

Conservation

bulletin

Conservation Principles in Practice



Everyone agrees that conservation aims to sustain the special character of places. But who decides what is special, and how do we reconcile conservation obligations with the need to keep buildings in everyday use?

The J W Evans metal-works offers complete immersion in the lost industrial world of Birmingham's historic jewellery quarter. Before embarking on its rescue we had to establish what makes the place so special and how its unique heritage values can best be sustained into the future – in other words by putting English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* into practice.

© English Heritage

2 Editorial

4 Codifying Conservation

- 4 A credo for consistency
- 5 The evolution of conservation principles
- 7 A sense of value
- 10 Heritage Protection Reform
- 12 Managing change in conservation areas

15 The Wider View

- 15 ... they do things differently there
- 16 The National Trust's approach
- 19 The public value of conservation
- 21 The local government perspective
- 24 European conservation policy
- 25 The international context

27 Putting the Principles into Practice

- 27 *Routine Management and Maintenance*
English Heritage's Asset Management Plan
- 29 *Periodic Renewal and Repair*
The J W Evans metal-works
- 31 *Intervention to Increase Understanding*
Witley Court
- 33 *Restoration*
Dover Castle Great Tower
- 35 *New Work and Alteration*
Royal Shakespeare Theatre
- 38 *Integrating Conservation with other Public Interests*
The past shaping the future
- 40 *Enabling Development*
Meeting the cost of saving historic places

42 News

44 The National Monuments Record

46 Legal Developments

47 New Publications



ENGLISH HERITAGE

Editorial: Conservation Principles in Practice

Managing change to historic places can be challenging – but it is made much easier if we can first agree what we are trying to protect.

Amid the clamour for attention and resources that seems to surround everything we do, the clear, distinctive and authoritative voice is the one most likely to be heard.

This is particularly so in the historic environment, where public agencies, special interests groups, professional organisations, private sector bodies and individuals all demand, insist or complain that their view, their opinion, their priorities, are paramount. We may be better at cooperating than we used to be, but such tensions and conflict can still slow us down and undermine our credibility with the decision-makers we aim to influence.

So English Heritage embarked on the preparation of its *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance* in 2004. It took four years, including two major consultation exercises, to refine the intellectual debate, argument and language down to the 70-page document that we published in May 2008.

The benefits of all that hard work are becoming apparent. For example, our ability to express our position more consistently, more precisely and persuasively is strengthening the credibility of our expert evidence to public inquiries. Others are now recognising the benefits of a consistent and objective approach, and a common language for explaining the effects of change to the historic environment.

This edition of *Conservation Bulletin* offers perspectives on the utility of *Conservation Principles* from within and beyond English Heritage. The bodies represented by our contributors have diverse interests that coincide with, overlap with, or complement those of English Heritage to varying degrees. When the issues with which we are involved generate so much passion, the ability to

agree quietly and consistently on what it is we are trying to protect is the important first step in helping the wider community manage change to England's historic places in a way that allows exciting and stimulating new places without compromising the exciting new places of previous periods that we have inherited.

We knew from the responses to our public consultation on early drafts that there was a lot more agreement among the bodies responsible for managing our historic environment than some of the high-profile arguments occasionally fanned into flames might suggest.

It is also encouraging to hear from colleagues in the National Trust that our approach is consistent with that which they follow, even though their interests extend into the natural as well as the built heritage; and from the Heritage Lottery Fund that the expression of our thinking fits closely with theirs, even though their funding activity extends much further into our cultural heritage than English Heritage normally ventures. That *Conservation Principles* is helping English Heritage staff maintain, manage and develop the historic properties for which we are responsible is no more than we would expect, but it is heartening to know that local authorities find the values-based approach useful too, because that is where most of the decisions regarding change to historic places are taken.

And beyond the clamour to be heard, and the passionate promotion of particular interests, it is the clear voices of reason that will inform the sound decisions that we all, in the end, rely on. ■

Steven Bee

Director of Planning and Development, English Heritage

Copies of ***Conservation Principles*** can be downloaded from www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.9181 or obtained in printed form by e-mailing customers@english-heritage.org.uk

Conservation Bulletin is published three times a year by English Heritage and circulated free of charge to more than 15,000 conservation specialists, opinion-formers and decision-makers. Its purpose is to communicate new ideas and advice to everyone concerned with the understanding, management and public enjoyment of England's rich and diverse historic environment.

When you have finished with this copy of *Conservation Bulletin*, do please pass it on. And if you would like to be added to our mailing list, or to change your current subscription details, just contact us on 020 7973 3253 or at mailinglist@english-heritage.org.uk.

Codifying Conservation

If we are to sustain the historic significance of places we first need to understand what it is that makes them special – and for whom.

A credo for consistency

Steven Bee

Director of Planning and Development, English Heritage

The arguments that arise between expert individuals and organisations are part of the development of theory and practice in any specialist field. Without it we would not make new discoveries, challenge orthodoxy or indeed engage the intellect of great minds to address the subjects in which we are interested. The decision-making process should, however be the opportunity to implement the resolution of such debates, not the opportunity to repeat, or worse, to re-open, the discussion.

It was partly to define more clearly the ways in which English Heritage behaves as a broadly based organisation with a wide remit, that its historic property, research, policy and advisory activities were separately defined when we refreshed our management structure in 2002. Arising out of a continuing debate between those responsible for these four organisational perspectives came a recognition that our advice to third parties was most credible when it was based on agreed policy, in turn based on sound research and evidence.

We also recognised that we were not always consistent and that our credibility, and that of our advice, could be compromised by varying articulation and interpretation of policy and research by those offering advice. We wanted to make sure that we always worked at our best, and so identified the need for a set of corporate principles with guidance on how they should be applied. It took us around four years to establish, organise, articulate and edit the principles down into a manageable form and these were eventually published as *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* in May 2008.

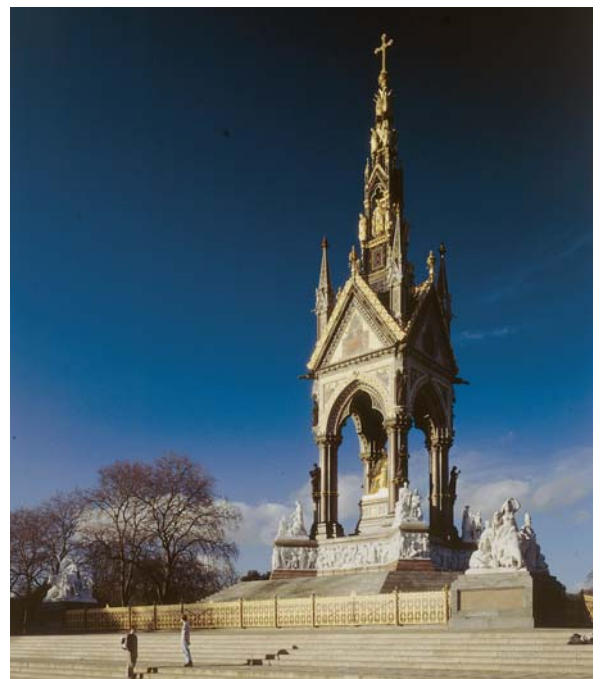
The work involved many people across English Heritage, representing all the activities and perspectives within the organisation, and those of many external players too. A major consultation on the first draft document in 2006 elicited more than 100 formal responses, widespread endorsement and support, and some important challenges. It also helped us to appreciate the wider conservation policy context in which we were working. There are many other agencies and interests with a

principled approach to conservation, not just in England but throughout the world. We wanted to present the principles of English Heritage in a way that encouraged their adoption by others, without denying the validity of other approaches.

The first draft was intellectually robust, comprehensive – and incredibly complex. The team responsible for producing *Principles* realised that to be useful the document had to be understandable – that is succinct, unequivocal and purposeful. The main reason for the complexity was our attempt to cover the practice of conservation from every possible perspective. That we managed to do this at all was a testament to the intellectual energy and rigour of those involved, but if it was not understandable no-one would use it, and so we had to review our approach.

We came to the conclusion that trying to meet all interests just wasn't practical, and that we should concentrate on what we felt the primary purpose should be. This took us back to the need for English Heritage to provide credible expert advice to those responsible for making or authorising changes to historic places. This allowed us to strip the tortuous inter-connections out of the original document and present the principles, the values-based approach to assessing historic significance, and the policies and guidance for English Heritage staff in a format that lost none of the intellectual

London's Albert Memorial, a familiar and popular symbol of the Victorian era. Its combination of historic, aesthetic and communal heritage values is immediately apparent. Investment in its restoration and conservation is uncontroversial.
Nigel Corrie © English Heritage



robustness of the original, but was more accessible.

We repeatedly honed the text of the second version to minimise the potential for mis-interpretation or multi-interpretation. There is always scope for improvement, but we had to stop somewhere. The core team responsible is pretty satisfied with the published version, and the reaction has been very positive.

It is fair to say that some of those English Heritage staff for whom the document is primarily intended were a bit sceptical at first. English Heritage had managed for nearly 25 years without these *Principles*, relying on the professional judgement and principles of its brilliant staff, so why did we need to lay the dead hand of corporate *diktat* on the creative flair that had helped us achieve so much?

The answer is twofold. First, the circumstances within which English Heritage operates now are significantly different from those that applied when it was created. The planning system within which we provide our advice to others, and the financial and commercial environment in which we invest in the care of our own properties or support the care of those owned by others is very different. We have an obligation to justify our actions and demonstrate that they are consistent with Government policy of all kinds, and the increasing regulation and accountability of public bodies.

Secondly, our credibility as an expert organisation is compromised by actions or advice that is considered by others to be inconsistent. However sound the professional judgement of our expert staff, accusations of unfairness, capriciousness or prejudice can arise when different advice is given

in apparently similar circumstances. The adoption of a corporate approach not only provides a consistent basis for all our activities, but allows those who feel they are not being treated fairly or consistently to challenge us.

Having established the use of *Conservation Principles* within English Heritage, we now want to promote their adoption by those most responsible for managing change in the historic environment – local authorities. We already have an established programme of training and capacity building for local authority staff and members through our Historic Environment Local Management (HELM) initiative, and our promotion of and support for Heritage Champions among elected local councillors. Looking ahead, the focus of our attention on Heritage Protection Reform, anticipating the imminent new Planning Policy Statement for Heritage and the future Heritage Protection Bill, will allow us further opportunities to promote *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance* as the standard text for managing change to historic places.

Finally, I must stress that this is not the introduction of yet another new way of doing things. English Heritage is as wary as anyone else of debilitating initiative-fatigue. Our *Conservation Principles* are not revolutionary, or even particularly evolutionary. They are a codification of what we do when we are working at our best, to make sure that we work at our best all the time. We hope that their wider adoption will in due course help others do the same, reducing the amount of time spent on avoidable argument and allowing us all to focus our effort where it can be most effectively deployed. ■



In 2007 the Grade II listing of Plymouth's innovative post-war Civic Centre was greeted with a storm of protest from some quarters. As a symbol of the city's post-war regeneration it should be highly valued by local people, but some have still to be persuaded of its historic, aesthetic, and communal heritage values.

James O Davies © English Heritage

The evolution of conservation principles

Ben Cowell

Assistant Director, External Affairs, National Trust

Statements of principles attempt to distil the lessons of past experience into some generally accepted rules of conduct, as a guide to future practice. English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* follow exactly this model in offering guidance on the management of historic places. Although 'principles' may appear to be 'timeless' or 'eternal', they are, inevitably, historical documents in their own right, and need to be understood in this context. It is worth considering briefly, therefore, how our present ideas of conservation have emerged over time, so that we might appreciate their evolution as a cultural and historical process.

It would be easy to assume that conservation practice has developed progressively, generation by generation, towards a nirvana represented by present-day principles, such as those articulated by English Heritage, the National Trust and others. History is, of course, more complicated than that. Yet it is evident that many of the 'conserve as found' ideas articulated by John Ruskin and William Morris in the second half of the 19th century continue to inform the essentials of modern conservation practice. From them we hear of how we are merely the custodians of historic buildings for future generations, of how our interventions in historic structures need to be proportionate and ideally kept to the essential minimum, and of the value of continual repair and maintenance.

Both Ruskin and Morris were reacting against prevailing ideas of 'restoration', as practised by architects such as Sir George Gilbert Scott in Britain and Viollet-le-Duc on the continent, that led to the remodelling of historic buildings to meet contemporary perceptions of how they ought to have appeared in their prime. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), established by Morris in 1877, set out to 'put Protection in place of Restoration'. Its Manifesto enshrined some basic conservation principles that are still adhered to by SPAB members today, in particular the call 'to stave off decay by daily care ... and otherwise to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands'.

The relatively slow adoption of statutory measures for the protection of heritage by successive British governments (compared to their European counterparts) in part explains why so much conservation practice in the UK remained essentially a private or voluntary endeavour until well into the 20th century. One of the earliest legislative embodiments of the emergent conservation philosophy was the National Trust Act of 1907. This gave statutory authority to the Trust to promote the 'permanent preservation' of places of historic interest or natural beauty, and to declare its holdings 'inalienable' – concepts that surely owed much to Ruskin.

The emergence of a distinct conservation profession during the 20th century, and the creation of public agencies for safeguarding historic sites, was accompanied by successive attempts to codify sets of principles through international



Understanding significance: Hinemihi is a Maori meeting house now located within the grounds of Clandon Park, near Guildford, Surrey. The National Trust has been working with the Maori community on plans for the future care of Hinemihi.
© NTPL/Nick Meers



Gibson Mill is an 18th-century former cotton mill at Hardcastle Crag, West Yorkshire. The building relies largely on water power, with the addition today of photovoltaic cells on the roof and a wood-burning stove – an example of how modern adaptation can be achieved while simultaneously helping to preserve historic value.

© NTPL/ Joe Cornish

charters and agreements. From the Athens Charter of 1931 to the Venice Charter of 1964, such documents attempted to summarise the basic ideas that underpinned the protection of heritage assets. While not legally enforceable, their existence served to emphasise the universal nature of the conservation challenge, and to highlight the importance of basing practice on a few well-developed rules and frameworks for action.

Such documents implicitly sanctioned particular modes of interpreting historic sites, normally placing a premium on the protection of ‘monuments’ of aesthetic or historical importance. The Burra Charter of 1979, later replaced by the version of 1999, introduced a new concept into conservation thinking: that of the cultural or social significance of places. This complemented the art-historical approach with one that emphasised the subjective importance of place to culture and identity. Within Australia, the charter gives legitimacy to those seeking recognition for places of all kinds that have special relevance to people, including the Aboriginal community. But the idea of basing conservation on assessments of significance is one that has much wider application, and indeed lies at the heart of English Heritage’s own conservation principles as well as those of the National Trust, transmitted through the conservation-management planning guidance developed by English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The idea is now commonplace in conservation practice. There is an increasing emphasis on the need to identify the significance of a place as the first step in developing any sort of management plan for its conservation. This helps to bring into consideration both the material reality of sites and an understanding of the multiple values that they may hold for people. As a recent pamphlet from Demos observes, in making the case for placing

conservation at the heart of a progressive public realm, ‘[w]hat we conserve is a statement of what we respect, who we are and who we wish to be’ (Jones and Holden 2008).

We cannot of course assume that the principles of today will survive intact in a hundred years’ time. New challenges will surely emerge that will require a reassessment of the basis on which conservation decisions are currently made. We are already seeing the impact that climate change is having on the historic environment, for example. The need for urgent measures to adapt to future climate scenarios may test the logic of current conservation philosophy to its fullest extent, although there are many practical examples within organisations such as the National Trust of adapting buildings in ways that respect their significance and historic integrity.

There is also the challenge of how to accommodate a concern for intangible as well as tangible heritage. For some critics, current conservation discourses do not go far enough in recognising that many people’s everyday understanding of heritage lies in the experiential – customs, traditions, practices, ways of living – rather than necessarily in physical places or structures (Smith 2006). The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003 goes some way to addressing this concern, but has yet to be ratified by the UK. Such considerations help to remind us that conservation principles do not descend from on high, as if in tablets of stone, but are themselves the products of particular times, places and circumstances. ■

REFERENCES

- Jones, Samuel and Holden, John 2008. *It’s a Material World: Caring for the Public Realm*. London: Demos
 Smith, Laurajane 2006. *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge

A sense of value

Paul Drury

Partner, The Paul Drury Partnership

A desire to know who we are and where we came from seems to be inherent in most human societies, expressed through everything from creation myths to academic history writing. Places can become respected for their association with past people and events that are important to communal identity; but in the more distant past, this rarely meant that the inherited fabric of the place was conserved: on the contrary, it was often aggrandised.

Understanding the materiality of the past is a pre-requisite to valuing it. This in turn demands the motivation to do so, and scholarly endeavour has always run alongside a desire to influence or validate the present. For example, antiquarian study of medieval buildings, exemplified by Rickman’s *Attempt to discriminate the styles of English architecture ...* (1817), revealed chronology, and the ecclesiological movement identified purpose and meanings which were translated into a contemporary religious imperative.

