



**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE IHBC'S
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS RECOGNITION
(HESPR) SERVICE**

See <http://hespr.ihbc.co.uk>

SUMMARY:

Historic Environment Service Providers Recognition (HESPR) is a recognition and promotional scheme for companies, including sole traders, active in the historic environment. HESPR is maintained and operated for the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) the professional body for historic environment conservation specialists across the UK. Recognition under the IHBC's HESPR scheme allows companies to subscribe to the same professional, ethical, technical and service standards expected of Full Members of the IHBC, to support the IHBC's charitable activities, and to have their business promoted through the IHBC's own extensive services and networks.

'Recognition' under HESPR allows the IHBC to acknowledge a company's service standard and advertise it to the wider public, including prospective customers. The IHBC is able to promote recognised companies under HESPR because it has a corresponding endorsement of its operations from one of our Full Members, who is also an employee of the company. This IHBC member, is called the *Designated Service Adviser* (DSA). The DSA is in effect the ambassador to the IHBC on behalf of the recognised company. As the DSA, the IHBC member makes a personal and professional statement on the company's service standard, providing quality assurance in the form of a structured link between the company, its operations and the IHBC.

The IHBC does not regulate a company recognised under HESPR. The IHBC cannot and does not regulate or discipline companies; if there is an unsatisfactory service standard from a recognised company, the IHBC will simply terminate recognition under HESPR.

The Designated Service Adviser provides the quality assurance for the HESPR scheme. As Full Members, if the company the DSA represents fails to work to the IHBC's standards, in particular to the institute's Code of Conduct, the DSA can be subject to disciplinary actions. In practice, the ethical responsibilities of the Designated Service Adviser are not significantly different from those expected of any Full Member of the IHBC, so serving as DSA for a company recognised under HESPR simply specifies ethical standards members are already expected to observe. However, the DSA will have additional operational duties, including serving as a link between the IHBC and the company's customers. That level of responsibility would be expected to be recognised in their particular role in the company.

HESPR is not and cannot attempt to be a guarantee of wider corporate standards, a guarantee of security (such as confirmation that insurances are held) or a guarantee of levels of pay to company employees. It explicitly does not scrutinise or assess the wider business operations of an organisation, in particular those that are covered by other regulators.

Under HESPR, the IHBC uses our Full Members to establish a mechanism within which companies can be promoted for adopting, maintaining and supporting the IHBC's ethical and service standards, and to carry out work in line with those standards.

1.0 Introduction to the IHBC's HESPR

- 1.1 HESPR is the IHBC's recognition process for those historic environment and conservation professional services that the institute recognises as subscribing to the IHBC's standards, guidance, ethics and code. It follows the recognition process that the IHBC already operates for conservation courses and related educational activities (see www.ihbc.org.uk). In common with that course recognition, HESPR does not evaluate or regulate areas covered by existing quality assurance or regulatory processes outside our areas of expertise. Instead, recognition focuses on quality assurance in areas that relate to the institute's own specialist interests. For HESPR, these specialist interests cover the standards adopted in historic environment conservation, including in particular how those standards operate for customers and the public.
- 1.2 The IHBC's promotion of HESPR companies will consist of a web based searchable resource to which prospective customers will be directed. Recognised companies will each have an individual entry with full contact details and links to the company's own website. A printed summary will appear annually in the IHBC's *Yearbook*.
- 1.3 Quality assurance of services by recognised companies is provided through the appointment of a **designated service adviser** (DSA) agreed between the IHBC and the recognised company. The DSA endorses the quality of service in line with their existing professional obligations, thereby allowing the IHBC to promote the company as subscribing to the institute's standards through this quality assurance mechanism. The DSA has a professional responsibility for the quality of that service, in line with the IHBC's Code of Conduct, and as such the DSA must be a Full Member of the IHBC.
- 1.4 Specifically, the individual DSA is formally responsible for the oversight of the historic environment standards – including relevant customer services – in the company they represent. Should these standards not be maintained this would be regarded as contravention of, at the very least, Item 1 of the IHBC's Code of Conduct:

