

Sustainable Conservation: The Role of Heritage in Sustainable Development

Abstract

Sustainable development means many things to many people. Much of the current work focuses on traditional environmental issues such as lessening of greenhouse gasses, reducing pollutants, increasing biodiversity, and searching for renewable fuels. The methods by which we achieve sustainability also vary, and one of the primary mechanisms for promoting sustainability is through strategic planning. In the 2007 White Paper *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century*, places the historic environment “at the heart of an effective planning system” (Department for Culture Media and Sport 2007: 7). However, this aspect of the environment is often overlooked by traditional approaches to sustainability and strategic planning. This omission carries over into the curriculum of both planning and archaeology. This paper looks at the role of the historic environment in sustainable development and how archaeologists, in particular, are trained to interpret guidance on sustainability, strategic planning, and heritage management. The role of the historic environment within a greater agenda of environmental sustainability is addressed, illustrating a greater need for inter-disciplinary studies and training to develop an effective approach to overall environmental sustainability.