

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT 2016

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SUMMARY

2. The Historic Environment (Wales) Act augments the existing systems for the protection and sustainable management of the Welsh historic environment. In broad terms, the Act: creates new measures for the protection of listed buildings and scheduled monuments; enhances existing mechanisms for the sustainable management of the historic environment; and introduces greater transparency and accountability into decisions taken on the historic environment.
3. The Act contains provisions that:
 - require the Welsh Ministers to consult with owners before designating historic assets through scheduling and listing, and establish a mechanism to review designation decisions;
 - allow the Welsh Ministers to put an immediate halt to unauthorised works to scheduled monuments and make it easier for action to be taken against those who have damaged or destroyed monuments;
 - enable authorities to act quickly if a listed building is under threat from unauthorised works and give them greater flexibility in dealing with listed buildings that require urgent works to protect them from further decay;
 - allow the Welsh Ministers to make provision in regulations about further steps that local authorities or the Welsh Ministers may take to secure the proper preservation of listed buildings in Wales that have fallen into disrepair;
 - make it easier for owners or developers to create sustainable new uses for unlisted historic buildings by relaxing the conditions for applications for certificates of immunity from listing;
 - allow owners of historic assets to negotiate heritage partnership agreements with consenting authorities for a period of years, eliminating the need for repeated applications for consent for similar works and encouraging more consistent and coherent management of the buildings or monuments;
 - require the Welsh Ministers to compile and maintain a register of historic parks and gardens;
 - require the Welsh Ministers to compile and keep up to date historic environment records for the whole of Wales, which provide detailed information and advice on the historic environment to local authorities and the public;
 - require the Welsh Ministers to compile and maintain a list of historic place names in Wales; and
 - establish an independent panel to advise on historic environment policy and strategy at a national level in Wales.