

People are interested in the historic environment. They want to learn about it. They want to help define it. They want their children to be taught about it. They want to be involved in decisions affecting it. They want to take part.

But many feel powerless and excluded. The historical contribution of their group in society is not celebrated. Their personal heritage does not appear to be taken into account by those who take decisions. It is difficult to get hold of information about how decisions are taken.

If the barriers to involvement can be overcome, the historic environment has the potential to strengthen the sense of community and provide a solid basis for neighbourhood renewal. This is the power of place.

The thirst for education

Priority should be given to schools. This will establish long-term foundation and lifelong interest. Parents also respond to the interests and knowledge children bring home from school.

Save Britain's Heritage

Education in schools and universities to introduce the historic environment in the context of a multi-cultural society is important because young people are already there – and this captive audience's attitudes can be shaped for life.

Black Environment Network

61 When people were asked by MORI how they would spend £100 on one aspect of the heritage, by far the most popular choice, for 22%, was education programmes for schools.

62 History, understood in an ordered, chronological framework, lies at the heart of the National Curriculum. The study of history is incomplete if it does not take into account the physical evidence. But the historic environment is not just relevant to history. It is cross-curricular, relating equally to geography, environmental science, art and design. Knowledge of the planning system and the management of change is directly relevant to citizenship.

63 The study of history is incomplete if it does not take into account the way the historic environment reflects the multi-cultural and many-layered development of England. Education drawing on the historic environment can and must reflect an inclusive view of our contemporary multi-cultural society.

64 There are plenty of pointers in the curriculum to allow teachers to help pupils understand places and their significance. The main barriers are a lack of trained teachers and a lack of resources for field study. The first can be overcome by emphasising the role of the historic

Recommendation 8

Place the historic environment at the heart of education

For the Government:

- a Integrate historic environment teaching with related subjects such as citizenship, geography, environmental science, architecture and design in the National Curriculum in ways that reflect our contemporary multi-cultural society
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For the education sector:

- b Emphasise the role of the historic environment in teacher training and develop the necessary skills and teaching resources, reflecting the multi-cultural society
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For the heritage sector:

- c Provide guidance for owners on educational programmes which acknowledge the contributions, values and needs of different social groups
 - d Work with museums, archives and community groups to support life-long learning
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For owners:

- e Provide facilities and educational material to encourage visits by schools and community groups



Photo: English Heritage



Photo: English Heritage

**Case Study 11
Marsden, West Yorkshire**

In summer 2000, pupils from two junior schools in the Pennine Rural Development Area studied aspects of their towns, Marsden and Slaithwaite, and possible developments over the next 10 years, and filmed short videos which were shown to parents and planners. Their suggestions are being considered by the regeneration working parties for the towns. An excellent cross-curricular pilot citizenship project, this is a model for such work.

**Case Study 12
Whitby Abbey, North Yorkshire**

Children from Bradford work on identifying similarities in design between the Abbey and their own mosque and produce 'stained glass window' lightboxes for an exhibition.



Photo: Trustees of the V&A

**Case Study 13
Shamiana, the Mughal Tent project, Victoria and Albert Museum, London**

Asian women who have never before been in a museum work on panels in the Mughal style inspired by the collection in the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art at the V&A. Over 800 women became involved in the project and 56 panels of their work were displayed in a specially constructed Mughal tent in 1997. Successful outreach work continues with different ethnic and religious communities, and includes literacy projects with refugees. The recent *Art of the Sikh Kingdoms* exhibition brought thousands of Sikhs to the museum; 70% had never before been to the V&A and 40% had never visited a museum.

environment in teacher training; the second, at least in part, by providing additional support for school visits and field trips. Heritage attractions themselves should provide facilities and educational material for school visits.

65 Educational work should also target life-long learning. Bodies such as English Heritage and the National Trust, with established educational programmes, can provide a lead for the rest of the sector. So too can many museums and archives, which hold collections and records relating directly to the historic environment. There are many local opportunities for educational programmes to be developed which link the wider heritage sector and involve community groups.

Broadening audiences and widening understanding

66 The historic environment is part of everyday culture. It is accessible to everyone. It is around us every time we travel to work, drive to the supermarket or go to school. Studying it, being able to read and interpret it, enriches people's lives as much as literature, music, or history. Access creates interest, interest stimulates understanding, understanding brings enjoyment, enjoyment leads to commitment. All contribute to the quality of life.

Recently we went to Northampton. I thought it was lovely, the old buildings, the Council, beautiful buildings, and a couple of museums there, a theatre. And the entire city itself, walking in there, acting as complete foreigners, it was nice.

MORI ethnic minority focus group

67 The MORI survey identified that 98% of the population think that the heritage is important in teaching us about the past, and that 76% think that their own lives are richer because of it. But many people feel excluded from a full appreciation of England's cultural richness and diversity. They think that their heritage – the things they themselves value in their environment – are ignored, and that their contributions and experiences are neglected.

I am British, but no one is going to come and see my heritage in this country.

MORI ethnic minority focus group

68 Our appreciation of the historic environment is broader than it used to be. Seventy-three per cent of the population disagrees with the statement that 'only great architecture and buildings count as heritage' and 69% disagree that 'nothing after 1950 counts as heritage'. Our environment includes places of importance to everyone in society. It includes mosques, synagogues and temples as well as churches, chapels and cathedrals.

People need coaxing to notice and understand the components of their locality – street names, elements of their home, cultural memory, places of worship, green spaces – they all have stories.

Black Environment Network

Talking from my own personal experience it is the way you are treated. Obviously I have a quest for knowledge, and I start asking questions but they don't have time for me. What is the reason, is it the colour of my skin or whatever, I don't know exactly. But what I am trying to say is when I started asking questions and I said 'what is this?' probably the person who was there to explain did not know, but you feel there isn't the warmth of welcome.

MORI ethnic minority focus group

69 In the MORI survey, many people expressed interest in the heritage but nevertheless felt excluded from it. Many people believe that heritage provision in England does not adequately represent certain groups. Three in four believe that the contribution of Black and Asian people is not adequately represented – a figure that is even higher among people from those backgrounds. Only a quarter of Black people said they had made a special trip to the countryside in the past year, and both Black and Asian people were less likely than White people to visit stately homes. Perceptions of a lack of welcome are significant and should be taken to heart by public and private owners alike.

70 Museums, libraries and archives are central to any initiative to introduce people to the historic environment. Archaeological collections are essential to interpret sites and field monuments. Social history collections explain how buildings were used. Rural life museums hold tools that help explain the history of the countryside. Some museums and galleries are housed in historic buildings. In some cases, a whole historic entity – a building in its land-



Photo: National Trust

Case Study 14
The National Trust's
Inner City Project

Volunteers in the National Trust are running a pilot project in Newcastle upon Tyne to increase opportunities for engagement with the historic environment. Disadvantaged inner city residents participate in a range of activities, starting locally and leading to visits to the countryside. Benefits include older people returning to learning and young people learning new skills. A model of information and guidance for youth and community groups, it creates new opportunities for access to the historic environment and strengthens communities.

Case Study 15
Great Yarmouth,
South Quay

A co-ordinated heritage strategy has been developed in a unique partnership between the Norfolk Museums Service, the National Trust, English Heritage, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Council. As well as helping to regenerate the historic core of a seaport suffering severely from the decline of the fishing industry, the strategy has been instrumental in restoring the town's pride in its own history. An oral history project has recorded the memories of people who lived in the town's historic rows before the Second World War, when the area was severely damaged by bombing. Local schools have taken part enthusiastically in educational work. Vandalism, formerly a serious problem, has been reduced. The town's museums and historic properties are now working together to interpret its history in an integrated way. Great Yarmouth's distinctive architectural character, like its historical dependence on the herring industry, has more in common with the seaports and fishing ports of the Low Countries than with inland East Anglia.

scape with its contents – is managed as a museum. Local studies libraries are an invaluable resource. County record offices hold deeds, maps and other local records. Regional Cultural Consortia have an important role to play in identifying the opportunities for cross-sectoral working, which need to be reflected in both regional and local museums and archive strategies.

71 Other people find themselves excluded from enjoying aspects of the historic environment as a result of disabilities. This covers access to information as well as intellectual and physical access to historic properties. English Heritage has developed best practice guidance in the difficult area of reconciling the needs of people with disabilities with alteration to historic fabric. *Easy Access to Historic Properties* gives owners and managers of historic properties advice about enabling people with disabilities to enjoy them in an easy and dignified way. The Disability Rights Commission expects that, with the Disability Rights Act coming fully into force in 2004, best practice in considering the needs of people with disabilities will soon become normal practice.

Recommendation 9

Remove barriers to access

For Regional Cultural Consortia:

- a Ensure that regional and local cultural strategies
 - identify and address previously neglected influences on the historic environment; and
 - identify opportunities to improve access to information
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For the heritage sector:

- b Find out what people value about their historic environment and why, and take this into account in assessing significance
 - c Work with museums, libraries and archives to widen access
 - d Work with excluded groups to develop access policy and practice
 - e Continue to develop best practice guidance for owners of historic properties on physical access
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For owners:

- f Draw up access programmes to attract new audiences
- g Ensure that people with disabilities can visit and enjoy historic properties in an easy and dignified way

Real participation in decisions

72 No-one should be excluded from benefiting from the historic environment. It has the potential to be both inclusive and unifying. But people feel excluded from decisions affecting it. Involvement, far from creating opposition to change, enables views to be exchanged and radical options to be considered rationally.

There is no encouragement. Who makes up this panel, who decides on the panel? People don't know English Heritage exists. I know it does, but how do you get in touch with them and say 'what about this building?' Perhaps you need more information from them.

