Towards HPR Compliant HERs

Final Report

Findings, implications and recommendations emerging from the development of a core Job Description for an HER Officer managing an HPR-compliant HER

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Research Context, Purpose and Methodology

Heritage Protection Reform (HPR) aims to achieve:

- ❖ a modernised approach to all aspects of protecting the historic environment
- ❖ a better designation process with wider participation, and
- ❖ improved management and decision making and greater local participation

In addition, the new **Planning and Policy Statement 5** (PPS5), written as guidance to local authorities and published on the 23rd March 2010, sets out the Government's national policies on planning in respect of the historic environment. The statement describes HERs as follows:

> *"information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use. Typically, they comprise databases linked to a geographic information system (GIS), and associated reference material, together with a dedicated staffing resource".*
>
> **PPS5, Terminology**

As part of the HER21 scheme of projects commissioned by English Heritage - the aim of this project was to identify a set of key skills and develop a core Job Description for an HER Officer[1] managing an HER-compliant HER.

The approach to the project was divided into three phases and may be summarised as follows:

- ❖ **Phase 1:** Formation of a Project Advisory Group; literature review to establish the research context, identify occupations with equivalent functions to the HER Officer, and identify existing National Occupational Standards considered relevant to the role

- ❖ **Phase 2:** In-depth telephone interviews with 40 HER Officers (and equivalent roles) as well as managers, to explore the role and responsibilities of HER Officers and associated issues and implications for future HPR compliance; interrogation of existing job descriptions; analysis of findings

- ❖ **Phase 3:** Iterative development of the draft core Job Description, with support from the Advisory Group; online feedback from HER organisations listed on the Heritage Gateway; subsequent workshop to discuss and finalise the Job Description

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[1] From this point forward the term HER Officer is also used to denote equivalent roles/job titles with common responsibilities for the HER, such as archaeologists/conservation officers working within local authorities.

Key Findings - Literature Review

A key challenge is that technological developments and changing attitudes mean that HERs are not always 'owned' by a single authority and there are substantial variations in HER management locally. At present there are a number of job titles in use for the Historic Environment staff who add to, manage, and maintain HER within County Councils, District Councils and Unitary Authorities.

There are a number of obstructions to data sharing with non-designated historic environment datasets, including:

- ❖ Data quality issues
- ❖ Lack of demand
- ❖ Incompatible software
- ❖ Lack of delivery mechanisms[2]

Key Findings - Telephone Interviews (to inform Draft 1)

- ❖ Clear disparities exist between local authorities on the responsibilities held by the HER Officer (and equivalent roles)
- ❖ There are variations in awareness concerning the likely impact of HPR and PPS5, including how job role might change
- ❖ The majority of respondents believe that archaeology remains intrinsic to the role
- ❖ The majority of respondents advocate proactive community-based project activity
- ❖ Respondents cited the need to improve HER access, functionality and interoperability (systems and Historic Environment job roles)

Early Development of the Job Description

Draft 1 Job Description:
- ❖ Based on responses to telephone interviews
- ❖ Drew out 'core' responsibilities and person requirements
- ❖ Inclusion of additional 'non-core' capabilities

Draft 2 Job Description:
- ❖ Forward-looking aspirational Job Description for delivering HPR-compliance by 2015
- ❖ Increased emphasis on joining up the HER within the planning system and PPS5
- ❖ Greater proactivity on the part of the HER Officer

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[2] GIS guidance for Historic Environment Records in England

Key Findings - Online Feedback (to inform Draft 3)

❖ Feedback largely consistent
❖ Agreement needed on the definition of the HER in the context of HER21
❖ Too strong a 'skew' towards planning at the expense of public service functions (from Key Purposes onwards)
❖ Concerns that some responsibilities stretch beyond the job role of an HER Officer (both now and in the future) and cross over to Development Control functions
❖ General disagreement over the term "built and historic environment" – instead favouring "historic environment"
❖ Mixed views on whether a degree qualification (either Archaeology or broader) is essential to the role

Working towards the Final Draft Job Description

❖
  Emphasis remains on planning in line with HER21 Scheme – BUT
  – recognition of wider remit in 'Context' and 'Key Purposes' sections
  – removal of some references to 'the planning system' where this is not the only applicable scenario
  – Removal of/changes to some statements within Draft 2 that were considered out of scope by the majority of respondents
❖ Replacement of the term 'built and historic environment' with 'historic environment'
❖ Merger of some key responsibilities without seeking to lose content
❖ Changes to knowledge, experience and qualifications to place greater value upon 'experience'; where sufficient this experience negates the requirement for a degree qualification
❖ Other minor content changes as suggested by respondents

Implications for the Future

Looking towards the future – most HER Officers recognise that HPR and PPS5 will increase the significance of the historic environment as part of the planning and consent process. As such, HER Officers will need to adapt to, and work within, a historic environment setting that is more holistic.

It is clear that to be HPR-compliant, HER Officers will require knowledge of the planning process, its interaction with the historic environment, and be able to contribute to this. In addition and in alignment with the Coalition Government's Big Society agenda - HER Officers are increasingly conscious of the skills needed to engage with and support communities to help them play an active role in understanding and sustaining the historic environment.

In order to be successfully implemented, the core Job Description should continue to advocate the 'gold standard' model to which local authorities and other organisations responsible for HERs should aspire. The Job Description should therefore represent 'best practice'.

Priorities for Future NOS Development

National Occupational Standards (NOS) cover a wide range of individual disciplines associated with the Historic Environment and the proposed update to NOS in Archaeological Practice will be valuable. While it is not envisaged that the core tasks undertaken by HER Officers will change - the knowledge and understanding underpinning those tasks will need to extend beyond the confines of an individual discipline.

1. Principles of Heritage Protection Reform (HPR) and Planning and Policy Statement 5 (PPS5)

This project is set within the wider context of Heritage Protection Reform (HPR); its aim was to identify a set of key skills and develop a core Job Description for an HER Officer[3] managing an HPR-compliant HER.

In June 2010, Pye Tait Consulting was commissioned by English Heritage to carry out the necessary research and to develop and validate the core Job Description.

1.1 Principles of Heritage Protection Reform (HPR)

Heritage Protection Reform aims to achieve:

- ❖ a modernised approach to all aspects of protecting the historic environment
- ❖ a better designation process with wider participation, and
- ❖ improved management and decision making and greater local participation

The draft Heritage Protection Bill of 2008 places historic environment management at the heart of the social, environmental, and economic agendas, at a local as well as a national level. The Bill determined that Heritage Protection Reform is designed to, '*unify heritage protection regimes, allow greater public involvement in decisions, and place heritage at the heart of the planning system*.'

One of the main policy proposals of HPR is to introduce a statutory responsibility for local authorities to maintain or to have access to an HER. The Impact Assessment on the draft Bill highlights that this will place increased responsibilities on the local authorities not only for the maintenance of the HER but also for an expanded consent process.

1.2 Principles of Planning and Policy Statement 5 (PPS5)

The new Planning and Policy Statement 5, written as guidance to local authorities and published on the 23rd March 2010, sets out the Government's national policies on planning in respect of the historic environment. The statement describes HERs as follows:

"information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use. Typically, they comprise databases linked to a geographic information system (GIS), and associated reference

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[3] From this point forward the term HER Officer is also used to denote equivalent roles/job titles with common responsibilities for the HER, such as archaeologists/conservation officers working within local authorities.

material, together with a dedicated staffing resource".

