

## The National Heritage List for England – Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some general FAQs on The National Heritage List for England:

### Q. What is The National Heritage List for England?

A. The National Heritage List for England is an online database, which, for the first time, brings together all nationally designated heritage assets in one place, including:

- Listed Buildings
- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Registered Battlefields
- Protected Wreck Sites

World Heritage Site records have also been added to The National Heritage List for England, but are inscribed by UNESCO.

You will also find current [Certificates of Immunity \(COI\)](#) and [Building Preservation Notices \(BPN\)](#) on the List. A COI prevents a building from being listed for five years from its date of issue. A BPN can be served by any local authority and is valid for six months, during which time the building is subject to the same protection as it would be if it were listed. Further information on COIs and BPNs is available on our website using the links above.

When you search on The National Heritage List for England you will find the relevant list entry which describes the asset and provides a copy of a map which indicates its location.

### Q. What do you mean by designated heritage assets?

A. World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Battlefields are all designated as heritage assets under the relevant legislation<sup>1</sup>. Designation is the process which we undertake to assess and make our recommendation to the Secretary of State (where necessary) for an asset to be added to The National Heritage List for England or an amendment be made to the List.

### Q. Why are you doing this now? Why hasn't such a database existed before?

A. Since 2002 the Government has been committed to working with English Heritage, local authorities and the wider historic environment sector to improve the way the heritage protection system works in the interests of everyone. This process is known as Heritage Protection Reform (HPR) and is an ongoing process which has seen many improvements made to the way we designate and manage the historic environment. Two of the main aims of HPR include:

- creating a unified approach to the historic environment
- making the designation process more open and accessible.

The National Heritage List for England is one important step towards a unified approach to the historic environment as it will hold all national designation records in one place (buildings,

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<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010)

archaeology, landscapes and wreck sites, as well as World Heritage Sites, COIs and BPNs) and anyone will be able to access the data it holds via the [English Heritage website](#) or [Heritage Gateway](#). This is a considerable advance on existing arrangements.

### Q. Is The National Heritage List for England the Statutory List?

A.

- For listed buildings the List is the statutory record.
- For scheduled monuments the statutory record is kept by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the record which appears on the List is a copy of this.
- Protected wreck sites are designated by Statutory Instrument; the information on the List has been extracted from the relevant Statutory Instrument.
- For Registered Parks and Gardens the List is the statutory record.
- Registered Battlefields are not a statutory designation, but the definitive record of their designation appears on the List.
- World Heritage Sites are inscribed by UNESCO, but a record of their designation appears on the List.

Without changes to the current legislation we still have to operate within the current legislative frameworks for listing, scheduling, registration and protected wreck sites (one of the main aims of Heritage Protection Reform is to unify all the current designation systems under one piece of legislation). Some powers of responsibility have been handed from the DCMS to English Heritage, but the Secretary of State still retains decision-making authority for listing, scheduling and the protection of wrecks.

### Q. How can I access The National Heritage List for England?

A. You can access The National Heritage List for England via the [English Heritage website](#) and cross-search the List data alongside other national and local historic environment datasets on the [Heritage Gateway](#).

### Q. How can I search for assets on The National Heritage List for England?

A. The List provides a number of search functions:

- You can enter keywords into a simple text-box search
- A map search is available to locate designated assets
- A more structured advanced search combining 'What', 'Where', 'When', 'Who' type queries is available
- Guidance on how to carry out your search is available via the [English Heritage website](#)

### Q. How do I know the records on The National Heritage List for England are up to date?

A. Once a decision to designate has been made; we will update The National Heritage List for England as appropriate and notify the owners, applicants and local authority. The record on the List will be updated nightly to provide refreshed data each day.

**Q. How can I apply for an asset to be designated?**

**A.** You can check to see if a heritage asset is already designated by searching [The National Heritage List for England](#).

If you wish to make an application please use our [online application form](#) available on our website. The online application form can be used to apply for all types of asset i.e. buildings, archaeology, designed landscapes, battlefields and wreck sites to be designated.

There is further guidance on our [website](#) about how to make a designation application and what information we need from you for your application to be progressed.

When an application is made, the application form is fed through to our casework database which means we can start the assessment process immediately and assess the application for national significance. Once a decision has been made to designate or amend a current entry, either by ourselves or by the Secretary of State, the new (or amended) entry will appear on the List

**Q. How can I ask for an entry on The National Heritage List for England to be amended if it is incorrect?**

**A.** Any request to amend a List entry has to be made via the [online application form](#). Please note that the amendment process is a formal one (we cannot just edit the List). We will therefore prioritise those requests where amendments amount to a significant revision of an asset's significance or legal standing (i.e. incorrect address).

