state of the historic environment reports to monitor the condition of our historic assets (whether or not formally designated), to assess the pressures facing them and to analyse their contribution to contemporary life in cultural, economic and social terms. Such reports would provide yardsticks with which to measure the achievements, not only of the sector itself but also of local government, business and local communities, in looking after the historic environment and enhancing its contribution to contemporary life. Achievements of local government might also contribute to the development of a Best Value indicator and also the scope for the historic environment featuring in the Beacon Councils scheme. **The Government supports the recommendation and has asked English Heritage to produce a pilot Historic Environment Report during 2002.**

**1.12** Research relating to the historic environment is undertaken by a wide range of organisations, both within the sector itself and elsewhere (for instance, in academic institutions). While acknowledging that a great deal of high-quality work has already been done or is currently in progress, the Government believes that a coordinated approach to research is essential if its full benefit is to be realised. **The Government has commissioned English Heritage, working with partner organisations, to frame a coordinated approach to research across the sector, with the aim of ensuring that needs are clearly identified, priorities established and duplication avoided.**

**1.13** The Sites and Monuments Records maintained by local authorities are acknowledged as an extremely valuable resource, with many potential uses. On one level they are essential to the effective operation of the planning system, but they also have the potential to be a powerful educational tool, both for the professional and academic users and for the wider public. The Government welcomes the recommendation in *Power of Place* that the service offered by these Records should be enhanced, that their scope should be more comprehensive, and that access to the information held should be facilitated through use of the electronic media.

**1.14** Sites and Monuments Records expanded and improved in this way could embrace historic buildings (both those statutorily listed and those of local interest), conservation areas, historic battlefields, and historic parks and gardens. In this way they would become comprehensive Historic Environment Record Centres. These would be significant developments and careful thought must be given to the technology involved in making electronic access to the expanded data widely available, given variations in the way the Records are currently operated. There are a number of models that might be adopted to provide a new system. **The Government will produce a consultation paper covering a range of options in the summer of 2002.**



REALISING EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL

## Realising Educational Potential

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**The task: to realise the full potential of the historic environment as a learning resource.**

**2.1** The historic environment has immense value as an educational resource, both as a learning experience in its own right and as a tool for other disciplines. Whether at school, in further and higher education or in later life, the fabric of the past constitutes a vast reservoir of knowledge and learning opportunities. This is as true of the oldest archaeological remains as it is of buildings of the last fifty years. The history of buildings and places is also the history of the age in which they originated and of the eras in which they flourished. They can tell us about the individuals and the institutions that created them and occupied them and about the societies and the local communities they served. Nor is the educational significance of the historic environment confined to the teaching of history. It is also relevant to subject areas as diverse as economics, geography, aesthetics, science,

technology and design. Buildings and places can also play a role in developing a sense of active citizenship; by learning about their own environment and how they can participate in its evolution, people feel a greater sense of belonging and engagement.

**2.2** On another level, preserving the fabric of the past requires knowledge and expertise. Half the annual turnover of the construction industry relates to repairs and maintenance. Training in traditional craft skills is essential to ensure that existing buildings are satisfactorily maintained. This is a mainstream economic activity and we need to address the current severe lack of skills by developing an integrated approach to conservation training to ensure that the necessary skills are fostered and passed on from generation to generation.

**Main picture:**

Children examining an historic artefact during school trip.

Excavations at Rivenhall Church, Essex

(courtesy Essex County Council)

Cathedral Camp restoration, Coventry Cathedral.

(courtesy Cathedral Camp)



## Realising Educational Potential

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### Lifelong learning

**2.3** The increasing public interest in local heritage, archaeology and genealogy demonstrates a keen appetite among all age-groups to learn about the past. The BBC's *History 2000* project made innovative links between television programmes and other resources, such as those available through libraries, museums and historic properties. The project encouraged many people to follow up their interests with site visits and further reading, and vividly demonstrated the role of the historic environment in promoting knowledge of and enthusiasm for the past. **The Government will work with English Heritage and the Learning and Skills Council to frame an action plan to increase opportunities for those who wish to develop their interests further, for example through further and higher education or vocational courses.**

**2.4** The highly successful annual Heritage Open Days give the public an opportunity to experience some of England's hidden architectural treasures. Other events such as National Archaeology Days, Architecture Week and Museums and Galleries Month have helped promote wider public awareness of these different aspects of our cultural life. **The Government will explore with English Heritage how best to develop the existing initiatives and whether this approach might now be extended to the historic environment as a whole in the form of an annual Historic Environment Week.**

### Heritage Open Days

Heritage Open Days are an immensely popular annual event. England's contribution to the Council of Europe's European Heritage Days initiative, Heritage Open Days, began in 1993 with 10,000 people taking advantage of free access to forty participating properties.