'Those engaged in the conservation of historic buildings, areas and landscapes will adhere to the highest standards of ethical and responsible behaviour in the conduct of the conservation of such buildings and sites.'
- 1.5 Through the DSA, HESPR can promote a business on the basis of its service standard and the processes to ensure observation of that standard. It indicates technical/professional competence in the service, that can be endorsed, assessed and regulated through the disciplinary systems the IHBC already operates for its members.
- 1.6 The IHBC's recognition will generate an accessible public resource that allows customers to find historic environment specialists with appropriate skills.
- 1.7 The IHBC's HESPR is designed to work alongside existing precedents & models in standards and quality assurance including registers and accreditation systems in

other bodies. HESPR is unique for its combination of:

- adopting current government guidance on restrictive practices (such as directions on payments for services)
- the wide range of disciplines, skills and services that the IHBC recognises as underpinning the proper management and conservation of the historic environment
- the regulatory mechanisms and standards currently in operation through current and projected government bodies
- integrating these areas with a specific focus on conservation outcomes

2. **Benefits for recognised HESPR companies**

- 2.1 On recognition under HESPR, companies can be promoted by the IHBC, primarily through the institute's website. This provides a searchable resource that identifies each recognised company with an individual entry based on information provided, with full contact details, including those of the *Designated Service Adviser*, and links to the company's own website. The IHBC website receives around 200,000 page visits each month and each of the most popular pages on the site exceeds 7,000 hits each month. Apart from visits by IHBC members and other conservation professionals, many of these visits are from members of the public seeking conservation advice and enquiries fed into the site are often looking for conservation services.
- 2.2 In addition, lists of companies recognised under HESPR will be made available to IHBC members, local authorities, companies and other subscribers annually as a hardcopy list in the IHBC yearbook, or relevant extracts will be sent on request to members of the public.
- 2.3 Referrals will be generated to HESPR from organisations and individuals such as local authorities, amenity groups and conservation bodies that seek the historic environment conservation standards promoted by the IHBC.
- 2.4 Any person enquiring of the IHBC and seeking specialist service providers will be directed to the IHBC's HESPR.

3. **Benefits for clients and customers**

- 3.1 The HESPR will provide customers with a 'one-stop shop' for finding specialist services covering all aspects of the historic environment and its conservation.
- 3.2 Customers benefit from the knowledge that they are using a service that adopts ethical standards that accord with those of the UK's professional body for specialist conservation, the IHBC. They will also gain comfort from the fact that there is a lead professional within the organisation who should be operating in line with the IHBC's procedures, is regulated by the IHBC as their professional body for historic environment conservation, and who is responsible to the IHBC for the company's service standards.

4. **Criteria for inclusion in HESPR**

- 4.1 The *designated service adviser* on behalf of the applicant body is required to sign a declaration stating that they are able to meet the criteria for inclusion in HESPR.

- 4.2 In applying for inclusion the DSA states, on behalf of the company they represent, that it:
- maintains their company accounts and records in accordance with appropriate statutory requirements
 - meets all relevant current Health and Safety legislation
 - maintains suitable insurance cover against risks appropriate to its operations
 - understands the terms of HESPR and their responsibilities as DSA
- 4.3 While these must be confirmed in writing to qualify for inclusion under HESPR, the IHBC does not control or regulate all the areas covered under this declaration, as some are a matter for the DSA and their employer. However they do reflect areas for which Full Members of the IHBC should have special regard in any company they work for. As such, this declaration simply articulates a professional standard we would expect of any Full Member.
- 4.4 In line with this, the *Designated Service Adviser* will not necessarily be in a position to maintain direct control over such matters. Should the recognised body contravene those requirements, disciplinary measures would only be brought to bear on the DSA where there was a direct line of professional responsibility and culpability. In either case the relevant body would however be removed from HESPR.
- 4.5 Appropriate guidance and disclaimers are included below and are clearly presented to prospective customers in all HESPR information.
- 4.6 As an additional level of quality assurance, applicants for HESPR will provide references from two recent clients. The referees must confirm that the company has operated in a businesslike manner and has observed a good standard of conservation. The reference form is to be completed and submitted with the application.

