

Conservation Bulletin, Issue 6, October 1988

Monuments Protection Programme	1–2
Editorial	3
Conserving corroded ironwork	4–5
Church grants	6–7
European Community heritage awards	7
‘Visitors welcome’	7
Larkin portraits restoration	8–10
News and diary dates	10, 12
Grants, April – July 1988	11
Rescue archaeology funding	12
‘Emergency repairs’	13
Historic towns	14–15
Damage to monuments	15
Correspondence	15
Organisation chart	16

(NB: page numbers are those of the original publication)

THE MONUMENTS PROTECTION PROGRAMME

One of English Heritage’s major initiatives is the Monuments Protection Programme, whose aim is to review the national lists of scheduled monuments protected by law, to identify or redefine those which should be scheduled, and to collect up-to-date information to assist in decisions about their future use and management.

A report prepared in 1984 estimated that there were then in England over 300,000 recorded sites and finds, that the eventual number of records could be over 600,000, and that, to form a reasonable sample, some 60,000 rather than the present 13,000 monuments might need to be identified for scheduling.

The first two tasks were the need to review and develop scheduling records and procedures and the need to establish how up to 600,000 records could be assessed in a systematic and cost-effective manner as a basis for consistent professional decisions. At each stage, professional advice has been sought both from our internal Ancient Monuments Advisory Committee and from the County Sites and Monument Records and the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. We have also sought to test the proposals we are making on outside academic opinion.

THE RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS AND THE COMPUTER-BASED MAPPING SYSTEM

A new computer-based system for the text record of scheduled monuments has been designed for our use. This will also generate and drive some of the key administrative procedures. Our preferred system, awaiting approval from the Department of the Environment, is a DEC/VAX system which is compatible with the RCHM’s National Monuments Record. In addition, and perhaps of more general interest, we have introduced a computerised map record.



Caxton moated site, Cambridgeshire: the methods adopted by the Monuments Protection Programme have been planned to ensure that complex sites such as these can be

assessed against other well-preserved sites of different periods, as well as against other medieval moated enclosures (Cambridge University)

Although Ancient Monuments legislation was introduced more than a century ago, the mapping of scheduled areas was only begun in the 1930s. Some scheduled areas have never been mapped, and the present record based on paper maps requires complete updating and replacement. A new computer system, designed by Advent Systems Ltd, was purchased in November 1987 to hold this information which will be input by April 1989. It combines a 'backcloth' of 'raster-scanned' 1:10,000 OS map cover with 'overlays' (potentially up to 255) of digitised information and small amounts of text. Scheduled areas are contained on one 'overlay' and could eventually be combined with other conservation data (eg that for listed buildings) held on others.

EVALUATION AND NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The first step in the evaluation of up to 600,000 records must be their sub-division into groups of more manage-able size. Monuments which are sufficiently alike to allow direct comparison must be identified. To establish the classification to be used in the MPP we have embarked on a programme to produce 'monument class descriptions', covering the major data categories identified in the SMRs for each county, and this will be complete by Christmas of this year.

To qualify for scheduling, monuments must be of national importance. The criteria governing the required judgement as to whether a monument obtains this status or not were published by the Secretary of State in 1983. In order to establish a procedure for their systematic application, we have restated them in terms of three stages of evaluation.

CLASS CHARACTERISATION

A principal aim is that the schedule should be representative of the range of known monuments and thus properly reflect the history of the country. To help achieve a balanced schedule, four 'class characterisation' criteria are considered for each monument class:

period (currency) – the length of time over which a class of monument was built and used
rarity

diversity (form) – the variety of types within the class

period (representativity) – the extent to which a monument class characterises a period.

The application of these criteria to a monument class gives it a profile which can be compared nationally against other classes. Neolithic henges, for example, were in use for a long period, are relatively rare, form a few diverse types, and are characteristic of the Neolithic period. By comparison, medieval moated sites were built and used over a shorter period of time, are relatively numerous, exhibit a large variety of forms, but are only one of a number of monuments typical of their period. For a balanced schedule, this over-simplified example suggests that a higher proportion of Neolithic henges would have to be included than of medieval moated sites.