The event has now grown beyond all recognition. In 2000 nearly one million people took part, visiting 3,035 properties in England, more than ever before. Popular locations include Westenhanger Castle, Hythe, a partly ruinous fortified house, dating from the fourteenth century; North Lees Hall, Hathersage, believed to be the inspiration for Thornfield Hall in *Jane Eyre*; Queen Street Mill in Burnley, a steam-powered weaving shed with a coal-fired Lancashire boiler; Redbournbury Watermill, St Albans, a fully restored eighteenth century working watermill, producing stone ground organic flour; and the Sun Inn, Ipswich, a fifteenth century merchant's house.

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## School-age children

**2.5** English Heritage has a leading role in promoting the historic environment as a resource for use within the school curriculum. It has produced a wealth of educational material relating not only to its own properties but also to the historic environment more generally. It runs courses particularly directed at trainee and newly qualified teachers. And, as a member of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, English Heritage advises on material for the history curriculum, as well as on the citizenship component of the National Curriculum.

**2.6** Every child should have the opportunity to visit the widest possible range of historic sites. Over half a million children, students and teachers enjoy free admission annually to English Heritage sites on curriculum-based school trips. The National Trust works closely with schools and welcomes over 600,000 children to its properties every year. Valuable educational schemes are also operated by the Royal Parks Agency, Historic Royal Palaces and the Historic Houses Association.

### Whitehaven Citizenship Project

Whitehaven was a prosperous Georgian town but its economy declined during the later part of the twentieth century. The restoration and regeneration of the town centre, harbour and castle during the 1990s was led by the Whitehaven Development Company. Using the regeneration project, English Heritage has devised a study-programme for the citizenship curriculum, aimed at Key Stages 3 and 4.

The study programme takes a number of significant features in the town and suggests fieldwork, the use of museums, historic buildings and archives. A template has been laid down which could be transferred easily to other towns or cities. The programme provides many opportunities to develop skills and requires pupils to be engaged in the historical process: working independently, posing questions, devising theories and explanations (and testing them), analysing and evaluating sources, organising their material, and communicating it in a variety of forms. The local authority was the key partner in the study and has been highly supportive. The programme demonstrates that understanding the history of a place and its regeneration can be central to the teaching of citizenship.

## Realising Educational Potential

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**2.7** The Government is committed to providing universal free access to our national museums and galleries and, following the measures announced in the 2001 Budget, free entry became a reality for everyone from 1 December 2001. Having delivered on free access for children at the main national galleries and museums, **the Government will at an early opportunity consider, in consultation with relevant outside interests, how this principle might be extended to the historic environment sector.** Possible options include free entry for all children to properties in the care of English Heritage and other bodies funded by central Government; or, alternatively, a voucher scheme for schools to allow free access to any historic property, whether in public, charitable or private ownership.

**2.8** Visits to historic sites and buildings can really help history and other subjects come alive for young people, sparking their creativity and imagination. However, research into similar activities in the arts has shown that a poorly organised day trip can be counterproductive and put children off for life. A more effective approach is to build sustained relationships between schools and local historic sites, so that young people get the chance to work with conservationists, archaeologists and other heritage professionals on longer term projects. Innovative programmes such as the Heritage Lottery Fund's Young Roots scheme engage young people in heritage activities appropriate to their interests and age group.

**2.9** The Government's new Creative Partnerships programme, due to be launched in April 2002, will help broker and support schools projects right across the cultural, creative and heritage fields. The £40 million scheme will initially target schools in sixteen of the most disadvantaged areas in England. The historic environment sector and its many professionals have a huge amount to offer young people and to the Creative Partnerships programme, and **the Government would very much encourage historic environment organisations to get involved.**

### Gawthorpe Hall

The previous owner of Gawthorpe Hall in Lancashire, now owned by the National Trust, brought together a vast collection of Indian silks, which was used as inspiration for local mill workers making their own silk pieces. Building on this past, the National Trust is looking to broaden the appeal of Gawthorpe Hall by bringing the silk collection out of the basement and featuring it in an exhibition. Asian children from a nearby school have visited the property and are developing new interpretation of the labels in Urdu.

**2.10** There is a wide choice of published material which can assist both teachers and parents in developing children's interest in the historic environment. The Department for Education and Skills and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have produced a range of leaflets to assist parents in supporting their children on specific history topics. The Department's *Learning Journey* parents' guides to the National Curriculum emphasise how parents can support their children's history education through study of the local heritage. The Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE) has published *Our Street: Learning to See*, which encourages primary school pupils to appreciate their local surroundings. It has also produced *From One Street to Another* for the Council of Europe, showing the direct relevance of buildings to people's lives. **The Government will work with CABE to ensure the widest possible circulation for these publications.**

**2.11** Other cultural bodies have produced material for the National Curriculum which could be adapted for the historic environment. In particular, the British Film Institute's *Moving Images in the Classroom* shows how secondary school teachers can use the moving image as a resource in studying a wide range of curriculum subjects. **The Government has asked English Heritage to consider producing a comparable document for the historic environment.**

## E-learning and Culture Online

**2.12** Learning through the use of electronic media can help bring history to life. Though never a substitute for the experience of seeing a historic site at first hand, this approach can involve the provision of e-learning or self-managed learning opportunities for a wide range of people, including socially excluded or disadvantaged groups. The National Grid for Learning brings together websites which support education and lifelong learning. Virtual access to many individual historic properties is available through their websites and the 24 Hour Museum portal.

