



**National
Trust**

Dr Ingrid Samuel – Director
Ingrid.Samuel@nationaltrust.org.uk
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Statement in support of the Gardens Trust

The National Trust cares for over 260 gardens and 200 historic parklands, 55% of which are included on the National Registers of Parks and Gardens of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. While we have significant internal expertise to help us care for these important assets, we always value the support, advice and timely feedback we receive from the Gardens Trust. We know that other owners of heritage gardens feel the similarly, as we believe do local authorities, many of whom have limited access to expert advice via any other means.

As a significant landowner the National Trust regularly interacts with the planning system, whether as applicant or in response to the proposals of others. We recognise the need for an efficient and effective system that both supports growth and helps to protect our shared environmental and cultural capital for this and future generations. Expert understanding and pragmatic advice are vital inputs into this system, helping to balance needs and support good decision-making.

The Government's plans to review all statutory consultees to the planning system has the potential to impact expert input into the system across a range of important areas, including historic gardens. The National Trust will respond in full to the consultation when it is launched, but we need to understand the rationale for removing the Gardens Trust from the list of statutory consultees and importantly how planning authorities in future would access the specialised knowledge and expertise they need to make informed decisions.

Whatever the outcome of the review, we also regard it as imperative that there is ongoing, and improved, support for The Gardens Trust to continue to provide the research, advice and professional development that the sector relies on to support the conservation, management and active engagement of others with the UK's historic gardens, known and loved around world.

Dr Ingrid Samuel
Placemaking & Heritage Director
National Trust