



Researching Historic Designed Parks and Gardens for Local Listing

A workshop for County Gardens Trust
volunteers on researching and
recording landscapes using the English
Heritage 'Register' format

Programme

10am	Welcome and introductions
10.10	The benefits of Local Listing
10.40	Introduction to EH site description methodology
11.30	Tea and coffee
11.45	Interpreting and using [chosen site] maps and documents
12.45	Lunch
13.30	Site Survey with tea and coffee on return
14.30	Writing the description
16.00	Summary and feedback
16.15	Close

[Adjust this slide according to your timetable but bear in mind the tricky balance between imparting theory and giving time to do practical sessions]



The Rationale Behind Local Listing

HANDOUT 1

Local Importance

Parks, gardens, cemeteries:

- Contribute to local cultural history, appearance and atmosphere
- Are often highly valued locally
- Are vulnerable to pressures of development, poor maintenance and neglect
- Are often poorly understood or recorded



Many local parks and gardens won't meet criteria for national designation but make a considerable contribution to a district or borough's cultural history, appearance and atmosphere – usually a big focus on buildings and archaeology

LOCALLY They are highly valued by their owners (hopefully), by local communities and by visitors; many owners generously share their heritage through opening to the public through the National Gardens Scheme.

Like national sites, local sites are not afforded any additional protection through being included on a local list. But, the very fact that a local site's significance is formally recorded and recognised is more likely to assist in its conservation.

Understanding the quality, nature and extent of our heritage is important for assessing the potential impact change. A local list will provide additional contextual information for informing the selection and/or extent of associated designations such as conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and tree preservation orders.

Threats to Landscapes

- Development
- Fragmentation through multiple ownership
- Lack of knowledge or understanding of design:
inappropriate/poor management and maintenance
- Decay, damage or loss of key features



As we've said, landscapes are vulnerable to a number of different pressures – and development is a particular risk factor in the southeast.

If a site lacks knowledge or understanding of its design the outcome can often be inappropriate management and maintenance - or no maintenance at all.

Key features will decay or be damaged; views become blocked by self-sown trees, waterworks no longer function and structural surfaces of paths and garden buildings become subject to damp, cracking and even collapse.

Why Create a Local List?

- Local listing affords no additional protection
BUT
recognition and recording of significance can support conservation
- Understanding the quality, nature and extent of our heritage is important for assessing the potential impact of change
- Provides additional contextual information for informing the selection and/or extent of associated designations

Like national sites, local sites are not afforded any additional protection through being included on a local list. But, the very fact that a local site's significance is formally recorded and recognised is more likely to assist in its conservation.

Understanding the quality, nature and extent of our heritage is important for assessing the potential impact change might bring to a site. It also provides a record of *what is there now* if a site survey is carried out alongside research.

A local list will provide additional contextual information for informing the selection and/or extent of associated designations such as conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and tree preservation orders. These designations are some of the few protections that are afforded to landscapes (e.g. forming the setting for a listed building; being part of a conservation area).

Why Create a Local List?