**Q. My house isn't called that anymore, how can I get the list entry changed to reflect its current name?**

**A.** You will need to use our [online application form](#) to apply for an amendment to the entry on The National Heritage List for England. Guidance on how to fill out the form is also available on our website [www.english-heritage.org.uk/list](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/list).

**Q. I've sent you an e-mail with the correct address; can you not just make the change?**

**A.** Even one small correction to an entry on The National Heritage List for England is still amending the statutory record and will need to follow the same process as an initial application to designate. Priority will be given to the assessment of assets which are under threat of demolition, alteration, removal or salvage.

**Q. How will I find out whether something has been designated?**

**A.** The owner, applicant, and relevant local authorities will be notified when a change is made to the List; other members of the public will be able to use the search function of the List to see if the asset they are interested in has been added to the List.

**Q. What is so new about this online List? Don't [Listed Buildings Online \(LBOonline\)](#) and [Images of England](#) already provide this information?**

**A.** The National Heritage List for England makes available for the first time all nationally designated assets online in a searchable format. Previously we have had a searchable database of the 43 Registered Battlefields and LBOonline, which only displays listed building information but does not include mapping. Both the Registered Battlefield database and LBOonline will be replaced by the List, which brings together all national designations on one database.

The Images of England website displays information on some listed buildings (not all) and is a point-in-time record. It has not been updated with recent additions to the List and the photos on were taken between 1999 and 2008. The List description that accompanies each image is taken from February 2001 and any amendments to the List description since that time are not included. The National Heritage List for England will not contain photographs of the assets but Images of England will continue to exist.

**Q. Why are there no photos on The National Heritage List for England?**

**A.** The National Heritage List for England is a large database, to add and edit photos on the List would incur extra resources which we currently do not have available.

The [Images of England](#) website does provide images for a large number of listed buildings, but these images are a point-in-time record only (the photos were taken between 1999 and 2008 and are not updated).

**Q. I thought all heritage assets were graded at I, II\* or II, why do some heritage assets not have a grade at all?**

**A.** Not all heritage assets are graded; only listed buildings or registered parks and gardens are currently graded. Scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites and registered battlefields are not graded.

**Q. The List entry information I have printed off contained something called an 'asset grouping' – what is this? And why is there no information in this section?**

**A.** This is a new function which will be developed shortly. It will allow us to link List entries which are connected in some way i.e. a listed house and its separately registered garden. Not all entries on the List will be grouped in this way. Further information on this will be available in due course.

Asset grouping is not the same as group value, which can constitute the reason why something is nationally designated in the first place. When making a listing decision, the Secretary of State may take into account the extent to which the exterior contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms a part. This is generally known as group value.

**Q. I've just discovered my property is on The National Heritage List for England, I didn't even know it was protected, why didn't anyone consult with me?**

**A.** We now consult with owners on all applications to designate that are being taken forward for full assessment. Likewise we will notify owners of the decision of our assessment electronically, however it still remains the responsibility of the local authority to ensure the owner of a designated asset is aware of its designated status and the implications of this in terms of planning and consent applications.

Many years ago we weren't as good at consulting with, or notifying, owners and occupiers of designated heritage assets, with the responsibility falling to the local authority. For a number of years now we have improved our processes so they are more open and accessible and we will continue to do so.

**Q. I work for an amenity society, will you still notify us when something has been added or amended on The National Heritage List for England?**

**A.** We will continue to consult with relevant amenity societies as needed through the designation process; however amenity groups will no longer be directly notified of any changes to the List (unless of course they are the applicant/owner of the site in question). Information on the List will be updated nightly to provide refreshed data each day which anyone can access through The National Heritage List for England, if you are interested to know if a building or site has been added to the List you can check it on a daily basis.

**Questions if you work for a local authority:**

**Q. I work for a local authority: how do you intend to let us know of new additions to the List?**

**A.** We will continue to consult with local authorities on all applications to designate and notify you when a decision has been made on the application outcome, as we currently do. The big difference will be that in most cases we will notify you electronically, rather than by letter, of the fact that an asset has been added to The National Heritage List for England. We will no longer send out paper notifications for addition to your bound copies of the Lists known as greenbacks or bluebacks (if you have them), but you can still print the information from The National Heritage List for England and add these to your green/bluebacks if you prefer to maintain a paper copy.