5. Procedure for inclusion in HESPR

- 5.1 The body applying for recognition under HESPR identifies a staff member who is a professional with appropriate experience and holding an appropriate role (to be agreed between the company, the identified staff member and IHBC). That person will be identified under HESPR as the *designated service adviser*. The responsibilities of this person in relation to HESPR are listed below.
- 5.2 The IHBC *designated service adviser* completes the application for recognition on behalf of the applicant body. This includes the confirmation that the criteria for inclusion are met. Two client references should also be submitted, along with the appropriate fees.
- 5.3 The IHBC *designated service adviser* also completes the *pro forma* providing information for inclusion in the web based search engine and the IHBC Yearbook.
- 5.4 The required information is submitted to the IHBC, which will clarify any issues and evaluate the application. Further information or discussion may be required before a final decision on inclusion in HESPR is achieved, again following the IHBC's recognition process for conservation courses. Any issues and queries will be overseen by the IHBC Education, Training and Standards Committee, but the right to recognise a business on HESPR remains exclusively with the IHBC.
- 5.5 Following a successful application for recognition under HESPR, service providers have their details added to the web-based search engine and included in the next

available edition of the IHBC Yearbook. Any applications approved after the 1st December of any year cannot be guaranteed to be included in the *Yearbook* for the following year.

6. Responsibilities of the IHBC *designated service adviser*

- 6.1 The *designated service adviser* is the representative of the recognised HESPR company with the IHBC - in effect, its ambassador to the institute. The DSA is responsible for activities in the company that impact on the specialist historic environment services provided by the body in line with the terms of its recognition under HESPR.
- 6.2 The *designated service adviser* must hold a post or role within the applicant body that allows them endorsement of the relevant service provision and standards of the company. This would usually be a senior professional manager in the organisation, directly responsible for the historic environment and is likely to be at the company director, partner or, at least senior associate level.
- 6.3 The *designated service adviser* for specialist historic environment work under HESPR must be a Full Member of the IHBC.
- 6.4 The *designated service adviser* may be responsible for, as appropriate, the oversight, management and/or delivery of operations or services that fall within the specialist historic environment interests of the IHBC. Equally, the DSA is responsible to the IHBC for the professional standards of the HESPR-related services of the HESPR recognised body.
- 6.5 As *designated service adviser* that person offers a level of control and oversight and accepts a level of responsibility, based on which the IHBC can promote the relevant service. They are then responsible in particular for communicating with the IHBC about any matters that could undermine that service, as well as any matters that might help promote it.
- 6.6 It is the responsibility of the HESPR-recognised body, and through that, the *designated service adviser*, to ensure that historic environment services provided to customers are applied in line with the standards, guidance and terms of reference recognised by the IHBC.
- 6.7 It is the responsibility of the HESPR-recognised body, and through that, the *designated service adviser*, to advise the IHBC of any change in personnel that might affect its status as a recognised body, or the areas of conservation in which it operates. If the *designated service adviser* were to leave the employ of the recognised body and no new *designated service adviser* is agreed, the recognition will be terminated. Failure to notify the IHBC of the change of *designated service adviser* would contravene both the terms of reference of HESPR and the designated service adviser's Code of Conduct.
- 6.8 The name of the *designated service adviser* is included on relevant HESPR literature and promotional information, and they will serve as a public point of contact for HESPR-related issues, problems or complaints to be registered and addressed. The *designated service adviser* becomes a key point of call for complaints etc.
- 6.9 It is essential that the *designated service adviser* maintains a high standard of appropriate professional development and consequently will be subject to IHBC

CPD assessment each cycle. It is expected that, in line with the principles of the IHBC as the professional body for historic environment conservation specialists, the company recognised under HESPR will give particular support in CPD for the *designated service adviser* and all other relevant staff.