PPS5, Terminology

The statement replaces PPG 15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) and PPG16 (Archaeology and Planning) and is intended to provide an integrated approach to the historic environment by removing the distinction between archaeological remains, buildings and landscapes. PPS5 updates planning procedures to allow flexibility and to ensure that the historic environment is a key consideration in local regeneration.

2. Research Purpose and Methodology

2.1 Research Purpose

As part of its commitment to Heritage Protection Reform (HPR), English Heritage commissioned a number of projects under the HER21 scheme. The projects under this scheme set out to:

- ❖ ensure useful, appropriate, accurate and reliable information is available to all those involved in making planning decisions relating to the historic environment;

- ❖ advocate a more holistic approach to HERs and the Historic Environment – beyond traditional archaeology;

- ❖ develop exemplars of good practice, delivering guidance and assisting with infrastructure improvements

The HER scheme has consisted of projects divided into two strands. This project was commissioned under Strand 1 - 'Strategic Research'. The purpose of this strand to date has been to provide the sector with greater understanding of user requirements, integration of HERs with wider planning processes and establish guidance or standards for HER development.

2.2 Methodology

The approach to the project was divided into three phases and may be summarised as follows:

Methodology Phase 1

- ❖ Establishment of a **Project Advisory Group** to guide the direction of the core Job Description. The Advisory Group consisted of the following organisations:

  - o Association of Local Government Archaeologists (ALGAO)
  - o Durham County Council
  - o Historic Environment Local Management (HELM)
  - o Institute for Archaeologists (IFA)
  - o Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)
  - o North Yorkshire County Council
  - o Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

❖ Literature Review to establish the research context and identify occupations with equivalent functions to the HER Officer, as well as existing National Occupational Standards considered relevant to the role

The first report (for project milestone 1) summarised the findings from the initial literature review and formed the basis for developing a questionnaire to carry out a series of in-depth interviews with HER Officers and their line managers.

Methodology Phase 2

❖ 40 telephone interviews with HER Officers (and equivalent roles in archaeology and conservation) as well as HER Managers to explore the role and responsibilities of HER Officers and associated issues and implications for future HPR compliance

❖ Where available – acquisition of existing range of HER Officer job descriptions and person specifications from interviewees as part of this process

❖ Analysis of interview findings, existing job descriptions and person specifications to identify core components for the Job Description template;

❖ Audit of existing job descriptions and interview findings against interfaces such as the results of the Data Sources Audit, GIS Standards in HERs and the Content and Computing Survey 2009 in order to identify a range of possible core components for the Job Description template

❖ Meeting with the Advisory Group to discuss the emerging findings and agree on the main considerations for the Draft 1 Job Description

The second report (for project milestone 2) provided an overview of the main findings from this phase of the research, including:
1. ***Organisation of the Historic Environment Record (including working arrangements) across different local authorities and other organisations***
2. ***Key purposes of the HER role (now and looking towards the future)***
3. ***Key responsibilities, knowledge, experience and qualifications and behavioural competences required***

Methodology Phase 3

❖ Development of the Draft 1 Job Description

❖ Consultation with the Advisory Group to obtain comments and feedback; development of the Draft 2 Job Description

❖ Online feedback period (one month) to gain feedback on the Draft 2 Job Description and identify further issues and implications associated with moving towards HPR-compliance

❖ Summary of online feedback findings prepared; consultation with the Advisory Group to gain comments and feedback; development of the Draft 3 Job Description

❖ Workshop to discuss the Draft 3 Job Description - with representation from English Heritage; ALGAO; IHBC; RTPI; local authorities (2 HER Officers and 2 equivalent roles); and an independent consultancy

❖ Development of the final draft Job Description

This report draws together the findings from the three phases of the project, and the findings of each of the two milestone reports produced.

- The findings from the literature review are detailed in sections 3 and 4

- Section 5 summarises the results of the primary research phase

- The process of drafting the job description, and wider consultation, are covered in sections 6 and 7

- Future issues and considerations are presented in section 8

Two appendices contain the final version of the job description, and the job roles interviewed for the primary research.

3. Key Considerations for Compliance: A Literature Review

A literature review was undertaken in the early stages of the project and helped to inform the research in the following ways:

- ❖ setting the context and identifying the characteristics associated with the HER Officer role

- ❖ highlighting key issues that an HER Officer is required to respond to, that may support or otherwise work against the principles of HPR and PPS5 compliance

- ❖ supporting the development of questionnaire to explore the role and responsibilities of the HER Officer in more detail via telephone-based interviews

- ❖ supporting the development of a Job Description to reflect the emerging responsibilities of the role

The main findings are presented below.

3.1 Key Functions of the HER Officer Role

The role of the Historic Environment Record Officer is traditionally understood to have two key functions: [4]

1. That of information manager, responsible for developing the record and providing information services

2. In a planning context - providing information and advice for the assessment of the implications of development proposals

3.2 Variations in Role Requirements

A key challenge is that technological developments and changing attitudes mean that HERs are not always 'owned' by a single authority and there are substantial variations in HER management locally. Existing policy documents do not help HER Officers get the most out of the facilities and resources available to them and these clearly need to be diligently assessed and given careful consideration when developing the Job Description[5].

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[4] Informing the Future of the Past – Guidelines for HERs A3.3
[5] CLG(2010) Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

At present there are a number of job titles in use for the Historic Environment staff who add to, manage, and maintain HER within County Councils, District Councils and Unitary Authorities. These titles reflect the types of responsibilities of the post holders and include:

- ❖ **HER Officer**
- ❖ **Archaeological Data Entry Assistant**
- ❖ **UAD/Monument Officer**
- ❖ **Senior Archaeologist**
- ❖ **SMR Assistant**
- ❖ **Assistant Archaeologist HER**
- ❖ **Archaeological Officer**
- ❖ **Chief HER officer**
- ❖ **Historic Environment Record Development Officer**
- ❖ **Assistant Conservation Officer and HER Officer**

Often the post holder will work as part of a team of historic environment specialists. As stated in the Guidelines for HERs[6] - many HER Officers hold the opinion that each function of the job role constitutes a separate role in itself. Some of the larger HERs include several posts encompassing an HER Manager and HER Assistants, sometimes with specific roles such as Outreach Officer in support.

The same job title within different sized organisations can denote a considerably different role and a different level of relationship with the HER. The scope of the work undertaken, especially within local authorities (noting that some are single authorities and others are multiples) can potentially differ significantly.

In practice, for example – as is illustrated by the job titles above – the same member of staff can perform more than one job function. Assuming that the job titles are representative of the function/functions performed by the incumbent, this highlights potential differences in requirement from organisation to organisation in terms of full time hours and required levels of experience.

3.3 Data Sharing and Storage

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are one of the most common means by which HERs share data with other parties. The use of GIS is steadily increasing enabling HERs to collate, store and disseminate greater volumes of data – there is however a growing problem that there is no satisfactory data-recording protocol and data standards are often inconsistent.