**Q. Is an electronic copy of the list entry a 'true copy' of the list entry as it states in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990?**

**A.** The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 specifies copies of the list shall be certified as a true copy on behalf of the Secretary of State and "deposited" with local authorities. However, the Act does not explain what is meant by deposit. The Secretary of State retains decision making powers and English Heritage now has responsibility for ensuring this decision is passed onto local authorities. An email from English Heritage will be sufficient notification to a local authority of amendments or additions to the List. This demonstrates there is a procedure in place to officially and reliably inform local authorities of changes effective from a definitive date and which will constitute the deposit of the record with local authorities.

For scheduled monuments and Protected Wreck Sites, DCMS still retain the official record and what you see on the List is a copy of this. There is no commitment in legislation for any notification of Registered Parks, Gardens or Battlefields, therefore all notifications for additions/amendments to the List have been unified in one process and local authorities will now receive emails from English Heritage when a new addition (or amendment) is made to the List, be it a building or a battlefield.

**Q. I have heard reference being made to 'the Unified Designation System (UDS)'; what's the difference between this and The National Heritage List for England?**

**A.** The Unified Designation System (or UDS) is a database available to English Heritage staff only. It is the new, unified system to manage all designation casework, replacing the separate systems for listing, scheduling, registration and protected wreck sites that previously operated. The online application form will be linked to the UDS, so any applications received to designate historic assets will be processed in the UDS and inform The National Heritage List for England.

**Q. Won't many of the older designation entries look outdated on this new system?**

**A.** We are deliberately transferring existing designation records onto the new system, rather than starting afresh, as it would be a colossal enterprise to revise around 400,000 designation records from scratch. Many of the older designation entries are extremely cursory: something we freely acknowledge. The National Heritage List for England will contain the date that entries were added or amended. Modernising designations is an important area of future work for English Heritage, and we shall be revisiting areas and thematic subjects as resources allow.

**Q. Why are some assets mapped as points and some as polygons on the GIS map?**

**A.** The status of the map is different depending on the type of record that is being viewed on The National Heritage List for England. This will be made clear in the notes accompanying each record.

For all buildings listed prior to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011 (when the List went live) the map does not form part of the official record, but has been added later to assist in identification of the location of the site. The majority of listed buildings are identified with a point, but some have been outlined. These shapes were created with the intention of providing greater clarity about what is listed. However, they were not identified to consistent criteria. We feel this information will require re-assessment and updating to consistent standards before it can be included in the new online List. Therefore all buildings listed prior to the List going live will be marked with a polygon (a large triangle), until they are reviewed.

All maps for buildings listed from 4<sup>th</sup> April will form part of the list description and will result in a map of a building or buildings that is, or are, the principal listed building (depicted as a polygon). This cannot affect the extent of listing protection, which may go beyond the boundary on the map and include attached or curtilage buildings.

Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks, Gardens and Battlefields and World Heritage Sites all have maps as part of their official records and appear as polygons. The maps available with the official records on The National Heritage List for England are copies of those maps. Inaccuracies may have arisen in transcribing older hand-prepared maps to digital data based on the latest OS

maps. A direct copy of the official map can only be obtained by contacting the National Monuments Record (NMR).

Protected Wrecks are designated using geographic coordinates from which the map is produced. So, again, the map does not officially form part of the record, but is provided as a means of assisting identification.

Even maps that form part of the official record are only part of the evidence of what is protected and are therefore not the only definition of what is designated.

The different asset types will continue to be available as separate datasets via the NMR Data Download Area (<http://services.english-heritage.org.uk/NMRDataDownload>).

**Q. Do the maps for Listed buildings indicate curtilage structures?**

**A.** For all list entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings. For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

The definition of curtilage is a matter for local authorities. Whether a structure falls within the curtilage of a listed building may require advice ahead of any planning application or acquisition. Structures covered by curtilage might include walls, gates, railings, gatehouses, stables, statues, etc. To demolish, alter or move any such structure, you will need to apply for listed building consent from the relevant local planning authority.

**Q. What has happened to the previous reference numbers you used? You now seem to be using a different numbering system.**

**A.** The National Heritage List for England provides information on *all* nationally designated assets and therefore each entry on the List has been given a unique reference number. The entry for an asset will mention any previous reference numbers associated with the heritage asset and you will be able to search the List using the previous reference numbers to find the list entry you are looking for.

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact  
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