7. Companies with multiple offices

- 7.1 Companies which have more than one office should refer to the IHBC to determine if they include each office as an individual entity with its own *designated service adviser* or add the whole company, as long as the *designated service adviser* has operational involvement in all offices. This is necessary to ensure appropriate skills and standards are available at each office but will be tailored for each company to ensure best value for the recognised company and most effective endorsement from the IHBC.

8. Fees

- 8.1 An initial application fee is required on application for recognition under HESPR, and on any subsequent reapplication for recognition following any break in inclusion. This is non-returnable and is used to cover the costs of processing the application.
- 8.2 An annual recognition fee is to be paid by recognised service providers. The HESPR year runs from 1 October to 30 September and the annual fee is due on 1st October each year. It must be paid on time and if payment remains outstanding 28 days afterwards the recognition will be terminated.
- 8.3 After this the fee will be due for payment every year on 1st October if the service provider maintains recognition under HESPER.
- 8.4 Cheques should be made payable to IHBC Enterprises Ltd.

9. Disclaimer

- 9.1 The Historic Environment Service Providers Recognition scheme is overseen by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation and operated through its business arm, IHBC Enterprises Ltd. Recognition under HESPR does not constitute a formal recommendation by IHBC, it only confirms that the company has met specified criteria laid down by the Institute.
- 9.2 Information described is supplied directly by the recognised companies and is reproduced in good faith.
- 9.3 The Institute of Historic Building Conservation accepts no liability for any loss or damage that may result from any use of HESPR or any subsequent appointment based upon its contents.

10. Nomenclature

- 10.1 Recognised bodies may refer to themselves as 'a recognised historic environment service provider'. Alongside which they may use HESPR logo as indicated which will be provided on request.
- 10.2 The inclusion on HESPR does not give any rights to the recognised body to use the name, logo or any other such intellectual property of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation. Contravention of this would ordinarily lead to removal from HESPR and, possibly, disciplinary actions for the DSA.



11. Complaints and removal from HESPR

- 11.1 The IHBC makes every effort to provide up to date and accurate information on the companies included but the Institute relies on the information supplied by each recognised company reproduced in good faith.
- 11.2 Applicants are required to sign a declaration that they comply with the criteria for inclusion.
- 11.3 All work carried out by the company must be done in accordance with the *Code of conduct* of the Institute. It is the responsibility of the *designated service adviser* to ensure this is the case.
- 11.4 Transgression of the principle terms of the HESPR are a subject for disciplinary procedure where Articles 1 and 2 of the Institute's Code of Conduct have not been observed:
1. *Those engaged in the conservation of historic buildings, areas and landscapes will adhere to the highest standards of ethical and responsible behaviour in the conduct of the conservation of such buildings and sites.*
 2. *Members shall conduct themselves in a manner which will not bring the conservation of the built heritage or the Institute into disrepute.*
- 11.5 Should there be dissatisfaction with the recognition process or with a company included in it complaints will be dealt with by IHBC through the HESPR complaints procedure, operating under our Membership and Ethics Committee (for disciplinary issues) and our Education, Training and Standards Committee (for all others). This could lead to the termination of the company's recognition under HESPR and/or the expulsion of the *designated service adviser* from the institute's membership.
- 11.6 Recognition under HESPR could be terminated if:
- the recognised body fails to fulfil or continue to fulfil the criteria for inclusion
 - false information is found to have been supplied in support of an application
 - the service provider fails to pay the annual recognition fee at the appropriate time
 - the *designated service adviser* ceases to be a Full Member of the IHBC.
 - the *designated service adviser* leaves the company and the IHBC is not notified of an appropriately qualified replacement who will in turn become the new *designated service adviser*.