 A survey carried out by ALGAO October 2009 to January 2010 highlighted a number of obstructions to data sharing with non-designated historic environment datasets, including:

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[6] CLG(2010) Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

❖ Data quality issues
❖ Lack of demand
❖ Incompatible software
❖ Lack of delivery mechanisms

The latter two of these barriers were identified to be the most prohibitive to effective and efficient data sharing[7].

The relevance of data sharing and storage to this particular piece of work is that they constitute key elements of the role of the Historic Environment Record Officer. It is necessary that the HER Officer is able to share data with other parties and that the data which is collected and maintained is preserved in a way which allows for dissemination and for the efficient provision of information in response to the requirements of end users.

3.4 Essential Criteria

The **Institute of Historic Building Conservation** promulgates that possession of the following criteria is essential for any historic conservation professional[8]:

• Informed knowledge of all the complex issues that can secure or threaten historic places
• Understanding and appreciation of how sustainable conservation can be achieved in society
• Capacity to access, interpret and apply the specialist skills, advise and services of others where appropriate, and
• Knowledge of their own limitations

3.5 Existing Themes in HER Officer Job Descriptions

There is a wide variability in HER job descriptions in terms of the roles and the associated responsibilities. English Heritage's guide to **Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment**[9] (MoRPHE) sets out the following themes for historic environment research:

A. Discovering, studying and defining historic assets and their significance
B. Studying and establishing the socio-economic and other values and needs of the historic environment and those concerned with it
C. Engaging and developing diverse audiences

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[7] GIS guidance for Historic Environment Records in England
[8] IHBC-Membership Standards, Criteria and Guidelines, section 1.2
[9] MoRPHE PM's Guide pg 22

D. Studying and assessing the risks to historic assets and devising responses
E. Studying historic assets and improving their presentation and interpretation
F. Studying and developing information management

MoRPHE sets out that,

'An archive should be part of every project which compiles unique information – such as photographs or surveys of historic buildings prior to a change of use ,maps of an historic landscape or an archaeological excavation site archive – about the historic environment[10].'

The research themes determined by MoRPHE are all components of the role of HER Officer in varying degrees. The HER Data Sources Audit concluded that, even within the Historic Environment Record community, differing ideas exist as to what the role of the HER Officer should be. There were conflicting opinions about the critical elements of the role including whether responsibilities should incorporate the management of the wider historic environment[11].

Our research has identified two main types of job description for the role of Historic Environment Record Officer:

1. **Generic/general descriptions** written in broadly stated terms that do not tend to identify specific responsibilities of the role or set out its purpose

2. **Specific/individual** job descriptions provide information on all essential responsibilities assigned to the person who will be performing the job; these can be very detailed and comprehensive

Table 1 (on the following page) highlights some common recurring themes within the purpose and the responsibilities of the HER Officer role that have been identified through a study of online adverts from a small number of Local Authorities[12]:

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[10] MoRPHE PM's Guide pg 22
[11] ALGO GIS guidance pg 4
[12] Local Authorities include North Yorkshire, Durham, Lancaster, Peterborough, Exmoor

Table 1

Job Purpose	Key Responsibilities
Provide and interpret HER information	Maintenance of HER
To promote the significance of HERs	Development of HER
To develop and promote uses of the historic environment for education, outreach, research and other projects and contribute to service outreach and publicity initiatives	Providing HER support for local community
To promote data exchange with relevant internal and external partners and organisations	Development of web-based access to HER
To engage with, and provide information and advice to, community-led and other research projects seeking to learn about or enhance their historic environment	Assistance with archaeological inputs into the statutory planning process
To provide specialist, professional archaeological information, advice and guidance on historic environment records and data management and data storage systems	Providing archaeological advise on development control and planning matters to district councils and external agencies

4. Existing Qualifications and Standards

A high level review of qualifications at levels 2-4 was conducted to identify existing provision in terms of skills (competence requirements) and knowledge requirements of HER Officers.

The scoping of qualifications was based on findings of the literature review and initial high level examination of job descriptions.

The qualifications identified revealed a good coverage of general heritage and conservation skills; building heritage is for example catered for in a number of qualifications in the Qualifications and Credit (QCF) framework, as are practical and environmental conservation.

Work based environmental conservation benefits from a range of provision, as do other disciplines or areas with a discrete environmental or land-based, focus but which are slightly beyond the remit of this piece of work.

Provision for archaeology is fairly narrow, with it being limited mainly to GCE Awards, rather than anything with a vocational, or practical focus.

Transferrable (or cross-sectoral) skills are, perhaps unsurprisingly, well covered in terms of qualifications. Awards are available in archiving, information services, and management related training is widespread. More niche, technical areas of skills and knowledge relevant to HER Officers are covered by Awards in spatial data management, for example.

Most training provision identified through the initial scoping study is available at Level 3; Level 4 provision is fairly sparse in comparison.

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are available in a number of occupational areas which link with the HER Officer role - in many of the areas highlighted above from the qualifications scoping. A list of relevant suites of NOS is given below:

- ❖ Cultural Heritage
- ❖ Heritage Skills
- ❖ Archaeological Practice
- ❖ Built Environment Development & Control (Planning) (Conservation) (Building Control) Level 4
- ❖ Built Environment Development & Control (Planning) (Construction) (Building Control) Level 3
- ❖ Freelancing in the Creative and Cultural Industries
- ❖ Environmental Conservation
- ❖ Construction Site Supervision
- ❖ Outdoor sector senior roles

- ❖ Senior Crafts
- ❖ Information and Library Services, Archive Services and Records Management
- ❖ Amenity Horticulture Management
- ❖ Land Based Management
- ❖ Geomatics and Site Surveying

In addition to the NOS listed above, Section F of the Functional Map for Archaeology[13] presents sub-functions on information management. These sections bear resemblance to the types of responsibilities identified during the literature review and subsequent primary research among HER Officers and Managers.

As such, the Functional Map acts as a useful tool for cross-checking against the final job description. A cross references is provided on the following page.

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[13] The functional map for archaeological practice was developed by Carter and Robertson in 2002. The Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) was commissioned by Creative and Cultural Skills to update the functional map and ensure that it is still fit for purpose. This forms the first stage of a wider project to update the National Occupational Standards and, vocational qualifications which are based on them. A draft of the revised functional map was made available publicly in December 2010 which was compiled following consultation with employers and key groups.

Functional Map for Archaeology (2002/Revised Draft 2010)

Section F – Manage information on the material remains and intangible heritage of past communities

AF1 Develop information resources to meet the needs of users

AF1.1 Identify the needs of users of information resources

AF1.2 Identify and recommend improvements to information resources

AF1.3 Implement improvements to information resources

Final Job Description - Key Responsibilities section 4

AF2 Develop procedures for the use of information resources

AF2.1 Develop procedures for accessing and amending data

AF2.2 Develop documentation rules

AF2.3 Maintain the security and safety of information

Final Job Description section - Key Responsibilities section 6 and section 4

AF3 Classify, compile and maintain data on the material remains and intangible heritage of past communities

AF3.1 Agree methods for classifying and compiling data on the material remains and intangible heritage of past communities

AF3.2 Maintain data and records on the material remains and intangible heritage of past communities

Final Job Description section - Key Responsibilities sections 1 and 2

AF4 Provide information on the material remains of past communities to others

AF4.1 Interpret customers' requests for information on the material remains and intangible heritage of past communities

AF4.2 Access data sources and compile data on the material remains and intangible heritage of past communities

