

First steps in... Conservation



February 2009

Visit our website www.hlf.org.uk for copies of our application materials and to make an application online.

You can get more copies of this guidance by:

- downloading it from www.hlf.org.uk;
- emailing enquire@hlf.org.uk;
- phoning our helpline on 020 7591 6042;
- contacting us by textphone on 020 7591 6255; or
- using TextDirect 18001 020 7591 6042.

If you require a copy of this guidance in an alternative format (large print, braille, or audio version), or if your first language is not English, we can provide it in the appropriate format or language if you ask us. It is also available in Welsh.

1 Introduction

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund sustains and transforms a wide range of the UK's heritage for present and future generations to experience, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks, and historic places to archaeology, wildlife and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage and help more people take part and make decisions about its future.

We give grants to support a wide range of projects involving the local, regional and national heritage of the United Kingdom. We have three main aims.

To receive a grant your project must:

- Help people to learn about their own and other people's heritage.

Your project must also do either or both of the following:

- Conserve the UK's heritage for present and future generations to experience and enjoy.
- Help more people, and a wider range of people, to take an active part in and make decisions about heritage.

If you are thinking about making an application to our **Your Heritage** programme (grants £3,000-£50,000) or **Young Roots** programme (grants £3,000 – £25,000 for projects led by 13-25 year olds) this short guidance explains how your project can meet our aim in the second bullet point above, which we refer to as our **conservation** aim.

2 What do we mean by conservation?

Heritage is anything we have inherited from the past and want to hand onto the future. It can include historic buildings, landscapes, collections, transport items or sites, as well as collections and biodiversity, and intangible heritage such as oral history.

By 'conservation' we mean looking after heritage items. There are four main ways you can do this:

- helping people understand the heritage better, and keeping good records of conservation work that has been done;
- bringing heritage items, collections, sites, species or places into a good state of repair or better condition;
- creating a new use for a heritage site or building which will help sustain it in the long term;
- putting in place plans, policies and skills to help manage and maintain heritage better.

Your project might do one of these things or a combination of them depending on its size and nature.

Every project must also help people to learn about their own and other people's heritage. Although you do not have to do activities that help people take an active part in heritage if you are carrying out work that meets our aim for conservation, we

do encourage you to think about this. For example, consider whether there could be opportunities to involve the public in the conservation activity itself.

Some heritage activities, such as archaeological excavation or experimenting with historic technology, do not involve conserving existing heritage. HLF can only consider such projects if they help people to learn about their own and other people's heritage, and help more people to take an active part in and make decisions about the heritage.

3 Understanding heritage better

What you might do

Understanding the heritage is the first step in looking after it, and keeping good records of what you have found is one of the last steps. Before you do any work to the heritage it is important to understand it first. For example, you could:

- survey wildlife or planting;
- do a geophysical survey;
- draw a building, landscape or archaeological features;
- research the history of a painting or artefact;
- study historical sources including maps, manuscripts and other documents;
- collect and archive oral history or memories;
- investigate buried remains or hidden features in a building;
- undertake chemical analysis or other scientific investigation;
- gather expert views.

Issues to consider

In planning your project you should think about:

- how the heritage will be used and who by;
- whether you need permission, for example to be on land or to work on a protected site or with a protected species;
- whether you need a specialist or you can do the work yourselves or with volunteers;
- whether any volunteers will need training;
- how you will keep records, and where will those records be kept; and
- what will you do with any finds or other material resulting from the project.

If you are intending to work on a local wildlife site or archaeological site, you should speak to your local authority or their advisor first. You could also contact other groups who have done similar work for advice.

If you need a condition survey you should talk to an architect, surveyor, ecologist, conservator or other professional with experience in your kind of heritage.

Our guidance *First steps in participation* will help you think about involving people in the work.

4 Doing repairs or other work to stop heritage deteriorating and bring it into better condition

What you might do

Most heritage deteriorates over time and needs to be repaired. Here are some examples of repair or restoration work:

- paper conservation in an archive;
- repairing a canal lock, historic bus, stile or boundary wall;
- laying hedges;
- making a ruin safe and ensuring it does not deteriorate further.

Issues to consider

- **Get advice** – before doing any work you should talk to your local authority heritage or wildlife service, or your local museum service or other groups who have done similar work.
- **Specialist help** - it is very easy to damage heritage sites by using the wrong materials or techniques or to do unintentional harm to wildlife. If you are repairing or restoring heritage you will almost certainly need specialist advice, and you may need to employ a heritage professional such as an architect or surveyor with experience in historic buildings, a conservator, an ecological or landscape advisor or someone with expertise in transport heritage. You may also need specialist help with archaeology. Our guidance *Thinking about conservation* provides a list of specialist organisations that may be able to help.
- **Employing contractors** - they will help you to draw up a specification for the work, so that you can then get costs from contractors (or brief your volunteers). If you are using contractors it is vital that they have relevant heritage skills and experience. Be aware that many builders (including both big and small companies) do not know about traditional building techniques and materials. If the work you are doing will cost more than £10,000 you will need to get three tenders for it. It is important to get value for money, which means making sure that the contractor has the right skills and knowledge, as well as looking at price.
- **Training volunteers** - If you will be doing the work with a team of volunteers it is even more important that they have the right skills, training and support, so that they can do the best possible job. You can include the cost of training in your project as well as the cost of specialist help.
- **Staying involved** – even if you have a specialist advisor it is important that you and your organisation stay closely involved in the work to make sure that it meets your needs.
- **Evaluation** – one of the best ways of helping your organisation and others is to evaluate your project afterwards to find out what went well and what you learnt from it. You can include the cost of evaluation in your project.

