

JOINT NAUTICAL ARCHAEOLOGY POLICY COMMITTEE

Consultation on Conservation Principles by English Heritage

Response to Consultation by the JNAPC

The JNAPC welcomes the opportunity to respond to this initial consultation by English Heritage.

The JNAPC was formed in 1988 from individuals and representatives of institutions who wished to raise awareness of Britain's underwater cultural heritage and to persuade government that underwater sites of historical importance should receive no less protection than those on land. Some summary information on the JNAPC and its members is attached.

The JNAPC is pleased to endorse the seven principles outlined below that:

- 1 The historic environment is a shared resource
- 2 It is essential to understand and sustain what is valuable in the historic environment
- 3 Everyone can make a contribution
- 4 Understanding the values of places is vital
- 5 Places should be managed to sustain their significance
- 6 Decisions about change must be reasonable and transparent
- 7 It is essential to document and learn from decisions.

The JNAPC believes it is very important that marine, maritime and coastal heritage is set in the same framework as the terrestrial heritage in order to ensure that marine policy or guidance initiatives, such as the forthcoming JNAPC Code of Practice for Seabed Development, are integrated with higher principles agreed across the whole historic environment sector.

Maritime and marine historic environment management practice is still very young. It has many gaps, and is often inconsistent where it is present particularly across Government Departments. It is not widely recognised throughout all the associated interests and stakeholders who should have influence and who could in fact contribute to better practice and decision-making, and through this better protect a fragile and vulnerable resource which is set in an environment that is essentially little understood, and subject to rapid expansion in use and exploitation. Having a set of basic principles, commonly agreed, will be of enormous benefit.

Please keep us involved as the consultation proceeds.

R A Yorke
Chairman
Silver Birches
Horsham
West Sussex
RH13 0NY