AF4.3 Collate and present data to meet customers' requirements

Final Job Description section - Key Responsibilities sections 3 and 5

AE5 Disseminate, deposit and archive data on the material remains and intangible heritage of past communities

AE5.1 Develop procedures for information resource dissemination, deposition and archive

AE5.2 Prepare and transfer information resources for dissemination, deposition and archive

Final Job Description section - Key Responsibilities sections 5 and 6

5. The Current and Future HER Officer Role – Primary Research Findings

Primary Research was conducted in two parts:

Part 1: Telephone Interviews and Review of Job Descriptions >>> Informed the Draft 1 and Draft 2 Core Job Description

Part 2: Online Feedback >>> Informed the Draft 3 Core Job Description

5.1 Telephone Interviews - Overview

To inform the development of the Draft 1 Job Description – 40 in-depth telephone interviews were carried out with HER Officers and Managers, along with a detailed review of existing job descriptions and person specifications. This research explored the current and anticipated future responsibilities of the HER Officer role, as well as issues associated with moving towards HPR compliance[14]. These issues are presented below:

5.2 Telephone Interviews - Key Issues

1. From the analysis of qualitative interviews and interrogation of job descriptions and person specifications, it became clear that there are a number of common functions, as well as core skills and knowledge elements that are required by HER Officers;

2. There are notable variations between organisations concerning requirements of the HER Officer role, which is largely attributable to the environment where the HER is situated. This includes factors such as local authority department structure; the number of people within the department, and the expertise of those staff;

3. Most HER Officers have either already experienced, or expect to experience, a significant increase in the number of commercial enquiries as a result of PPS5. While this is not expected to impact largely on the types of skills and knowledge required to carry out the role - HER Officers will need to continue to ensure that all work is planned and prioritised and records updated;

4. HPR is driving forward a more holistic function of the HER, requiring contributions to the HER from a wider range of historic environment teams beyond traditional archaeology. Going

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[14] A full report on these findings is contained within the Milestone 2 report and a list of the organisations that participated in the telephone interviews is contained within Appendix 2.

forward, HER Officers will need to collaborate more closely with these teams, including overcoming challenges where existing methods of recording information are not necessarily compatible with HER protocols;

5. Positive communication based on mutual exchange and collaborative working is essential. This includes IT services as well as a range of partners and 'customers', such as researchers, archaeological contractors, consultants, universities, schools and members of the public;

6. HER Officers aspire to create a more detailed and sophisticated record and to embark upon a more proactive and engaging programme of outreach work. There are of course, some outliers for example, where the HER is held in a museum or university and those responsible for it have little or no contact with local authorities or planning departments. These are rare instances and in such cases the HER is most often not GIS compliant and likely to require significant changes which would bring it in line with HPR compliance (if the HPR bill is to be passed);

7. While outreach activities are expected to become more important under HPR, as part of community engagement strategies - there are concerns that time and resources will be drawn towards a 'statutory' HER; i.e. working towards compliance with benchmarks and performance standards;

8. It is clear from the review of job descriptions that despite clear similarities between the practical elements of the role and its purpose, context and responsibilities - the breadth and depth of the stated requirements, include grading information, are inconsistent;

9. An HER Officer's background in British Archaeology will continue to be important in the future, however the modern, holistic HER means that wider historic environment experience and knowledge are viewed as increasingly valuable for the post-holder to posses;

10. Experience of database management and GIS software is almost always a prerequisite for applicants. There is a very small minority of current HER Officers with whom we have spoken, who embarked upon their Office with little or no GIS experience and have learnt "on the job";

11. Funding cuts (and the threat of cuts) is a significant issue that could impact upon future HER management. In some cases, departments have been forced to make staff cuts; most often the number of contracted hours attributed to an HER Officer has been reduced, fixed term contracts have not been renewed, and in a minority of cases assistant and supporting roles have been removed. The impact of reduced staff is that enhancement and maintenance of the HER becomes a lower priority than answering planning and conservation queries.

5.3 Review of Job Descriptions - Key Issues

❖ Our analysis of existing and current Job Descriptions and Person Specifications for the HER Officer role (and equivalent) has revealed that there are considerable variations in the style, length and 'depth' of these documents. The age of these documents also varies - from 2005 through to 2010.

❖ All job descriptions list 'main accountabilities' (or equivalent), usually in bullet point or numbered form. A minority contain secondary or 'other' accountabilities, and one provides additional detailed text/supporting information relating to key functions and considerations of the role.

❖ Some job descriptions contain person requirements within the same document which attest to qualifications, skills and personal attributes, whereas some organisations produce these separately.

❖ Across all job descriptions collated, there are between five and 18 main accountabilities listed for the role. This suggests that there are variations or disparities between organisations as to the range of functions and skills required of the role. The implication of this finding, for this research, is that it stresses the importance of seeking to establish a 'core' for the job description.

5.4 Developing the Draft 1 and Draft 2 Core Job Description

Following analysis of the telephone interviews and review of existing job descriptions, the Draft 1 core Job Description was developed. English Heritage as well as the Advisory Group provided comments and suggestions on this first draft.

The feedback received from English Heritage on the Draft 1 Job Description highlighted the need to develop a more forward-looking 'Gold standard' version for an HER Officer managing and HPR-compliant HER by 2015. In particular, English Heritage requested that the Draft 2 Job Description should:

- in almost every situation be aspirational - not perpetuating the status quo;
- present a broader perspective on the nature of the historic environment, extending beyond British Archaeology, into architectural history, building and area conservation, the history of designed landscapes etc.
- consider the necessary changes to process and practice being brought about by HPR and the planning system, particularly PPS5
- involve the HER Officer being proactive both in their acquisition of information and its collation and integration, and then proactive in the dissemination of this information

English Heritage acknowledged that by taking this approach, Local Authorities might find such a comprehensive and forward-looking Job Description daunting, but also recognised that this approach could increase the propensity for Local Authorities to set a business case for HER development and HER Officer training.

The Draft 2 Job Description was therefore developed by taking the above points into consideration.

5.5 Online Feedback – Overview and Response Patterns

Following the development of the Draft 2 Job Description in November 2010, all 88 Historic Environment Records (HERs) were contacted via the Heritage Gateway and staff invited to provide feedback. Invitees included HER Officers (including equivalent roles) and Managers whose details were listed on the Heritage Gateway.

Some respondents had previously participated in a telephone interview which helped to inform the Draft 1 Job Description and were advised that the document was being developed to reflect a 'Gold Standard' Job Description for the role of an HER Officer managing and HPR-compliant HER by 2015. As such, respondents were asked to consider the document in this context.

A total of 30 responses were received by email during the feedback period, from the following organisations:

Birmingham City Council	North Yorkshire County Council
Bedford Borough Council	Northumberland County Council
Cheshire Shared Services	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cornwall Council	Oxfordshire County Council
Dartmoor National Park Authority	Somerset Heritage Centre
English Heritage - Heritage Protection Reform Team	Southampton City Council
Essex County Council	Surrey County Council
Exeter City Council	Tees Archaeology
Gloucestershire County Council	Warwickshire County Council
Greater London HER	Winchester County Council
Hertfordshire County Council	Wellingborough Borough Council
Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)	West Berkshire Council
Lake District National Park Authority	Wolverhampton City Council
Leicestershire County Council	Worcester City Council
Leicester City Council	
North York Moors National Park Authority	

- 11 responses were received from HER Officers;
- 7 responses were received from individuals with 'Archaeology' in their job title;
- 5 responses contained amalgamated feedback from within a Local Authority HER;
- 2 responses were received from non-HER organisations;
- 3 responses were received from 'HER Managers';
- 2 responses were received from 'Conservation Officers'.

