

THE ARCHAEOLOGY FORUM

a grouping of independent bodies concerned with archaeology

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31 July 2009

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Government's draft legislative programme: Heritage Protection Bill

The Archaeology Forum is a grouping of the key, non-governmental organisations concerned with archaeology in the UK. Its members include the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers UK, the Council for British Archaeology, the Institute of Conservation, the Institute for Archaeologists, the National Trust, the National Trust for Scotland, Rescue, the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers, and the Society of Museum Archaeologists UK.

The Archaeology Forum has given its advice and strong support for the provisions of the draft **Heritage Protection Bill** throughout its long evolution. This draft Bill contains a wide range of reforms that will add clarity, transparency and efficiency to the way in which we manage the statutorily protected historic environment. It also permits ratification of the 1954 *Hague Convention for the Protection of Armed conflict in the Event of Armed Conflict* and its two Protocols of 1954 and 1999.

The measures set out in the Bill have been shown to have only minor cost implications in the short term with the scope for considerable long-term efficiency savings.

The Bill is non-controversial, has cross-party support and could pass through Parliament without complications or delay.

We have been reassured by government that failure to include the Bill in the legislative programme does not indicate a lack of interest in heritage or any failure to recognise its contribution to sustainable communities, economic recovery and a wide range of public

benefits. Nevertheless, for many concerned about our heritage and environment, omission of this straightforward piece of parliamentary business sends out a very different message.

We hope that Government will review its legislative programme and press forward with this uncontroversial and much needed Bill.

Yours faithfully,



Peter Hinton,
Institute for Archaeologists
Convenor, The Archaeology Forum

The Archaeology Forum's members are:

The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers UK
The Council for British Archaeology
The Institute of Conservation
The Institute for Archaeologists
The National Trust
The National Trust for Scotland

Rescue: the British Archaeological Trust
The Society of Antiquaries of London
The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
The Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers
The Society of Museum Archaeologists UK