Respect for the evidential and aesthetic value of material remains grew in parallel as increasing knowledge was applied to shaping the landscapes of contemporary society, both physical (like the gothic revival) and intellectual (like the long chronology of evolution). This appreciation of the values of what we now call the ‘historic [dimension of the] environment’ led first to pressure to prevent its destruction, then the emergence of professional

ethics in managing it and, eventually, a degree of legal protection.

The evolving basis of designation

From the outset, selection for designation was by and for experts. The initial schedule of monuments was based primarily on the evidential value of prehistoric monuments, but their aesthetic and other cultural values could not realistically be ignored: it surely is no accident that the then highly picturesque Tintern Abbey in the Wye Valley was one of the first medieval monuments to be protected. Once formal designation extended into the ‘architectural or historic interest’ of buildings, the nature of the complex cultural value judgements involved became more apparent.

Protection widened to include the Victorian and the industrial, the built environment of a wider stratum of past society, but gradually the limitations of the designation of isolated structures became clear. Conservation areas, introduced in 1967 and designated locally, were the first step towards a more inclusive view of the historic environment and its values for local communities.

Differences in policy, practice and terminology between professionals managing different strands of the historic environment – archaeological sites, buildings, designed landscapes – tended to produce inconsistency, and sometimes downright conflict, in the management of places combining all three. Then the need to recognise values that go beyond the statutory thresholds gained momentum. From the late 1990s, the idea of ‘democratisation of

Often the location for national protest, Trafalgar Square is also a place of national rejoicing. Here the crowds celebrate the award of the 2012 Olympics to Britain – an activity that reinforces the communal heritage value of this historic place.

© Hayley Madden





Oxford Castle, which became the county gaol, demonstrates the indivisibility of evidential value below and above ground.

© Oxford Archaeology

heritage', exemplified perhaps by *Power of Place* (English Heritage 2000), and underpinned by the policies and resources of the Heritage Lottery Fund, has gained support as part of a wider political narrative of inclusivity.

Conservation Principles

The genesis of the *Principles* was primarily the need for a concise, intellectual underpinning of the reasons why, at the beginning of the 21st century, we value the historic environment beyond its mere utility; and for a consistent and coherent framework for making decisions about managing heritage values. The need was evident both professionally, through increasing resort to ICOMOS Australia's *Burra Charter* to fill a perceived gap, and administratively, to enable English Heritage as a publicly accountable organisation to justify its decisions against consistent principles and criteria.

The route to developing the *Principles* was long, and it is a tribute to English Heritage that flexibility was maintained throughout. It rapidly became clear that, while all existing statements of principle and policy needed to be taken into account, a 'cut and paste' approach would not suffice. Working groups of English Heritage staff were established, in which the drafting of the core Principles was argued word by word.

These discussions highlighted how personal each practitioner's definition of conservation, and

the weight they attach to particular values, can be. Thus the process of thinking about and debating what conservation of the historic environment entails, why and how English Heritage does it, and justifies doing so, was itself valuable. Regional seminars on the public consultation drafts followed, where the interplay of opinion provided a particularly valuable input from the wider heritage constituency.

Identifying headline values

All regimes for identifying, classifying and protecting elements of the historic environment are values-based, even if words such as 'special interest' are used instead of 'value'. We decided at the outset to draw a clear distinction between heritage values which are culturally ascribed to places, and so 'represent a public interest in property, regardless of ownership' (*Principle 1.4*), and the 'instrumental' economic and social benefits (sometimes also called 'values') which may flow from them, but which cannot exist without them. An extensive literature trawl produced a long list of cultural heritage values, from which the final short list of four headline values was distilled.

The order of the list – evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal – might be said to progress from more objective to more subjective, were not all heritage values assigned and therefore subjective by definition. Assessing evidential value – the

Forty Hall, Enfield, a landscape with many diverse historic values. The predominantly 18th-century designed landscape of Forty Hall overlies the buried remains of the Tudor Elsing Palace, demolished in the 17th century. Appreciating the relative significance of historic, evidential and aesthetic heritage values allows better management decisions to be made.

© London Borough of Enfield



potential of a place to yield information about past human activity – tends to lie in the professional realm, while communal value necessarily derives from the meanings of a place for those who relate to it. Historical values, whether associative or illustrative, and aesthetic values can then be seen to lie between these two poles. The *Principles* aim not to produce ultimate definitions of self-contained values, which obviously overlap, but rather to prompt comprehensive thought about who values a place and why they do so.

That made our list of values wider than the statutory criteria which warrant designation, both because most places have some heritage value, and because all the heritage values of a designated place, not just those that justify designation, should be taken into account in its management. But while the theory is clear, the practical problems of capturing the full range of values of a place for all those with an interest in it can be considerable. Public consultation has become standard practice

for the more obviously ‘public’ assets and for the public realm, for example conservation areas. Even so, there are real problems with taking the values concept outside the professional realm: most people find it difficult to articulate why they value places, and teasing out their views takes time and effort. Often, a threat to the existence of a place is needed to focus public and community attention on articulating its values.

Conflicting values

Summarising the range of heritage values attached to a place and how they interrelate in an overall ‘statement of significance’ is rarely a sufficient tool for managing a place with numerous values. Sustaining some values may be in conflict with sustaining others, while sustaining the totality of values of a place may be neither practicable nor affordable. Thus a statement of significance needs to indicate the relative importance of the heritage values of a place, how they relate to its fabric, and

any obvious tensions between potentially conflicting values.

The greatest problem in doing so lies in trying to balance the differing value scales of the various stakeholder groups. An archaeologist will tend to attach particular weight to evidential value, whereas local residents are likely to privilege the communal values of the place. Take, for example, the site of Elsing, a Tudor royal palace in the grounds of Forty Hall in Enfield. It has no upstanding remains, but excellent preservation of a nationally rare monument type (evidential value), in an essentially complete 18th-century designed landscape (including an over-mature avenue of trees), which ranks highly on evidential, illustrative historical, and aesthetic values. It is also a public park of great, but local, communal value, as a semi-wild place surrounded by suburbia. Replanting of the avenue would damage the buried archaeology; allowing it to die would damage a whole range of values of the designed landscape; natural regeneration of scrub, leading to woodland, could reinforce (local) communal values, but would harm all the other (national as well as local) values.

In such complex situations, management strategies can only be developed through dialogue and negotiation, with all the interests who champion different values – or attach different weights to particular values – coming at least to understand each other's position. Ultimately, hard decisions have to be made, but a framework of identified values and weighting should allow the effects of different options to be tested, and the 'least-worst' decision to be reached logically and explained clearly.

The approach should be inclusive in the sense that all the identified values should be sustained or reinforced where there is no conflict between them. But if conflict cannot be avoided, national importance must prevail over regional, and regional over local. Where a place is subject to formal designation or statutory protection, statutory duties make this unavoidable. The Heritage Protection Reform proposals aim to provide an integrated framework for such decision-making, and to remove these conflicts of statutory duty. ■

REFERENCES

- English Heritage 2000. *Power of Place, The Future of the Historic Environment*. London: English Heritage
- Rickman, T, 1817. *An Attempt to discriminate the Styles of English Architecture from the Conquest to the Reformation*. London

Heritage Protection Reform

Peter Beacham

Heritage Protection Director, English Heritage

The publication of *Conservation Principles* is a vital part of a wide-ranging shift in the way in which we protect and manage the historic environment. It moves us decisively away from the caricature of the heritage sector as change-averse to welcoming change both for the health of the historic environment today and for making of the heritage of tomorrow. The reform of the legislative, policy and practice framework of our national system of heritage protection, now known universally as Heritage Protection Reform (HPR), provides a wider context, and its origins, aims and objectives as well as its progress and future trajectory need to be understood as complementary to *Conservation Principles*.

The origins of HPR lie in the realisation by the historic-environment sector, from the late 20th century onwards, that the whole system of heritage protection needed a thorough overhaul. This was forcefully expressed in *Power of Place*, the report published in 2000 by English Heritage on behalf of the sector to articulate the need for change. Government took up the gauntlet and during the last eight years a series of major public consultations about the composition of the future system have built and sustained a broad consensus not only about the need for change but about its shape. This found expression in the DCMS White Paper *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century* in 2007, which set out the government's specific proposals for reform.

The government's aims are ambitious. The reforms are not only designed to ensure that the historic environment is at the heart of the reformed spatial planning system (rather than remaining on its periphery) but to bring together the disparate regimes of protection and management for historic buildings, archaeological sites, historic parks, gardens and battlefields, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, and the marine heritage. In simplifying these processes, there is an even more important underpinning governmental objective to open up the heritage protection system and encourage greater public engagement, not just in processes themselves but with the riches and pleasures of the historic environment. Such increased transparency and accountability is vital if we are to play our full part in national life. Explaining ourselves – why we are protecting this site or building, why this landscape matters, what

Godolphin House, Cornwall. Recently acquired by the National Trust and in need of sensitive repair and continuing maintenance, Godolphin is an example of the kind of complex historic estate that will benefit from the guidance provided by *Conservation Principles*.

© English Heritage



makes this place special – in our statutory systems is an essential mechanism complementary to *Conservation Principles* that helps the wider community to identify, protect and manage their special places.

How far has HPR gone, and what is its future programme? This is an especially pertinent question in the light of the government’s recent decision to exclude the draft Heritage Protection Bill of 2008 from the legislative programme for the 2008–9 Parliamentary Session. The Heritage Protection Bill is a necessary part of the reform package because some of the major changes, especially the unification of the statutory protection regimes, the establishment of Heritage Partnership Agreements and the provision of statutory status for local Historic Environment Records cannot be achieved without primary legislation. But Heritage Protection Reform was never just about these specifics. On the contrary, it is about a deeper process of change, and no fewer than 17 of the 26 reforms proposed in the 2007 White Paper can be taken forward immediately.

The government, importantly in the shape of the Department for Communities and Local Government as well as the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, has reaffirmed its commitment to HPR and to sustaining the momentum of reform that has been gathering pace over the last few years. It is essential that all those who are passionate about the historic environment continue to work together to implement the many significant changes that will transform

for the better our perceptions of the importance of places in national life and culture. That is why English Heritage is as determined as government to forge ahead with the intensive HPR programme over the next three years in partnership with local authorities, amenity groups, owners and managers of the historic environment, and all other interested parties. We have recently recruited a significant number of staff to help us meet the targets of our programme and pave the way for the introduction of the Heritage Protection Bill.

The HPR programme is a combination of government and sectoral initiatives. For government, the key element is the new Planning Policy Statement (PPS) which will represent a comprehensive policy framework for the historic environment as part of the planning system. It will replace the present Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15 and 16, which deal with the historic environment and archaeology separately. The government has committed to publishing a draft PPS for consultation before the 2009 Easter recess. It will also publish a statement of its vision for the historic environment that will guide the activities all government departments.

For our part, English Heritage will embark on an ambitious series of projects during 2009. We will launch a major consultation exercise to engage as wide a range of people as possible in a debate about the priorities for a new national listing programme covering all historic assets. We will also be developing and initiating a major programme of training



and capacity building for local authorities and our other partners, which will take its lead from the detailed assessment of their resources that we aim to publish early in 2009. In parallel, we will continue to develop the single unified database for all nationally designated assets that is planned for introduction in late 2010 and which will be directly searchable by the public. Meanwhile we will explore how we can support the continued enhancement of local Historic Environment Records, which we recognise will remain the most important source of locally available information on all historic environment assets. A fuller explanation of the programme can be found on our website www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.8380. ■

Managing change in conservation areas

Philip Davies

Planning and Development Director (South), English Heritage

People care passionately about the places where they live and work, and development proposals can generate heated debate when the people affected fear that somewhere special or cherished is in danger of being lost or compromised by ill-considered change.

A conservation area is an area ‘of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. Most developers and architects will plead that their own particular proposals will enhance an area, but all too often this relies on bold assertion rather than any objective analysis of the actual qualities that make a place special – the *genius loci*, or sense of place. *Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2000) recognised the need to understand much better the character of places and the significance we ascribe to them, and in *Conservation Bulletin 59* Simon Thurley stressed the importance of developing a system that would enable us to evaluate objectively whether a new building fits in with the old. *Conservation Principles* provides the framework for such objective evaluation.

To be successful, new development in conservation areas must spring from a detailed understanding of the significance of a place and its spatial and temporal context. More often than not this fundamental starting point is overlooked or deliberately ignored by the client, the architect and the local authority, leading to proposals that erode rather than reinforce the essence of a place.

The heritage-values-led approach encapsulated in *Conservation Principles* is a key to unlocking better understanding. By evaluating a place against the four primary heritage values – evidential, aesthetic, historic and communal – and their sub-categories, the character of an area, or its component parts, can be identified on a more objective basis than hitherto, providing a common baseline of understanding. This can enable informed judgments and decisions to be made about the form and design of new development if a proposal is to meet the statutory requirement of ensuring that it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area as a whole. Enhancement means that new development should reinforce, not diminish, the qualities which make an area special and which warranted the original designation.

Holkham, Norfolk. The monument by William Donthorne erected in 1845–8 to commemorate Thomas Coke, 1st Earl of Leicester is an historic asset significant both in its own right and as a component of the wider parkland landscape of Holkham Hall.

© English Heritage

If a place is to be truly enhanced, it is first necessary to identify the heritage values that make it distinctive so that the architectural response can in turn be informed explicitly by those values. Aesthetically, form, massing, scale, proportion, materials, silhouette, plot width, the rhythm of solid to void and the relationship of the parts to the whole must all be assessed carefully. English Heritage’s three publications *Capital Solutions: Modern Conservation in London* (2004), *Shared Interest: Celebrating Investment in the Historic Environment* (2006) and *Constructive Conservation in Practice* (2008) have all celebrated a range of creative responses and highlighted that some of the best new architecture of recent years has been achieved in sensitive historic contexts. But, in practice, how do we achieve this?

PPSI stresses that government policy is to get the right development in the right places. At a time of architectural pluralism, we need to be far more discriminating in choosing what sort of architecture is appropriate for any particular context and transcend deeply entrenched prejudices. The old-fashioned, fundamentalist dogma that architecture must express the *zeitgeist*, or spirit of the age, has still not been consigned to the dustbin of history. It has had a hugely damaging impact on the restoration of historic buildings, as well as on the design of new buildings in conservation areas. To an historian this outmoded intellectual strait-jacket is absurd. As David Watkin pointed out in *Morality and Architecture Revisited* (2001), ‘hostility towards inspiration from the past makes it impossible to understand the Renaissance with its tradition of imitating and copying antique works ... otherwise someone might say “I’ve got a fake. It’s by Michelangelo”’.

So how can we manage change more objectively in ways that will best sustain the heritage values of a place?

Westminster City Council has been more successful than most local authorities because it has a simple, but highly effective, policy framework for new design in conservation areas based on just such a discerning, graduated contextual approach. This avoids dogma in favour of a range of approaches rooted firmly in an understanding of the existing townscape. The greater the unity of the townscape, the greater the need for integration.

It specifies that in areas of low-quality varied townscape, the opportunity exists to generate new compositions and points of interest. High-quality innovative architecture may be acceptable provided it respects the prevailing scale and form of the surroundings. A wide range of architectural solu-



15–25 Davies Street, Mayfair, London: a fine new modern building in terracotta and bronze by KPF.

© English Heritage

tions is therefore possible which can improve the quality of an area.

In areas of high-quality varied townscape, new development should be integrated more fully into its surroundings based on a proper understanding of the heritage values of a place and through appropriate choices of scale, form and materials that reflect the type and quality of the existing townscape. Good modern design may be acceptable providing it follows these broad parameters. It has led to some outstanding new buildings, such as the fine new modern building in terracotta and bronze by KPF at 15–25 Davies Street, Mayfair.

Finally, in areas of homogenous townscape of particular historic or aesthetic significance, the Council seeks scholarly replica buildings, especially if this restores or completes an otherwise coherent composition, or where a building of historic or townscape value has been lost. The reconstruction of the north-east corner of Cavendish Square to its original form, in place of a much taller 19th-century mansion block, is just one recent example of a sophisticated and progressive piece of urban surgery.

We need to reject discredited concepts that



Cavendish Square, London: the north-east corner of the square has been reconstructed to its original form through a sophisticated and progressive piece of urban surgery. In this case, the heritage value of an 18th-century composition restored was demonstrably greater than that of the 19th-century intervention that preceded it.

© Richard Dumville, English Heritage

‘modern’ architecture is somehow ‘honest’ or ‘truthful’ and that schemes which draw their inspiration from the past are ‘historical fakes’. We are free to choose what we want from a compendium of architectural traditions and styles depending on what will best sustain the heritage value of a place. A shared understanding of the heritage values of a place should reduce the scope for all involved in the decision-making process to come to different conclusions. This means that when new buildings are designed in old places, we need to understand the role and purpose of a building or group of buildings within the context and hierarchy of a place as a whole, which has profound implications for architectural education in the UK – for architects, developers, planners and patrons. It is a matter of choosing the right architect with the specific experience and track record of dealing with the particular context which applies – the more extensive and varied the townscape, the greater the range of potential options; the more homogenous, the greater the need for an appropriate specialist.