MONUMENT DISCRIMINATION

In order to identify which individual sites within each monument class are of national importance, six or seven 'monument discrimination' criteria are applied:

survival

group value (association) – that is, their association with monuments of other classes

potential – for example, water-logging can provide for the survival of rare and exceptional organic remains

documentation (archaeological)

documentation (historical) – a criterion which only applies to some monument classes

group value (clustering) – that is, association with other monuments of the same class

diversity (features) – the variety of component features present.

A further criterion applied at this stage aids future considerations of monument management:

amenity value – the extent to which a monument can be readily appreciated by the public because of its accessibility and as a good example of its class.

MANAGEMENT APPRAISAL

The principal aim of the MPP is to identify the most important sites which merit preservation. The third stage of evaluation therefore involves, amongst other things, the consideration of four 'management appraisal' criteria which can help to determine the most appropriate course of action at each site:

condition

vulnerability

fragility

conservation value – that is, overlap with other conservation interests.

During the second stage of the evaluation, when deciding which monuments within separate classes merit inclusion on the schedule, a simple scoring system can be used to assist professional judgement. Under each of the eight 'discrimination criteria', scores of poor (1), or average (2), or good (3) can be rapidly assigned to each of the monuments considered and a total score given which helps to rank individual monuments in relation to others of the same monument class. Work with pilot projects has shown that this system produces results broadly similar to accepted professional judgements, although it cannot replace them. Applying such a system ensures more accurate and consistent results than more intuitive approaches, since it applies all of the criteria to all of the monuments within each class. The procedures for evaluation have now been successfully established and a draft manual circulated, along with the first sets of descriptions necessary to define several classes of monuments.

THE APPLICATION OF THE PROGRAMME

Evaluation work has been under way for some time in the upland areas of Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor. On Salisbury Plain, given early consideration because of the exceptional survival of the historic landscape, evaluation work has been followed by the completion of scheduling recommendations, now under consideration by the Secretary of State.

Elsewhere, the systematic evaluation of data held by the county SMRs can begin as soon as these records can be fully consulted by the computer-based information retrieval system.

From Christmas 1988, work on evaluating the importance of monuments will begin the region covering Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire. This region has been selected simply because the SMRs of these adjoining counties were in a sufficiently advanced state of preparation. In the near future it is hoped that such work can also begin south-east England. As the programme of grant-aid for the establishment and computerisation of SMRs elsewhere in the country is completed during 1989–90, evaluation will commence throughout the rest of England. From April 1989 onwards, evaluation work will be followed by scheduling.

LIAISON

For the MPP to be successful and acceptable to those affected by scheduling it is important that good liaison is maintained with all interested parties. Those bodies representing the landowning and farming communities and planning matters in general have been and will continue to be formally consulted, particularly as we prepare to build up the rate of scheduling during next year. Owners and occupiers of nationally important monuments will be visited in advance of scheduling to inform them both of the

archaeological importance of the monuments concerned and the purposes of scheduling. The groundwork has now been laid: the systematic scheduling of sites of national importance can now begin.

BILL STARTIN

Antiquity 61 (1987), 393–408

EDITORIAL

DRAFT CARE OF CATHEDRALS MEASURE

In 1096 Bishop Herbert Losinga began building Norwich Cathedral. By the time of his death in 1119 the choir, the transepts, and the eastern bays of the nave had been completed. The cathedral is, of course, one of the great glories of English architecture and one of the great Houses of God.

In 1987, the Dean and Chapter decided to pierce an opening through part of the continuous blind arcading and wall which had stood intact for 850 years. They did so in the exercise of responsibilities vested in them for the care of the cathedral. It was a decision which they took after considerable thought and in the belief that the requirements of the living Church outweigh the desirability of preserving the cathedral as it stands. By piercing this north aisle wall the Dean and Chapter will be able to provide a solution to a number of complex problems. However, to those whose primary responsibilities are for conservation, the piercing of the wall can only be regarded as an intense tragedy, particularly as other solutions, even if more complex and expensive, did seem possible.

