



Sheffield Assay Office Act 1995

1995 CHAPTER v

An Act to amend section 16 of the Hallmarking Act 1973 in its application to the Sheffield Assay Office; to extend the functions of the Office; and for other purposes incidental thereto. [19th July 1995]

WHEREAS—

- (1) The Sheffield Assay Office (hereinafter called “the Company”), of which the full name is The Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate within the Town of Sheffield, was established by the Plate Assay (Sheffield and Birmingham) Act 1772 (hereinafter called “the Act of 1772”) as a corporate body for the assaying and marking of wrought silver plate:
- (2) The Plate Assay (Sheffield) Act 1784 (hereinafter called “the Act of 1784”) altered and amended the Act of 1772 in certain respects:
- (3) By sections 47 and 48 of the Sheffield Corporation Act 1903 (hereinafter called “the Act of 1903”), the assaying of gold plate was brought within the functions of the Company:
- (4) The Sheffield Assay Act 1906 (hereinafter called “the Act of 1906”) made further provision for the execution of the powers and duties of the Company:
- (5) Sections 47 and 48 of the Act of 1903 were subsequently replaced by sections 501 and 502 of the Sheffield Corporation (Consolidation) Act 1918, but the latter provisions were repealed by the Hallmarking Act 1973 (hereinafter called “the Act of 1973”) which (inter alia) made fresh provision as to assay offices including provision that their functions should extend to the assaying of gold, silver and platinum and of any other metal which might be prescribed under the provisions of section 17 of that Act:
- (6) The Act of 1973 also repealed the Act of 1784, and certain provisions of the Act of 1772 and of the Act of 1906, and by section 16 gave the Secretary of State power to make orders (inter alia) for constituting and conferring powers on assay offices:
- (7) In exercise of that power, the Secretary of State made the Sheffield Assay Office Order 1978 (hereinafter called “the Order of 1978”), altering the constitution of the Company, conferring further powers upon it and making other provisions in relation to it:
- (8) The Order of 1978 also repealed certain of the remaining provisions of the Act of 1772 and of the Act of 1906, made amendments to the latter Act and provided that the Act of 1772, the Act of 1906 and the Order itself might be cited together as the Sheffield Assay Office Acts and Order 1772 to 1978:

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.

- (9) The assaying of precious metals is believed to have been the earliest and, for a long time, the only form of consumer protection in the United Kingdom:
- (10) It would be of public advantage if the Company could extend its activities to the independent and objective testing, examination, investigation and evaluation of materials and articles of any kind, and of firms, corporations, systems, programmes and procedures:
- (11) For those reasons, and in order that it may respond to changed market conditions resulting from the Single European Market, the Company wishes to have power to carry on, in addition to the business of an assay office, the other activities described in this Act, and to have, in relation to those activities, the ancillary powers so described:
- (12) Doubts have arisen as to the extent to which the making of the Order of 1978 was within the powers conferred upon the Secretary of State by section 16 of the Act of 1973, and it is desirable to set those doubts at rest, and to clarify the position for the future, by means of a retrospective amendment of that section in its application to the Company:
- (13) It is expedient that such provisions should be enacted as are contained in this Act:
- (14) The objects of this Act cannot be attained without the authority of Parliament:

May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted, and be it enacted, by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—