5.6 Online Feedback – Key Issues

Around half of respondents commented that the Draft 2 Job Description was going in the right direction, while others were more critical. Some of the general comments were poles apart from others, ranging from "this is an excellent Job Description" [professional organisation]; to "really good and very accurate" [HER Officer]; to "a very poorly thought out document...needs a radical rewrite" [Archaeologist].

Almost all respondents offered some general and specific comments for improvement. The general comments highlighted a small number of issues with the Job Description that needed to be considered and overcome prior to the development of Draft 3. The comments relating to specific responsibilities were largely consistent, enabling identification of areas requiring attention.

Of particular value was that, where a particular statement was not considered relevant or appropriate, many respondents explained in some detail why this was the case, and offered suggestions for alternative or additional content. It should be noted however that many of these responses were written in the context of the *current* HER officer role (rather than the role in 2015).

Discussions on the HER Forum

In addition to the feedback received directly by Pye Tait, a small number HER professionals (c.12 individuals) engaged in a discussion about the Job Description on the JISCMail HER Forum. The discussion was wide-ranging in opinion. One or two individuals praised the forward-looking approach to developing "well rounded historic environment professionals", and at a time when it is difficult for Local Authorities to justify a narrow specialism focussed simply on records. Others criticised the fact that the responsibilities appear to be geared towards a minority of HER Officers whose roles are combined with planning and development control.

5.6.1 Definition of the HER

A fundamental problem for some respondents was the lack of a current, agreed definition for an Historic Environment Record - as evidenced in the Glossary of the Draft 2 Job Description.

> *"We think that an HER definition that is 'TBC' may explain everything"*
> **Amalgamated feedback**

For these respondents the lack of an agreed definition at the time was perceived as a challenge to developing a vision of the future responsibilities of the HER Officer. One suggestion was to use the PPS5 definition (included in the original Draft 1 Job Description)[15]. Many of those negative comments received about the job description were, in general, made from this standpoint.

5.6.2 Skew towards planning

The main concern for many respondents was that the Job Description appeared too heavily skewed towards planning and aimed only at those HER Officers whose duties are combined with planning and development control. Respondents generally reported that there are relatively few HER Officers with such combined roles and, as such, a number of the responsibilities appeared to be beyond the remit of the HER Officer. While some felt this is a positive and welcome move - the majority believed this would not be workable.

This issue was compounded by the following points (raised by several respondents):

• disparities that exist between local authority departments, including the challenge in identifying what is core to the role of HER Officer;
• many of the key responsibilities as outlined in the Job Description would be dependent on local resources and existing procedures

It should also be borne in mind that the individual requirements of PPS5 are not clearly attributed to individual job roles.

> *"There seems a bias in the document towards working with planners. This is clearly an area where many HERs could improve, and also an area that current trends would suggest - but it is not the key role of the HER as defined in the section "context of the role".*
> **Amalgamated feedback**

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[15] An approved definition of 'Historic Environment Record' was provided to Pye Tait by English Heritage in time for the Draft 3 Job Description.

> *"I feel that the only key purpose being shown here of an HER is for planning purposes. I understand that the background to this project is to make HERs more HPR compliant but the reality is that an HER is far more than just a planning tool or part of the planning system".*
> **HER Manager**

5.6.3 'Unrealistic' demands being placed upon HER Officers

Linking to issue 2 - some respondents questioned whether focussing on just one job role, as opposed to a review of wider roles, may not be the best approach. That is, that the 'aspirational' responsibilities assigned to HER Officers may well have implications for other job roles, along with Local Authority policies and procedures that will also need to be reviewed in this context.

One respondent questioned the term "manage" in the Key Purposes statement on the grounds that it implies the Job Description is also trying to encompass HER Managers as well as Officers (which it is not).

Several respondents commented that the Job Description was too long and one described it as potentially "onerous".

5.6.4 Use of the term 'Built and Historic Environment'

Use of the term "Built and Historic Environment" was suggested following the Draft 1 Job Description. The rationale for the term was that "Built" could refer to the non-historic environment that has an ever-increasing impact upon the wider landscape. The majority of respondents found the term confusing and considered "Built" to be readily encompassed within "Historic Environment", i.e. moving away from a "false dichotomy between historic buildings and archaeology" [HER Officer]. One HER Officer commented that encapsulating the contemporary built environment within the Job Description would be unachievable.

In addition, the description "Planning and other Built and Historic Environment Specialists" was also considered confusing.

5.6.5 Qualifications/archaeology

There was mixed feedback on the qualifications element of the job description. This ranged from the view that an Archaeology degree is beyond question; to the view that a degree does not need to be related to the historic environment; to the view that a degree should not be essential at all.

There is generally less favour towards a post-graduate qualification being either essential or desirable, unless this is specific to the post, e.g. Archaeological Computing or Information Management.

6. Developing the Draft 3 Core Job Description

Pye Tait considered the themes, comments and suggestions which emerged through the online feedback and developed recommendations for changes as part of the Draft 3 Job Description. These recommendations were considered by English Heritage and Advisory Group members and a summary of the agreed changes is presented in this section.

6.1 Summary of Changes in Draft 3

6.1.1 Skew towards planning

Where the Key Purposes were concerned - many suggestions were received from online respondents to help set a broader context for the HER as a public service - with community engagement, outreach and provision of information and advice to different groups being key considerations here. These considerations were acted upon and the Draft 3 Job Description presents a 'core' set of responsibilities that balance the need for closer integration within the planning system alongside the wider context and public functions of the HER.

Where specific statements were concerned (notably 1.6 "use evidence gathered during the planning process to prioritise...") the explicit reference to planning was removed from the beginning as it seemed to imply that this was the only consideration for prioritising actions and that other considerations, such as local resources and procedures, needed to be factored in.

6.1.2 Use of the term 'Built and Historic Environment'

After careful consideration, the term "Built" was ultimately removed as it was considered to be encompassed within the title "Historic Environment". By way of explanation however, the Glossary within Draft 3 was amended to define "Historic Environment" as encompassing:

• Roles responsible for the historic environment and heritage assets, including: HER staff, archaeologists, conservation officers, historic buildings and landscapes staff;

• Roles responsible for specific aspects of the built environment, including: architects, landscape architects, planners and urban designers.

6.1.3 'Unrealistic' demands being placed upon HER Officers

In response to the online feedback, the Draft 3 Job Description sought to present a set of responsibilities that balanced the need for closer integration within the planning system, alongside the wider context and public functions of the HER.

6.1.4 Qualifications/archaeology

In keeping with the desire to broaden the context of the HER Officer job role, there would continue to be no specific reference to the requirement for a degree in Archaeology. Instead, reference was made to a degree "in a core discipline relating to the historic environment". On balance, some online feedback also suggested that a degree is not necessarily essential where equivalent experience is held. With that in mind, the term "or equivalent experience" was added.