**2.13** The Government is establishing a new body, with the working title Culture Online, to widen access to all cultural sectors through the use of digital technology. It will complement the National Grid for Learning with information on, among other things, using the historic environment to enhance the National Curriculum. **English Heritage will work closely with Culture Online in unlocking the potential of e-learning.**

## Widening the perspective

**2.14** In recognition of the impact of David Anderson's report, *A Common Wealth*, which placed education firmly at the heart of the museum sector, a similar report has been commissioned to assess the provision of learning opportunities within the historic environment sector, including the role of information technology. The work is funded by the Attingham Trust and the results are expected in the autumn of 2002. **The Government fully supports this project as a potential catalyst for the further development of historic environment education.**

## Realising Educational Potential

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**2.15** In the meantime, to build on the initiatives and activities described in this document, **English Heritage will work closely with its partners to develop further the place of education within the historic environment sector. The Government will propose targets for increased activity in this area for inclusion in English Heritage's Funding Agreement for 2002-03.** For example, the Government will ask English Heritage to build on its current work to increase awareness among teachers of the relevance of the historic environment as a resource for the widest possible range of subjects. It will also look to English Heritage to develop a strategy towards lifelong learning (including the targeting of groups such as older learners, families and disadvantaged young people) and to promote the historic environment in vocational training for the leisure and tourism sector. English Heritage is a key member of the Sponsored Bodies Education Network, which has been established by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to develop a strategic approach by its sponsored bodies towards educational issues.

### Training in Craft Skills

**2.16** The Craft Skills Forum, led by UK SKILLS, comprises organisations with an interest in craft skills relating to the historic environment, such as stained glass conservation, stone-carving, thatching and dry-stone-walling. It seeks wider recognition of the importance of specialist traditional craft skills in sustaining the historic environment and in securing those skills for the future. One of its main priorities is to promote awareness of career development opportunities in schools, colleges and universities.

**2.17** The Building Skills Action Group, in partnership with English Heritage, the Construction Industry Training Board and other interests, aims to promote practical training in traditional construction skills, such as brick-laying, plastering and carpentry. Business and management skills are also important in making technical skills marketable. **As the sectoral lead body English Heritage will coordinate the work of these two groups and others working in the area to ensure a coherent approach to meeting skills requirements.**

**2.18** Several new education initiatives that offer good opportunities for developing training in craft skills. For example, new vocational GCSEs to be launched in 2002 will be supported by a programme of college and work placements, heralding a shift towards vocational courses and expanded opportunities for work-related learning. These, along with the Government's Modern Apprenticeships scheme for those aged 16 and over, will help young people learn craft skills. The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for addressing the education and training needs of those over 16. **The Government is exploring with the Learning and Skills Council how some planned Centres of Vocational Excellence could specialise in skills relevant to the historic environment.**

**2.19** To help address the skills gap in a wide range of areas, including conservation craft skills, the Heritage Lottery Fund actively encourages applicants for grants to include training elements within their applications, especially for specialist craft skills, and to provide apprenticeships and work placements which may not readily be covered by the Learning and Skills Council. Within the framework of the England Rural Development Programme, operated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, support is available under the Rural Enterprise Scheme and Vocational Training Scheme for projects which develop rural conservation and craft skills such as thatching, dry-stone-walling, hedge-laying and traditional building restoration. **The Government will encourage other grant-givers to give training a similar priority.**

### **Windsor Castle restoration**

In 1992 a large fire broke out in Windsor Castle, destroying nine of the principal state apartments and 100 other rooms. A major restoration project lasting five years was completed in November 1997. The project was the largest rebuilding project undertaken in the past century. Teams of skilled carpenters, plasters, upholsterers, stonemasons and seamstresses were employed, using skills some of which had been thought lost. Wood carvers recreated giltwood carvings in the drawing rooms. Plasterers used fragments of plaster salvaged from the fire to recreate the traditional ceiling and wall designs. Rather than replicating the state rooms as they were before the fire, the opportunity was taken to return the rooms to their original appearance. In St George's Hall the panelled roof was rebuilt with a brand new oak ceiling using traditional methods.

### **Site management and interpretation skills**

**2.20** In order to survive, visitor attractions must satisfy the needs and expectations of their customers. Customer care and interpretation skills are very important, and staff with a role to play in ensuring customer satisfaction must be supported in their development. Close attention must be given to the continued professional development of those running and managing historic attractions and this must include the fostering of skills in management, business management, marketing and fundraising.

**2.21** Many universities now provide courses on aspects of heritage or leisure management. **The Government has asked English Heritage to work with one or two major providers to develop courses which will match the skills required within the sector.**