



26 March 2025

Statement for Support of The Gardens Trust

World Heritage UK (WHUK) is dismayed to learn that the Government is considering removing The Gardens Trust as a Statutory Consultee in the planning system. As a consultee The Gardens Trust has continued to provide a vital and balanced service to Government and Local Authorities in evaluating comprehensively planning applications which affect parks and gardens on the national Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

In addition to their national importance, a significant number of our much valued historic designed parks and gardens, both in their own right or as part of wider landscape and townscapes are of international significance. Sites as such as Blenheim Palace and Park, Studley Royal Park, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew are inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. As a signatory to the World Heritage Convention the UK Government has an obligation to fully protect the Outstanding Universal Value of all of our sites on the List.

Our Historic Parks and Gardens and World Heritage Sites across the country have a key role to play in growing a balanced development and tourism economy, meeting climate change challenges, contributing to social and community cohesion and nurturing health and wellbeing. We therefore strongly urge the Government to retain the services of The Gardens Trust as a statutory consultee or find other funded mechanism for their very valuable work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Simons', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Simons
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