

Institution: University College London
Unit of Assessment: 17A – Geography, Environmental Studies & Archaeology: Archaeology
Title of case study: Peoples-based conservation: Caring for Hinemihi, the Maori meeting house at Clandon Park, UK
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The Peoples-based Conservation Project (PBC) has challenged conventional heritage conservation practice by privileging a community's cultural systems over universalised concepts of heritage, through participatory practice. This transformed conservation practice by transferring the focus from material preservation to developing and preserving the connections between people, their cultural heritage, and each other. This new approach has developed a shared responsibility between the National Trust and Maori in the UK and New Zealand for the care of Hinemihi, an historic Maori meeting house which is no longer conserved as an object of built heritage, but as the living focus of a network of reciprocal social relationships.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The Peoples-based Conservation Project (PBC), led by Dean Sully (Lecturer in Conservation since 2000) at UCL, has instituted a new understanding of conservation practice by prioritising the relationships between people and objects as the essential element of heritage conservation [a]. In 2002, Sully initiated research in partnership with the National Trust (NT) and Maori community groups to establish a strategic approach to long-term conservation management at Hinemihi, a historic Maori meeting house at Clandon Park, a National Trust property in Surrey. Maori meeting houses embody the values, customs, social structures and practices of Maori people. They are public places where important decisions were made, visitors entertained, genealogies affirmed, relationships confirmed, births and marriages celebrated, and the dead mourned. 'Hinemihi' is characterised as female, and 'she' is referred to as a living ancestor of the Ngati Hinemihi people [a,b].</p> <p>Before Sully's research began, the debate around Hinemihi's conservation had focused specifically on physical alterations to her built structure. In 2002, Sully devised a conservation strategy based on a values-based conservation management approach that advocated the active participation of UK and New Zealand-based Maori in the care of Hinemihi [a,b]. This strategy questioned the NT's conventional approach to Hinemihi as an 'ethnographic object', and thus challenged the power relationships between project participants [a].</p> <p>In 2003 a fabric survey, condition assessment and archival survey undertaken by UCL [c] revealed evidence of substantial periodic changes in Hinemihi's physical and cultural fabric. This meant that she could not be conserved as an immutable representation of an historical period, but should be viewed, instead, as a structure in transition [a]. This insight provided the basis for a formal consultation process starting in 2004; Sully played a key role in this process in his capacity as a member of the Hinemihi Stakeholder Group and Hinemihi Project Steering Group (2004-10).</p> <p>During fieldwork in New Zealand in 2004 and 2010, Sully studied New Zealand's conservation approach to historic meeting houses as developed by <i>Pouhere Taonga</i> (New Zealand Historic Places Trust, NZHPT) [a,d]. In <i>Pouhere Taonga's</i> approach, the restoration of a meeting house was seen as a catalyst to building capacity among local people and as a vehicle for the transfer of knowledge and cultural practice. Sully translated this approach to – and thereby instituted new conservation practices in – the UK by applying decolonising methods such as Maori <i>kaupapa</i> (the philosophy and practice of being Maori). The application of these methods at Hinemihi refocused conservation practice on building relationships between people and their heritage objects, in line with the approach that Sully had observed in New Zealand [a,d]. A volume on these approaches, with contributions from the main participants in the PBC project, was published in 2007 [a]. Subsequent work established systems in which research questions and methods are generated in partnership with communities, and which reflect the aspirations of those participants in the specific circumstances of the conservation project [c,d].</p> <p>As an early response to views expressed in the conservation consultation, in 2004 Sully initiated the annual '<i>Kaitiakitanga: Maintenance of Hinemihi Days</i>' [d]. These reflect the Maori concept of reciprocal care of <i>taonga</i> (treasures), according to which principle, by caring for Hinemihi (keeping</p>

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her warm through songs, speech, and touch during cleaning, repair and maintenance), Hinemihi's People are themselves cared for. These events provided a forum for discussion about the use and care of Hinemihi and have enabled a continuing connection between the project and 'Hinemihi's People', a group formed by Sully as a sustainable conservation community that reflects the contemporary reality of this heritage project. This community consists of a diverse network of Maori and non-Maori people and groups, including the descendants of the originating community in New Zealand; National Trust staff, volunteers, members and visitors; artists and craftspeople; local residents; and 14 Maori and Polynesian cultural groups based in New Zealand and the UK [c,d].