The best new schemes have arisen from a creative, iterative dialogue between the client, the

architect and the local authority based on a common baseline of understanding, which *Conservation Principles* can help secure. The combination of early pre-application discussion and a thorough understanding of an historic place based on *Conservation Principles* can establish a firm basis for a successful scheme. It epitomises a modern, progressive approach to conservation, which eschews blind architectural dogma and intellectual prejudice in favour of a better-informed values-based approach. ■

REFERENCES

- English Heritage 2000. *Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment*. London: English Heritage
- English Heritage 2004. *Capital Solutions: Modern Conservation in London*. London: English Heritage
- English Heritage 2006. *Shared Interest: Celebrating Investment in the Historic Environment*. London: English Heritage
- English Heritage 2008. *Constructive Conservation in Practice*. London: English Heritage
- Watkin, David 2001. *Morality and Architecture Revisited*. London: John Murray

The Wider View

Conservation Principles were devised to improve the way English Heritage works, but how can they help other organisations make their decisions?

‘... they do things differently there’: Scotland’s approach to policy and principles

Gordon J Barclay

Head of Policy, Historic Scotland

The historic environment has been a devolved matter since the passage of the Scotland Act in 1998. While the listing of historic buildings was always the responsibility of the Scottish Office, the ancient monuments strand, including properties in state care, was, in contrast, part of a UK department until 1978. During the 1980s historic buildings and ancient monuments were merged into one Scottish Office directorate, which became Historic Scotland (HS) in 1991.

Until now we have operated under a UK Act (the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act) and listed buildings legislation (the 1997 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act) that largely paralleled its English equivalent. Scottish Ministers have made it clear that they do not see a case for a fundamental review of heritage legislation. However, they have announced that they plan to undertake some tightly focused amendment of the law, on which there will be consultation in the near future.

Organisational structures have an effect on policy development. English Heritage is a non-departmental public body, at arm’s length from government. HS is an executive agency and therefore part of government, but unlike most agencies it also has the policy lead for the historic environment in the Scottish Government – directly advising the Minister for Europe, External Affairs & Culture. Thus, HS fulfils the roles of both English Heritage and DCMS. Therefore, when HS publishes a policy document, it is not HS’s policy, but the policy of Scottish Ministers.

A review of HS in 2003–4 recommended that a ‘[Scottish Government-] endorsed policy statement for the historic environment in Scotland should be developed in consultation with stakeholders’. Until then policy on the historic environment had been published in a variety of places; some of it had uncertain status, and some was out of date. The *Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas* (1998) provided a mixture of high-level policy and detailed legal and technical guidance. It was a long and complex

document that was difficult to update, and by 2004 was needing revision. For scheduled monuments and properties in care, there was a mixture of HS-published guidance and an accumulation of practice and operational policies.

What was needed was a clear set of policies covering all the areas of work on the historic environment where Scottish Ministers had a role or influence, and HS was given the task of developing a suite of policies – the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) series – on behalf of ministers. The series was intended to provide for the first time a clear, consistent and comprehensive framework to give greater policy direction for the range of bodies (including Historic Scotland) responsible to Scottish Ministers, and local authorities. The documents were to complement and have the same authority as the Scottish Planning Policy series, and to be relevant documents in the statutory planning, Environmental Impact Assessment, and Strategic Environment Assessment processes.

The key document was *SHEP 1: Scotland’s Historic Environment*, which defined the historic environment and set out Scottish Ministers’ vision and key objectives and principles, how their policies fitted into the wider Scottish Government policy framework, and the partners they wanted to engage. It was published in final form in 2007. Other SHEPs covered ministers’ policies on specific areas: scheduling of ancient monuments;





Interior view of the bar of the 19th-century Cafe Royal – a listed building that remains in use as one the Edinburgh's most popular and attractive pubs. © Crown Copyright Historic Scotland

scheduled monument consent; gardens and designed landscapes; properties in care of Scottish Ministers. All of these, and further draft SHEPs on listing of historic buildings, listed building consent, the marine historic environment and historic battlefields, were influenced by public consultation.

Each subject-specific SHEP provided some context and legal background, a core of ministerial policies and the principles underpinning them, and notes on implementation. The marine historic environment consultation also sought views on proposals for new legislation in this area: new provisions for the protection of the marine historic environment are to be included in the Scottish Marine Bill in the spring of 2009.

The Scottish Government elected in 2007 has, as one of its aims, the simplification of the public sector, and part of this programme has been the streamlining of policy and guidance. Ministers decided that, now the SHEP series is nearing completion, it should be consolidated, and shortened where possible, into a single Scottish Historic Environment Policy (albeit with the policies largely unchanged), as originally envisaged in the 2003–4 review. The revised document was published, alongside the new Scottish Planning Policy 23 (SPP 23) on the historic environment, at the end of October 2008. SPP 23 is the last free-standing Planning Policy, as that series is now

also being condensed and revised. The condensed SHEP also included the final versions of policy on listing and listed building consent, and carried over policy about conservation areas from the *Memorandum of Guidance*. Future revisions will contain finalised policy on historic battlefields and the marine historic environment, the latter probably appearing after the passage of the Scottish Marine Bill.

The Scottish Government's central purpose is 'to focus government and public services on creating a more sustainable country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth'. This ties in with the Scottish Government's aim to have a more open and trusting relationship with local government. For the historic environment this means stronger delegation to planning authorities through the 2006 Planning Act, and the development of Joint Working Agreements between Historic Scotland and the 32 local authorities.

- making judicious amendments to legislation
- making policy clear and concise
- improving administrative processes
- preparing to devolve some responsibility to local government, and
- clarifying responsibilities and requirements.

This proportionate approach is how we intend to work with the wider sector to reach our aim of better outcomes for everyone in the protection, management and use of the historic environment. ■

REFERENCES

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy:

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/policy/shep.htm>

Scottish Planning Policy 23:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/10/28135841/0>

The National Trust's approach to conservation

Katy Lithgow

Head Conservator, The National Trust

David Thackray

Head of Archaeology, The National Trust

Since our foundation in 1895 'for the purpose of promoting the permanent preservation for the benefit of the nation of lands and tenements (including buildings) of beauty or historic interest' (*National Trust Act 1907*, Section 4.1) the National Trust has embraced the evolving discipline of conservation, whether defined by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings or the

Burra Charter. Although we have since developed numerous policies and guidance on managing the conservation of the many aspects of our diverse range of properties, an Organisational Strategy (National Trust 2007) that prioritises the improvement of Conservation and Environmental performance, alongside Engaging Supporters, Investing in our People, and Financing our Future, stimulated conservation practitioners to formulate a set of guiding principles to enable managers who may not be conservation professionals to take good conservation decisions.

We have taken account of, and collaborated in the development of conservation principles by other organisations dealing with different parts of the historic environment, such as the National Trust for Scotland as well as English Heritage. However, the breadth of the work of the National Trust for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, across both cultural and natural heritage, in rural, coastal and urban environments, required the development of our own conservation principles, although they share the same spirit of conservation. Our principles reflect not only continuing practice, but also changes in the way conservation is now understood and implemented, especially the increasingly accepted view that it is impossible to stop the clock entirely. Thus we now define conservation as ‘the careful management of change. It is about revealing and sharing the significance of places and ensuring that their special qualities are protected, enhanced, enjoyed and understood by present and future generations.’ (National Trust, Conservation Directorate, September 2003)

There is no primacy in any of the six principles, but there is a narrative in terms of the conservation cycle that proceeds from understanding to action to record, reflecting the English Heritage conservation principles.

Principle 1: Significance

‘We will ensure that all decisions are informed by an appropriate level of understanding of the significance and “Spirit of Place” of each of our properties, and why we and others value them.’

In the 21st century we have woven the revelation of meaning into our approach to conservation in addition to the preservation of physical material. This reflects the increasing emphasis of Conservation Management Planning in maintaining the significance of what is to be conserved (Heritage Lottery Fund 2005). Determining significance through research and consultation provides the evidence for how we identify and prioritise

conservation work, and we have developed processes such as the Conservation Performance Indicator and the Triple Bottom Line Tool that enable progress in conserving our properties to be quantified alongside financial and social benefits (Lithgow *et al* 2008). Significance also takes account of the context in which our properties and their elements evolved or for which they were created, raising the importance of views and settings. We also now acknowledge that significance may change as society changes.

Principle 2: Integration

‘We will take an integrated approach to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, reconciling the full spectrum of interests involved.’

Our organisation involves many professions in which the practitioners are enjoined to respect each other’s priorities, to enable managers to make decisions that take account of the range of interests that may be involved. This approach can result in innovative solutions that would not occur to each discipline working in isolation. Such collaboration involves not only different conservation specialisms, but also different functions, for instance the integration of business and productivity with good environmental practices and diverse habitats through organic farming.

However, this principle also has a wider perspective. Today, just over a hundred years since our 1907 Act, we lay equal emphasis on the verb ‘to promote’, which allows us to campaign on issues that fall outside our geographical boundaries but affect the preservation of our own properties. Such issues include climate change, for example the management of water catchments (National Trust 2008).

Principle 3: Change

‘We will anticipate and work with change that affects our conservation interests, embracing, accommodating or adapting where appropriate, and mitigating, preventing or opposing where there is a potential adverse impact.’

In common with other conservation bodies, we acknowledge that we cannot stop all the processes of change, as reflected in our definition of the term ‘conservation’, so we now emphasise maintaining significance for the future through conservation management.

We welcome processes of change that are benign and benefit our properties by enhancing their presentation, interpretation and state of conservation. Others, while damaging significance,



Managing change. Rising sea levels and more frequent storms are taking an increasing toll on the harbour walls of Mullion Cove, Cornwall (left). Working with consultants and the community, the Trust has developed a long-term strategy to manage the gradual change from the cove's current appearance to its return to its original form (right). ©The National Trust

may be avoidable, through better planning. Unavoidable change that results in irreversible damage can be mitigated through conservation processes such as recording, reconstruction, or even relocation.

It is probably fair to say, however, that most non-specialists still perceive conservation to be static, akin to 'fossilisation'. While the understanding of conservation as a dynamic process is spreading among our property staff, work is still needed to convey this understanding to our visitors and supporters.

Principle 4: Access and engagement

'We will conserve natural and cultural heritage to enable engagement for the benefit of society, gaining the support of the widest range of people by promoting understanding, enjoyment and participation in our work.'

Access is now considered to be not only the way in which we provide public benefit, but also the means of improving the conservation of our properties, by engaging the support that enables conservation work to be carried out. This is a step away from the Sandford Principle (Sandford 1974) that prevailed in the late 20th century, which presumed a conflict between conservation and access by emphasising the primacy of conservation in situations where that conflict arose. Instead, we aspire to remove the potential for conflict by achieving conservation through those to whom we provide access. Negotiating the reconciliation of real and apparent conflicts in providing sustainable access requires clear standards, which we now tailor to each property through processes such as the Conservation for Access Toolkit (Lithgow *et al* 2008).

Principle 5: Skills and partnership

'We will develop our skills and experience in partnership with others to promote and improve the conservation of natural and cultural heritage now and for the future.'

The vast range of skills needed to care for our diverse range of properties is practised by increasingly low numbers of people. A shortage will inhibit our ability to practise the 'little and often' care of our properties, such as preventive conservation and regular building maintenance. This approach retains more significance and is more cost-effective than allowing longer cycles of decay that require greater intervention and thus more expensive repair.

We recognise skills are acquired and developed most effectively through partnership, not only between our staff and volunteers, but also with other organisations including educational institutions, and heritage and professional bodies, who provide training and experience, and a common understanding of the professional standards and conservation ethics. The entire heritage sector should benefit as individuals move between different employers and types of employment through their careers.

Principle 6: Accountability

'We will be transparent and accountable by recording our decisions and sharing knowledge to enable the best conservation decisions to be taken both today and by future generations.'

Record-keeping is not merely an adjunct to conservation work but a significant part of our legacy to the future. As well as explaining the reasoning behind our decisions, to assist the

decisions of those responsible for our properties in the future, these records may be the only physical relic of properties lost through unavoidable processes of change. Our record and archive should therefore be seen as being as significant an asset as the properties themselves.

Conclusion

Having undergone consultation throughout the organisation, our conservation principles now form part of the induction of staff new to the Trust. By providing a checklist that enables non-conservation managers to know whether they are taking good conservation decisions the principles inform the Trust's ability to measure and therefore understand how we need to develop our performance in all our areas of business, whether financial, social or conservation, to ensure our organisation is sustainable in the long term. ■

REFERENCES

Heritage Lottery Fund 2005. *Conservation Management Plans. Helping your Application*

Lithgow, Katy, Staniforth, Sarah and Etheridge, Paul 2008. 'Prioritising access in collections conservation' in Saunders, D, Townsend, J and Woodcock, S, *Conservation and Access: Contributions to the London Congress 2008, 15–19 September*, pp 178–85. Dorchester: International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
National Trust 2007. *Our Strategy to 2010 and Beyond* <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-national-trust-strategy>

National Trust 2008. *From Source to Sea: Working with Water* <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-sourcetosea>

Sandford, Lord 1974. *Report of the National Park Policy Review Committee* ('The Sandford Report'). London: HMSO

The public value of conservation: the view from the Heritage Lottery Fund

Ian Morrison

Head of Historic Environment Conservation, The Heritage Lottery Fund

Last year Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) published its third strategic plan, *Valuing our Heritage, Investing in our Future*, and in doing so reaffirmed its commitment to supporting heritage in its broadest sense. HLF views heritage as anything we have inherited, value and want to pass on to future generations. Critically, we have always resisted any attempt to define what those values are, relying instead on the public to identify what it cherishes and how it should be looked after. Conservation

along with learning and participation are the three fundamental activities that HLF supports by offering grants of all sizes, from £3,000 to more than £5 million, amounting to some £180 million per year for the next decade. In total, more than £4 billion has already been committed to heritage projects by HLF, £1.5 billion of which has been awarded to the conservation of more than 12,000 buildings and monuments throughout the UK. This is a very large sum of money that has made a significant difference to the quality and appreciation of the nation's heritage.

The challenge is to ensure that supported projects reflect the priorities of the lottery-playing public and capture the value that they place upon those aspects of heritage that matter to them. This is not an easy thing to do, particularly when you consider that 'heritage' can mean a building, a monument, a park, a particular place, an object, or an archive, as well as non-material things such as language or tradition. Moreover, a heritage item can be valued by different people for a variety of different meanings. A church, for example, can be treasured as a place for worship, commemoration or memory. Equally it can be valued for its distinctive architecture, for its historical associations, or for its landscape value often at the heart of a community. It can also be seen simply as a thing of beauty that contributes to the surrounding environment, helping create a sense of place and belonging.

These values are not hierarchical; one person's opinion is not necessarily more valid than another's. We do not prescribe which values will be supported and which will not; rather, we invite people to make the case for their own particular project, what it will do for the heritage and why it is important to them. This is a very open process, the only requirement being that every project must include a significant learning element to raise understanding and enjoyment of the heritage in all its forms.

Capturing the public value of projects is particularly important at a time when the HLF application process is becoming increasingly competitive, where demand significantly outstrips the funds available. We need to understand what is of value and to whom. This is of fundamental importance to us for a number of reasons: to work out the relative public benefit of each project, to check the potential of the project is being realised, to ensure some values will not be unintentionally damaged, and ultimately to allow us to undertake a value-for-money assessment and decide which projects to fund. We therefore encourage applicants to think about the wider benefits of their project in order to



St Peter's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Belfast, a building that embodies many different public values.
© Esler Crawford Photography

make the best case for support. This can be difficult to achieve as it is a common tendency not to look beyond one's own narrow sphere of interest and recognise the values held by others.

This is an area where the publication of *Conservation Principles* can make a real difference. The section on Understanding Heritage Values provides a very useful mechanism for capturing the wide range of values which people place on heritage. It provides a structured process for illustrating why something is of significance and is worthy of conservation, promotion or celebration. *Conservation Principles* explains how the significance

of historic buildings and places can be understood and articulated. It sets out a method for categorising heritage value into four primary groups of evidential, historical, aesthetic or communal value and demonstrates how this can be applied to the physical environment that surrounds us.

Although specifically written for the material world, the proposed four value groups work equally well for the more intangible heritage of language, tradition, ceremony and memory. For example, oral-history projects can provide evidence about past events from the recollections and memories of people who lived through them.



The HLF-supported Refugee Communities History Project, which recorded the collective oral histories of 15 refugee communities in London.

© HLF

Projects such as those that celebrated the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade have clear historical resonance. Traditional ceremonies or events can have significant aesthetic value, such as the Holi, an ancient festival of India which comprises a lavishly colourful visual spectacle that will linger long in the minds of those that HLF helped witness it. And projects that explore the origins of culture and language have clear communal value, such as *Pròiseact Thasglann*, which involved young people working across Scotland to collect, understand and present local Gaelic oral heritage to their older peers. The *Conservation Principles* method for understanding values can be applied across the wide spectrum of heritage and is a useful tool for helping people to think about what is important and to whom.

