



## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Having described and evaluated the site of Merton Priory in Part One of the Conservation and Management Plan, this section identifies the *key issues* and the *policies* that are deemed necessary for the effective management and future development of the monument, through the encouragement and promotion of continuing academic research. These policies constitute a *vision* that is intended to improve understanding of the historical, architectural and archaeological value of the Priory Precinct, the post medieval developments and the wider site.

The general areas of interest have been examined and the relative significance of individual elements has been identified in the description and gazetteer.

It has been established that Merton Priory, the post-medieval archaeology and Merton Abbey Mills are of significance for a number of historical and archaeological reasons. However the potential of the Priory Precinct is presently unrealised.

Merton is important as a place of religious worship and education, where individuals come face to face with history and walk in the footsteps of those who left a significant legacy of historical events.

It has a corporate importance as a major historical site in London, the origin of the name of Merton; a place that exemplified sustainable husbandry of the surrounding areas.

Merton Priory was the focus and scene of events of national and global importance and, after the dissolution of the monasteries, a major locum for the emerging post-medieval and modern industries.

The policies set out in Section 2.4 encapsulate a vision of the future of the Precinct and its setting for public enjoyment and education, as an educational and cultural resource and, particularly, as a recognised monument of major spiritual and cultural significance.

### **Protection**

Certain elements of the site are formally protected by the legislation relating to Listed Buildings. Other designations include Archaeological Priority Zones [APZs]. The Wandle Valley, Wandle -Colliers Wood and Stane Street APZ extend over the site and the Merton Place APZ is immediately to the west.

Part of the site is contained within a Designated Conservation Area.

All the structures surviving both above and below ground level are afforded a degree of protection by the Government's Planning Policy Guidelines 15 and 16 [replacement of PPG15 will be a PPS [Planning Policy Statement] and by the policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan adopted by the London Borough of Merton in October 2003.

Merton's UDP is currently under review and will be replaced by a Local Development Framework [LDF]. Merton Council will be given the opportunity to adopt the Conservation Management Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

The Conservation Plan is designed to supplement the statutory legislation and the planning policies. Merton Council will be offered the opportunity to adopt the Conservation Management Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

## Method

This part of the Conservation Plan is designed to determine in what ways the significance of the various elements of the site are *at risk* to changing circumstances (2.2); to establish what conflicts or management *issues* exist (2.3); and to put in place a series of Conservation Plan *policies* to resolve those issues and ensure that the wide-ranging interest of Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills are protected and, if possible, enhanced for public benefit (2.4). Section 2.5 contains proposals for implementation and review of the Plan.

## Aims

The policies are designed to recognise, protect and enhance the inspirational heritage features within the Priory precinct and to meet the particular needs of the site and the structures on it, in light of the UDP policies relating to the regeneration of the Colliers Wood Urban Centre.

It is recognised that policies may vary on different parts of the site, for example between areas where a passive preservation approach may be needed to protect historic remains and areas where a pro-active conservation approach will be needed to remove immediate or long-term threats.

The following policies are intended to provide a framework for long- and short-term decision-making and the evaluation of any proposals affecting the significance of the standing or buried structures or the sense of place. In particular we seek to:

- Preserve and enhance the significance of the standing structures and buried remains for the benefit of future generations;
- Influence long- and short-term management proposals for the uses of land and development on it;
- Provide a benchmark against which to assess the likely impact of any changes in land use and the use of the buildings;
- Promote appropriate uses for the historic buildings;
- Ensure access to the site to the widest range of people possible; and
- Improve the interpretation and presentation of the historic remains and other aspects of the site.

## 2.2. RISKS

The principal areas of significance on the site, identified in Part One of the Conservation Plan, are as follows :

- the **standing buildings**, which comprise the Listed and other buildings at Merton Abbey Mills;
- **other masonry structures** on the site, which consist of the remains of the monastic chapter house and the several stretches of former historic walls;
- the **archaeology** which includes the remains of the Roman road, the remains of the monastic complex, and the remains of earlier structures associated with Merton Abbey Mills, as well as objects associated with them;
- the **sense of place** afforded by the site's former connections with religion and learning, with meetings of national importance, and with the history of design and technology;
- its function as a **wildlife habitat**; and
- its role as a resource for **research, education, inspiration, and tourism**.

