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Dear Ms Williams,

Consultation on Review of the National Historic Fleet and Assessment Methodology

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this review and proposed assessment methodology.

The Institute for Archaeologists

The Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) is a professional body for the study and care of the historic environment. It promotes best practice in archaeology and provides a self-regulatory quality assurance framework for the sector and those it serves.

IfA has over 3,000 members and more than 70 registered practices across the United Kingdom. Its members work in all branches of the discipline: heritage management, planning advice, excavation, finds and environmental study, buildings recording, underwater and aerial archaeology, museums, conservation, survey, research and development, teaching and liaison with the community, industry and the commercial and financial sectors.

In matters relating to maritime archaeology IfA is advised by its Maritime Affairs Group (MAG), to which most professional maritime archaeologists belong. The Group exists to:

- advance the practice of maritime archaeology by promoting professional standards for the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of the maritime archaeological resource;
- provide advice and commentary to IfA on matters relating to maritime archaeology;
- aid in the development of professional guidelines and standards for the execution of maritime archaeological work;
- promote the training of archaeologists and others in maritime archaeological practice; and,
- facilitate the exchange of information and ideas about maritime archaeology and to communicate these to the wider profession.

IfA has successfully petitioned for a Royal Charter of Incorporation which was granted on 03 June 2014.

Review of the National Historic Fleet and Assessment Methodology

General

IfA welcomes the publication of this review of the National Historic Fleet and assessment methodology and is particularly supportive of National Historic Ships UK's objective to *'develop and promote professional standards of good practice for the conservation and preservation of historic vessels'*.

Specific Questions

1. NHS-UK has proposed a new method of analysing vessel significance, based on an assessment of vessels grouped by like characteristics as shown in Appendix A.

1a). Do you think that the suggested method of grouping vessels is the right approach?

Yes. IfA strongly supports a comprehensive, significance-based approach to the management and protection of heritage assets (as now defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as opposed to PPS 5 as indicated at paragraph 26 of the consultation document).

The proposed new methodology should, so far as is possible, be consistent, not only with English Heritage's Conservation Principles, but also with Cadw's Conservation Principles (2011) and other methodologies for assessing significance in both marine and terrestrial contexts (such as the methodology developed by Wessex Archaeology on behalf of English Heritage in relation to shipwrecks as part of the *Assessing Boats and Ships* project: <http://www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/marine/assessing-boats-ships>).

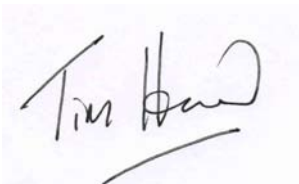
3. In future, statements of significance will be developed with the focus on those vessels likely to achieve NHF status, those seeking grant aid or those falling within relevant project work. These statements of significance will be published online.

3a). Do you consider it valuable to produce statements of significance for vessels?

Yes. Ideally such statements should be produced by, or with the assistance of, professionally accredited practitioners.

The Institute would be delighted further to contribute to the formulation of the proposed assessment methodology. In the meantime, if there is anything further that I can do to assist please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Howard LLB, Dip Prof Arch
Policy Advisor