Just as importantly, a values-based approach to project development can help improve the quality of project outcomes. Only when the values of a heritage item are identified and understood is it possible to make sound and appropriate decisions about its future management. During the last three years HLF has commissioned research into the conservation outcomes of projects. This study has looked at more than 50 case studies in detail and has identified some worrying trends. Despite encouragement to produce conservation statements and plans, it is clear from the case studies that insufficient thought is given to heritage values at an early enough stage in the project-planning and design process. This has led to problems ranging from poor identification of conservation needs to difficulties with project delivery, such as cost increases and unexpected delays. The study concluded that some additional guidance would benefit applicants on how to develop an understanding of the heritage asset as well as its vulnerability to change.

HLF has sought to fill this gap by making improvements to the guidance available to applicants. Our approach is broadly consistent with that of *Conservation Principles*. Both promote the benefits of utilising a values-based approach at the beginning of the project development process. They demonstrate how early consideration of all heritage values can help unravel their relative importance to one another, identify their sensitivity to change, and ultimately indicate how those values can be nurtured or enhanced to meet the needs and aspirations of those that engage with the heritage. ■

For more information, visit www.hlf.org.uk

The local government perspective: applying the *Conservation Principles* to Buxton's heritage-led regeneration

Richard Tuffrey

Business Manager, Planning Policy & Design, High Peak Borough Council

For anyone involved in conservation practice, the publication of *Conservation Principles* provides a refreshingly simple, and therefore usable, guide to what we do and why we do it. The six principles are not new but they have been recast using a more inclusive language and, in that sense, their publication is timely. Like all of the professions that operate in the public sphere, conservation needs to be seen to be aligning itself with current public values so that judgements are consistent, credible and can withstand challenge.

As an example of the *Conservation Principles'* inclusive approach, they emphasise the historic environment as being a shared resource and the need for everyone to participate in its sustainable management. They benchmark success in terms of the quality of the processes used to arrive at the end product focusing on the research of values – aesthetic, communal, historic and evidential – leading to an assessment of significance. The impact on significance is key to the management of change.

This seems a clear framework but it may be useful to look at some practical applications using Buxton in Derbyshire as a case study. While the projects largely pre-date the publication of *Conservation Principles* (and not all of them are complete), the approaches adopted have been similar, making these relevant examples to consider.

Set against the backdrop of dramatic Peak District scenery, Buxton has a legacy of fine Georgian and Victorian architecture largely built under the patronage of the Dukes of Devonshire. Unfortunately, the town's popularity declined throughout the 20th century, so much so that the local economy was failing to sustain its architectural heritage.

A programme of heritage-led regeneration started about 20 years ago; after the completion of all of the currently planned schemes it will have involved a combined public and private investment of approximately £70 million – this in a small town of just under 23,000 people. The programme has included the restoration of the key historic buildings and gardens and has benefited from long-standing area-grant schemes. Involving local



A major programme of heritage-led regeneration is paying huge dividends as Buxton rediscovers its built and natural assets.

© University of Derby

authorities, English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the East Midlands Development Agency, it is now paying huge dividends in sustaining the town's future prosperity through enhanced private-sector interest.

The scale of this programme, involving generous public-sector funding, is a testament to the inclusive, values-led approach advocated in *Conservation Principles*. All of the key projects have been preceded by thorough research of the full range of embedded heritage values prior to extensive public consultation. Subsequent proposals have then been tested against their impact on these values. Demonstrating heritage significance (in its fullest sense) and public engagement is an absolute pre-requisite of a successful funding bid – particularly to regeneration sources which have to be convinced of the value of heritage beyond mere architecture.

Embracing new stakeholders who will actively manage the historic environment has been another outcome. The conversion of the former Devonshire

Royal Hospital into a new campus for the University of Derby is a good case in point. Widely recognised as an architectural jewel in the town and known to be an engineering triumph (at the time of its construction, it had one of the largest unsupported domes in the world), the site started life in 1790 as the Great Stables. A century later, it became the country's largest hydrotherapy hospital (with important local and national communal values) before its conversion to a campus in 2004.

The hospital's internal layout was robust enough to survive this recent conversion with little physical intervention. In fact, the building's conservation plan reflected more concern about the possible future impact of 2,500 students. Understandably, in the early stages of the project, its new owner was more interested in the building's fitness of purpose for education than the seemingly arcane conservation issues. Since its opening, however, the university has positively embraced its new role as the curator of a significant part of the town's common heritage. It has established



A computer-generated view from the new roof-top pool, proposed as part of the Buxton Crescent & Thermal Spa.

© Buxton Crescent Hotel & Thermal Spa Company

The new University of Derby Buxton College occupies the Grade II* former Devonshire Royal Hospital.

© University of Derby



a Friends network that meets regularly to hear presentations, gives well-informed guided tours and has established an audio archive of living memories of the building. In doing this, the richness and depth of our understanding of the site's significance continues to grow. The buildings are impeccably managed and due to their greater public access, acquire something that *Conservation Principles* calls illustrative historic value – the link between the past and present. In this case, this is neatly captured in a Victorian inscription that circumnavigates the base of the huge dome and commemorates the site's conveyance by the Duke of Devonshire for use as a hospital in 1881.

The other key project in Buxton, the ambitious Crescent & Thermal Spa, will reestablish the niche market of spa-related tourism in the town. The conversion of the 18th-century Crescent into a 5-star spa hotel and the adjoining Victorian baths building into a 21st-century spa has, however, presented considerable challenges. The building was designed in 1780 as a pair of hotels book-ending six lodging houses – these being an 18th-century building-type consisting solely of lettable rooms and communal dining facilities. The lodging-house accommodation ranged from modest single rooms with bed-recesses to grander rooms that could be combined into suites on demand. The conservation challenge was to accommodate high-specification en-suite facilities to all bedrooms but in a way that kept, without subdivision, examples of the whole range of original rooms. As a result, a bed-recess arrangement will be preserved with the new facilities consisting of a freestanding hot tub in the bedroom, while other rooms have been combined into present-day suites so that the original reception rooms have been left intact. It would have been easier to treat the lodging houses rather as commercial 'town houses' and focus efforts on

the protection of the better rooms alone. But, by being guided by an understanding of the *precise*, rather than the *general*, way in which the building was used, a solution has resulted which retains present-day significance by enabling an insight into 18th-century social values.

Finally, the council has just embarked on a project to invite the community to fully engage in the emerging debate about the quality of new development coming forward and its impact on the town's historic character. Adopting an 'enquiry by design' approach, consultant urban designers have been appointed to work with invited representatives of the local community and other stakeholders in intensive workshop sessions. All parties will be expected to sign up to an agreed design vision and framework so that this can carry the full weight of the community's support in guiding future development proposals that come forward.

This is a brave route as the nature of the outcome is not entirely controlled – the experts are facilitating the debate rather than controlling it by using their knowledge and skills to encourage true community engagement by nurturing an understanding of values prior to designing for real. Although not solely about heritage, it is an approach that closely reflects the *Conservation Principles'* emphasis on access to the sustainable management of the environment being open to everyone. If successful, the 'buy-in' of the design strategy will be extended to the entire community.

These few examples show that a well-researched values-led approach to understanding the historic significance of places that involves an open dialogue with their users can achieve a range of positive outcomes. The English Heritage *Conservation Principles* provide a useful benchmarking tool that should be widely adopted. ■

European approaches to conservation policy

Alexandra Coxen

Senior Policy Officer (Europe), English Heritage

I wish to speak to you today about the tragedy of Europe, this noble Continent, comprising on the whole the fairest and the most cultivated regions of the earth ... home of all the great parent races of the western world ... It is the origin of most of the culture, arts, philosophy, and science both of ancient and modern times. If Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance there would be no limit to the happiness, the prosperity, and the glory which its ... people would enjoy ... We must build a kind of United States of Europe.

Sir Winston Churchill, 1946, Zurich

Churchill's 1946 call for unity ignited a flurry of political activity throughout continental Europe. By 1949 the Council of Europe had been founded and eight years later the first treaty establishing what came to be known as the European Union was signed in Rome. The 'Treaty of Rome' (1957) was the first to include acknowledgement of, and provision for, Churchill's heralded cultural element of Europe, while maintaining legal responsibility for culture at the national level: 'The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore' (Art 128, 1957; Art 151, consolidated text 1992).

It would take another 20 years before the concept of cultural heritage would be tackled institutionally at the European level. In 1975 the Council of Europe launched the European Architectural Heritage Year, guided by the still-relevant concept of 'integrated heritage conservation' that:

1. is a key feature of spatial and urban planning
2. concerns and involves citizens directly
3. requires policies to consist of administrative, financial, social and education measures
4. requires intersectoral co-operation between public administrative bodies, and coordinated legislative measures
5. includes public and private partnership and volunteers
6. requires national, regional and local authorities to take active responsibility for the implementation of integrated conservation.

Since then, numerous charters and conventions



The Forum, Rome. Southern European heritage still tends to be judged in terms of traditional expert assessments of historic and aesthetic values.

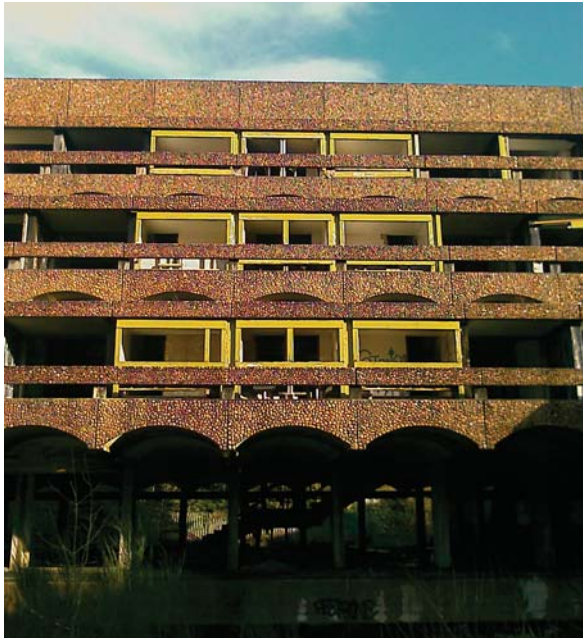
© Alexandra Coxen

have allowed evolving conceptual definitions of cultural heritage to be integrated into a complex high-level legal framework under which national heritage management can be seated. Despite this, there is still strong regional and national diversity in the way historic places are defined, managed and protected. This is for a complicated mixture of social, economic, historical, religious, linguistic, territorial and climatic reasons, but there nevertheless remains an undoubted north/south divide in attitudes towards heritage.

The focus in the 'south' is on the individual site. Heritage is a place that can be cordoned off and visited (within appropriate hours) during which time an expert will inform the visitor of the important elements which are worth considering. The terms 'high culture', 'prescriptive', 'expert', 'academic' all still apply.

The 'north' tends towards a more open and inclusive approach; heritage is all around you. The values of places are defined by the people familiar with them; the 'expert' can as easily be a local resident as an historian. The terms 'community', 'engaging', 'values', 'managing change', 'transparent' and 'significance' are the ones that resonate here.

These are obviously exaggerated representations



St Peter's College, Cardross. Built in 1967 and listed Grade A by Historic Scotland but now reduced to a ruinous skeleton, this innovative modular concrete building demonstrates the more open and flexible way in which northern European countries now measure the heritage value of places.

© Alexandra Coxen

of what is, in reality, a complicated and evolving spectrum of approaches. Nevertheless it does illustrate that conservation philosophy in Europe is moving forward – a shift in ideas that is very accurately and appropriately reflected in English Heritage's own *Conservation Principles*, the Polish translation of which is already being prepared by KOBiDZ, the National Heritage Board of Poland. ■

The international context

Christopher Young

Head of World Heritage and International Policy, English Heritage

In 1972 UNESCO adopted the World Heritage Convention to protect places of 'outstanding universal value'. It is thus one of the earliest statements, national or international, defining heritage in terms of its values rather than whether or not a place just exists. Today a values-led approach is much more common but before 1972 (and often since) international agreements classified heritage by its nature not by its value. This is true, for example, of the Charter of Venice of 1964, which set international professional standards for conservation. It was also largely true of national designation systems, though often these introduced some such

qualification as 'national significance'.

Approaches of this kind go back to the beginnings of modern conservation in the 19th century and for a long time worked well. While the idea of value was inherent in such concepts as 'national significance', its expression was implicit rather than explicit. That such systems did work depended very much on a willingness to provide a tight definition of heritage, mainly important individual buildings, great monuments and archaeological sites. It was also implicit that heritage existed largely before some chronological milestone, often around 1700. This meant that heritage assets were to some extent set apart from the rest of the environment and were self-evidently important.

In the last 50 years, the concept of the historic environment has developed enormously. Entirely new categories of heritage have been recognised – for example industrial archaeology – and the idea of a cut-off date has virtually disappeared. Increasingly, it is recognised that the whole of our environment has been influenced by humanity and is therefore historic in some sense. This has led to the need for value judgements as to what should be conserved and how decisions should be made. A landmark in this process was the Burra Charter, developed for use in Australia in 1979 but subsequently influential throughout the world. This established the principle of explicit evaluation of sites to demonstrate how and why they are important places. This evaluation then underpins subsequent decisions on what should be conserved and how it should be done and has led directly to the concept of the conservation plan.

Recognition that values lie at the base of heritage conservation has led to the need for tools for their objective assessment. Apart from the Burra Charter and conservation planning, the Getty Conservation Institute has published a series of volumes on values in conservation over the last 15 years or so. The English Heritage *Conservation Principles* fit well into this developing international approach to conservation on the basis of identified values. Indeed the 200 copies taken to last summer's meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee proved extremely popular with the delegates.

The congruence between *Conservation Principles* and the work of the World Heritage Convention is close. Parts of *Conservation Principles* draw very much on the work on authenticity and integrity carried out for the convention. The *Principles* also respect UNESCO guidance on matters such as restoration and reconstruction.

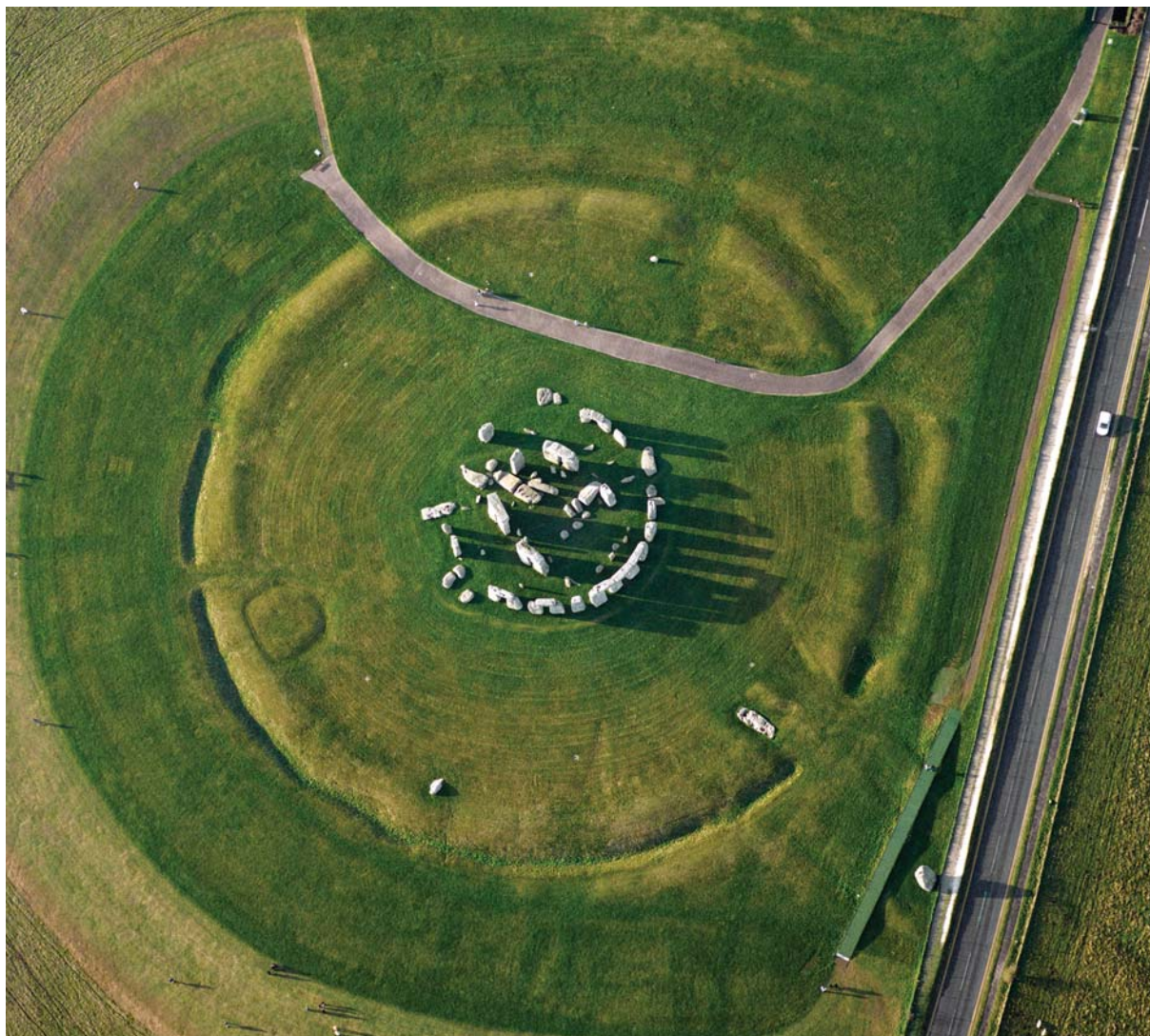
CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

Increasingly, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and its advisers are emphasising the need for clear identification and definition of the outstanding universal value of each World Heritage Site so that all involved understand what aspects of the site have to be protected. The UK has been supporting this move by developing clear statements of the outstanding universal value for each site already on the World Heritage List. Eleven were approved by the World Heritage Committee last summer and a further eight will be submitted to this year's committee. By the autumn of 2009 all UK mainland World Heritage Sites will have agreed statements explaining why they are on the World Heritage List.

These statements of value need to be translated into action through World Heritage Site Management Plans as they are revised. The philosophy of *Conservation Principles* can and should underpin this process. In particular, guidance on assessing heritage significance provides useful

advice that is already being adopted in some management plans. The classification of values as evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal is also proving of use. For any future nominations, the whole process of identifying and defining value set out in *Conservation Principles* will be of enormous help in making and rigorously testing the case for outstanding universal value.

Conservation is a matter of concern across the whole world. In developing overall approaches there needs to be interaction between national and international approaches. English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* draws on and conforms with much international practice but in its own turn advances that guidance still further. In coming years the publication can be expected to have an increasing influence on international practice. In part this will be through dissemination of the *Principles* to the international conservation community, but just as importantly through their practical application on our own World Heritage Sites. ■



The recently completed revision of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Plan emphasises the role of *Conservation Principles* in the future management of the site.

© English Heritage

Putting the Principles into Practice

Agreeing a set of conservation policies is one thing, but how helpful are they in informing the way we make changes to real buildings and places?

Conservation Principles has two purposes. The first is to help identify why historic places matter and for whom. The second is to provide clear and consistent advice on the best ways of managing change to those places, whether simply to combat the processes of natural decay or to adapt them to new uses. In the following articles we move on from the principles of good conservation to their practical application. Using *Conservation Principles*' hierarchy of eight levels of intervention as a starting point, the case studies show how the advice in the concluding section of the *Principles* (English Heritage Conservation Policies and Guidance, pp 51–63, paragraphs 111–159) is already helping people to make better-informed and more confident decisions out there on the ground.

Routine Management and Maintenance English Heritage's Asset Management Plan

Bill Martin

Conservation Director, English Heritage

Much of *Conservation Principles* is about how to manage change to elements of the historic environment that have already suffered from neglect and decay. The very best way to sustain the heritage value of a place, however, is to prevent the problems of decay from arising in the first place – an argument that applies as strongly to English Heritage's own estate of historic and non-historic properties as it does to any other.

The 400 historic sites for which we are directly responsible vary enormously in type and content. As well as prehistoric and Roman remains, ruined abbeys and castles they include furnished historic houses, industrial sites, gardens, landscapes and statues. The majority are scheduled ancient monuments. Some are listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, or lie within conservation areas. A few are World Heritage Sites. Almost all of them are open to the public and many include admissions buildings, shops, car-parks, catering and educational facilities, toilets and signage facilities, and other facilities for visitors. They may also contain staff and welfare facilities, workshops, storage and other accommodation. Some of these facilities are

provided within historic buildings; others are in more modern structures. We also have responsibilities for a number of office buildings and stores.

To make sure that we are looking after this huge portfolio of historic places to the best of our ability we are developing an Asset Management Plan that will provide us for the first time with a comprehensive view of the condition and liabilities of our entire property portfolio. This will in turn allow us to define more accurately than ever before the size and cost of the backlog of conservation and maintenance work, including statutory liabilities, that needs to be tackled during the 20-year lifetime of the plan.

Currently we have no clear overall picture of the condition and liabilities of the sites that make up our estate, nor of the work needed to bring them into, and maintain them, in good condition. The condition of our properties has been assessed by way of a rolling programme of condition surveys managed and implemented on a regional, and now territorial, basis. Surveys were carried out on a quadrennial cycle, but as a result of various slippages, roughly a quarter of the sites, mainly prehistoric earthworks, had no current survey at the start of



Regular and systematic survey lies at the heart of any effective asset-management system: what condition is it in now; what work still needs to be done?

© English Heritage



current Asset Management Plan project. What is more, condition surveys were not being carried out to a consistent format or standard, or always in the most appropriate and cost-effective manner. Most critically of all, they were not consistently informed by an up-to-date assessment of the site's heritage significance.

The core for any asset-management system is an understanding of the baseline condition of the property assets, of the initial work needed to bring them up to the required benchmark condition, and of the further work needed to maintain them in that benchmark condition for the next 20 years. We have therefore embarked on an accelerated programme of periodic condition survey of all our sites to provide the initial data to populate the Asset Management System. The surveys are carried out to a common templated standard designed to be uploaded into an IT system and in each case are informed by a summary statement of significance.

The maintenance requirement of assets or their components must be assessed on an individual basis and the assessment must take account of a range of factors that will include statutory and legal requirements; significance; condition (fragility and variability of deterioration, cause and extent of decay); original design and construction (materials, workmanship and specification) and any subsequent

alterations to these; location (orientation, vulnerability and severity of exposure); function; and frequency and intensity of use (past, present and future). It is therefore important that the survey process is able to capture all the necessary information in a consistent way so that we are able to prioritise work across the estate.

Alongside the survey and assessment of individual sites, a further essential requirement is an asset-management planning system capable of storing and managing data on condition and required work. Software for this purpose is being developed on our behalf by the Tribal Group, and once completed will provide quantified, costed and detailed work plans; facilitate effective procurement and delivery of maintenance works; store and manipulate data on condition and works; and assist in producing a 20-year prioritised programme of ongoing property maintenance.

The Asset Management Plan on which we have already begun work will eventually contain a prioritised programme of works to bring the properties into the benchmark condition and thereafter to maintain them in that state. As well as repairs to the historic fabric it will identify all work to non-historic fabric, landscapes, building services and essential works to meet current fire, security and health and safety requirements.

In addition to identifying the needs of individual properties, the Asset Management Plan will allow us to quantify the level of liability across our whole estate and to establish priorities consistently on a site-, territory- and estate-wide basis against clear and objective criteria. This will in turn make sure that our conservation and maintenance budgets are in future allocated on the basis of a systematic analysis of need and significance rather than subjective judgement informed by individual and inconsistently presented condition surveys.

Performance measurement of work to the English Heritage estate has traditionally focused on purely quantitative measures, work completed on time and to budget being the most obvious. The Asset Management Plan should, for the first time, allow us to begin to assess performance in more qualitative terms by establishing a consistent benchmark of condition across the country against which progress at individual properties can be charted. It will also allow us to introduce more specific and informative quantitative measures – for example the rate of completion of outstanding repairs at targeted sites such as buildings at risk or World Heritage Sites.

By the end of March 2009 we will be two-

Routine repair and maintenance: the best way to sustain the heritage value of a place is to prevent the problems of decay from arising in the first place.

© Historic Royal Palaces

thirds of the way through our accelerated survey programme and well advanced in implementing our IT system. We still have much to do to understand what the data is telling us, but we are in a better position than ever before to maintain and conserve our sites to the consistent standard they deserve. ■

Periodic Renewal and Repair

The JW Evans metal-works

Nick Molyneux

Casework Team Leader, West Midlands, English Heritage

The Evans metal-works offers complete immersion in a lost industrial world, represented by the buildings, machinery, stock, and archives of the business, and by the last owner of the business, the grandson of the founder. Here, in the physical remains, lies the evidence of three generations of the Evans family and the people who worked for them: lives of enterprise and hard work from 1881 to 2008.

But why is it so important? A few years ago a comprehensive survey (Cattell *et al*, 2002) identified Birmingham’s Jewellery Quarter as the last-surviving working industrial quarter of its type in Europe. The premises of J W Evans and Sons were in turn recognised as an exemplar of the conversion from domestic to industrial use that characterised the development of small-scale metal-working industries during the 19th century. Constructed as houses in 1836, the buildings were progressively modified for industrial use. The back gardens were

eventually completely filled with the long narrow shopping (ie workshop) ranges characteristic of the Quarter.

English Heritage has been seeking a solution for the future of the Evans works since being approached by Tony Evans, the grandson of Jenkin W Evans who founded the firm in August 1881. After an unsuccessful search for a partner to take on the works and retain the heritage of the site, English Heritage bought the buildings and their contents on 31 March 2008 as a last resort.

English Heritage’s first step as the new owner was to learn the bucket-emptying regime from Tony Evans, before undertaking emergency repairs to stop the leaks. It then needed to lay the foundations for the future. This began with a ‘conservation philosophy’, based on an understanding of the heritage values of the place. These were identified using the very wide variety of experience available within English Heritage, and led to the development of a guiding philosophy:

Minimum intervention is the approach to be adopted. This ranges from not redecorating workshops and leaving as many of the dies on racks as possible, through to the minimum of intervention to introduce new services, and a low-key approach to object conservation.

In conserving J W Evans & Sons, the question is ‘Will it last if nothing is done?’ – not ‘Is it attractive?’ If the answer is that it *will* last, whether in pristine or deteriorated condition, then no work will be done. If it will *not* last, or the decay will accelerate, then English Heritage will find ways



Originally constructed as houses, the buildings of the JW Evans works were progressively modified for industrial use and their back gardens filled with the long narrow workshop ranges that characterise the Birmingham Jewellery Quarter.
© English Heritage



to slow down the deterioration while minimising change to the significances of the place. Before deciding any element is dispensable its significance needs to be understood within the context of the J W Evans & Sons business. The end result must be the preservation of the character of the working environment.

Oral history has reinforced our understanding of how the Quarter functioned: there was no retail trade, and very few firms carried out all the processes from the initial rolling of metal through to polished saleable goods. Rather, it was a complex network of small businesses that, through their proximity, functioned as a production centre for all forms of small metal goods. Almost all of J W Evans & Sons' production was sold under the names of others, such as Garrards and Mappin & Webb, and bore the hallmarks of those companies. The Evans company would sell anything from components fresh from the drop stamps through to made-up goods, which would then be finished by their customers.

Conservative repair will maintain the significances of the place, but will involve choices where worn-out elements that are contributing to further decay need to be replaced. The first stage is to ensure the maximum long-term survival of the whole. The main roof coverings and roof lights have to be entirely renewed to secure the building, but English Heritage will retain plastic corrugated sheeting on some subsidiary roofs. The internal finishes are the result of more than 100 years of working in the premises and would be impossible to reproduce convincingly once disturbed.

The machinery and die racks will remain *in situ* during building works as will most of the movable

contents, which range from thousands of metal dies through to metal stocks and a vast selection of finished and partially finished goods. This will help ensure an authentic experience when all is complete, in contrast to earlier projects where the contents have been carefully removed for the building works and then replaced, resulting in a sanitised experience.

A characteristic of many industrial sites is that some areas were left unused for considerable periods as the business expanded and contracted. The Evans works exemplifies this, with two workshops recently inhabited only by pigeons. While the guano will be removed, these shops will be kept in this form. The main working areas will need to be operated from time to time to retain their atmosphere.

Providing visitors with access to the site will inevitably require some changes. J W Evans & Sons never occupied the whole of number 57, so this part of the works can take the most change. There are other areas where adaptation will be possible once the significance of each part of the works has been properly assessed.

As an owner of last resort it is not English Heritage's intention to hold the Evans works in the long term. The aspiration to recommence manufacturing is also strong and it is recognised that Evans needs to be kept 'active'. English Heritage is



The internal finishes of the J W Evans works are the result of more than 100 years of working in the premises and would be impossible to reproduce convincingly once disturbed.

© English Heritage

Keeping the machinery and die racks in their original positions during repair work will ensure an authentic experience for visitors once the repair and minimal conservation has been completed.

© English Heritage

therefore exploring the opportunities to work with complementary businesses and organisations within the Jewellery Quarter to ensure the heritage values of the site are retained in a sustainable way. ■

REFERENCE

Cattell, John, Ely, Sheila and Jones, Barry 2002. *The Birmingham Jewellery Quarter: An Architectural Survey of the Manufactories*. Swindon: English Heritage

**Intervention to Increase Understanding
Witley Court**

Brian Kerr

Head of Archaeological Projects, English Heritage

With the help of the Wolfson Challenge Fund, English Heritage has been enhancing historic gardens at a number of its properties, most notably Kirby Hall, Kenilworth Castle and Witley Court. We are also working on the repair of important designed landscapes at Chiswick and Wrest Park. The restoration of missing garden features can add a great deal to the atmosphere and appearance of historic properties, and such projects have been carried out over a long period in England by private owners, the National Trust, the Historic Royal Palaces Agency and English Heritage.

Conservation Principles might seem at first sight to offer some problems for historic-garden restoration projects. Section 126 on Restoration offers some helpful criteria for judging the acceptability of proposed projects. On turning to the glossary,

however, we find that ‘restoration’ is defined as ‘To return a place to a known earlier state, on the basis of compelling evidence, without conjecture’. Taken at face value, no historic-garden repair or restoration project would meet this criterion. The problem is that the evidence is never so clear-cut as to avoid completely the need for speculation. Even in those rare cases where we have detailed knowledge of the designer’s intentions, we can never be certain that these were scrupulously executed, nor are we likely to know how these plans may have been modified by successive generations of owners and garden staff. Gardens are living things, and different plants flourish or suffer in ways that the garden designer may not have anticipated.

To augment the advice of *Conservation Principles* for the benefit of those responsible for managing historic designed gardens and landscapes, English Heritage has commissioned the respected garden historian David Jacques to draft new guidance on garden conservation. Like *Conservation Principles*, this will emphasise the importance of carrying out first-class multi-disciplinary research to inform and support decisions on repair and restoration. It will also stress the need to document that research and the decision-making process so that future curators can fully understand what we did and why. A good example is provided by the recent research carried out on the East Parterre at Witley Court, an English Heritage historic property in Worcestershire.

The gardens at Witley Court were designed by William Andrews Nesfield in the 1850s. Nesfield is



Witley Court, Worcestershire. The central bed of the East Parterre under excavation in 1996, showing the survival of plan evidence for Nesfield’s design. Note the surviving, if overgrown, box-hedging plants in the unexcavated half of the garden. © Nottingham University/English Heritage

particularly well known for his elaborate ‘*parterres de broderie*’, intricate patterns based on 17th-century French embroidery designs, although it should be noted that these were generally only one small element of a much wider design, which often extended to design or remodelling of parkland. At Witley the whole of Nesfield’s design was lost after the disastrous fire of 1937 that left the house a permanent ruin. The parterres were abandoned, the parkland trees felled, and most of the architectural elements of the gardens, which included long stretches of stone balustrading, were removed as architectural salvage.

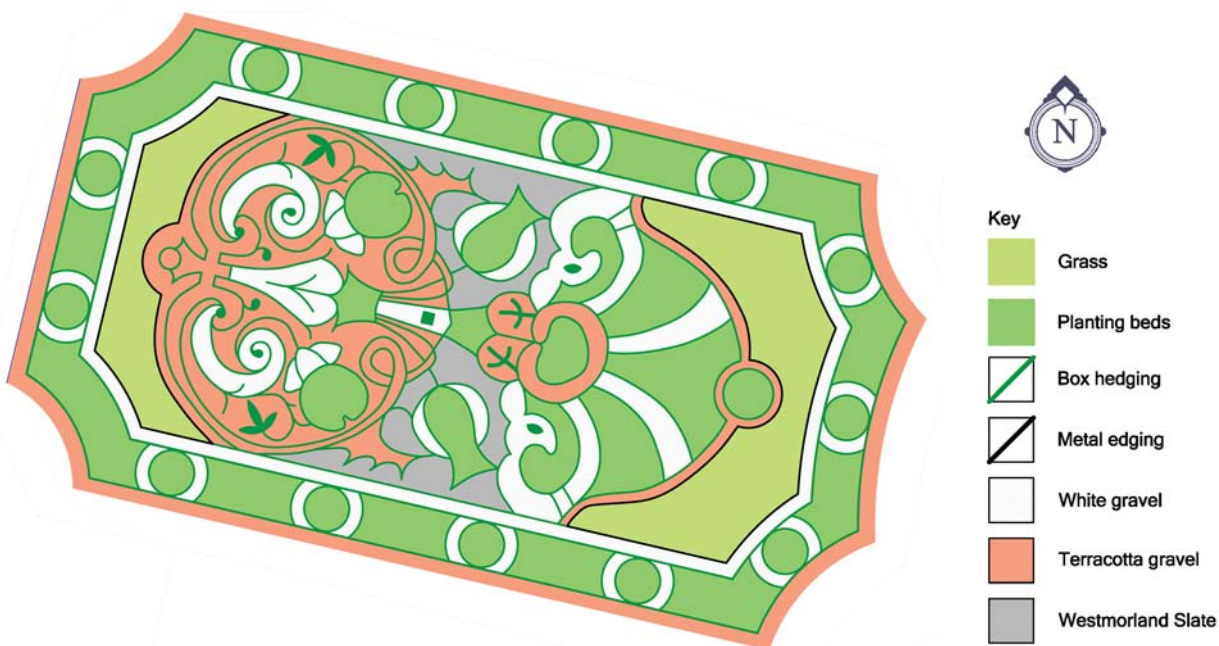
In the mid-1990s work began on re-creation of the South Parterre and restoration of its Perseus and Andromeda fountain to working order. There were also unfulfilled plans to re-create the smaller but more elaborate East Parterre and partial excavation of the central bed by Nottingham University Research Associates in 1996 demonstrated the exceptional quality of the survival of Nesfield’s original design.

We were fortunate that Nesfield’s work has been the subject of long-term research by Dr Shirley Evans, who had travelled to Australia to look at the archives held by Nesfield’s descendants. Dr Evans’s exhaustive work provided a great deal of information on Nesfield’s designs, including the patterns on which he based his parterres and the range of plants he used to create his colour palette. Thin lines of box hedging defined the patterns, while colour was provided by planting, areas of

lawn and by coloured gravels.

Unfortunately, there are no surviving design drawings for the East Parterre at Witley. Attempts had previously been made to reconstruct its plan from the few remaining photographs, but the evidence from such low-level oblique views was patchy, even when attempts were made to rectify the photographs. By contrast, the 1996 excavations demonstrated the excellent archaeological survival of the plan. The East Parterre had not been cultivated since it had been abandoned – indeed the large specimens of box still growing on the site were the survivors of the original planting. The lines of the bedding trenches, sections of lawn and hedge-lines were clearly visible. Samples of gravel recovered from excavation showed the materials used by Nesfield – grey Westmorland slate, crushed brick and tile and sparkling white Derbyshire spar. In 2006 Oxford Archaeology carried out further excavation of the two ornamental side-beds, which recovered the guilloche pattern of the box-hedge planting, complete with setting-out errors, suggesting that Nesfield’s plans had been imperfectly implemented.

After reviewing the evidence from documentary sources and excavation, a decision was taken to go ahead with restoration of the East Parterre, but before the plans could be finalised the excavation of the main central bed of the parterre had to be completed. Oxford Archaeology carried this out in 2007, to a specification provided by the English Heritage Archaeological Projects team, which then



Witley Court: the design for the replanting of the central bed.
© English Heritage

monitored the fieldwork. Critical to the success of the excavation was the specialist advice provided by Brian Dix, whose expertise in gardens archaeology was essential to the interpretation of the excavated features. It proved possible, for example, to define the thin lines of box-hedge planting within much wider bedding trenches. The plan was recorded by high-level rectified colour photography provided by the English Heritage Metric Survey team, with additional details added by Oxford Archaeology from the excavation of individual features. Some later disturbance had destroyed parts of the plan, but sufficient survived, combined with a new rectification of historic photographs, to allow a full reconstruction of the plan of the Parterre.

Planting of the East Parterre is due to start in 2009. Cuttings were taken from the surviving box plants to provide disease-free stock; all the thousands of plants needed for the filigree pattern will be direct descendants of the original hedge plants. Coloured gravels are being sourced to match the materials used by Nesfield, and a planting plan has been developed using the same varieties that Nesfield used to create his coloured beds. Restoration of the East Parterre is due to be completed in 2010, after which the results of the research project will be published as an accessible record of the way in which modern scientific excavation allowed the recovery of Nesfield's original design. ■

Restoration

The Dover Castle Great Tower project

Edward Impey

Director of Research and Standards, English Heritage

At the top of the list of English Heritage's programme of improvements to our properties is the re-presentation and interpretation of the 12th-century Great Tower or 'Keep' at Dover Castle. As with so many areas of our work, *Conservation Principles*, both through the principles and guidance set out in the document and current changes in attitude which (we believe) it both reflects and encourages, have been integral to its development.

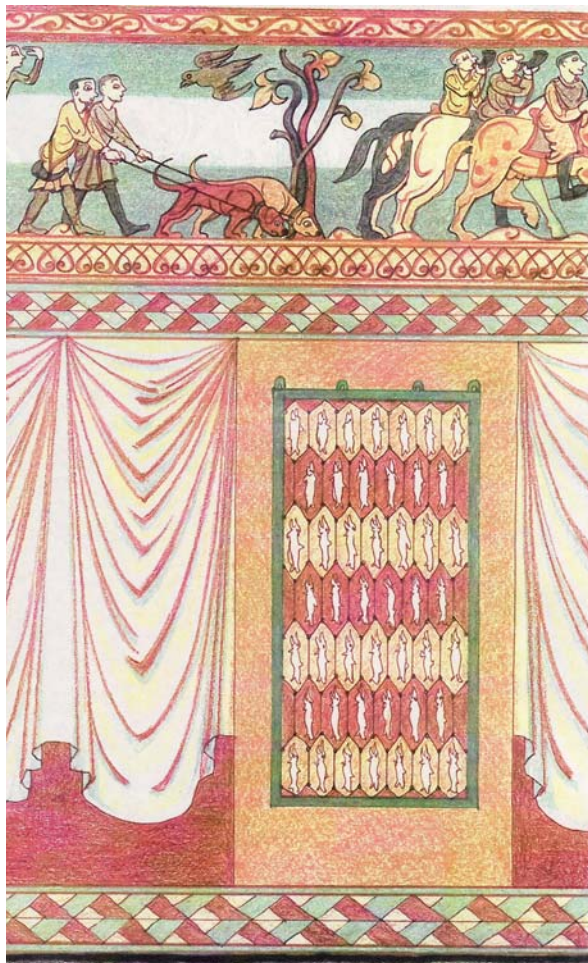
In this case the relevance and contribution of the *Principles* take three forms: first in the selection and development of the central ideas behind the scheme; second, in re-examining long-held concerns as to what it is and is not possible or acceptable to present to the visiting public; and third, in helping determine what physical interventions to a historic building may or may not be

acceptable. Overall it is about an approach less cautious, if every bit as responsible, as that typically taken in the recent past.

In devising the scheme in the first place, the 'values-based' approach, intended principally to guide the management of physical change, has been helpful in selecting and refining what can and should be displayed and explained. In this instance the subject is an astonishing and exceptional building (a truth no less real for constant repetition) and a key part of a vast castle of multifaceted international significance. But, given the chance of a radical re-think in how it is presented, what, among the many things the Great Tower illustrates and tells of the past, might we focus on? The building's incalculable *evidential* value – leading to a didactic re-presentation on what it reveals about its own history and that of other sites? An attractive possibility. But taking as read that 'understanding the significance of a place is vital' (Principle 3), the building's most conspicuous 'heritage value', and also the one that best coincides with the aims of the project (ie to increase visitors' understanding enjoyment) is *historical* – its capacity to 'illustrate' the past and bring people and events alive today through 'association'. This too, though, leaves plenty of scope for subject matter. But we felt that the building's key historical significance lies in the functions for which it was designed, not those, interesting as they are, to which it was subsequently put; that the key 'association' is with its creator, Henry II, maker of Dover as we know it and a gigantic figure on the 12th-century political stage whose legacy is with us still. Hence, in a nutshell, the core of the project: to 're-present' the interiors of the building to evoke their appearance on the occasion of a great royal event in the late

The Great Tower at Dover, built in the late 12th century and currently the subject of a major re-presentation project. The building possesses, in abundance, all the heritage values identified in *Conservation Principles*, all of which the current project aims to sustain.
© English Heritage Photo Library





Re-presenting the Dover Great Tower: this draft design for simulated wall painting is in the late 12th-century style but does not attempt to copy particular originals. Well-researched decoration and furnishings of this kind will complement the building's historical value by better illustrating its original form and emphasising associations with past people and events.

© Kit Surrey

12th century. Enlivened by a range of interpretative techniques, the aim is to introduce visitors to aspects of medieval life and, through the 'immersive' nature of the presentation, an experience that will be new in both subject matter and technique.

But to do so lays us open to a number of familiar accusations, notably that we will be 'misleading' the public by presenting new as old, or because the building itself, superbly preserved as it is, inevitably contains much and obvious post-12th-century fabric. Comments may be made about the handling of evidence or of 'Disneyfication' such as those, for example, that greeted the Historic Royal Palaces Agency's re-display of St Thomas's Tower at the Tower of London in the mid-1990s: here too, the *Principles* are of value, the sections of most immediate relevance being those in the 'Policies and Guidance' section under 'Restoration'. At the highest level, assistance is offered by the presumption

at Paragraph 126 that 'Restoration to a significant place *should normally be acceptable if ...*': clearly this is not advocacy of restoration, but its intent and phrasing accept that, the five stringent criteria being applied, the 'revealing or recovering of a known element of heritage value that has been eroded' is not the taboo it has been in some quarters, and in English official thinking, for more than a century. At a more detailed level, Paragraph 132 warns against presenting 'speculative or generalised re-creation as authentic': this of course we will not be doing; rather, we will be completely and confidently open about the sources and research basis of what they are seeing (indeed, through supplementary interpretation and publication, visitors will be able to explore how this process worked).

More importantly, however, Paragraph 132 then adds that 'judgement is needed in determining the level of information required to justify restoration'. The inherent acceptance here of the role of 'judgement' and that sufficient evidence under some circumstances may be insufficient in others is crucial, for in the case of Dover a stultifying requirement for the '100 per cent authenticity' (almost always unachievable) would have killed the scheme at birth. Nevertheless, in fulfilment of the requirement in Paragraph 126, the work will indeed be justified by what we believe to be 'compelling evidence', as required in Paragraph 126: we have, for example, determined on the best evidence we have, the function of the various rooms, and will populate them with artefacts in keeping with that function – entirely modern, but designed in a 12th-century idiom on the basis of meticulous comparative research.

Finally, although it is important to state that our 'intervention' will largely be confined to introducing items into the building rather than doing things to it, some fixtures and some structural work will be needed. Guidance in the *Principles* found under 'Restoration' applies, for example, to the fitting of new doors, designed in a late 12th-century manner: in this case our view is that the contribution of a functioning door leaf to enhancing the overall illustrative value of the building palpably outweighs any detriment to other values. The case for and against some other work – such as that needed to use the chimneys – will more obviously be debated with the aid of guidance under 'New work and alteration': once again, the constructive attitude of the approach as a whole is reflected in the positive framing of the statement that such intervention 'to a significant place should normally be acceptable if ...'; the extent to which

the conditions that follow can or cannot be met have been invaluable both to those devising the project, and to colleagues in the Advice and Grants Team exercising their statutory authority.

The Dover Great Tower project has been and continues to be, something of a test-bed for the application of *Conservation Principles* in this area of work – not conservation *per se*, but with inevitable conservation implications. But in simply widening the scope of what may be considered, while providing a discipline for the identification of the special significance of the place and logical safeguards for sustaining it, the *Principles* promise to be of great benefit to the successful and engaging presentation and interpretation of English Heritage’s properties in the future. ■

New Work and Alteration

The Royal Shakespeare Theatre

Rab Bennetts OBE

Director, Bennetts Associates Architects

Shakespeare seems to permeate every facet of Stratford-upon-Avon – his birthplace, the school where he excelled in English and the Classics, the site of the house (sadly, long demolished) where he invested his later wealth, the church where he is buried and, just beyond the town, the bucolic

landscapes that surfaced regularly in his writings.

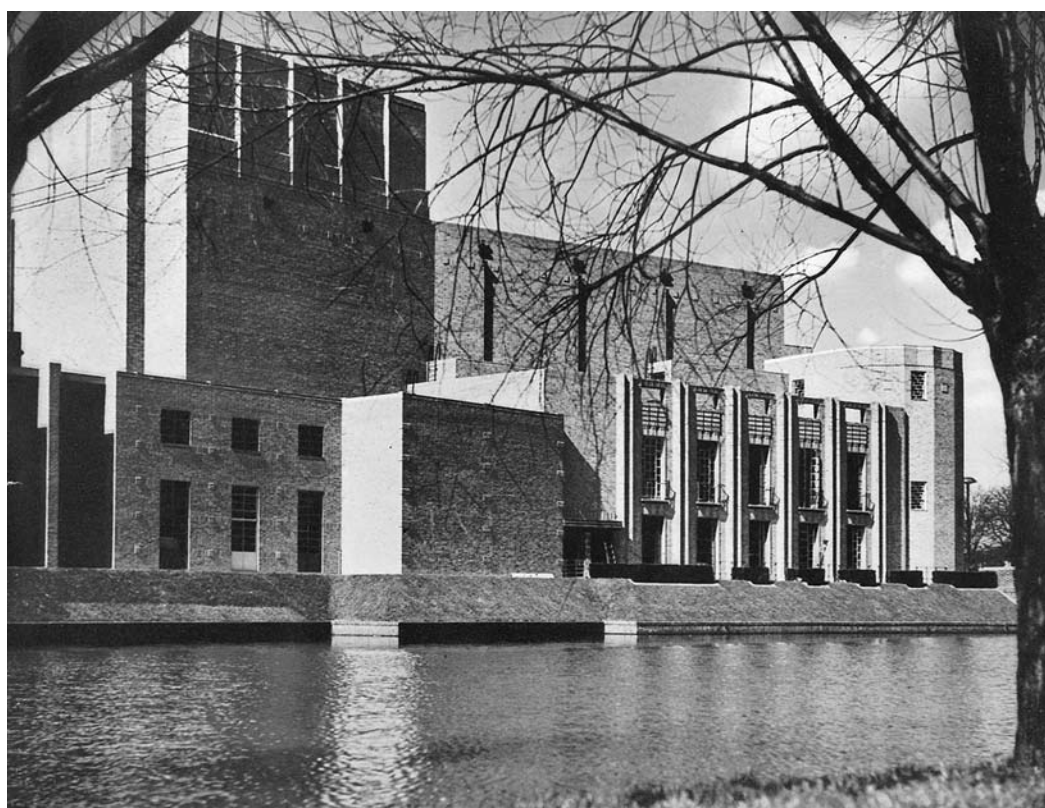
Despite being established only in the 1960s, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), too, seems to be woven into the fabric of the town, with three performance spaces and a string of workshops, offices, rehearsal rooms and cottages for the actors that seem to embed the notion of theatre within the bricks and paving stones as well as the wider townscape.

The imposing brick theatre on the banks of the Avon is a surprisingly late addition to the medieval town. Initially, a small playhouse and picture gallery were donated and built by the Flower family in the late 19th century as a memorial to Stratford’s most famous son, but a calamitous fire in 1926 left the Victorian confection as an abandoned shell. There is little trace today of the gothic tower that was the pinnacle of its composition, despite its secondary function of containing water tanks to fight fires.

The architectural competition that subsequently created the Royal Shakespeare Theatre seems to have been just as flawed as many competitions are today, its legacy comprising a handsome example of art-deco design that was riddled with functional deficiencies from the date of its completion in 1932. Primary among these was an extremely challenging auditorium shaped like a cinema, where the 1,400-strong audience faced the distant stage as they would a screen. In the 1980s,

The 1932 Shakespeare Memorial Theatre: a handsome example of art-deco design that was beset with functional deficiencies from the date of its completion.

© RSC





The Royal Shakespeare Theatre reborn: a computer image showing the addition of a roof canopy over the 1932 building and the new viewing/circulation tower. The challenge has been to create a new auditorium and public space fit for the 21st century while retaining the spirit of the original art-deco foyers and façades.

Hayes Davidson © Bennetts Associates

the shell of the Victorian structure was converted into the Swan Theatre and it did not take long for actors to express a strong preference for its far more intimate format and for directors to find that even major interventions within the 1932 building would fail to achieve anything comparable.

Another architectural competition, this time in 1999, considered wholesale removal of the 1930s' theatre but fell victim to a lack of public support. In consequence, a fundamental rethink of the RSC's requirements led to the emergence of a new design brief, accompanied by a greater conviction about the type of auditorium that was appropriate – 'something Shakespeare himself might recognise' to quote the incoming artistic director Michael Boyd. Hence, an idea about a 1,000-seat thrust-format, galleried auditorium was already on paper before a new architect was chosen in 2005 and a full-size mock-up in the form of the temporary 'Courtyard' theatre was already committed to construction.

Rather than hold another design competition, the RSC opted for a thorough interview process that included visits to previous buildings and a design workshop in the architects' offices. Quite apart from the excitement of working with a distinguished existing building, Bennetts Associates' collaborative approach had a resonance with Michael Boyd's re-invigoration of the theatrical ensemble – a group of players that lives and works together for two or three years, performing in much the same way as Shakespeare's own acting companies. The parallels with architectural practice

are instructive, with a team of individuals working together for years at a time and from one project to the next, revelling in the skills of numerous contributors such as planners, engineers, lighting specialists and so on.

A rigorous assessment of the existing building by conservation specialists Alan Baxter Associates underpinned early discussions with English Heritage and the local authority, who broadly supported the idea of radically altering the auditorium without losing the spirit of the art-deco foyers and their fine details. We, too, were keen to see the best characteristics of the listed building retained, but it seemed to us that we also had to face up to the theatre's shortcomings, particularly its failure to address the town and integrate itself with the wider network of RSC activities

Inserting the new auditorium and its flytower inside the existing shell has given rise to a change of skyline and some serious technical challenges, but its geometry means that we have been able to retain a crust of art-deco rooms around the perimeter that give the public spaces a sense of familiarity. In addition to retaining or reusing many of the original details, we are stripping away later accretions so that the very best 1930s' façades can reveal themselves once more. In between the new U-shaped auditorium and the back of the retained art-deco rooms is a residual space that should encapsulate the frisson between old and new – constricted but lofty, it will be full of glimpses between the foyers and the auditorium that should enrich the experience of arrival

The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon: the new auditorium under construction at the end of 2008.

© Bennetts Associates



and departure. Such is the scale of the internal alterations, however, an expansive roof-level canopy for the top floor restaurant is used to suggest that the 21st century has asserted itself and that the project is not only about conservation.

To understand the theatre's wider context, we carried out a wide-ranging analysis well beyond the walls of the theatre. This allowed us to propose new workshops on the other side of the street and a series of secondary routes that will open up the back-of-house accommodation to public view and ensure better access between the theatre and its riverside frontage.

By far the boldest move in our urban-design strategy is a new, freestanding tower just outside the main theatre building, but this is by no means a whimsical idea. In compositional terms, it replaces the Victorian tower that was lost in the 1926 fire and provides a focal point for the town's millions of tourists, many of whom have appeared to be underwhelmed by one the UK's most famous theatres. It will have exceptional 360° views across the major landmarks of Shakespeare's time and it will provide a location for a main lift and stair that would not fit within the listed building's tightly planned interior. Last but not least, the tower will mark out one side of a new public square, formed by the row of cottages on the other side of the street and a new glazed arcade connecting the main theatre to the Swan. As an external performance space, the new square will provide an outward-looking threshold for the theatre and the means of correcting

its previously abrupt relationship with the town.

As with the analysis of the art-deco building's features, English Heritage supported both the logic of the urban strategy and the detail of its final proposals. We also knew that objectivity was an important factor in the public-consultation process and our ideas were debated openly at numerous public meetings. Indeed, the opening lines of English Heritage's recent publication *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*, which place a welcome emphasis on a logical approach when adapting and managing the historic environment, have many parallels in our approach to the RSC's project in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Despite a small number of objections to the tower, the project received widespread support and received detailed planning consent in April 2007. Demolition of the old auditorium began shortly afterwards. Construction is now well advanced and the new shell of the building should be broadly complete by the end of 2009, leaving a lengthy period for theatrical fitting-out prior to re-opening in late summer 2010.

Back in 2005, it seemed to us that the project encapsulated 'engagement' in many forms – engagement between the town and the theatre, engagement between the RSC and its public and, of course, engagement between the actors and the audience. Since then the time has flown by and we will not have to wait long now before knowing if these overall objectives have been achieved. ■

Integrating Conservation with other Public Interests

The past helping to shape a region's future

Tim Challans

*Assistant Director of Culture, Leisure and Lifelong Learning,
Walsall Council*

When I started work as a planner in the 1970s our cities were still emerging from the explosion of urban development of the 1960s. For many, conservation stood in the way of progress. It was rigorously policed by passionate conservation planners and civic societies, but did not engage a wider public. Exceptional buildings were well protected but a glance at pre-1960s' photographs of any of our towns and cities will show what society was prepared to sacrifice in the name of progress.

The demand for progress does not change, but there has been a real change in public and political attitudes to heritage and the value of conservation. In the last 30 years we have witnessed a real shift of values and a popularisation of history, heritage and conservation that has changed the way we view our past and the increasingly homogenised environment that surrounds us. As we consume the benefits of rapid technological change there is a parallel interest in the artefacts and buildings of the past displayed through the media and by the

increased membership of heritage organisations. Conservation has become democratised. While its champions may still be the passionate and knowledgeable planners and the civic societies, its supporters are much more broadly based.

Increased wealth has allowed more people to buy into the past. People desire to live in old buildings and historic landscapes. What drives this interest in the value of heritage and the values of conservation is debatable. It may be nostalgia for what are perceived to be better times, but a more positive view is that in a post-industrial society people have become more interested in how their local area was created and developed and in retaining its historic character.

This genuinely represents a change in values and the determination not to remove what remains of character and significance in our built environment – the very sense of place that is so clearly articulated in English Heritage's *Conservation Principles*. It also recognises that conservation is not just about preserving the extraordinary but has a social and cultural function in protecting the ordinary and the locally valued. This fundamental value is similar to the value that steers other public policy, which is increasingly focused towards a community involvement in decision-making that goes beyond the ballot box. While the term 'place-making' is over-used in public policy, at its core is the recognition that change should be led by social and



Ironbridge, Shropshire. Industry and innovation lie at the very heart of the cultural history of the Birmingham, Coventry and Black Country city region.
© Ironbridge Gorge Museums

Opened in 1999, The New Art Gallery carries forward the innovative and visionary spirit that has shaped Walsall and its wider region.
© Walsall Council



cultural values and not solely by market and political expediency, and, most importantly, that people can take more control of the actions that influence their lives and environment.

I have recently been leading on work that identifies the cultural dimensions and benefits of the creation of the snappily titled Birmingham, Coventry and Black Country city region. In trying to grasp the identity of an area that extends from Coventry to Telford (about the same distance as is covered by Los Angeles), it has been agreed that culture, along with the M6 and M54, is a significant factor that draws the different localities and communities together.

At the centre of the cultural assessment of the area is its history and heritage. It is, of course, the cradle of the Industrial Revolution; of innovation and technological development from the Ironbridge, through the Spitfire to mass-production cars; and the development of craft skills such as, glass, leather, locks and jewellery. It was the home of Abraham Darby, Mathew Boulton and James Watt and the Lunar Society. This culture of invention, creativity and entrepreneurial risk is marked on the landscape by its canals, factory buildings, public buildings, industrialists' mansions and countless urban parks as well as architectural gems

like Coventry Cathedral and the Tecton buildings at Dudley Zoo. However, we did not want the cultural development of the city region to be nostalgically embedded in its heritage, but for it to continue the innovative and visionary spirit that created it.

Although this area has an extraordinary history and some extremely significant buildings and landscapes, local sense of place is underpinned by the more mundane, but important, traces of its past. It is this sense of place that we have chosen to use as a base for our cultural-development plans.

Thus, conservation has become more important to sensitive physical and cultural regeneration than the technical processes of protection. Launching the *Culture at the Heart of Regeneration* consultation in 2006, the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, asserted that culture can be a catalyst to turn round whole communities, including exploiting heritage to make places where people want to live. She stated that 'success for us will be when culture is as important to planners, developers and government when looking at new projects, as the economy and jobs currently are'.

The subsequent Living Spaces project (a partnership between English Heritage and four other other cultural agencies) aims to ensure that all communities, particularly those experiencing housing-led growth and regeneration, can benefit from cultural opportunities. By working together, the partners want to ensure that culture is embedded in the development of our villages, towns and cities alongside other key areas of provision such as healthcare and transport.

Recognising that many school buildings play an important role in adding to local character as well as being part of local identity and at the centre of communities, English Heritage has been supportive of the government's Building Schools for the Future programme since its inception. With this and other examples, we are seeing conservation at the heart of social and community, as well as physical, planning. The value of *Conservation Principles* is that the cultural importance of conservation is at its core. If there is a positive in the current recession, it is that it puts the frenzy of urban development on hold and gives us the opportunity to reflect on what we value and how to integrate these principles into the future shape of the built environment and the lives of people and aspirations of communities. ■

Enabling Development

Meeting the cost of saving historic places

David H Tomback FRICS

Development Economics Director, English Heritage

Enabling development was first established as a legitimate planning tool when, in 1988, the Court of Appeal upheld the validity of the granting of consent for office development, contrary to the development plan, to provide funds to improve the Royal Opera House (*Westminster City Council ex parte Monahan*). Enabling development is development that secures the future of a significant place but contrary to established planning policy. It is, however, a last resort and by its very nature, an inefficient method of fundraising.

English Heritage first produced an Enabling Development Policy in 1999 and a combined Policy and Guidance was produced in 2001 as a response to the unacceptable practice by some developers of using historic places in poor repair as an excuse to circumvent the planning system. The latest updated guidance (September 2008) links into, and is particularly relevant to, *Conservation Principles* as understanding significance is the bedrock from which all decisions flow. The purpose of the Policy and Guidance is to ensure rigorous scrutiny by local planning authorities and it sets out the rules for applicants. From the very beginning, the Policy has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate as providing the basis for considering enabling development: 'I consider that English Heritage's policy statement on enabling development and the conservation of heritage assets, published in June 1999, provides the basis for considering enabling development' (Planning Inspector's report concerning Coleorton Hall, Leicestershire, October 1999).

The important interrelationship between *Conservation Principles* and enabling development is that *Principles* puts enabling development guidance into a wider picture and is indeed a model for how particular types of applications relating to change should be assessed. Both documents are intended to amplify and reinforce, and should be used in conjunction with the well-established criteria set out in PPG15.

The criteria set out in the Policy and that need to be met before enabling development should be considered are stringent and are set out both in *Conservation Principles* in section 157 and in *Enabling Development* on page 5; they are:

Enabling development that would secure the future of a significant place, but contravene other planning policy objectives, should be unacceptable unless:

- a it will not materially harm the heritage values of the place or its setting
- b it avoids detrimental fragmentation of management of the place
- c it will secure the long-term future of the place and, where applicable, its continued use for a sympathetic purpose
- d it is necessary to resolve problems arising from the inherent needs of the place, rather than the circumstances of the present owner, or the purchaser price paid
- e sufficient subsidy is not available from any other source
- f it is demonstrated that the amount of enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the future of the place, and that its form minimises harm to other public interests
- g the public benefit of securing the future of the significant place through such enabling development decisively outweighs the disbenefits of breaching other public policies.

The final criterion, that the public benefits of enabling development should decisively outweigh the disbenefits, is perhaps the hardest aspect for the decision maker. While the financial need may have been demonstrated, the resulting harm to the significance of the place could in some cases range from minimal to unacceptable. It is in this 'grey area', where to allow no change could result in the entire loss of the significant place, that the crunch decisions have to be made. In such circumstances, decision-making will invariably be much better informed if a proper understanding of the heritage values of a place, of the kind recommended by *Conservation Principles*, has been acquired before rather than after application of the Enabling Development criteria.

Enabling developments are, by their very nature, complex and often controversial and the onus is on the applicant to provide all relevant information to the local planning authority. The most common cases I deal with are large country houses or redundant mental hospitals, some of which have been neglected for many years, often vandalised, and where the cost of repairs may outweigh the market value once repaired – ie there is a conservation deficit. The perceived only 'solution' is for the local authority to relax the planning

rules by permitting otherwise unacceptable development – perhaps in the form of residential units within the grounds of the main property, for example in a walled garden or on adjacent land. If permitted, the benefit to the community is that the main heritage asset is repaired and brought back into long-term beneficial use. Nevertheless, if the first criterion is not met, namely that the proposals will not materially harm the heritage values of the place or its setting, then the application can go no further.

With the exception of historic entities and traditional buildings in the countryside, before enabling development is even considered, the applicant needs to demonstrate that real efforts have been made, without success, to continue the present use or find compatible alternative uses for the place by carrying out a proper and genuine market testing exercise.

Once it has been decided that an enabling development scheme meets all the criteria, there are still four further tests in that the impact of the development must be precisely defined from the outset; the benefits must be secured, normally by way of a Section 106 Agreement; the place concerned is repaired to an agreed standard as early as possible; and finally the planning authority closely monitors implementation to ensure that obligations are fulfilled.

Assessing an enabling development application is not straightforward and a number of professional disciplines are required to contribute to the decision-making process. The fact that the updated *Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places Policy and Guidance* mirror in design the layout and terminology within *Conservation Principles* is no accident, as the two are inter-linked and used together provide a sound base and useful guidance for those decision-makers involved in managing our historic environment.

In today's difficult financial climate, there is increased pressure on developers and owners as property values fall and funding becomes hard to secure. I therefore anticipate more enabling development cases having to be dealt with by local authorities and English Heritage. The key for all parties is to understand the rules from the outset – read the Policy and Guidance and obtain good professional advice from practitioners well versed in the process. ■

The *Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places Policy and Guidance* is available on www.english-heritage.org.uk/enablingdevelopment and www.helm.org.uk/enablingdevelopment



Henbury House, Dorset. In 1995 'enabling development' permission was given for the construction of 29 new homes to offset the cost of major structural repairs to this important Grade II* country house. With hindsight, the application of *Conservation Principles* could have helped identify a solution less damaging to the heritage values of the original building and its setting. © English Heritage

News from English Heritage

Places of Worship Support Officers

A new funding stream for historic places of worship was launched in December, as part of the on-going Inspired! campaign. English Heritage is offering £1.5 million in grants to organisations that use, manage or conserve numbers of historic places of worship to employ a Support Officer to help look after and make the most of their buildings.

It is up to the partner organisation to draw up its own job description, depending on the particular needs of its historic buildings. No two Support Officer jobs will be exactly the same: some will focus on essential repairs, others on opening churches for tourism or community projects. English Heritage will cover 50 per cent of the total costs of a Support Officer post for three years. It will encourage the professional development of the postholders and jointly agree objectives with the partner organisation but will have no involvement in the day-to-day management of the post.

Support Officers must have a knowledge of the principles of historic-building conservation and a demonstrable interest in England's historic places of worship, but detailed knowledge of ecclesiastical architecture is not essential. They should be excellent communicators, have problem-solving skills, and be able to empathise with the purposes of the relevant faith group.

Contact: Nick Chapple, tel: 020 7973 3267
email: nick.chapple@english-heritage.org.uk

The socio-economic benefits of heritage in the National Parks

The heritage of National Parks is fundamental to their character and to the sense of identity of their local communities. It is also a key factor for inward investment and tourism. However, the socio-economic benefits of heritage to the parks have yet to be measured and evaluated in ways that can usefully inform policy formulation and management practice.

In 2007 English Heritage and Cadw commissioned the Countryside and Community Research Institute at the University of Gloucestershire to examine this issue. The research comprised an extensive scoping study involving a literature review combined with various forms of stakeholder consultation, including email and telephone surveys, face-to-face interviews and participatory workshops. The results from this scoping study will be available later this summer on the HELM website at www.helm.org.uk

Contact: Sarah Tunnicliffe; tel: 020 7973 3724;
email: sarah.tunnicliffe@english-heritage.org.uk

Heritage Link's Embracing Difference website

Led by Heritage Link, with funding from English Heritage, Embracing Difference was a two-year programme to develop the heritage sector's capacity to attract wider and more diverse engagement. Running across five regions of England, the programme delivered a series of seminars that encouraged creativity, learning, networking and mutual understanding between different groups. Five practical projects showed that wider diversity can be achieved by voluntary heritage organisations, whatever their resources. A new website bringing together resources, links and information from the programme is available for all to use at www.heritagelink.org.uk/diversity

Contact: Kate Pugh,
email: mail@heritagelink.org.uk

HELM training programme 2009–10

Next year's HELM training programme will include events on characterisation, places of worship and Stop the Rot. It will also address the legal aspects of development control and heritage at risk and offer a programme of training on Heritage Protection Reform, including events on local lists, defining special interest, and Historic Environment Records.

Please check the HELM website www.helm.org.uk for more details as they become available. By signing up to the HELM newsletter you will make sure you are kept informed about the training programme as well as other news and updates from English Heritage.

Contact: Jane Driscoll, tel: 020 7973 2228
email: jane.driscoll@english-heritage.org.uk

Taking Part

English Heritage has welcomed the publication of the DCMS's report on Taking Part, the survey that measures the number of extra people participating in culture and sports between 2005/6 and 2007/8 (www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/5653.aspx). For the heritage sector, the Public Service Agreement (PSA) 3 target was to increase attendance at heritage sites by three percentage points for each of three priority groups – black and minority ethnic, people with limiting disability and people from lower socio-economic groups.



Launching the Places of Worship Support Officers fund in Manchester were, from left to right, Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of English Heritage, Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the Bishop of Middleton.

© English Heritage

The results for the heritage sector are extremely encouraging. More people than ever before are visiting heritage sites, with the greatest percentage increase (11 per cent) being among people from black and minority ethnic groups. The increase is particularly marked for people who also belong to lower socio-economic groups, for those from a mixed-race or Asian background, those who are Muslim by religion, and those who live in Yorkshire and Humberside and West Midlands.

It is too early to explain these results in detail, but the efforts of the whole of the historic-environment sector to encourage wider participation must certainly be a key factor in the very welcome increases. In coming months the survey will be an important source of evidence for further research into what makes people take part in cultural activities commissioned by English Heritage, DCMS, Arts Council England, Museum Libraries and Archives and Sport England as part of the Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) programme.

Contact: Laura Clayton, tel: 020 7973 3100
email: laura.clayton@english-heritage.org.uk

Missing out? Socio-economic status and heritage participation

On 23 March 2009 English Heritage will host a conference about broadening the appeal of the heritage offer, particularly to family groups. As

well as bringing together heritage organisations, commentators, researchers and community groups to investigate the appeal of the heritage offer to families, the conference will see the launch of new research findings from English Heritage into the ways in which education, social status and family background influence the way people think about and respond to heritage.

A day of workshops and seminars will address questions such as:

- How do we broaden audiences to existing heritage sites?
- What can we learn from outside the sector?
- Do we need better representation of working people's history, or a more engaging general offer?
- How do different groups most enjoy engaging with the past, and does the sector recognise these means?
- How important is it to provide a 'family-friendly' offer in order to ensure that an interest in heritage is passed down generations?

Places may still be available for this conference, which is taking place at the London School of Economics New Academic Building at 54 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3LJ.

Contact: Chemeck Slowik, tel: 020 7973 3253
email: chemeck.slowick@english-heritage.org.uk

The National Monuments Record

News and Events

The NMR is the public archive of English Heritage. It includes more than 10 million archive items (photographs, drawings, reports and digital data) relating to England's historic environment. Catalogues are available online and in the NMR search room in Swindon.

Contact the NMR at:

NMR Enquiry & Research Services, National Monuments Record, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ

tel: 01793 414600

fax: 01793 414606

email: nmrinfo@english-heritage.org.uk

web: www.english-heritage.org.uk/nmr

Online Resources from the NMR Heritage Explorer

(www.heritageexplorer.org.uk)

The *Heritage Explorer* website is designed for education users. It gives teachers and learners access to more than 3,000 inspiring NMR images specially selected for their educational relevance, which can be searched using keywords related to the curriculum. Access to images is augmented by ready-prepared resources for use in the classroom, in particular activities for use with interactive whiteboards.

Contact: Mary Mills, tel: 01793 414892

email: mary.mills@english-heritage.org.uk

PastScape (www.pastscape.org.uk)

PastScape is the publicly accessible online version of the national database of monuments maintained by the NMR. The website has recently undergone

extensive redevelopment to improve searching capabilities and results.

In addition to these major changes to the structure of the site we continue to work on targeted projects to improve the content of our records on particular types of site or monument. Two such projects, described below, give a flavour of the sheer variety of themes covered by the website.

Logboats

A small project was undertaken to enhance the existing record of logboats within the NMR's database. In total, 139 records were amended to bring them up-to-date and improve their ease of retrieval. Out of a total of 55 prehistoric boats, it turned out that 21 belong to the Bronze Age; another 9 are dated to the Roman period and 15 to the early and post-medieval periods. The remaining 59 artefacts lacked dating evidence. This high number of undated logboats is perhaps not surprising because 107 of the 139 examples were found between the 18th and early 20th centuries, before the advent of modern dating techniques, and at least 79 have since been destroyed or lost.

South Shoreditch commercial buildings

A project has recently been completed to enhance NMR records of Victorian and 20th-century commercial buildings in the South Shoreditch area of London. This district was traditionally the home of the furniture industry and associated trades including upholsterers, cabinet ironmongers, varnish-makers and timber suppliers. Nearly 200 records have been created from a number of



A group of children playing in a lane near Dinton in Buckinghamshire, the older children looking after the younger ones. Taken by SW Newton in 1904, the photograph is just one of the many thousands of images accessible through the NMR's Heritage Explorer website.

© English Heritage.NMR.AA97/07509

Built in the Italian style, this late 19th-century office and warehouse building at 125–130 Shoreditch High Street, London E1, is just one of the 300,000 listed buildings recorded by volunteer photographers as part of English Heritage's Images of England project.
© J. Callon, IoE 425985



sources including English Heritage's 2004 architectural investigation of South Shoreditch commercial buildings. This NMR enhancement project is important in providing public access to a significant part of London's commercial and industrial heritage and maintaining a permanent record of an ever-changing and developing cityscape.
Contact: Robin Page, tel: 01793 414617
email: robin.page@english-heritage.org.uk

ViewFinder

(www.english-heritage.org.uk/viewfinder)

ViewFinder is an online picture resource drawing on the NMR's national photographic collections,

with more than 70,000 images available. Currently, the emphasis is on the images of John Gay, a prolific freelance photographer who was most active between 1945 and the 1970s. His work features buildings, people, animals, rural life and landscapes, and he was often commissioned by architects to record their projects. Some 20,000 of John Gay's photographs are now on *ViewFinder* and new material is being added quarterly.

Contact: Andrew Sargent, tel: 01793 414740
email: andrew.sargent@english-heritage.org.uk

Search English Heritage Archives on line

Discover photographs and archives of England's buildings and historic sites.

Soon you will be able to search the catalogues of some of our photographic and other archive collections online. You will also be able to see online photographs and order copies.

The new website is being designed for:

- architectural historians
- local and family historians
- people interested in house history
- anyone interested in finding out more about England's architectural and archaeological heritage.

We would also value your comments on the first release of the site, to help us make it better for all our users.

For further information, or to express an interest in taking part in the site evaluation, contact:
Gillian Sheldrick, email: gillian.sheldrick@english-heritage.org.uk

Dry-stone walling is one of the traditional craft skills on which practical conservation of the historic environment still vitally depends. This photograph by the prolific freelance photographer John Gay was taken in Gloucestershire in about 1950. It is among 70,000 of his fascinating pictures that are being made accessible through the NMR's Viewfinder website.
© English Heritage.NMR
AA083345



Legal Developments

Accidents can happen

Mike Harlow, Legal Director, *English Heritage*

It is a commonly held misbelief that health and safety law has gone bonkers; that it requires zero risk and allows for zero adventure. In fact, while the principles have ebbed and flowed a little, the law has always been pretty balanced and rooted in common sense.

A recent case of a ricked ankle in Ripon Cathedral serves as a reminder to us all, and perhaps most importantly, consultants and insurers, that it is not the responsibility of a property owner to make visitors totally safe. That is, after all, unachievable. It was unfortunate that Jennifer Hunt turned her ankle over while descending into the crypt. She stepped into a depression typical of the uneven stone surfaces of such old buildings. But was it the fault of the cathedral or an accident without blame?

Quite properly the cathedral had undertaken a health and safety risk assessment for visitors. It had concluded that no handrail was necessary down the stairs and no signage was needed warning of the uneven floor. There was a one-way system in operation, presumably to prevent overcrowding and jostling on the stairs.

Ms Hunt sued for her personal injury claiming a breach by the cathedral of its duty under section 2 of the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957. That duty is to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that the visitor will be reasonably safe in using the premises for the purposes for which he is invited or permitted by the occupier to be there. It is critical to note that only *reasonable* steps have to be taken to see that people are *reasonably* safe. You do not have to take every last measure to ensure absolute safety.

The judge acknowledged that very old buildings have uneven floors. ...it was reasonable to assume that people would take care when placing their feet in a place of such antiquity.

Ms Hunt lost her case. The judge acknowledged that very old buildings have uneven floors. He said no additional signage was necessary to warn of a risk of falling as it was reasonable to assume that people would take care when placing their feet in a place of such antiquity. The absence

of a handrail posed no real danger as the stairs were narrow.

This is only a first-instance decision and since it is in tune with other personal-injury cases away from the historic environment it is perhaps unremarkable in legal theory. But I do think it is vital that owners and advisers are reminded of where the law stands. There is always a natural tendency towards more protection. Some of the pressure comes from consultants and insurers whose direct self-interest is never served by placing the risk in the middle ground. Increasing protection also results from ignorance – a half-baked and risk-averse understanding of what is required in this day and age to discharge one's duties.

I am sure that Ms Hunt's accident could have been avoided if the cathedral had been altered. So it does not look kindly to be suggesting that protection should go so far and no further, as to do so is to suggest that we tolerate injuries in favour of less clutter and a more pure visitor experience. But the law, at least, recognises that there is no such thing as absolute safety. Accidents will always happen. The cost of attempting to avoid any risk is harm to the historic environment itself, sometimes irreparable, and a loss of enjoyment by the visitor.

Only *reasonable* steps have to be taken to see that people are *reasonably* safe. You do not have to take every last measure to ensure absolute safety.

Any decision to alter a building or site requires a balance to be struck between conservation and pressures for change. The difficulty with decisions involving safety is that the words 'safety first' tend to float by, putting it on the moral high ground. The Ripon case emphasises that safety is not a trump card. It is still a balance. The question is: what can the visitor reasonably expect? With an old building they can generally expect standards to be less than those of the 21st century. That is not to say that they should be prepared for real dangers or look out for real surprises, but they can expect a building to be what it is – worn, unusual, uneven and interesting. ■

New publications from English Heritage



Twentieth Century Architects

RIBA Publishing, English Heritage and The 20th Century Society have jointly commissioned a new series, *Twentieth Century Architects*, which examines the work and influence of some of the century's significant architectural practices. The following two titles will appear in April and books on Aldington, Craig & Collinge and McMorran & Whitby will be published in August. The series will be essential reading for architects, students, architectural historians and modernist enthusiasts interested in learning more about the 20th century's most successful British practices.

Powell & Moya

Kenneth Powell

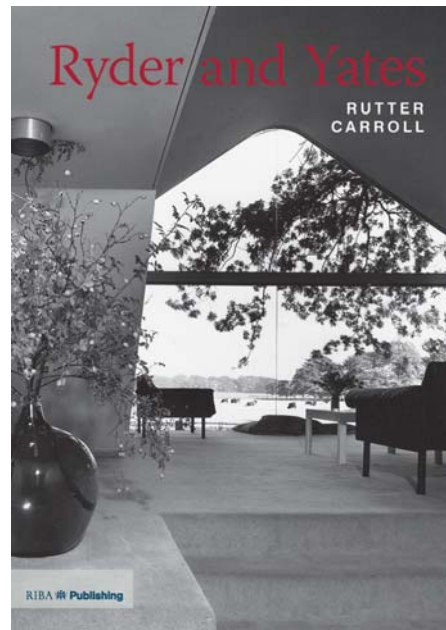
This is a comprehensive and engaging account of one of Britain's most significant post-war practices. Founded in 1946 by Philip Powell and Hidalgo 'Jacko' Moya, the practice rapidly established a reputation for 'humane modernism'.

Structured by building type, this book reveals the principles of design particular to Powell & Moya, and tells how they were at the forefront of hospital design, brought modernism to the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and designed one of London's most successful post-war housing schemes, Churchill Gardens. The book is lavishly illustrated with images from the Powell & Moya archive and stunning new photography.

PUBLICATION DATE: April 2009

PRICE: £20.00 + £2.00 P&P

ISBN: 978 | 85946 303 | Paperback, 160 pp



Ryder & Yates

Rutter Carroll

The outstanding work of Ryder & Yates, the pioneers of the modern movement in the North-East, is chronicled by Rutter Carroll, an architect from Newcastle upon Tyne. Formed in 1953 by Gordon Ryder and Peter Yates and heavily influenced by Le Corbusier and Berthold Lubetkin, the practice's uncompromising modernism put it in stark contrast to its contemporaries, and it quickly established a reputation for innovative and highly individual buildings situated almost exclusively on Tyneside. Images from the Ryder & Yates private archive illustrate the text.

PUBLICATION DATE: April 2009

PRICE: £20.00 + £2.00 P&P

ISBN: 978 | 85946 266 9 | Paperback, 160pp

Played at the Pub

Arthur Taylor and Simon Inglis

Aunt Sally in Oxford, Toad in the Hole in Lewes, bagatelle in Chester, quoits in Darlington and bat and trap in Kent – they sound like relics of a bygone age, and yet contrary to popular belief the pub games of Britain live on. Traditional games such as nipsy (the poor man's golf), played by Barnsley miners, may have died out in the 1990s, but new games emerge all the time so that nowadays regulars are just as likely to be entering pub quizzes – the first quiz league was recorded in Bootle in 1959 – or playing pool (which arrived via Australia during the 1960s) or petanque (brought over from France). Fashions may move

on but find any decent pub and the chances are that there are games to be played.

Played at the Pub is not only beautiful to look at and overflowing with interesting stories it is also an informative guide, copiously illustrated with contemporary images taken by English Heritage's own specialist photographers.

PUBLICATION DATE:

April 2009

PRICE: £14.99 + £2.00 P&P

ISBN: 978 1 90562 497 3 Paperback, 144pp

Britain's Oldest Art: The Ice Age Cave Art of Creswell Crags

Paul Bahn and Paul Pettitt

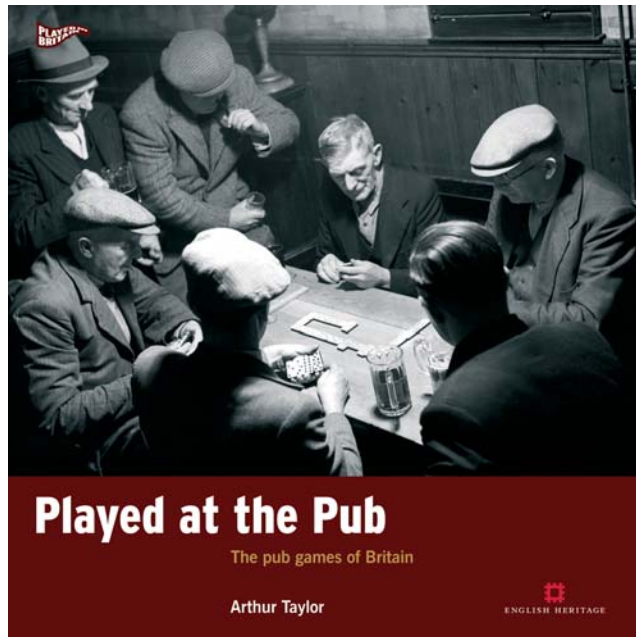
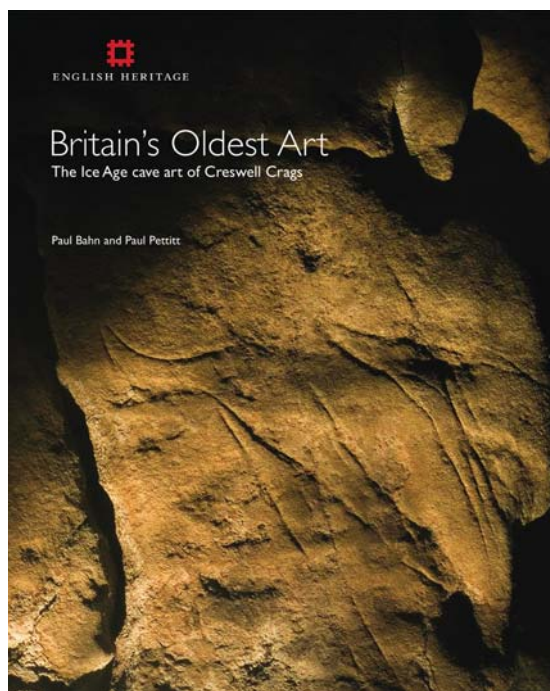
In 2003 Britain's first Ice Age cave art was discovered at Creswell Crags on the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire border, a limestone gorge honey-combed with caves and smaller fissures that was among the most northerly places on earth to have been visited by our ancient ancestors.

The book starts with the discovery of the art, places the Ice Age archaeology of the crags in a national context, draws on continental parallels and details the scientific verification of the art. It concludes with a chapter on the national search for other examples of Ice Age cave art. It is illustrated throughout with atmospheric images of birds, deer, bison and horse and provides a definitive list of the motifs, each with a photograph, line drawing and full description.

PUBLICATION DATE: March 2009

PRICE: £14.99+ £2.00 P&P

ISBN: 9 781 84802 025 2 Paperback, 128 pp



SPECIAL OFFER

Until 31 May 2009 all of the titles featured above can be obtained free of the normal £2.00 postage and packing charge through English Heritage Publishing Mail Order Sales at the address shown below (please quote CONBULL 60).

Publications may be ordered from:

English Heritage Publishing Mail Order Sales,
c/o Central Books, 99 Wallis Road, London E9 5LN
tel: 0845 458 9910; email: eh@centralbooks.com

Please quote the appropriate ISBN and make all cheques payable in sterling to Central Books Ltd. Publications may also be ordered from www.english-heritage.org.uk



Please remember to recycle this publication when you no longer need it.



Mixed Sources

Product group from well-managed forests, controlled sources and recycled wood or fiber
www.fsc.org Cert no. SGS-COC-003231
© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council



Conservation Bulletin appears three times a year. It is printed on paper made from chlorine-free pulp sourced from sustainable managed forests.
ISSN 0753-8674

Product Code: 51488

Subscription enquiries and change of address: tel: 020 7973 3253;
email: mailinglist@english-heritage.org.uk

Additional copies: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

Guest editor: Steven Bee

Editorial and project management: Whimster Associates Ltd;
tel: 01672 521525; email: r.whimster@eclipse.co.uk

Layout: Libanus Press Ltd

Printed by: Pureprint

Web version: www.english-heritage.org.uk

© English Heritage 2009

English Heritage is the Government's lead body for the historic environment.

English Heritage, 1 Waterhouse Square, 138-142 Holborn, London EC1N 2ST

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact
our Customer Services department:
Telephone: 0870 333 1181
Fax: 01793 414926
Textphone: 01793 414878
E-mail: customers@english-heritage.org.uk