Each of these is vulnerable to particular types of activity and need to be managed to ensure that they are not adversely affected by development or other proposals for the site.

### Standing Buildings

These comprise the eight principal historic buildings at **Merton Abbey Mills** (see Section 1.2 201-208), of which two (201 and 202) are Listed buildings, and all are contained within the Designated Conservation Area. All these buildings are currently in use, mostly as shops and studio offices' and appear to be in good condition.

They would each be vulnerable to changes if these adversely affected their historic fabric, their integrity as historic buildings, or their setting.

Each of the buildings has been constructed in a particular style and using materials which are jointly indicative of their original date and function. It is these aspects that distinguish the historic buildings from later ones. The alterations made in the past have not detracted substantially from the original work and it is important that any repairs or alterations made to them in the future are sympathetic to the original design and materials.

Although they have each been adapted for a new use or uses, the current uses are for the most part relatively compatible with their original functions as part of a light industrial works. Their historical integrity would be vulnerable to changes of use if these required substantial alterations to the fabric such that their original form and function was no longer clear.

The buildings currently form a distinct group of one- and two-storey structures, defined on their west side by the River Wandle, amongst a variety of modern, mostly multi-storey, domestic and commercial premises. The distinct nature and setting of the group is important to the historical integrity of the site and the individual buildings, and these aspects are vulnerable to change in the surrounding area.

### Other Masonry Structures

These comprise the remains of the **monastic chapter house**, now contained in the visitor centre (see Section 1.2 104), and the several sections of former **precinct wall** that survive near the watercourse known as The Pickle (see Section 1.2 101a-f), near Windsor Avenue (see Section 1.2 101k-l), and along Station Road (see Section 1.2 102 a-l).

The remains of the chapter house are contained both within the Scheduled Ancient Monument and the Designated Conservation Area, whilst two of the stretches of precinct wall are Listed buildings.

The remains of the chapter house are the only part of the monastic buildings that are currently visible, albeit within a restricted way in the visitor centre, and thus have an important role to play in the interpretation of the site. The remains, which are essentially only of the footings of the structure, would be vulnerable to damage by erosion or decay, if neglected, or by unsympathetic repair, which could adversely affect their historical integrity. We recommend that this area requires a Management Plan and programme of improvements and improved access.

The length of former precinct wall alongside The Pickle, at the northeast corner of the site, is currently obscured by vegetation and is now only partially visible even during the winter months when the leaves have fallen from the trees and bushes. Lack of access has precluded a close examination of the fabric, but it appears from a distance to be standing to its full height, at least in some places. This is a significant element of the Priory, representing the extent of the Precinct on its north-east side, but in its present form it is both separated from the main part of the site by the huge Sainsbury's Savacentre store and it is barely visible. Its significance as an element of the Priory is vulnerable to damage by erosion and decay, if it continues to be neglected. Its role as a visible part of the Priory complex is vulnerable to the increasing amount of vegetation that is being allowed to grow around it and the lack of interpretation. Ideally the vegetation needs to be cleared and replaced with grass and the wall needs to be repaired and provided with some interpretation. We believe that that this area requires a Management Plan that includes recommendations for improved interpretation and access and we recommend that such a Plan be prepared and adopted.

The two small fragments of Precinct wall in the back gardens of properties in Windsor Avenue are already in a very poor condition and desperately in need of repair. In their present state they are vulnerable to total loss in the near future if no action is taken to stabilise and repair them.

The sections of historic wall along the south side of Station Road have been much altered and rebuilt in the past and doubts have been expressed as to whether they include any original medieval fabric. The suggestion has also been made that they may have been built at a later date. At the time that the Conservation Plan was being prepared (December 2005), the wall was being repaired and as a result of this it will be in good condition. As with other masonry structures on the site, its significance as an element of the priory would be vulnerable to neglect, if it was not kept in good repair, and its historical integrity could be at risk if repairs were not undertaken in a sympathetic manner.