Between 2009 and 2013, three series of community-based capacity building events were organised under the banner of 'whareNOW'. These events, which enabled the development of relationships between Hinemihi and her people to be investigated and documented, were designed by Sully with community partners including parents and teachers from the London Maori preschool; British-based members of the Maori & Polynesian Community; members of the NT; residents local to Clandon; and UCL staff and students. The first workshop series, 'Being with Hinemihi', included five activity sessions in 2009, which explored the relationship between UK Maori families and Hinemihi. The 2010 'Sharing with Hinemihi' series involved six learning events at Hinemihi and UCL that considered how Maori and others feel when they are with Hinemihi. Finally, in a 2012-13 series of three 3-day *Tukutuku* weaving workshops, Ngati Hinemihi weavers taught participants Maori weaving skills in order to produce *tukutuku* panels (decorative internal woven wall panels) that will be incorporated into the restored Hinemihi [d].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

The following outputs have been assessed through a rigorous peer review process.

- [a] Sully, D. (2007). (ed.) *Decolonising Conservation: Caring for Maori Meeting Houses Outside New Zealand*. Left Coast Press Walnut Creek, US. Available on request.
- [b] Sully, D. (2003–4). Conservation in Context: a Maori Meeting House in Surrey. *Archaeology International*. London: *Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology*. University College London. 2003/2004 53-57. DOI: [10.5334/ai.0714](https://doi.org/10.5334/ai.0714).
- [c] Sully, D., Cardoso, I. P. (2013) 'Painting Hinemihi by Numbers: Peoples-based Conservation and the Paint Analysis of Hinemihi's Carvings' in *Studies in Conservation*. Available online, and submitted for REF2. DOI: [10.1179/2047058413Y.0000000102](https://doi.org/10.1179/2047058413Y.0000000102).
- [d] Sully, D., Raymond, R., Hoete, A. (2013). 'Locating Hinemihi's People' in *Journal of Material Culture*. Submitted for REF2.
- [e] Pye, E., Sully, D. (2007). Evolving Challenges, Developing Skills. *The Conservator* 30(1):19-37. DOI: [10.1080/01410096.2007.9995221](https://doi.org/10.1080/01410096.2007.9995221).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

This research programme has introduced new peoples-based approaches to UK heritage conservation and, in the process, has brought together and engaged new communities in both the UK and New Zealand with their cultural heritage. Its impacts on conservation practice and community engagement with cultural heritage can be seen particularly in the transition of the approach of the NT to the conservation of Hinemihi [3], and the current active role of Hinemihi's People in her care [4,5,6]. As well as benefiting participants, the work has enhanced conservation in the UK and internationally through its influence on theory, practice, and teaching [1,2].

Benefiting Conservation Theory, Practice, and Teaching

The Hinemihi project has led to new ways of understanding and teaching conservation, as well as to a reworking of practice within the discipline. Its influence on the developing conservation profession can be seen in the use of the peoples-based approach advocated by Sully based on his work in New Zealand within post-graduate teaching. That approach now features, for example, in the Institute of Conservation's (ICON) Sharing Conservation Decisions courses (2011–2013), which reach approximately 120 conservation practitioners and postgraduate students per year [1]. Research that has led to the establishment of a new definition of conservation has been established within a wider view of heritage, that reflects the transmission of cultural practice in the care of cultural spaces and objects [2]. This has enabled heritage conservation to address the social issues of the present and engage the future, rather than merely seeking to fix the past. In so

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doing, it validates conservation responses that seek to incorporate the multiple ways that people care for and use their own cultural heritage. This has been developed through the work of ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) as a part of the Living Heritage Programme (2009–2011) and their developing research on People Centred Approaches [2] and, more broadly, acknowledged within the conservation discipline [1].

Transforming the Conservation of Hinemihi

The volunteer group *Te Maru o Hinemihi* (In the embrace of Hinemihi) was established in March 2012 with Sully as a founder committee member [9]. The group represents the institutionalisation of an object centred network of people around Hinemihi to collaborate in her effective care with the National Trust, whose conservation approach to Hinemihi has been transformed during the years since the research began. In 2003, the meeting house was described on the NT website and Clandon Guidebook as “...the single most important [ethnographic] item held...the house commemorates the Governorship of New Zealand...” [10] The research itself and the subsequently increased participation of Maori in Hinemihi’s care has catalysed a shift within the NT from a focus on the material authenticity of Hinemihi as a historic building towards a Maori view of Hinemihi as a living being and an active *marae* [3,4,6]. Today, the translation of Maori conservation approaches to Hinemihi is evident in the decisions taken and even the language used by the NT, for example in its description of the observance of Maori *tikanga* (philosophy) and *kawa* (protocol) [3,4,8].

Community Cohesion and Involvement with Cultural Heritage: Engaging Hinemihi’s People

One of the project’s many legacies is the vibrant and sustainable network of social relationships between communities – both New Zealand and British – and their cultural heritage. There are believed to be around 8,000 Maori, and an additional 50,000 New Zealanders presently living in the UK. Since 2004, a community of Hinemihi’s People has been built and engaged through regular participatory events such as annual *Kaitiakitanga* Hinemihi Maintenance Days, and community-building events such as the workshop series [4,6,7]. Between 2008–2013 these events, which have involved over 400 participants and many encounters with National Trust visitors, have nurtured and developed relationships between Hinemihi and her people. ‘Hinemihi’s People’ encompasses both the role of Maori in Hinemihi’s care, and that of British people in sustaining her future in ways based on lived experience. Accordingly, the research encourages and facilitates both the local community of Clandon and those of New Zealand origin to think of Hinemihi as an intrinsic and living part of their community. A project participant’s comment demonstrates this view of Hinemihi almost as a family member: ‘We keep her warm when we visit her, we keep her from being lonely. I lived in New Zealand for 33 years and coming back here it’s like home; my grandchildren were baptised here two years ago, the first babies to be baptised in this marae’ (interviewee 2012) [7].

An important aspect of this unique model of community engagement is that of engaging children with cultural heritage. The five ‘Being with Hinemihi’ sessions run in 2009 as part of the ‘*whareNOW*’ workshop series led to the development in 2009 of a dance performance with the children’s educational group, *Kohanga Reo o Ranana*, to share the significance and stories of Hinemihi and her People. As one young *Kohanga Reo tamariki* (child) participant explained during Being with Hinemihi: ‘I like Hinemihi because she is pretty. She makes me feel important because she is special and she’s my ancestor’ [7]. The Kohanga is intended to engage New Zealand children in the UK with Maori culture, to which the connection with Hinemihi is central. A performance, *Ko au te whare* (I am the house), was staged at several venues from 2009–2013, including at *Hangi* celebrations at Hinemihi and at cultural festivals and academic conferences in the UK, Rarotonga, New Zealand, and Australia [7, p. 21]. *Ko au te whare* has now become an important learning resource used with children from diverse cultural backgrounds. In October 2012, for instance, 45 children from Clandon School participated in *Ko au te whare*, and similar events have been held for children from inner city London schools and as part of the ‘Origins: Heritage of First Nations “Border Crossings” in 2011 [7, p. 11].

A second aspect is that of creating an essential means for Hinemihi’s people to engage with their cultural heritage in a similar way to meeting houses in New Zealand. The “Sharing with Hinemihi” series (attended by 65 participants) culminated in “Staying with Hinemihi”, a *noho marae* (sleep over) in August 2010. This also had important implications for the conservation project and the

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future use of Hinemihī. For the first time in 124 years, Hinemihī was kept awake with the sounds of 43 of her people sleeping inside her. Staying with Hinemihī provided an important channel to foster the development of cultural heritage: one participant observed ‘I will always remember sleeping in Hinemihī and what a privilege that was. I loved singing and talking with her and helping her to be fed on a *wairua* (spiritual) level. As a Maori, I understand this important facet of caring for such a *taonga*. If people can stay in Hinemihī on a regular basis, she will be warm and fully fed all the time...’ (interviewee 2012) [7].

During the event itself, the group completed an artwork titled ‘Painting Hinemihī by numbers’ to link the conservation work and paint analysis at UCL with a communal vision of Hinemihī’s future appearance. The visual artist Cecilie Gravesen also produced an original piece entitled ‘Between Hinemihī and Other Things’ as a response to her participation in these workshops [7, p. 20]. The *tukutuku* weaving workshops have likewise supported the production of new artwork, this time in the form of decorative panels produced using traditional crafting techniques. At the same time, the sessions also enhanced the capacity of Hinemihī’s People to look after her. By June 2013, 36 workshop participants had completed 16 of the 49 panels needed, and over 50 weavers had contributed to the work. The remaining panels are being completed by Ngati Hinemihī in New Zealand and by Hinemihī’s People in the UK [7, p. 15].

The development of the Hinemihī *marae* also provides opportunities for visitors to Clandon (50,000 in 2012) [10] to encounter Maori culture and consider the modern legacy of Britain’s past colonial relationships. An illustration of this was the formal *powhiri* (ceremonial welcoming) of the New Zealand Olympic team at Hinemihī on 8 August 2012. Hinemihī’s presence provided much needed *tautoko* (support) to inspire the New Zealand athletes [7]. This intercultural encounter is fundamental to the role of a *marae*, and is critical in a multicultural society seeking to understand what it is to be British [5].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- [1] Factual statement from the Coordinator of Conservation Methodology Course corroborating the impacts of Sully’s approach on conservation theory and teaching is available on request.
- [2] Factual statement from the Project Manager, Living Heritage Programme (ICCROM) further evidences the impacts of the research on the conservation discipline. Available on request.
- [3] Joint statement from the Head Conservator, NT and NT Property Manager, Clandon Park corroborating impacts on NT conservation of Hinemihī. Available on request.
- [4] NT language at Clandon Park now reflects Maori approaches. Factual statement provided by the Ngati Hinemihī spokesperson. Available on request.
- [5] Conservation Statement 2010, Submitted by the NT for the first round application to the HLF for the repair and restoration of Hinemihī at Clandon Park in Surrey:
<http://www.hinemihī.co.uk/media/120914-1458-Conservation%20Statement%20%20without%20pictures%20Nov%202010.pdf>
- [6] Factual statement, Architect, member of UK based Maori community, on the development of a community of Hinemihī’s people and a new approach to conservation. Available on request.
- [7] A Dialogue with Hinemihī’s People. Compiled by Te Maru o Hinemihī, November 2012
<http://bit.ly/18MqhWB>. Statements from project participants and information about activities involving Hinemihī’s People appear on pp. 7–8.
- [8] National Trust ‘Hinemihī Project’ Consultation Documents 2004.
<http://www.hinemihī.co.uk/media/120809-1954-Hinemihī%20consultation%20Nov%202004a.pdf>.
- [9] Formation of Te Maru Hinemihī: Introduction to Te Maru (2012), Te Maru o Hinemihī Chairperson. <http://www.hinemihī.co.uk/media/130918-1142-Te%20Maru%20%20O%20Hinemihī%20-%20introduction.pdf>.
- [10] Hinemihī o te Ao Tawhito Audience Development Plan. Unpublished report for the National Trust by the sam-culture consultancy and Mel Larsen, July 2013. Available on request.