

PRESS RELEASE



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IFA REACTION TO ENGLISH HERITAGE NEW MODEL ANNOUNCEMENT

News summary

IfA congratulates English Heritage on having successfully negotiated its future governance and funding with UK government. Discussions have been protracted, but statements issued today indicate that they have been productive. There is significantly improved investment promised for the English Heritage charity (a new body to manage properties in Government care); and there are some reassuring commitments to the future funding security of Historic England (the new name for the body that will continue all the other valued functions currently provided by English Heritage).

Full statement

As planned, the current structure will be reformed. The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England retains its statutory responsibilities under the National Heritage Act 1983 for 'securing the preservation' of ancient monuments and historic buildings and for advancing knowledge and promoting public enjoyment of them. The Commission will directly manage its championing, capacity building, research, advisory and designation functions by trading as Historic England; and it will help Government meet its responsibilities for conserving and presenting the 240 properties it owns or manages through an independent charity, English Heritage.

The changes are made possible by a one-off grant by Government of £52m to address the most pressing demands of the conservation backlog, £28m to improve the standard of interpretation at important sites and make them more attractive visitor propositions, and £8.5m towards transition costs. The business model sets out a future in which this investment is expected to remove the need for Government subsidy of English Heritage by 2022-23: until then a declining annual grant will be administered by HBMCE.

During consultation on earlier proposals, IfA supported the principles behind the new model, which provides greater clarity of purpose for Historic England and allows Government to work towards self-sufficient management of the properties it is responsible for. With others, though, we expressed concern that the separation might not be complete enough, raising questions about the detail of governance arrangements and the robustness of the financial firewall around Historic England's grant-in-aid in the event of any failure by the English Heritage charity to meet its ambitious financial targets.

The statements issued by the Secretary of State ([link below](#)) and English Heritage ([link below](#)) make clear that HBMCE's financial responsibilities to English Heritage will be removed over the eight-year period to 2022-23. In essence, any financial problems encountered by EH will be for Government to sort out, not HE. In another very positive move, Government has promised no reduction to HE

funding for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 settlements – not the eight-year guarantee that the Commission sought but probably as good a deal as could be secured in the present climate and at this stage of the Westminster election cycle, and far better than the punitive cuts of recent spending rounds.

IfA will study the published documents carefully and will continue to monitor the governance and funding arrangements as they bed in over the years: as always we will be ready to protest any further disproportionate cuts to HE revenue funding and to provide briefings to political and press allies in any such event. In the meantime we hope that the way is now clear for the rapid appointment of governance posts, and for formal consultation on the all-important corporate plan for Historic England.

LINKS TO FURTHER INFORMATION

IfA website	www.archaeologists.net
Statement issued by Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy, Ed Vaizey MP	www.gov.uk/government/news/new-model-for-english-heritage-moves-a-step-closer-following-consultation
Letter from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport	www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/363662/Secretary_of_State_s_letter.pdf
Summary of the business case presented by EH, January 2014	www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/363589/EH_New_Model_Summary_Business_Case.pdf
IfA response to consultation on the new model for EH 17/02/2014	www.archaeologists.net/news/140217-ifa-response-consultation-new-model-english-heritage

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FURTHER INFORMATION

The Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) is the leading professional body representing archaeologists working in the UK and overseas. We promote high professional standards and strong ethics in archaeological practice, to maximise the benefits that archaeologists bring to society. Members of IfA are professionally accredited and skilled in the study and care of the historic environment.

Further information about IfA and *IfA Standards and guidance* can be found at www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa.