ENGLISH HERITAGE

National Heritage Protection Plan

NHPP 4D2 Cemeteries and Churchyards

A Project Brief for Developing Local Assessment Toolkits – a scoping study to look at developing a standard model for recording cemeteries and burial grounds

Project Number: 6358

Date of Issue: December 2012

Contents

1.   Project Summary

The topics of cemeteries, churchyards, burial grounds, monuments, memorials and conservation are embedded into a number of areas of English Heritage's work. Through this project English Heritage aims to support local communities in recording their cemetery and burial ground heritage and to harness this asset-recording information to provide a national overview to use in conservation work and decision-making. The project seeks to try to maximise the benefit from existing records and enthuse communities to contribute and record. The goal is to objectively capture the current situation of monuments and cemetery sites with an appropriate and realistic level of recording of individual objects.

This brief is to carry out an initial scoping study of existing recording programmes, to assess the current status and operation of these and to provide advice and recommendations on developing an HLF digital project bid for a national toolkit and web-based database for volunteers.

2.   Background

Valuable work is being carried out in many cemeteries by voluntary groups, particularly those belonging to the National Federation of Cemetery Friends and to the Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS), as well as through other bodies and Amenity Societies. The emphasis to date has essentially been on recording individual memorials. Recording inscriptions goes back to antiquaries in the C17th and C18th and this has ensured the survival of important information on a wide range of social groups. Britain has a highly significant legacy of older burial grounds and recording can assist in ensuring information is not lost as decay occurs over time. The archaeological recording of memorial stones and churchyards was developed in England in the 1970s (e.g. How to record gravestones, by Jeremy Jones, 1979, and Recording and analysing graveyards, by Harold Mytum, 2000) and this was a point of reference in a pioneering project undertaken in the early 1980s to record the memorials and the landscape of the Protestant Cemetery in Rome (Rahtz et al 1987).

There are a host of recording initiatives specific to the study of gravestones and monuments, some providing online guidance and databases. Examples include:

- The website www.scottishgraveyards.org.uk is dedicated to providing a host of guidance on graveyard recording and conservation in Scotland.
- The University of Bedfordshire - HLF funded National Archive of Memorial Inscriptions
- Under their 'Monumental inscriptions for family historians' web site (www.british-genealogy.com/resources/graves/recording.htm) the British-Geneaology.com shop provides guidance on planning and carrying out recording projects.
- The Public Sculpture and Monument Association's national recording project of public sculptures and monuments throughout Britain (excluding cemeteries), is 65% completed to 2002 and is still under way. The project includes an online database (http://pmsa.cch.kcl.ac.uk/) (see example at appendix 5).
- There is also the National Inventory of War Memorials (www.ukniwm.org.uk/) which lists 2,605 entries for cemeteries.

Many of these approaches focus on detailed monument recording, much of which is useful. Understanding what from these would achieve the aims of a project to objectively capture their current reality within a cemetery or churchyard and enable the objectives of this initiative to be met is an important element of this project.

Other initiatives that may provide useful models exist in other areas and a readily available, easy-to-use standard model for recording any stone carved surface is available from England's Rock Art website (http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/era/). Although the assessment will need to consider the depth of archaeological recording that is necessary or realistic as compared to the range of other initiatives here highlighted.

Individuals or groups may draw on these and as a result may be working in a variety of ways. The FFHS, for instance, has been engaged on the Monument Inscription Project for some 30 years, with guidance based on Jeremy Jones' work (1979), but this may often be adapted and varied by local teams and their leaders.

The absence of a readily available, easy-to-use standard model for recording items within cemeteries and burial grounds is widely felt among those with a professional and research interest in the subject and volunteers interested in local sites. Local recording efforts are highly valuable at a local level but the variety between the methods makes collating meaningful national evidence from the locally recorded information difficult or impossible.

All monuments add to the historical and social record of a community buried or memorialised in a particular place: it is not just the 'special' and elaborate monuments that are of interest from a demographic or iconographic point of view. Monuments and the grouping of monuments shape the character of each cemetery or burial ground and can be an important element of the design. Thus individual monuments, groups of monuments and the place itself is likely to hold a range of particular and varied values to a community. Moreover, a proportion of burials may be unmarked, and this proportion cannot be determined unless all marked burials, and all monuments, are considered within the overall context of the sites. Without knowledge of what is out there and how and where it is being recorded, a holistic overview of values cannot easily be made and yet could significantly enhance our understanding of burial grounds and the values associated with them.

As well as individual monuments there are many other cemetery/burial ground features that are worthy of recording and that would contribute to an holistic appreciation of a cemetery or burial ground's character, for example:

- Landscape design
- Buildings
- Gates
- Boundaries
- Trees
- Habitats
- Wildlife

The topics of cemeteries, churchyards, burial grounds, monuments, memorials and conservation are embedded into a number of areas of English Heritage's work.

English Heritage's Paradise Preserved (2007) provides an introduction to the conservation management of cemeteries. The guidance highlights the historic interest of cemeteries. Although there are various statutory designations that recognise the significance of these sites and individual features, there are relatively few memorials currently designated and the system is not designed to capture the vast array of monuments and structures. Other NHPP projects will continue to address this issue of designation and ensuring the rich array of monuments is reflected in national priorities. Paradise Preserved acknowledges the work of many volunteers and Friends groups in championing local cemeteries and the practical conservation work undertaken. Such volunteer projects extend well beyond the context of burial grounds, and many other initiatives exist that may be of relevance to volunteers and to the basis of this project. In particular England's Rock Art project (http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/era/) is a more recent example of a recording initiative, albeit to a detailed level of information capture. Such projects may provide a readily available, easy-to-use standard model for recording any stone carved surface. Galvanising the expertise and approaches present in a broad range of volunteer and recording projects should significantly enhance the quality and consistency of recording within burial grounds.

One of English Heritage's roles is to help people to understand, value, care for and enjoy England's historic environment. English Heritage recognises that cemeteries and burial grounds present an opportunity for a community initiative in heritage recording and conservation. Enabling community effort to include consistent objective recording of what is present within a burial ground or cemetery context would provide a base from which to track condition and integrity over time.

3.   Aims and Objectives

This brief sets out the objective and tasks for a study to inform and shape the development of a national cemetery and burial ground recording system, defined here as a systematic and structured set of procedures for creating a record of cemeteries and burial grounds and their elements.

The objective would be to two-fold:

1. to enable the consistent capturing of primary information, including the use of digital photography, that will inform future researchers and other interested parties including decision-makers within the planning process, conservation specialists and guardians or owners of sites.
2. to provide a basis for volunteers to input and manage their contributions consistently in response to an assessment of their needs, and view the contributions of others across the country.

The national recording system would help develop our understanding of cemeteries and burial grounds, and their significances at local and national levels; ultimately as the significance of sites is addressed this should inform future heritage protection measures and designations.

The recording of primary information at this time will be particularly valuable to future researchers if policies such as the reuse of monuments and of burial spaces gain momentum.

The goal is to objectively capture the current situation of monuments and cemetery sites, with an appropriate and realistic level of recording of individual objects.

The specific aim of this element of the project is to inform English Heritage and project partners about recording needs, options for recording systems, issues that will need to be addressed and, if a solution does not already exist to support the delivery of a national dataset, produce a set of proposals for a new initiative.

Specifically the scoping study will deliver –

- o A survey and evaluation of the range of existing recording systems (within the field of recording cemeteries and beyond where appropriate), assessing their purpose, methods and current scope

- o Recommendations, or otherwise, on a possible toolkit and advice on options for recording cemeteries/burial grounds, including collaboration with other initiatives if appropriate

- o Assess the requirements of the sector (including English Heritage) with regard recording tools, standards and support

- o Assess the capacity of the sector (voluntary and community bodies as referred to above) to support and provide guidance to local groups on such an initiative

- o Subsequently, provide information on the feasibility and credibility of a national recording system with an assessment of options for the insertion of factual and photographic data by volunteers which can support local Historic Environment Records.

- o Recommendations on the development of such a recording system, and its future sustainability

- o Draft a set of proposals for the development of the project based on the recommendations, with specification which will provide the basis for a future EH Heritage Lottery Fund application for a digital project bid, if applicable.

4.   Business Case

The National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP) sets out how English Heritage, with help from partners in the sector, will prioritise and deliver heritage protection for the next four years (2011-2015). It will make best use of our resources so that England's vulnerable historic environment is safeguarded in the most cost-effective way at a time of massive social, environmental, economic and technological change.

The heart of delivery of the NHPP is the Action Plan. This is divided into 8 themes (called Measures). These are further sub-divided into a series of Topics and Activities comprising over 400 projects. The Activities address specific areas of work (e.g. places of worship, historic ports, strategic designation) that have been identified as priorities for the Plan.

This project will be funded under Measure 4 – Assessment of significance; Topic D – Worship and commemoration; Activity 2 – Churchyards, Cemeteries and Burial Grounds.

Activity 4D2 – Extant or visible historic burial grounds and other commemorative locales, significant both at a personal and historic level for local and faith communities, are under threat from vandalism, neglect and development pressure. Their full heritage significance (monumental, design and archaeological heritage values) is often poorly understood, especially for the period after 1500. Knowledge of earlier cemeteries is much better as a result of archaeological investigations, but the basis for protection lies primarily through policy (Ministry of Justice licences, church faculties and pastoral measures etc) and a clearer articulation of significance is required.

The project forms a key component of NHPP Activity 4D2 Churchyards, Cemeteries and Burial Grounds.

4D2.2	Deliver the means for local communities to understand the value and significance of their historic cemeteries and to monitor their condition	4D2.201	5. Developing Local Assessment and Monitoring Toolkits	Establish current recording and assessment toolkits used by Friends of cemeteries and others. Identify AMIE consistency. Develop core structure and assess online capacity to link to HERs/AMIE. Develop on line database. Test, publish and publicise.

It is seen as an essential in supporting voluntary bodies and volunteers in recording local and national assets; providing guidance on a consistent standard of recording.

It will enhance the contents of HERs providing information to Local Authorities as either managers, owners or advisors on burial grounds and related planning issues.

The project will strengthen key partnerships as a result of a consultative approach; creating a mechanism for future collaboration.

The project is primarily seen to fit SHAPE Sub-Programme 43215.110 (Guidance for volunteer and community groups).

This project addresses issues identified in English Heritage's Heritage at Risk programme, and ties in with Conservation Department's technical advice note on memorial conservation.

5.   Method and Scope

The project will require:

i.   Desk-based survey of existing standards, recording practice guidance and information systems

ii.   Organisation of a seminar or series or workshops to engage the sectoral partners in a discussion to evaluate existing systems and ways to improve

iii. Analysis of current guidance and systems for recording – in terms of functionality, data standards, purpose and effectiveness

iv. Limited site visits and consultation outside the organisation of the seminar may be required

The recommendations for a new recording system or systems(s) will need to take the following criteria into account:

- Be relevant for the whole of England, all cemeteries and burial grounds
- Address all aspects of cemeteries including the potential to record wildlife interests
- Be easy to use for volunteers with varied interests
- Be easy to use in the cemetery/burial ground
- Readily aggregate to build into a national dataset
- Readily contribute to Historic Environment Records across the country
- Be seen as the national authoritative product with a verification system for all records
- Be cost-effective and suitable for wide-scale application
- Be sustainable with funding to maintain, clear ownership and support etc.
- Designed to be functional for a period of at least ten years

6. Products, Dissemination and Archiving

A report will be produced to include recommendations as set out above, the results of consultation and appendices evaluating specific toolkits. The report should follow the stages and tasks set out below and ensure that it covers each element. It should be submitted as a PDF and word document.

The project manager of the commissioned organisation is responsible for disseminating the report to the project steering group.

English Heritage will be responsible for wider dissemination, which will include publishing aspects on the EH website. Specific contact should be made with the groups listed in interfaces to provide feedback on the project (and any others recommended by the report).

7. Stages and Tasks

Stage 1 Set up

There will be an initial set up meeting to confirm lists of stakeholders and timetable for the consultation

Stage 2 Desk based evaluation

- Prepare draft list of recording needs for cemeteries and burial grounds whole sites, features and feature characteristics
- Identify organisations which need to be engaged as the project develops
- Consider at an early stage the national standards on monument recording set by English Heritage
- Review existing recording initiatives from a range of sources as a means of recording which could be applicable to cemeteries/burial grounds and summarise their strengths and weaknesses e.g.
  - Statutory burial records and other local burial authority cemetery management systems such as
    - Epitaph www.epitaph-solutions.com
    - Deceased Online www.deceasedonline.com
    - Epilog www.gowerconsultants.com
  - Existing models for burial ground recording (such as Essex Family History Society; Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery, Tunbridge Wells, etc)
  - Existing models for recording historic assets and objects eg England's Rock Art (http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uki/era/)
  - Historic Scotland/Carved Stones Adviser Project and www.scottishgraveyards.org.uk
  - War Memorials Trust and National Inventory of War Memorialswww.ukniwm.org.uk/)
  - National Archive of Memorial Inscriptions www.memorialinscriptions.org.uk/
  - The British-Geneaology.Com website www.british-genealogy.com/resources/graves/recording.htm
  - Internmeny.Net Cemetery Records Online www.interment.net/uk/eng/index.htm
  - Find A Grave www.findagrave.com/
  - Burial Records & Death Records in the UK www.ukburials.com/
  - English Heritage's recording advice to be published in the forthcoming technical advice note on memorial conservation.

Stage 3 Consultation

- Organise a seminar to draw together expertise from various sectors(including those in the interfaces below), foster support and collaboration and assess need. This will contribute towards the review of the existing systems and available guidance and assessing the sectoral needs for work in this area

Stage 4 Evaluation

- Identify gaps in recording guidance and current inventories/databases
- Identify and assess online databases that could offer potential parallel models or interfaces for this project e.g.
  - English Heritage standards and databases (e.g. Thesaurus of Monument Types)
  - Exegesis and the Midas recording (contact EH data standards)
  - Historic Environment Records (SMR in Greater London)
  - England's Rock Art database http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/era/
  - Public Monument and Sculpture Association http://pmsa.cch.kcl.ac.uk/

- o UK Parks & Gardens Database
- o National Biodiversity Network's Gateway
  http://www.nbn.org.uk/About.aspx

Stage 5 Produce a final report that includes the following:

- Advise on options for recording cemeteries/burial grounds, including collaboration with other initiatives if appropriate
- Identify issues that will need to addressed in a national recording project such as testing both of field recording systems and database, long term data curation, promotion and communication strategy, training, health and safety guidance etc
- If a new recording project/database is recommended, draft a set of proposals and recommendations and provide cost estimates for the next stage for discussion by the English heritage Activity Team.
- Advise on funding, and in particular HLF.

8. Interfaces

Internal:
Heritage Data Management: Heritage Gateway, Datasets Development and the Data Standards Unit (gill.grayson@english-heritage.org.uk)
Direct internal link with HER Local Engagement Group (jane.golding@english-heritage.org.uk)
OASIS
National Heritage Protection Plan Activity 4D2 (linda.monckton@english-heritage.org.uk)

External:
Archaeology Data Service
Local Authority Historic Environment Records (and HER Committee via sub-group HER Local Engagement Group)
Local Authority conservation officers
Volunteer networks (e.g.: NADFAS)
National Federation of Cemetery Friends and to the Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS),
Friends Groups
Family History groups and genealogist groups
Cemetery management professionals
Victorian Society Chapels at Risk Project
Council for British Archaeology
Institute of Historic Building Conservation
Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe
Last Lines project (www.lastlines.org) Contact: Dr Matthew Cragoe, University of Sussex

9. Timescale

Completion of project - end of August 2013.

10. Overall Budget

It is anticipated that the project will cost £12-£14,000 (ex VAT) and should take approximately 40 days.

11. Form of tender: MoRPHE Project Designs

The tender submission should refer to the National Heritage Protection Commissions programme Guidance for Applicants (Release 6) and be in the form of a Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Design.

The Project Design should also include:
- A document-control grid with contact details (see MoRPHE p42)
- Costs calculated according to Section 12 of the Guidance for Applicants and set out per financial year (see Guidance for Applicants, Appendix 5)
- A task list which included days per person, per task (see Guidance for Applicants, Appendix 5)
- A Gantt chart and/or timetable

The relevant documentation to assist in producing the Project Design can be downloaded at http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/MoRPHE and the guidance notes www.english-heritage.org.uk/nhpcp.

12. Copyright

The reports and all associated documentation, databases and photographs will be the copyright of English Heritage. Copyright on all reports submitted will reside with English Heritage, although a third-party in-perpetuity licence will automatically be given for reproduction of the works by the originator, subject to agreement in writing from English Heritage.

13. Selection Process

Tenders will be appraised at a formal tender board comprising three or more appropriate English heritage officers, and will be scored in accordance with the English heritage procurement regulations. English heritage may consult externally as well as internally when appraising the tenders. Successful and unsuccessful tenders will be notified of the results of the tender board in writing usually within a week.

14. Administration of Contract

The grant award will be administered via a standard English Heritage NHPCP contract. If the tender is a sole trader, rather than a limited company, association or partnership, then we would advise that early contact be made in order that an Employment Status Questionnaire (a requirement of English Heritage by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)) can be completed in advance of submission of a tender.

15. Management, monitoring and reporting arrangements

The project will be administered through the National Heritage Protection Commissions Programme; for guidance see http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/funding/grants/grants-available/nhpcp.

The project will be MoRPHE compliant (http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/MoRPHE).

English Heritage Project Assurance and routine monitoring of standards and progress will be undertaken by an NHPC Project Assurance Officer.

The Project Manager will be responsible for liaison with the English Heritage Project Assurance Office and the Activity Team as required, and expected to produce highlight reports (see MoRPHE p48) at appropriate points throughout the project and an end-of-project report (see MoRPHE p49) and attend steering group meetings.

The project will involve a minimum of three meetings: one at the start to discuss the tasks and clarify the brief; a mid-scoping project review; and a final meeting to look at findings and agree next steps. This meeting will be attended by appropriate members of the NHPP Activity Team 4D2 and Project Assurance Officer.

16. References

Jones, J, 1979 (2edn) How to record graveyards Council for British Archaeology

Rahtz, S P Q, 1987 'The Protestant Cemetery, Rome: interim report' Opuscula Romana xvi: 10, PAGES (appended)

English Heritage, 1998 Recording gravestones

Mytum, H, 2000 Recording and analysing graveyards (CBA practical handbook 15)

Council for Scottish Archaeology. Carved Stone Adviser Project, March 2006 (2edn) An introduction to graveyard recording www.scottishgraveyards.org.uk/downloads/8Introductiontogr.pdf

English Heritage and Natural England, 2007 Paradise Preserved. An introduction to the assessment, evaluation, conservation and management of historic cemeteries.

English Heritage (due 2011) Technical Advice Note on Memorial Conservation

English Heritage Thesaurus of Monument Types The Thesaurus provides standardised terms for the funerary monument types - graves, grave markers, and tombs http://thesaurus.english-heritage.org.uk/frequentuser.htm

17. Further Information

For questions about the project please contact Dr Linda Monckton at linda.monckton@english-heritage.org.uk.

For further queries about the application process, deadlines etc please contact Charlotte Winter at Charlotte.Winter@english-heritage.org.uk .

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact or Customer Services department:
Telephone: 0870 333 1181
Fax: 01793 414926
Textphone: 01793 414878
Email: customers@english-heritage.org.uk