6.1.5 Specific changes

Due to the large volume of responses received, some statements within the Job Description received more attention than others. Comments ranged from queries regarding the appropriateness of some statements to the role of HER Officer, to suggestions for minor wording changes.

1. Some of the Key Responsibilities in Sections 1 and 2 of the Draft 2 Job Description were edited or combined in Draft 3, where there was considered to be some overlap.

2. Statement 1.4 (below) in Draft 2 was since deleted on the basis that it proved particularly contentious among online respondents and was considered beyond the remit of the core role of the HER Officer.

   Responsibility 1.4: Gather up-to-date information on the efficiency and sustainability of historic buildings in the interests of climate change, in order to inform planning decisions relating to their suitability for retention, reuse and/or adaptation

3. Statement 1.5 (below) in Draft 2 was since amended as it appeared to misconstrue 'Written Schemes of Investigation' and the role of the HER Officer in connection with these schemes. i.e. once Written Scheme of Investigation have been agreed, it is the resulting records and reports that should be used to update the HER.

   Responsibility 1.5: Ensure that records are obtained from written schemes of investigation (including reports, site summaries and other relevant information) for updating to the HER

4. The three statements listed below (3.2, 4.1 and 4.3) were considered, as written, to be beyond the remit of the role of the HER Officer and should therefore be amended or deleted. Statement 3.2 was since deleted and statements 4.1 and 4.3 since amended.

   Responsibility 3.2: Engage in pre-planning discussions with relevant stakeholders in order to assess and determine:
   a. appropriate considerations and information requirements to support the planning application process;

b. *the likely impact of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets*

Responsibility 4.1: Promote improvements to the interoperability of software systems and working practices used and followed by planners and other built and historic environment specialists

Responsibility 4.3: Identify and initiate changes required to Information Technology (IT) that will:
a. *improve the efficiency and functionality of the HER;*
b. *improve access to information for both internal and external users;*
c. *optimise compatibility with other software systems*
d. *maintain data security in line with national protocols*

5. Statement 4.4 (below) with its specific reference to the Heritage Gateway was questioned on the basis that most respondents would rather see flexibility here for promoting local web-based systems. However PPS5 makes specific reference to the Heritage Gateway in line with the desire for a more standardised information system, hence the rationale for its inclusion.

   A compromise was reached for Draft 3 in line with one suggestion received from an online respondent: "Promote and embed online access to HER information and consider the Heritage Gateway as a local and national resource for sharing information in respect of the historic environment".

   Responsibility 4.4: Promote and embed the Heritage Gateway as a local and national resource for sharing information in respect of the historic environment

6. In Draft 3, specific reference was made to GIS as this was considered to be a core part of the role.

7. Reference to "accurately" was removed within specific responsibilities as this was considered to be more of a behavioural competence

8. In Draft 3 – the Additional Capabilities section was removed on the basis that some of the statements were considered core (since moved and embedded accordingly), some were considered relevant to the 'Desirable' section of the person specification, and others were considered duplications of content already included elsewhere.

7. Developing the Final Core Job Description

The Draft 3 Job Description was subject to further discussion at a seminar for Historic Environment professionals and representatives, held at English Heritage's offices in York on 25th January 2011. This workshop-style event was attended by eight representatives and provided the opportunity to agree on any final changes needed to the Job Description and help to inform the Final Draft.

7.1 Summary of Changes in the Final Version

The suggested changes in the move from Draft 3 to the Final Draft may be summarised as follows:

❖ Short introduction added to the Job Description to set the context for its use

❖ New statement in the 'Context' that the HER Officer operates in accordance with national standards and benchmarks

❖ Removal of reference to the Key Purposes "not [intending] to be in order of priority" to alleviate any possible confusion

❖ Removal of "and to help encourage social action" from Key Purpose 'd'

❖ Merging of Key Purpose statements 'b and 'c'

❖ Removal of "within the geographic area it covers" from Key Purpose statement 'd' (second section)

❖ Addition of "and understanding" within Key Purpose statement 'e' (second section)

❖ KR 1.4: Replaced "assess and determine the need for", with "to inform" and removed reference to "conservation area"

❖ KR 1.5: Removed "during the planning process" as not only applicable in this context; also deleted "applicability of" for improved clarity

❖ KR 4.4: Removed second half of statement and deletion of reference to the Heritage Gateway

❖ KR 5.4: Removed reference to "project manage" as deemed non-core for HER Officers

❖ KR 5.5: Removed second half of statement (specific examples) which may not always be

appropriate

❖ KR Section 6: Consolidation of responsibilities to simply cover the core of contributing towards compliance and adhering to national standards (which in turn feed into local policies and procedures)

❖ Knowledge and Experience: 'Essential f' deleted; 'essential g' amended; 'desirable h' amended

❖ Glossary: Amendment to definition of 'Historic environment specialists' to clarify roles with specific/roles with general undertaking in relation to the historic environment; as well as that this includes roles both internal and external to the local authority/HER-owning organisation

❖ Glossary: Amendment to definition of 'Stakeholders' to include reference to the general public

❖ Glossary: Sources (for definitions) added where applicable

8. Implications for the Future

8.1 Future Impact of HPR on HERs

In order to be successfully implemented, the core Job Description should continue to advocate the 'gold standard' model to which local authorities and other organisations responsible for HERs should aspire. The Job Description should therefore represent 'best practise'.

Given the wide-ranging disparities between local authorities concerning the resources, systems and processes used for managing and operating HERs - the Job Description would be best served as a tool to support changes to relevant national principles, policies ad legislation.

Looking towards the future – most HER Officers recognise that HPR and PPS5 will increase the significance of the historic environment as part of the planning and consent process. They are also generally optimistic about the increased importance this in turn places on the information contained within the Historic Environment Record.

As a result of PPS5 in particular, the most commonly cited expectations among HER Officers are that:

a) the level of enquiries to the record will increase in the future;

b) a wider range of historic environment job roles will need to work in conjunction with the HER besides archaeologists (i.e. planners, conservation officers and historic buildings officers)

c) the HER Officer will have a part to play in developing and improving access to the HER both internally and externally;

d) the HER Officer will have a part to play in improving interoperability; i.e. relationships and compatibility between information systems and business processes;

e) if the HER becomes statutory (currently subject to the HPR Bill being passed) - then there will need to be greater consistency between local authorities in terms of systems and processes, and the HER Officer may need to work towards recognised performance standards and benchmarks.

Most HER Officers feel unable to comment on what, exactly, the future impacts of HPR and PPS5 will be, stating that it is simply too early to tell. Threatened budgets cuts are the greatest concern for the immediate future, and there is the general perception that a move towards a statutory HER is far

from certain.

8.2 Future Skills and Training Needs

Going forward, HER Officers will need to adapt to, and work within, a historic environment setting that is more holistic i.e. archaeological knowledge and expertise will need to be supplemented with an understanding of a wider range of job roles and functions as they relate to the historic environment. This presents an opportunity for local authorities and other organisations to cast the net wider when recruiting HER Officers of the future, as a wider range of educational specialisms are likely to add value to the role.

The most common concern raised by HER Officers throughout the course of the research was that the Job Description (Draft 2 in particular) placed too great an emphasis on functions considered outside of scope, i.e. those functions that are commonly associated with planning and development control. While it became clear through the iterative development of the Job Description that some of these responsibilities needed to be modified or removed, it is clear that to be HPR-compliant - HER Officers will require knowledge of the planning process, its interaction with the historic environment, and be able to contribute to this.