5 New uses for historic buildings and new work that can sustain heritage

What you might do

HLF will not pay for new buildings unless they are part of an existing heritage site or are for a collection of recognised importance. However, HLF can help with the cost of finding new uses for historic buildings, or doing new work that will contribute to the long term sustainability of a historic site. For example, we might fund:

- new access to a landscape such as level pathways;
- new facilities such as interpretation space associated with a historic ship;
- adapting a historic building to a new use;
- new services or facilities that enable people to experience and enjoy heritage such as lifts, toilets and cafes (provided they are part of a more broadly-based project);
- the restoration of features or habitats that have been lost;
- laying a new hedge; or
- new storage or display space for collections.

Issues to consider

All the issues that you need to think about when repairing a heritage site are also relevant to thinking about new work.

In addition, there are five steps to thinking about any new work on a heritage site:

1. Is there a clear need and justification for the new work?
2. What will the impact be on the heritage?
3. Do you understand the heritage well enough to plan the new work, or do you need more research or surveys (see above)?
4. Do the benefits for the heritage outweigh the risks?
5. How will you avoid any risks?

Even if the work will clearly benefit heritage, you will still need to be careful not to harm it or put it at risk. For example, repairing a roof could harm nesting bats. You will need to think about ways of avoiding harm when you are designing new work. We will not fund new buildings if there is an existing building that can be used.

We welcome projects that improve access to heritage as part of a wider project and providing you have met your existing obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act. We also recognise that it can be difficult to provide physical access to some historic sites or buildings, and you may need to find alternative ways of providing access, for example through the use of new technology.

6 Maintenance and management

Once your project has ended, we will expect you to maintain and manage the heritage that we have funded. This is particularly important if your heritage was in a very poor condition before your project began. Maintenance is the routine work that you need to do to keep heritage in good condition, such as:

- sweeping paths in a park;
- cleaning out the gutters and drains of a building;
- removing weeds from archaeological remains;
- mowing grass; or
- housekeeping such as dusting and cleaning.

Management involves making sure that your organisation has policies and procedures to look after the heritage.

Although we do not ask you to prepare a written plan for management and maintenance if you are doing a project under our Your Heritage or Young Roots programmes, it is a good idea to make sure that you know how to look after your heritage once your project has finished, and that you have the resources and the skills to do that. We cannot pay for the cost of long-term maintenance.

7 Heritage and the law

It is likely that repair or new work to a protected site or building will need special consent; you could also need a license to work with some protected species or to do geophysical survey on a scheduled ancient monument. If you do not have the correct permissions you could be breaking the law. Before you start work, you should talk to your local authority or their advisor about whether your site is protected, and whether special permissions are needed.

If your project involves new building work, it may also need separate planning consent. Again, it is your responsibility to make sure that you have the right permissions for your project.

8 What we fund

We will fund the types of activities described in this guidance within a heritage project where one of your aims is to conserve the heritage. The costs can include:

- staff appointed to develop, manage and deliver the project;
- the costs of professional advisors such as conservation architects, surveyors or ecologists;
- the work to repair the heritage;
- the cost of new work that will sustain existing heritage sites including access improvements;
- training for project staff, contractors and volunteers;
- the cost of planning for maintenance, management and conservation;
- the cost of archiving material and keeping good records; and
- evaluating your activities.

We cannot fund the ongoing maintenance of heritage sites or costs that are a core part of what your organisation does (for example, looking after existing buildings) or, as noted above, new buildings. Also, we do not support projects mainly involving replicas of historic structures or objects.

9 More help

For more detailed information on conservation, see our guidance *Thinking about conservation; Management and maintenance planning and Conservation management planning*. These are longer documents written mainly for applicants to our Heritage Grants programme (grants over £50,000). However, they do contain useful lists of organisations to contact for help.

Your HLF development team will be able to advise you on whether they will be helpful to you in planning your project.

If you would like advice on making an application, contact the HLF development team in your regional or country office or send in a pre-application enquiry form via our website.

Our offices

East of England

Terrington House
13-15 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB2 1NL
Phone: 01223 224870
Fax: 01223 224871

East Midlands

Chiltern House
St Nicholas Court
25-27 Castle Gate
Nottingham
NG1 7AR
Phone: 0115 934 9050
Fax: 0115 934 9051

London

7 Holbein Place
London
SW1W 8NR
Phone: 020 7591 6000
Fax: 020 7591 6001

North East

St Nicholas Building
St Nicholas Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1TH
Phone: 0191 255 7570
Fax: 0191 255 7571

North West

9th Floor
82 King Street
Manchester
M2 2WQ
Phone: 0161 831 0850
Fax: 0161 831 0851

Northern Ireland

51-53 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FE
Phone: 028 9031 0120
Fax: 028 9031 0121

Scotland

28 Thistle Street
Edinburgh
EH2 1EN
Phone: 0131 225 9450
Fax: 0131 225 9454

South East England

7 Holbein Place
London
SW1W 8NR
Phone: 020 7591 6000
Fax: 020 7591 6001

South West

Trinity Court
Southernhay East
Exeter
EX1 1PG
Phone: 01392 223950
Fax: 01392 223951

Wales

Hodge House
Guildhall Place
Cardiff
CF10 1DY
Phone: 029 2034 3413
Fax: 029 2034 3427

West Midlands

Bank House
8 Cherry Street
Birmingham
B2 5AL
Phone: 0121 616 6870
Fax: 0121 616 6871

Yorkshire and the Humber

Carlton Tower
34 St Paul's Street
Leeds
LS1 2QB
Phone: 0113 388 8030
Fax: 0113 388 8031

Textphone: 020 7591 6255

Website: www.hlf.org.uk