

# IHBC Enterprises Ltd

## IHBC ENTERPRISES

Submission to the All-Party Parliamentary Group  
Conservation Places & People

*Inquiry 21st century places: values and benefits*

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## 1. Introduction

Historic Environment Service Providers' Recognition scheme, HESPR, is the IHBC's recognition and promotion service for companies and practices.

- The HESPR service has over 50 practices of all sizes - from small sole traders to large nationwide multi office companies.
- 50% are Conservation and Planning consultants, 25% are Architect practices and the remainder includes Research based practices, specialists in Regeneration, Urban design, Practical building conservation, Community engagement, Surveying and Engineering.
- HESPR contains practices to offer advice for every aspect of caring for historic buildings.
- The HESPR '*News and Tender Alert*' - a weekly Bulletin of current tender notifications to HESPR members, notifies members of over 300 varied business opportunities annually valued at a total of up to £1,833,791,666.

## 2. Responses

Professional advice is generally needed to best help understand, manage, repair and regenerate the historic environment. Taking good professional advice will ensure proper, efficient, effective and sustainable conservation. Taking the wrong advice can be dangerous and expensive. But how to find advice which is authoritative, expert and appropriately regulated is a difficult path for owners, whether public bodies community groups or developers. Many possible clients use internet searches with no quality control or rely on unreliable recommendations.

Historic Environment Service Providers' Recognition scheme, HESPR, is the Institute of Historic Building Conservation - the IHBC's, recognition and promotion service for companies and practices. The HESPR service connects clients with conservation businesses and their expert advice. HESPR businesses include offers of advice on conservation, repair, survey, research, planning, architecture, engineering and design.

The HESPR service has grown to over 50 practices of all sizes, from small sole traders to large nationwide multi office companies. Almost half are conservation and planning consultants, 25% are architect practices and the remainder includes Research based practices, specialists in Regeneration, Urban design, Practical building conservation, Community engagement, Surveying and Engineering. HESPR now contains practices to offer advice for every aspect of caring for historic buildings.

The HESPR '*News and Tender Alert*', a weekly Bulletin of current tender notifications to HESPR members, is an innovative service that supports their conservation businesses by seeking out a wide variety of potential commercial opportunities from nationwide sources. Each year for the last five years this service has notified members of over 300 varied business opportunities. The value of these opportunities for 2019 were as much as £1,676,004,453 rising to £1,833,791,666 in 2020.

Most importantly HESPR businesses operate in accordance with the IHBC's guiding principles and standards of historic environment conservation, principally the IHBC's Code of Conduct. Through HESPR, the IHBC allows companies to advertise an intention to support and work in line with IHBC standards. The mechanism for observing standards is through a link to the IHBC in the person of their Designated Service Adviser (DSA), a nominated Full Member of the IHBC, agreed by the IHBC. The DSA is the public contact point within HESPR and serves as the quality assurance for the service standards of the practice.

Where the service provided by the company is not in line with the IHBC's standards the IHBC can terminate recognition through HESPR but can also regulate the IHBC Membership of the Full Member who serves as the DSA through the institute's Code of Conduct and disciplinary processes. This link, which is both personal and corporate, marks the main difference between HESPR and other registers, which may require full corporate accountability but without an enforceable link other than removal from the register.

## Contact

ihbc.org.uk  
operations@ihbc.org.uk  
01747 873133

IHBC Enterprises Ltd  
Business Office:  
IHBC,  
Jubilee House,  
High Street,  
Tisbury,  
Wiltshire SP3 6HA