The Coalition Government's 'Big Society' agenda places increased importance on enabling voluntary sector organisations and individuals to play a part in shaping the society and environment in which they live and work. With that in mind, HER Officers are increasingly conscious of the skills needed to engage with and support communities to help them play an active role in understanding and sustaining the historic environment.

The 'Knowledge and Experience' section of the final Job Description serves as a useful tool for future skills and training development (see page 42).

8.3 Priorities for Future NOS Development

National Occupational Standards (NOS) cover a wide range of individual disciplines associated with the Historic Environment and the proposed update to NOS in Archaeological Practice will be valuable.

It will be important that future updates to existing NOS pay attention to the interaction between the historic and the modern; i.e. skills and knowledge required in relation to the planning process, as well as community engagement.

While it is not envisaged that the core tasks undertaken by HER Officers will change - the knowledge and understanding underpinning those tasks will need to extend beyond the confines of an individual discipline.

There may be merit in developing a more holistic suite of NOS relating to 'Historic Environment Records Enhancement' (or similar). Care will be needed over the title of any such NOS. While some HER Officers refer to their role of 'managing' the HER - the role of the HER Manager was outside the scope of this research.

Appendix 1　　　　Final Job Description

Core Job Description for an HER Officer managing an HPR-compliant HER

Overview

This document constitutes a core Job Description and Person Specification for an Historic Environment Record (HER) Officer managing an HER that is compliant with Heritage Protection Reform (HPR).

It includes the context of the role, objectives and responsibilities; these are underpinned by knowledge, experience, qualifications and behavioural requirements. A glossary of terms is also provided at the end of the document.

Purpose

The document sets out the core expectations of an HER Officer by 2015 and will help align the role to the principles of HPR as well as Planning Policy Statement 5. The document is not a mandatory requirement but sets out best practices for the role of HER Officer.

Job Title: Historic Environment Record Officer
Department: [to be completed by the employer]
Role reports to: [to be completed by the employer]
Roles reporting into the HER Officer: [to be completed by the employer]
Grade/salary: [to be completed by the employer]
Context of the role: Historic Environment Records (HERs) are information services that provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use. Operating in line with national standards and benchmarks - HERs typically comprise

databases linked to a geographic information system (GIS) and associated reference material, together with a dedicated staffing resource[16].

HERs contribute to the value of the historic environment and the contribution it makes to cultural, social and economic life. They provide a public service for anyone interested in the historic environment, and from an educational perspective HERs are consulted by students at all levels, as well as post-graduate academic researchers[17].

Within the context of the planning system, HERs contribute to the evidence base that is needed to develop robust plans and minimise the risk of challenge. This includes providing information that can be used to inform sustainability appraisals, assess the capacity and opportunities for change in a particular area, and identify the need for future policies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment[18].

Objectives

The objectives of the HER are as follows:

a.   To provide an evidence base that is needed as part of the planning system

b.   To inform the management of the historic environment, especially in land management, including agri-environment schemes and forestry schemes

c.   To serve as public information resources to allow an understanding and appreciation of the rich diversity of heritage and history of a local area by all those with an interest

d.   To contribute to the empowerment of communities

The HER Officer is responsible for managing, maintaining, enhancing and promoting the HER - and must meet the following key purposes:

a.   Ensure that the HER provides a comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date evidence base that is linked to the planning system

b.   Encourage and facilitate information sharing (including technical information) between the HER, historic environment specialists and other stakeholders - in line with agreed standards and specifications

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[16] Communities and Local Government (2010) PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment – Planning Practice Guide

[17] HELM (2010) 'Historic Environment Records' [online] Available at http://www.helm.org.uk/server/show/category.19607 [Accessed 19 January 2011]

[18] Communities and Local Government (2010) PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment – Planning Practice Guide

c. Ensure that the HER facilitates understanding, awareness and appreciation of the significance of the historic environment, including heritage assets

d. Contribute to a holistic and inclusive approach to the management and understanding of the historic environment at a local level, involving both internal and external stakeholders

Responsibilities:

1. Gathering and assessing information relating to the historic environment

1.1. Work with historic environment specialists and other stakeholders in order to identify appropriate national, regional and local sources of information relating to the historic environment

1.2. Gather available information about the historic, archaeological, architectural and artistic significance of the historic environment that will be used to:
   a. update the HER
   b. inform the planning process
   c. inform the conservation and management of the historic environment
   d. enhance understanding of the past

1.3. Ensure that records are obtained from the assessment and investigation of known and potential historic assets (including reports, site summaries and other relevant information) for updating the HER

1.4. Use evidence gathered to prioritise information for updating the HER, taking into account:
   a. the significance of the heritage asset/s and its setting - including the nature, extent and level of importance of that significance
   b. national and statutory designations and/or local listings to the heritage asset/s
   c. the value and importance of new information relating to the heritage asset/s
   d. current strategic and local planning priorities and development pressures

1.5. Work with relevant historic environment specialists and other stakeholders to inform local listings and designations using all relevant information gathered

2. Updating the HER

2.1. Extract, collate and index physical and digital information received for updating the HER, using appropriate recording and/or referencing systems

2.2. Interpret information in a consistent and methodical way in order to assess its quality and comprehensiveness, including the value and importance of facts and opinions

2.3. Enter qualifying information to the HER, using informed and accessible language and in line with nationally defined data standards

2.4. Ensure that physical and digital records are properly organised and documented, with clear storage systems, maintenance protocols and management processes - and in line with national standards

3. ***Prioritising and responding to enquiries and requests for information relating to the HER***

3.1. Inform the planning process by providing information to stakeholders relating to the historic environment

3.2. Respond to or direct advice requests using appropriate channels

3.3. As circumstances dictate, select and provide information from the HER that will be sufficiently comprehensive and accessible to the target audience

4. ***Developing the HER through improved functionality and access for internal and external users***

4.1 Work in partnership with IT specialists to promote improvements to the interoperability of software systems and working practices used and followed by historic environment specialists

4.2 Work in partnership with historic environment specialists to establish mutually beneficial methods of sharing and exchanging information that will enhance the HER

4.3 Identify and recommend changes required to Information Technology (IT) that will:
   a. improve the efficiency and functionality of the HER
   b. improve access to information for both internal and external users
   c. optimise compatibility with other software systems
   d. maintain data security in line with national protocols

4.4 Promote and embed online access to HER information

4.5 Promote the collective use and value of the HER by contributing to the training and development of historic environment specialists

5. ***Promoting relationship-building, engagement and information sharing activities among internal and external stakeholders***

5.1 Build effective working relationships with historic environment specialists and other stakeholders who interact with the HER

5.2 Build a network of contacts for the purpose of information sharing and gathering

5.3 Work in partnership with stakeholders to build capacity and resources for community engagement activities

5.4 Proactively engage with the community in order to share information and promote the value of the historic environment

5.5 Monitor community-based projects that will raise the profile of, and contribute to the enhancement of, the HER

5.6 [Where line management duties held] Lead and performance-manage other individuals who share the responsibility for the HER

