

Rt Hon. The Lord Boateng
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6 November 2025

Dear Lord Boateng,

Thank you for taking part in my first outing at the Dispatch Box, during the debate on Lord Pitkeathley of Camden's question on the Built Environment Sector on 28 October 2025; I promised to write to you in response to your question about The Gardens Trust.

Government continues to recognise the significant role The Gardens Trust plays in protecting our heritage, particularly in relation to registered parks and gardens. On 10 March, the Housing Minister issued a Written Ministerial Statement, setting out the government's intention to reform the system of statutory consultation. The government will shortly consult on these reforms, including on the impacts of potentially removing The Gardens Trust as a statutory consultee. This is in line with our broader aim to streamline the planning system, reduce duplication, and improve efficiency. Historic England already holds statutory responsibilities for higher-graded parks and gardens, and we are keen to ensure that the system remains effective without unnecessary overlap.

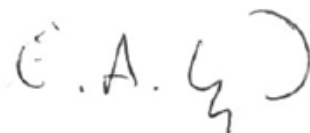
I want to reassure you that no decision will be made until all consultation feedback on the impact of The Gardens Trust's potential removal has been fully considered. As part of this consultation, the government will be keen to test mitigations to minimise the impact of the possible removal of the Gardens Trust and ensure they continue to play a valuable role in protecting our heritage. Amenity societies are not subject to the full requirements of statutory consultation but are notified of relevant development. The government will be keen to explore through the consultation whether this model would be suitable for The Gardens Trust and for certain types of development which impact on registered parks and gardens.

Importantly, the National Planning Policy Framework continues to provide robust protections for designated heritage assets, registered parks and gardens. The Framework sets out that local planning authorities are required to assess the impact of development proposals on these assets carefully and should refuse applications that would lead to substantial harm to these assets.

We value the ongoing role of The Gardens Trust in working with local authorities and developers, and we are committed to ensuring that this continues. MHCLG colleagues have engaged with The Gardens Trust to understand the impacts of potentially removing them as a statutory consultee in the planning process and will continue to engage with them over the coming months.

I will deposit a copy of this letter in the House library.

Best wishes,



LIZ LLOYD CBE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Digital Economy