## Archaeology

This comprises all the buried remains on the site and the objects associated with them. They include the footings of masonry structures, some of which have previously been exposed on one or, sometimes, two occasions; timber structures; features cut in the subsoil to contain or carry water; burials; and objects either still buried in the ground or already retrieved and held in store.

Some of the **masonry structures** have already been investigated in the past and several of them, such as the buildings which accommodated the William Morris works, appear to have been destroyed whilst others, such as some parts of the principal monastic buildings, are preserved under later structures, for example under the Sainsbury's Savacentre. The locations of other elements of the monastic complex, such as the Guest House and sections of the precinct wall, are known but have not previously been excavated, and there may be remains of other buildings, as yet unrecognised, within the precinct walls. All the remains of masonry structures on the site are of potential importance for research purposes, in that they provide information not available in other sources, and in some places there may be scope for including them as part of the visible interpretation of the site at some future date. Their significance is vulnerable to total loss during redevelopment, thus precluding the opportunity to display them, or loss without record, thus precluding the opportunity to investigate and record them as elements in the history of the site.

Water features are also significant in many ways particularly in the way the Priory and subsequent development has influenced them, and been influenced by them. The site has in the past maintained a relatively high water table and water content in the subsoil, for example in the former fishponds, and this has had the effect of preserving organic material, such as wood, which otherwise would have been destroyed. Some wooden objects, such as coffin planks and wooden bowls, have already been recovered during excavations and there is a strong possibility that **timber structures** associated with Merton Priory and with Merton Abbey Mills may also be preserved on the site. These would be important for research purposes and they may be capable of providing precise dating evidence by the technique known as tree-ring dating or dendrochronology. Any timber structures surviving on the site are likely to be vulnerable to loss without record, during redevelopment, or by any reduction in water content in the ground.

A number of features associated with the Priory and with Merton Abbey Mills were in the form of hollows cut in the subsoil which were intended to either contain water, as for example with the monastic fishponds, or to carry water, as for example the mill leat. The watercourses were significant factors in the original siting of the monastic complex and the post-medieval and later industrial complexes and have in turn been developed in each period. They provide historical evidence both for how the sites functioned and in the form of associated objects which might have been preserved in waterlogged conditions that might otherwise not survive in the archaeological record. The **water features** on the site provide a considerable resource for research but are vulnerable to physical loss without record during redevelopment or by any reduction in water content in the ground.

Excavations on the site of the monastic complex have revealed extensive evidence for **burials** both in and around the principal monastic buildings. It is believed that further examples may still survive on the site. These provide an important resource for research but are vulnerable to loss without record during redevelopment.

A large number of **objects** of stone, wood, bone, pottery, glass, and metal have already been retrieved during excavations and lie in store either in the visitor centre or at the Museum of London, whilst others doubtless still remain in the ground. These provide an important resource for research and education and need to be conserved for study and potential display. Objects already retrieved are vulnerable to damage or decay, if they are not properly conserved and stored or displayed in appropriate conditions, whilst those still in the ground are at risk from loss without record during redevelopment.

## **Sense of Place**

The quality of place of the former Priory, visible evidence of its connections with religious history and learning, with meetings of national importance and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the history of design and technology, has been degraded to the point of invisibility by insensitive developments.

The Priory buildings themselves were plundered for building stone following Dissolution, famously for the construction of Nonsuch Palace but also doubtless for many other less important buildings. The imposing presence that remains at many other Priory or monastery sites, even those such as Fountains or Kirkstall that are little but standing ruins, was therefore lost.

The monastery grounds were consequently eroded over a long period. There is a long and involved history of development and redevelopment on the site but in terms of its present condition it was, most significantly, cut in two in 1868 by the construction of the Tooting Merton & Wimbledon Railway between stations at Merton Park and Tooting Junction. The demolition of the railway in the 1960s allowed the construction of Mercantun Way and the flyover along the same line. This was followed by the commercial development of the site in the north by the Savacentre supermarket and most recently in the south by the present development of residential blocks and fast food outlets.

Although the road was constructed over the site deliberately in order to avoid physical damage to the Chapter House remains, the setting that this created makes any dignified presentation of the archaeology, virtually impossible. The obliteration of most historic boundaries and features, save the watercourses, makes any sensible presentation of the importance of the wider site equally difficult.

There is a risk that the *de facto* loss of heritage value becomes the accepted situation and that its erosion continues through inappropriate and piecemeal development.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

The western edge of the Conservation Area is defined by the boundary of the Merton industrial site, across the River Wandle. The importance of this river in terms of its biodiversity value is reflected in the various Merton UDP Policies which apply to the corridor through which it passes, including:

- Metropolitan Open Land
- A Green Corridor
- A Green Chain
- A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation [SINC].

Any works within the Conservation Area must, therefore, protect the various riparian wildlife habitats which exist, whilst also seeking, where practical, to positively enhance the nature conservation value of the Wandle corridor.

### **Research, Education, Inspiration, Tourism**

The use of the Merton Priory Chapter House archaeological site by tourists and for education is presently very limited. Small numbers of schools parties may visit by arrangement. However the attraction of the site as a visitor destination is limited by its setting and oppressive enclosure and by the lack of any engaging displays or interpretive material. The display and other material that are available in the Wheelhouse Pottery on the Liberty's site should be seen as a stop-gap measure only. It is proposed that the site be developed as a visitor attraction and for the better presentation of Merton's history. This need not be in conflict with the needs of conservation. The Wheelhouse Pottery could then be redeveloped more directly in connection with the post-medieval and Liberty periods.

## 2.3. KEY ISSUES

There are a large number of conflicts or key issues that currently affect the cultural significance of the Merton Priory archaeological site. These are considered under the same headings as the risks identified in the preceding section.

The principal key issue is the extent to which the appearance and value of the site has been degraded and obscured by ill-considered development in the post War period.

**Archaeological issues** The key issue here is the extent to which the surviving belowground archaeology can be protected from damage by further construction. An acceptance of the site as available for commercial development with established precedents will make continuing statutory protection and presentation of the remaining fabric very difficult.

The present degraded condition of the site requires that long term policies are accepted by all concerned for the eventual reinstatement of the site's character as a historic location.

**Buildings issues** The key issue with the former Liberty's buildings is to secure an appropriate suitable long-term future for them, which will encourage for the retention of those which are considered to be of significance, whilst at the same time ensuring that their adaptation does not adversely affect their historical & architectural integrity.

The loss of the car park as a result of the redevelopment of large areas of the site for residential and commercial use has put the recent use of the site as a crafts and food market at risk. If the buildings are to be converted for a different, more viable, use then special care will need to be taken to ensure their preservation as significant examples of period architecture and buildings relating to craft production.

**Landscape issues** The current urban landscape context for the Priory and Mills site is hostile to the effective presentation of a unified attraction. Positive intervention as part of a co-ordinated restoration masterplan will need to address issues of:

- Overlooking and visual dominance (scale)
- Unifying the disparate elements of the site
- Screening or filtering views
- Creation of inward looking spaces

**Ecological issues** The principal ecological issues relate to the need to maintain and enhance the nature conservation value of the River Wandle corridor, Bennett's Ditch and the Pickle [the original course of the Wandle] and the possibility of creating a linkage (or green corridor) from the Abbey to the riverside.



**Public Use issues**

The present public use of the Merton Priory archaeological site is almost entirely unrelated to its history and cultural significance and obscures the religious and spiritual significance of the Priory, as well as its importance as a centre of learning, law and industry. The recent development of the majority of the site concentrates public use entirely on shopping, fast food restaurants and housing, either at the Savacentre supermarket or in the 'craft village' that is housed in the former Liberty's buildings. Given that the present use and setting of the site is unlikely to change in the near future, the Trust should concentrate on strengthening and developing the Chapter House site as a visitor attraction to redress the balance and provide a focus for education and research.

## 2.4 POLICIES

The purpose of establishing the *Conservation Plan Policies* is to provide a guide to the principles of conservation, repair, enhancement, adaptation, and use of the Priory site that safeguards the significance of the site and ensures a sustainable future for it.

The policies follow from a clear understanding of the significance of the monument and the way in which it is vulnerable to change or inadequate maintenance.

The *Conservation Plan Policies* are designed to :

- Retain & protect the remaining historic fabric of the Chapter House and belowground archaeology of Merton Priory and the post-medieval period;
- Establish guidelines for the use of the buildings and the landscape;
- Acknowledge the importance of the site as a source for archaeological, architectural and cultural research and education, inform future research strategies; and
- Realise the presently untapped potential of the Priory Precinct and the post-medieval archaeology as an educational and cultural resource.
- Ensure positive results between the needs of conservation and use of the site by the commercial interests and the public.

### Setting

The relationship between an historic monument and its setting is established by PPG15 as a material consideration in cultural heritage policy generally and specifically that cultural and historic monuments should have a 'material' setting, i.e. one that is appropriate to the importance of the monument. PPG15 recommends that the local planning authority should consider the adoption of appropriate planning policies to safeguard the settings of such monuments.

The setting of the Chapter House and the belowground archaeology has been degraded by inappropriate and ill-considered development over many years.

Future conservation and development activity on the Merton Priory site should be carried out to the highest possible standards and in accordance with the principles set out in the *Venice Charter* (1964); the *ICOMOS* specialist charters, in particular the *Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter* (1979, revised 1981 & 1988); and in accordance with the policies contained within national legislation, such as *PPGs 15 & 16* (1994 & 1990), and the *Unitary Development Plan* prepared by the *London Borough of Merton*.

**Policy 1.** A key aim of the Management Plan shall be the re-establishment of the identity and legibility of the Priory site and its constituent parts, as a whole, and the medieval and post-medieval linkages to the River Wandle, by establishing a programme of actions that will preserve, conserve, protect and improve the setting.

**Policy 2.** The Management Plan shall be the framework document for achieving, in the long term, the reestablishment of the legibility of the Priory site, by promoting the highest possible standards of design in any future development which is appropriate and beneficial to the unique status, dignity and character of the site.

**Policy 3.** The Merton Priory Trust will actively seek to prevent any adverse effects of repair, maintenance regimes, and/or new works on the archaeology, the buildings, the landscape, the ecology, and the public uses of the Estate.

**Policy 4.** The Merton Priory Trust will make representation to the local authority to ensure that, in future reviews of the Unitary Development Plan, the emerging LDF and in subsequent Plans, the significance and importance of the Priory Precinct and its setting is embodied in future plan policies. Positive measures for the enhancement and regeneration of the Priory Precinct, in the long term, shall be directed to benefit its character, appearance and setting.

**Policy 5.** Research carried out during this study indicates that there are strong grounds for reconsidering the present boundaries of the scheduled area. This further study shall be proposed to the local authority and English Heritage.

**Policy 6.** Monitor and make representation to the Highway Authorities to reduce the impact of noise and pollution on the site. The local authority shall be requested to take this into consideration in future proposals, for example, when specifying resurfacing and other works to Merantun Way and the flyover.

**Policy 7.** Sustain and enhance the natural habitats and ecologically important zones in and around the site, to balance these needs with those of the buildings and urban landscape. The urban landscape character of the Merton Priory Precinct and Merton Abbey Mills site is a confused mixture of large infrastructure (elevated roads, high voltage overhead power lines), contemporary retail park and a residual enclave of historic industrial buildings on the banks of the Wandle. The impoverished nature of the urban landscape is reflected in the Merton UDP designation of the A24 Merantun Way - the subject of the '*Improvements to Streetscape/ Frontage Policy CW1.*' The scale of the contemporary built form also dominates, and detracts from, the relatively human scale of the Abbey Mills complex and the historic priory precinct.

**Policy 8.** To be successful, the setting of the Priory and the Mills will require a co-ordinated design response which seeks to:

In the short term-

- i. Maintain and enhance nature conservation values;
- ii. Screen or filter views of adjoining large scale contemporary development;

In the medium term-

- iii. Unify the site through a simple, high quality palette of hard landscape materials and tree species;
- iv. Lower visitors' eye line through canopy tree planting;
- v. Create a quiet garden enclosure, such as an herb garden, as an antechamber to the new visitor centre, on the site of the land over which the Trust has an option. This uses the precedent of an historic monastic garden in the same location. The garden shall be secure and protected against vandals.

In the long term-

- vi. Remove the electricity pylon from the Precinct;
- vii. Remove all inappropriate development from the Precinct;
- viii. Re-align Merantun Way to remove the flyover from the Precinct.

## Conservation

The condition of a historic monument is a matter for continuing and constant monitoring. Poor maintenance and an accumulation of minor damages will compromise the significance of the site as much as its poor presentation.

**Policy 9.** The Management Plan shall be the framework document for achieving the conservation of the cultural heritage asset of the Chapter House and ensure its preservation as a permanent and treasured part of local and national heritage.

**Policy 10.** The Trust shall operate a programme of inspections, and carry out any necessary maintenance as well as a programme of continual improvement of the immediate setting of the building fabric. These works will be defined as *urgent*, *intermediate* or *long term* and will be dealt with accordingly.

**Policy 11.** Maintain the built fabric of the Chapter House to the best standards of conservation and presentation and in accordance with international, national, and local conservation principles and policies.

**Policy 12.** Preserve the archaeological remains of the Priory in situ.

**Policy 13.** Ensure that any activities or events undertaken at the Chapter House are not detrimental to the remaining archaeology and its setting.

## Presentation

The importance of the Merton Priory site shall be presented to a wide audience and its significance presented in the interest of education and cultural enrichment of local residents, Londoners, national and international visitors, particularly the young and those with limited access to the cultural heritage of the area.

**Policy 14.** Prepare and adopt an interpretation strategy for the presentation of the Chapter House, the Priory Precinct and its environs including the post-medieval industrial archaeology. This shall co-ordinate the architectural, archaeological, historic and cultural stories that the site embodies. The strategy and proposals shall build upon the policies and proposals in the Conservation Management Plan and shall form the basis of applications for funding from the National Heritage Memorial Fund or other agencies, as appropriate.

**Policy 15.** The improvement of the presentation of the Chapter House will require a co-ordinated design proposal which seeks to:

- i. Remove all unrelated stored material from the Chapter House building;
- ii. Improve the lighting within the building;
- iii. Improve visibility and views into the building from the pedestrian passage;
- iv. Carry out appropriate works to the Chapter House foundations to emphasise and better demonstrate the form of the archaeological remains;
- v. Improve the presentation of the associated material; stone coffins, window tracery and etc.;
- vi. Create a suitable environment to allow the housing of significant illustrative displays, material and artefacts presently stored at the Museum of London, and other places;
- vii. In parallel with creation of the new visitor centre [Policy 16], ensure improved visitor facilities within the Chapter House building; WCs, seating, wheelchair access, storage & etc.;
- viii. Establish the Chapter House as a place of spiritual significance, and as a fitting place for religious services.

All these improvements shall be carried out generally in accordance with Policies 11, 12 and 13.

**Policy 16.** Provide new visitor facilities and improve accessibility to the Chapter House to encourage visitors. We recommend that this requires a design proposal for a new facility for visitors. In the meantime, the environment and exhibition within the present enclosure shall be redesigned and improved. The design proposal shall take note of the feasibility study prepared for English Heritage and Merton Council.

**Policy 17.** As part of the interpretation strategy, design, publish and maintain a state-of-the-art website as a popular, educational and research resource, including appropriate and relevant information on the broader history and archaeology of Merton.

**Policy 18.** Provide clear signage and interpretive material for visitors in order to improve public awareness of the location and facilitate their

understanding and appreciation of the Priory, its importance within London and in a historic context.

Direction signs shall be located at all local Underground stations, tram stops and bus stops and shall incorporate the logo graphic of the Merton Priory Trust, or otherwise an easily recognisable graphic such as a simplified plan of the Priory.

