



**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **SELECT COMMITTEE FLAGS GREEN MONUMENT OMISSION**

The campaign for recognition of green monuments has received a boost from the Select Committee on the Draft Heritage Protection Bill following a strongly worded recommendation over omissions.

Published today, the report of the Committee notes that the Bill “represents a significant opportunity for reform, but **its incompleteness** and the absence of the associated secondary legislation has **left the Committee guessing** about **whether important issues may have been missed** by DCMS and DCLG which might otherwise not be evaluated again for many years”<sup>1</sup>.

It goes on to recommend that the two departments review a number of matters, and in particular asks for **“further consideration of the designation of Ancient Trees as heritage assets [...] on the basis of their age and close association with people and events; and identification of responsibility within central government for the establishment of a national record of these assets”**<sup>2</sup> - **the primary objective of the Green Monument Campaign.**

**The Tree Council**, with member organisations the **Ancient Tree Forum** and **Woodland Trust**, warmly welcomed the news. In written evidence to the Select Committee, they had proposed that the Bill should be amended to make provision for individual trees of national importance, and groups of trees, to be proactively designated and protected for their cultural, historic, architectural, and wildlife value.

**“Heritage trees are a fundamental link between man and biodiversity – they are landmarks, are individually known and their importance acknowledged as having a place in our cultural life, recorded down the ages in documents and the arts”** said Pauline Buchanan Black, Director-General of The Tree Council.

**“Many people are astonished when they find out that there is no specific legislation or policy to protect trees because of their historic or cultural importance, despite their great significance to our heritage,”** she continued. **“There are yews, for example, that could have started life at the time that Stonehenge was being constructed and oaks that have probably been around since before the Norman Conquest. Even the original Bramley Apple tree is still bearing fruit today.”**

Campaign partners congratulate the Select Committee on their good sense in recognising the importance of examining possible outstanding omissions in heritage protection.

**ENDS**

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<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee: Draft Heritage Protection Bill *Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence* Section 6, Para. 43, p 16

<sup>2</sup> House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee: Draft Heritage Protection Bill *Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence* Section 6, Para. 44, pp 17/18

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## **Images of trees that should be designated Green Monuments available on request**

### NOTES TO EDITORS

**The Tree Council**, [www.treecouncil.org.uk](http://www.treecouncil.org.uk), the lead tree campaigning alliance, works with its 180 member organisations to make all trees matter to everyone. In 2000, it created an initiative to locate Heritage Trees which received an enthusiastic response from its national volunteer force of 8,000 Tree Wardens, who were concerned to ensure that some record of these trees existed. This led to the Great British Trees project of 2002, in which a representative fifty great trees were selected from those nominated to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. In 2003, The Tree Council formed the Green Monument Campaign, on which it has since worked with members, including the Ancient Tree Forum and the Woodland Trust, advocating provision that will safeguard ancient and heritage trees for future generations. "The Heritage Trees of Great Britain", the book published in support of the Green Monument Campaign, sold 15,000 copies in the three months following publication in 2004.

**The Ancient Tree Forum**, [www.ancient-tree-forum.org.uk](http://www.ancient-tree-forum.org.uk), has pioneered the conservation of ancient trees and is the main UK organisation concerned solely with their conservation. The ATF seeks to secure the long-term future of ancient trees through advocacy of no further avoidable loss of ancient trees, good management of ancient trees, the development of a succession of future ancient trees, and seeking to raise awareness and understanding of the value and importance of ancient trees. It works with owners, tree care professionals and supporters worldwide who recognise the immense and unique contribution of ancient trees to environment, biodiversity, heritage and culture.

**The Woodland Trust**, [www.woodland-trust.org.uk](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk), is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity. It has four main aims: no further loss of ancient woodland, restoring and improving woodland biodiversity, increasing new native woodland and increasing people's understanding and enjoyment of woodland. It owns over 1,000 sites across the UK, covering around 20,000 hectares (50,000 acres) and has 300,000 members and supporters. It, in turn, supports the work of less well resourced organisations where their objectives coincide: the ATF is one such.