

YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST GUIDANCE

Caring for Designed or Ornamental Landscapes of Heritage Value

Parks, gardens and designed landscapes form important settings for buildings and monuments as well as being places in their own right, whether wholly private or intended for public benefit. They may be places for domestic and private use, institutions or the public and they don't even have to be grand, they could be associated with anything from private plot to public park to palace.

Management is the process of trying to care for these places and their key features and associations, including people or even feelings and emotions aroused by them, but management takes time, effort and hard cash and hard-pressed landowners, managers or trustees often seek grants to help. Grant-aiding bodies (including the Yorkshire Gardens Trust) often ask for a management plan as a condition of grant or as part of the grant itself, either of which can seem a daunting prospect. In reality it is the opposite: at its best such a plan is a heritage record of a park, garden, designed landscape or a single feature such as a statue within it, containing a collection of historical information that can be publicly accessible, a chronology of events, an account of the condition of the park/garden/feature and general circumstances. It can be a large and complex document or it could be quite short, it all depends on the circumstances – why you're doing it, who it is for and prevailing circumstances.

- ❖ A plan naturally falls into two parts, broadly covering condition and monitoring.

Part 1 – An account of condition and general circumstances

1. Collect historical information and preferably prepare as a separate document which can be made accessible to the public for reference, via a local library, record office or Historic Environment Record.
2. Produce a chronology of events.
3. Assess the heritage values, both cultural and natural; include designated and undesignated features and any other interest.
4. Set out your basic policy for conservation and upkeep and outline the basic principles used.
5. Describe how you plan to implement the policy.

Part 2 – Monitoring and review

6. Identify specific proposals.
7. Assess their feasibility and describe how they will be implemented.
8. Implementation phase.
9. State how management and upkeep will continue afterwards.
10. Monitoring and review for what has been achieved to date and as a rolling process at future stages: Stages 6 – 10 can be used continuously for each project or phase of a project building on information gathered at Stages 1-5.

Different organizations use different terms so always check you know exactly what the funding body is after against what you are trying to achieve. Who and what is it for? This can be very helpful to correctly identify the right funder for the job.

The assessment at stage 3 is a weighing up of the different factors and working out what your priorities are; they will be dependent on the capabilities of the owner, budget, known heritage assets and so on. What is significant about them?

❖ General sources of information and advice:

- To find out if there are heritage designations on the property – listed buildings, register park, scheduled monuments – go to <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>
- Your local reference library and/or local studies library is often a useful source of information.
- When locating records it's often easiest to search by place name or associated person because information may be spread across different archives. The National Archives draws on all catalogues in a single search <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/> and there are links to contact the appropriate repository for viewing the documents.
- Historic Ordnance Survey maps can be found at <http://www.old-maps.co.uk/index.html>
- The English Heritage archives catalogue is now available on line, where you can order photographs, plans and drawings <http://www.englishheritagearchives.org.uk/>
- Local authority historic environment records can often be accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/chr/default.aspx>
- Parks and Gardens UK is an ongoing project to develop web-based information relating to historic parks, gardens and other green open spaces throughout the United Kingdom. <http://www.parksandgardens.ac.uk/>
- The Northern Fruit Group has information about old Yorkshire varieties and how to grow them and they may be able to help with identification of fruit. <http://www.northernfruitgroup.com/>
- Find out what habitats and species are present by accessing the appropriate ecological data centre in your area. <http://data.nbn.org.uk/organisation/organisationList.jsp>
- They will also advise on where to find ancient tree data or go to <http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/project/woodlandtrust>

❖ Definitions:

- *Heritage asset*: buildings, parks and gardens, standing, buried and submerged remains, areas, sites and landscapes.
- Natural features: ancient trees, habitats such as ponds, grassland, woodland; specific species.
- *Significance*: the significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest.
- *Management plan*: a document setting out criteria for management and how that management will be approached. It may be followed by an *action or implementation* plan describing what will be done and when.
- English Heritage uses the term *conservation plan* for a document which explains the *significance* of a site, identifies its vulnerabilities and sets out policies for retaining that significance in any new use or management.

❖ Further guidance:

- Garden History Society *Planning Conservation Advice Note 14: Management Plans* <http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/ghs-pcan-14.pdf>
- English Heritage *Farming the Historic Landscape: Caring for Historic Parkland* <http://www.helm.org.uk/server/show/category.19667>
- Natural England *Preparing a Heritage Management Plan* for inheritance tax exemption but very useful for all circumstances. <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/NE63>

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