The position of the Priory and the precinct buildings, walls and boundary shall be marked on the ground, as far as possible, by the use of brass studs or similar markers, particularly in public areas such as the Savacentre car park and the Abbey Mills car park.

### **Research and Understanding**

The understanding of Merton Priory and the post medieval use of the Precinct and wider site shall be constantly improved by encouraging continuing research and investigation into the history and archaeology of the area.

**Policy 19.** Encourage and promote continuing academic research to improve understanding of the historical, architectural and archaeological value of the Priory site, necessary for its appropriate management and improvement.

**Policy 20.** The Plan shall inform research strategies in connection with any future archaeological investigations within the Priory site or in its vicinity.

**Policy 21.** Access to the Chapter House and Priory Precinct as an educational resource shall be encouraged by means of an active out-reach programme to schools.

**Policy 22.** Through the foregoing policies, the Trust shall promote education, study and research, founded upon the Priory's reputation as a focus of learning and education.

## 2.5. IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

Following public consultation and revision, it is proposed that the Plan be adopted by the Trust.

### Commitment

The implementation of the Management Plan and achievement of the Trust's policies requires the support and participation of many organisations and individuals. The Plan provides the focus for this effort but it asks for committed time and resources if it is to succeed in protecting and improving the Priory site for future generations.

The Trustees have a major role to play in creating a sense of ownership and enthusiasm for the policies of the Plan as it is implemented across the site. They will need to gain the support and commitment of the local community, landowners, visitors and the local authority and others with statutory responsibilities within and around the site.

### Implementation

Experience shows that effective implementation is a matter of effective arrangements to encourage participation and active support for the policies of the Plan. The key components of an implementation strategy are :

- The preparation and coordination of annual work programme that translates the Plan's policies into practical action;
- The establishment of an efficient monitoring procedure to determine the state of the Priory site;
- A mechanism for reviewing and updating the Plan;
- Effective co-ordination of the actions agreed;
- Identification of stratagems and opportunities for funding for various issues; e.g. improvement of visitor signage, improved facilities etc.;
- Promotion of the site to local, regional and national audiences;
- Establishing links with other similar sites and monuments throughout the country to exchange experience and provide a consistency of approach.

### Action Programme

The policies should be translated into an **annual action programme** that should set out agreed projects in detail, to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The programme should identify who is responsible for delivering particular policies. The annual review will also provide an opportunity to monitor progress.

### Monitoring and Reviewing the Plan

Management planning is a dynamic process and does not stop with the production of a Management Plan document. New information or changed perceptions of management priorities can change the emphasis as the knowledge and experience of those responsible for the site develop.

Responsibility for organising and facilitating monitoring and reviews lies with the Trust. The Trust will monitor the progress of implementation by:

- reviewing the previous year's work as set out in the Annual Action Programme;
- monitoring the progress of the Annual Action Programmes through the production of progress reports on work achieved and identification of priorities for the following year;
- assessing the effectiveness of action in achieving the Plan's policies and reviewing the overall direction of the Plan's strategy and initiatives in response to changing perceived priorities and needs.

### **Monitoring Limits of Acceptable Change**

An important element of the Plan's implementation is continuing monitoring of changes in the site to help target policies and priorities for action. This could result, for example, in establishing new areas of priority in response to changing circumstances, or in the identification of buildings with an immediate need for maintenance work through visitor wear and tear. The monitoring of changes should be based on agreed minimum standards.

### **Reviewing the Plan**

It is suggested that the strategies and actions set out in the Management Plan will probably retain their relevance for five to ten years, as progress is made, although the overall policies are likely to be relevant for much longer. It is suggested that consideration should be given to undertaking a formal review of the issues and strategies at least every five years, and the Plan revised if necessary to reflect changed circumstances. However, as some parts of the Plan may need updating at different intervals related to key stages in the monitoring of the Annual Action Programmes, interim reviews should be undertaken as and when required. The relevant section of the Plan should be updated accordingly and reissued for inclusion in the Plan document.