

**HISTORIC HOUSES TRUST OF NSW: REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY  
FEBRUARY 2008**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales (HHT) is committed to developing regional programs and services to meet heritage sector and government priorities. The HHT plays an important role in supporting individuals and organisations working with cultural heritage in regional areas of New South Wales. This support is based on an understanding that regional communities have fewer opportunities to participate in cultural programs or to access the state's major cultural institutions.

The HHT recognises regional efforts to preserve and enjoy local cultural heritage assets. With an understanding of the issues, the HHT develops regional projects that focus on sustainable outcomes to last beyond the life of the project. Additionally, through partnerships with regional communities the HHT seeks to strengthen regional identities and encourage a greater understanding of New South Wales' diverse cultural heritage.

The emphasis of regional involvement is on improved access, cooperation and collaboration with regional interests and issues whilst balancing the significant demands on the HHT to realise its charter to conserve and interpret its own properties and collections. To this extent, the HHT is committed to providing access to its expertise, properties and resources to the people of regional New South Wales and assisting with regional initiatives aligned with the HHT's charter.

**GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENT**

The Department of Arts, Sport and Recreation (DASR), has overall responsibility for cultural heritage policy in New South Wales. The HHT is guided in the development and implementation of regional initiatives and relationships by the principles outlined in the document; *"Principles for regional programs by State Government cultural institutions"* (Ministry of the Arts December 1997 now Department of Arts, Sport and Recreation -DASR).

The principles recognise the following:

- the importance of local needs and interests
- the need to develop local skills and networks, as well as activities which reflect local history and culture
- the need for regions to develop their own cultural activities and infrastructure
- the need for compatibility of collection information
- the need to work collaboratively to conserve, document and interpret moveable heritage collections across NSW
- the importance of local cultural activity in attracting tourism and strengthening local economic development
- the importance of retaining moveable heritage within the communities and regions from which it is derived.

In addition, DASR in conjunction with the local government Association of NSW and the Shires Association of NSW have issued the Third Cultural Accord that calls for greater collaboration between state and local governments to deliver regional cultural planning.

## DEFINITIONS

**Regional:** is defined as everything outside the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Area in NSW

**Cultural heritage:** built heritage, historic environments and moveable heritage

## APPROACH

The HHT delivers a range of initiatives for the benefit of regional communities including access to the HHT collections and expertise. Such regional initiatives include professional advice, site visits and workshops. In addition, partnerships between the HHT and regional communities include exhibitions, projects, public programs education outreach, collection management, internships, training and research. In addition, the HHT liaise with other government and non government agencies to help identify issues and address regional needs.

## POLICY OBJECTIVES

- contribute to the conservation and interpretation of built heritage in Regional NSW.
- build relationships with people who have not traditionally embraced heritage
- promote greater cohesiveness within communities by raising awareness of heritage issues
- create sustainable outcomes from projects which last beyond the HHTs involvement
- foster an increase in public awareness of the HHT and the results that can be delivered in regional New South Wales
- help address government priorities associated with increased visitation and participation in the arts and cultural activity in New South Wales

## POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The HHTs regional involvement policy is implemented through its regional strategy updated every three years. The strategy addresses the principles outlined in "*Principles for regional programs by State Government cultural institutions*" (DASR, 1997). The proposed strategies will be carefully planned and implemented to ensure that policy objectives are met. The regional strategies set out nine targets to be met in the next three years.

## REPORTING AND REVIEW

The HHT reports to the NSW Government in a timely manner on the aims and outcomes of the HHT regional program. A summary of regional achievements is included in the HHT Annual Report. The Trustees of the HHT review the Regional Involvement policy every three (3) years to ensure that the policy and regional strategies respond to any changes in legislation, the industry or the organisations involved.