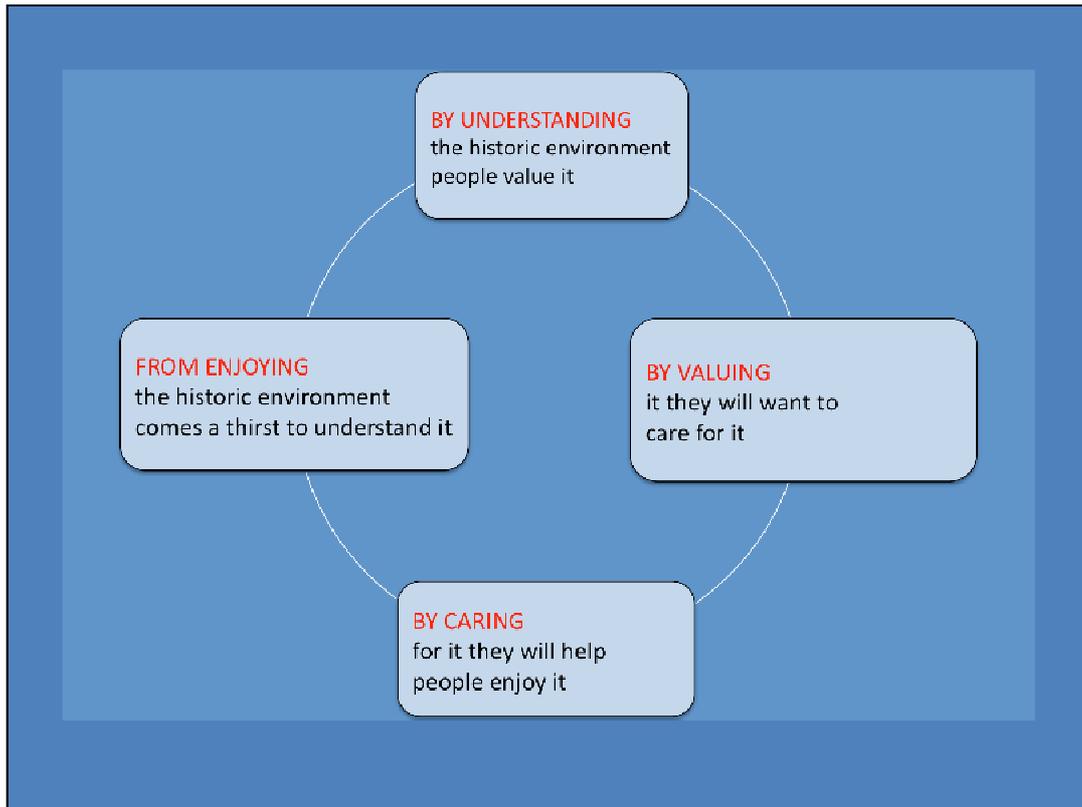
- Supports understanding of heritage and character of local authority area
- Complements lists of nationally designated historic sites
- **Forms the evidence base for local planning policy**



It is therefore invaluable in assisting a local authority in understanding the heritage and character of its administrative area and what makes this distinctive.

A local list or inventory of historic sites, complements the nationally-designated ones.

The list forms part of what is referred to in the local plan or local development framework as the 'evidence base', which is used to inform planning policy. This is a critical point is the conservation of these landscapes.



It's useful to look at it in terms of English Heritage's diagram demonstrating the value of understanding to the conservation cycle.

It is not only the local planning authority that benefits; where research and recording is undertaken with local partners such as the county gardens trust or local archive centres, and, of course, owners themselves, the knowledge and significance of a site is both deepened and disseminated more widely and publicly, promoting a cycle of understanding, valuing, enjoying and protecting the designed, historic environment.

Benefits for Local Authorities of working with CGTs on Local Listing

- **Select list:** up to date and robustly selected list of historic, designed parks, gardens and open spaces
- **Information for schedule of designated sites:** within a LA's area for the evidence base of its Local Development Framework/Plan - capable of being updated and amended
- **Site descriptions:** well-researched and accurately-recorded site survey information with supporting reference material

•An up to date and robustly selected list of historic, designed parks, gardens and open spaces.

•A list that can form part of the schedule of designated sites within an LA's area for the evidence base of its Local Development Framework/Plan and that is capable of being updated and amended as and when new information becomes available.

•Site descriptions accompanied by well-researched and accurately-recorded site descriptions with supporting reference material.

- **Development Control:** up to date information for use in development control decisions
- **E-gov requirements:** information on designed historic parks, gardens and open spaces in an electronic and accessible format
- **Raised standards:** a robust methodology for the survey, description and appraisal of sites capable of endorsement by statutory and non-statutory consultees

Benefits of Local Listing for CGTs

- Members have their research acknowledged and put to real, practical use in conserving landscapes
- Opportunity to hone personal knowledge and skills or gain new ones while contributing to something of lasting benefit
- Complete site reports can be entered on the UK Parks and Gardens Database and HER – provides local and national public access
- Higher profile for the quality work of CGTs

Local listing is an opportunity for Gardens Trust members to have their research acknowledged and put to real, practical use.

It presents an opportunity to hone their personal knowledge and skills or gain new ones while contributing to something of lasting benefit.

Completed site reports can be entered on the UK Parks and Gardens Database and HER providing a permanent and widely-accessible resource for learning about park and garden heritage both in the local area and nationally.