6. Implementing plans, policies and projects

6.1 Contribute towards implementing and meeting national standards, benchmarks and audit requirements relating to the HER

6.2 Represent the local authority, as required, at internal and external meetings, and fora

6.3 Contribute to the development of fee income and partnership funding

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and experience

Essential

a. Knowledge of legislation, standards, benchmarks and guidelines that impact upon HPR-compliant HERs
b. Knowledge of the planning process and its interaction with the historic environment
c. Knowledge of the history, principles, practices and techniques of Britain's historic environment and its management and investigation
d. Knowledge of information, records and database management including data standards, structures, formats and common issues
e. Knowledge of Geographic Information (GIS) systems
f. Experience of investigations involving historical research, analysis, surveying and recording
g. Experience working with sources such as aerial photographs, maps, archaeological, architectural and other survey records, together with an ability to discern and prioritise the potential value of such records
h. Experience of working as part of a team

Desirable

a. Knowledge of local authority policies and procedures, including procurement processes
b. Knowledge and appreciation of the historic environment on national, regional and local scales
c. Knowledge of the role of HERs in other land management regimes
d. Experience of community engagement activities
e. Experience of report writing
f. Experience of delivering effective presentations to a wide range of audiences
g. Experience of leading and influencing others
h. Membership of a relevant historic environment professional body

Qualifications

Essential

A degree (or equivalent) in a core discipline relating to the historic environment – or relevant experience to this level

Core behavioural competences

Quality of work

You are able to:

a. work meticulously with complex datasets and information in different forms of media to ensure that all appropriate information is extracted and recorded accurately

b. ensure that written and verbal communications are clear and consistent and tailored to the needs of the target audience

c. demonstrate sound professional judgment in decision-making

Professional standards

You are able to:

a. perform activities within the legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements set out in your area of work

b. demonstrate strong interpersonal skills and excellent customer service skills

Working with others

You are able to:

a. communicate effectively to a varied audience at a range of levels

b. use a range of techniques to successfully persuade, influence and/or negotiate with others to promote the benefits of the HER and its value

c. build cooperation and trust with colleagues and external stakeholders by sharing ideas and knowledge for mutual benefit

d. work in a manner that is flexible and responsive in order to support your department's requirements

Self motivation

You are able to:

a. work independently to plan, organise, prioritise and carry out in a methodical manner all tasks required by the role

b. organise time and workload effectively

Personal and professional development

You are able to manage your own Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to:

a. achieve your work objectives, career and personal goals

b. identify and address gaps in your skills, knowledge and understanding

c. maintain up-to-date knowledge and awareness in respect of the current and future historic environment, including national standards and legislation

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Historic environment specialists

Encompasses the following roles (both internal and external to the organisation that owns the HER):

- Roles responsible for the historic environment and heritage assets, including: HER staff, archaeologists, conservation officers, historic buildings and landscapes staff;

- Roles with a more general undertaking in relation to the historic environment and with responsibility for specific aspects of planning and the built environment, including: architects, landscape architects, planners and urban designers.

Conservation

The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and where appropriate enhances its significance[19].

Designated (Heritage Asset)

A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area classified as such under the relevant legislation[20].

Geographic Information System (GIS)

A computer system capable of capturing, storing, analysing and displaying geographically referenced information[21].

Heritage Asset

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in PPS5) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the planning process (including local listing)[22].

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[19] Communities and Local Government (2010) PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment; p.13
[20] Ibid
[21] English Heritage (2009)Sites and Monuments Record to Historic Environment Record - Local Authority Case Studies; p.40
[22] Communities and Local Government (2010) PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment; p.13

Heritage Gateway   A portal that provides cross-searchable online access to records of designated heritage assets, local HERs and many sources of historic information: www.heritagegateway.org.uk[23].
Heritage Protection Reform (HPR)   A programme of reform to achieve a modernised approach to all of the historic environment, a better designation process with wider participation, better management and decision-making and local participation and management. The Draft Bill, published in April 2008, failed to reach the Queens speech and is awaiting a future parliamentary session[24].
Historic Environment   All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora. Those elements of the historic environment that hold significance are called heritage assets[25].
Historic Environment Record (HER)   Historic Environment Records are sources of information about the local historic environment, its archaeology, architecture and town- and landscape from the Palaeolithic period to modern times, providing an up-to-date catalogue of heritage assets within a defined geographical area. They underpin the local planning system by providing information about the historic environment, complementary to that provided by museums, archives and libraries, to communities, owners and developers, thus enabling local people to shape their environment in ways which are sensitive to the history and character of an area. As an information service managed by dedicated staff, they consist of databases, indexes and reference collections linked to a Geographic Information System (GIS). They thus provide core information for plan-making, designation and development management decisions in the planning system as set out in government planning policy and especially in Planning Policy Statement 5, as well as decisions relating to environmental stewardship schemes[26].
Local   Within the geographic boundaries and remit of the HER.

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[23] Communities and Local Government (2010) PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment – Planning Practice Guide; p.52

[24] English Heritage (2009)Sites and Monuments Record to Historic Environment Record - Local Authority Case Studies; p.41

[25] Communities and Local Government (2010) PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment; p.14

[26] English Heritage - 2011 working definition

Setting

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral[27].

Significance

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be historic, archaeological, architectural and artistic[28].

Stakeholders (internal/external as appropriate)

'Internal stakeholders' includes colleagues such as historic environment specialists;

'External stakeholders' includes individuals and organisations whose work or activities intersect with the historic environment - such as the general public, asset owners, developers, researchers, museums, heritage centres, local history and archaeology societies, civic amenity societies and other special interest and community groups.

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[27] Communities and Local Government (2010) PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment; p.14
[28] Ibid

Appendix 2   Job Roles Interviewed

The following table lists the job roles[29] of individuals who participated in the telephone interviews to inform the Draft 1 Job Description:

Position	Location
HER Officer	North West
Historic Environment Project Manager	North West
HER Officer	North West
HER Officer	North West
HER Officer	North East
Conservation Team Manager / County Archaeologist	North East
SMR Officer	North East
Archaeology Officer	North East
Archaeology Officer	North East
Conservation Officer	Yorkshire and the Humber
Senior Environmental Records Officer	East Midlands
HER Officer	East Midlands
Senior Archaeological /Conservation Officer	Yorkshire and the Humber
HER Officer	Yorkshire and the Humber
Historic Environment Officer	East Midlands
HER Officer	East Midlands
City Archaeologist	East Midlands
Archaeologist	West Midlands
HER Officer	West Midlands
Senior HER Officer	West Midlands
HER Officer	West Midlands
HER Manager	West Midlands
Senior Archaeologist	East of England
HER Officer	East of England
HER Officer	East of England
County Archaeologist	East of England
Sites and Monuments Records Officer	London
HER Officer	South East
SMR/Archaeological Projects Officer	South East

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[29] Three job roles with 'conservation' in the title were interviewed as part of this research. This represents a 50% sample of the six 'conservation' job roles with responsibility for the HER, as reported by the Heritage Gateway [online].

Archaeological Officer	South East
Archaeologist	South East
Assistant Curator	South East
HER Officer	South East
HER Manager	South East
Archaeological Officer	South West
HER Officer	South West
HER Officer	South West
Heritage Service Manager	South West
HER Development Officer	South West
County Archaeologist	South West