MORI ethnic minority focus group

I think if you are made to feel welcome then you would feel better about having a voice and speaking up, if we thought it would make a difference.

MORI ethnic minority focus group

73 Involving people means working locally, project by project, community by community. It takes time and effort, but brings long-term reward. It means creating trust and sharing knowledge. It means reaching out to ethnic groups who feel that their role in history as well as their own heritage is not adequately represented.

74 Architecture Centres and initiatives like the Hackney Building Exploratory need to be set up across the country to work actively with local communities, stimulating interest and offering

the opportunity to appreciate the present and shape the future.

Work relating to small excluded social groups such as ethnic groups is not about favouring these groups. It is part of shaping a society we can all be proud of. The emergent holistic history will belong to everyone.

Black Environment Network

75 The planning system allows public participation but does not promote inclusion. Official announcements in local newspapers are largely unread. Public notices are written in difficult language, do not explain the proposals and usually invite people to examine plans in a local authority office, often some distance away, at times difficult for working people. The Government should look urgently at ways of improving consultation and participation procedures as part of its *Modernising Planning Initiative*. Against this background, a community strategy drawn up by a Local Strategic Partnership could be a powerful tool for community involvement. Local amenity societies, too, should reach out to include people currently detached from the planning process.

76 Some of the most successful examples of community participation have been in rural areas. The process has generated a real sense of community ownership.

Recommendation 10

Enable more people to participate

For the Government:

- a Give a higher priority to improving consultation and participation procedures as part of its *Modernising Planning Initiative*
- b Encourage Lottery distributors and Regional Development Agencies to support Architecture Centres

For local government:

- c Provide support for local Architecture Centres

For the heritage sector:

- d Work with local authorities to draw up programmes to engage people currently excluded from the planning process



Photo: Hackney Building Exploratory

**Case Study 16
Hackney Building Exploratory, London**

This model for low-cost, hands-on centres helps local communities to develop a sense of place, allows them to become better informed and enables them to express their views about their neighbourhood. Here, children are engaged in fitting together a jigsaw of London boroughs. Energy and enthusiastic organisers are more important than money in driving such projects.



Photo: Boris Bagg

**Case Study 17
Granada Cinema, Tooting, South London**

The public are invited to comment on all thematic listing proposals. In 1999, 32 cinemas were listed after a three-month public consultation, during which more than 450 letters of support and encouragement were received from members of the public. At first sight controversial, the cinemas listing initiative has been hugely popular, often among people with no pre-existing interest in historic buildings. The Granada, Tooting, London, is the only cinema to be listed Grade I.

People power

There are more members of the National Trust than of all the national political parties put together. The national amenity societies enjoy a statutory role in the planning process and have done so since 1972. The membership of civic societies and civic trusts runs to over 300,000 people. Many historic buildings are owned by charitable trusts, including building preservation trusts, which are dependent on the ability and willingness of hundreds of people to accept the challenge and risk of becoming a trustee... the country's 16,000 parish churches depend on a congregation and churchwardens.

Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies

The established amenity societies are seen by significant numbers of people as exclusive and remote to their lives.

Black Environment Network

77 The strength and depth of voluntary involvement in the historic environment in England is envied throughout the world. It is unique. The voluntary sector has been a spur to public action and a rich source of new insights.

- The National Trust, with its broad membership base built up over many decades, is a uniquely powerful force for conservation. The numbers of members actively involved in voluntary work at its houses, museums and other sites has increased by 100% to 40,000 since 1991.
- Britain's oldest amenity society, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, founded in 1877, was instrumental in bringing about the existing conservation legislation.
- The Victorian Society was instrumental in getting the value of nineteenth-century buildings recognised.
- The Twentieth Century Society helped to make the Modern Movement respectable.
- Many sites and buildings have been saved by the voluntary sector and continue to be looked after by volunteers.
- RESCUE led the campaign to secure funding

for the rescue recording of archaeological sites threatened by development.

- The voluntary sector has been a dominant force in archaeology for over a century. The journals of county societies still carry a significant proportion of academic archaeological publication.
- The Sensory Trust works to enable people with physical challenges and disabilities to participate fully in their environment.
- Ethnic community groups work with minimal resources to celebrate their own languages and culture, giving our cities, in particular, local areas of specific cultural character.
- Innovative organisations such as Black Environment Network represent and link ethnic interests across sectors, and promote participation by all in a multi-cultural society.
- Members of faith communities care for many of the most valued historic buildings in the country.
- More than 35,000 community-based volunteers are involved in planning and staffing the annual Heritage Open Days organised by the Civic Trust.

78 This voluntary energy and commitment deserves to be sustained and supported for the future. There has been no recent study of the voluntary sector's needs and potential. Some national and local societies are already realising the benefits of being less fragmented, less defensive and more inclusive.

Recommendation 11

Support the voluntary sector

For the heritage sector:

- a Initiate a detailed review of the needs and potential of the voluntary sector