This action comes at a time when the General Synod of the Church of England is soon to consider a revised draft Care of Cathedrals Measure. The historical background to that consideration merits rehearsing, as it is bound to influence whatever emerges from the draft measure.

In 1913, the Government agreed that ecclesiastical buildings in use should be exempt from scheduling or listed building control and that the Church of England should continue to look after its own buildings. The Church of England introduced its own legislation and procedures in parallel with secular legislation, and much distinguished conservation work has been achieved under this code.

In 1971, the General Synod instructed its Standing Committee to approach the Department of the Environment to seek financial support from public funds for the repair of churches in use. After detailed consideration, the Department announced in 1975 that the Government had accepted in principle the case for State aid for places of worship in use. A scheme was devised which was for an initial period of not less than five years.

It was accepted that during that period it would be unnecessary to legislate on the ecclesiastical exemption from listed building control. The General Synod undertook to review the Faculty Jurisdiction system, under which the alteration of churches (but not cathedrals) is controlled. Grants were not to be applied to them, but the review was to cover cathedrals; these are, however, *sui generis*. Each is controlled by its own administrative body, usually a Dean and Chapter. In recent years they have been able to seek the advice of the Cathedrals Advisory Commission, but this has no statutory powers. The Department of the Environment issued a consultation paper in 1984 reviewing the ecclesiastical exemption and, at about the same time, a Faculty Jurisdiction Commission report, in which important recommendations were made for the introduction of a system of mandatory control over works to cathedrals, was published. English Heritage responded by agreeing that the control over works to cathedrals should continue to be vested in the Church, provided that the system recommended in the Faculty Jurisdiction Commission

report was implemented and that the advice of the Cathedrals Advisory Commission was made mandatory.

In 1986, the Government announced that places of worship would still in general be exempted from listed building control. In response, the Bishop of Rochester said that the Church of England was ready to make improvements in its system of care for both parish churches and cathedrals, particularly since they were assured of continuing financial support for redundant churches and encouraged by English Heritage's decision to continue making grants to churches in use.

In February 1988, a draft Care of Cathedrals Measure was considered by Synod. It was mainly based on the Faculty Jurisdiction Commission report which had been endorsed by Synod in York in 1984. The draft measure was rejected. The proposed mandatory system was criticised, its complexity was attacked, and the introduction of a system formalising the separateness of the cathedrals from their dioceses was questioned.

A revised draft Care of Cathedrals Measure has now been prepared. It is designed to improve safeguards against the arbitrary alteration of cathedrals and, although it could be amended to make it more effective, it does look better than the draft measure rejected in February. But its impact would depend upon how fully Deans and Chapters act within the spirit of the legislation. The draft scheme envisages that they would themselves determine when proposals require approval in accordance with the measure and would direct 'minor' ones to the local Fabric Advisory Committee and 'major' ones to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission. Furthermore, the Fabric Advisory Committees would be empowered to remove from the scope of the measure classes of proposal which would normally be referred to the Commission. Clear and binding criteria are needed, therefore, to define the works covered by the measure: it should identify those which are minor and would not go beyond the Fabric Advisory Committee, and those which should be approved by the Cathedrals Fabric Commission. We believe, however, that these major cases should be routed via the appropriate Fabric Advisory Committee for its consideration and advice, rather than stem direct from the Dean and Chapter.

Further, the draft measure contains no enforcement provisions – a standard feature of all secular legislation and certainly part of the legislation covering non-ecclesiastical listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which this measure should echo.

The task which the Church of England – and all other churches – face in their responsibilities as guardians of the spiritual health of the nation is immense. The kinds of issues which faced the Dean and Chapter at Norwich Cathedral will doubtless continue to arise frequently and powerfully as society changes. On occasion, physical features of the glorious heritage of cathedrals and churches may not readily satisfy changing needs. English Heritage will wish to cooperate in working towards an improved draft measure and towards its effective implementation when enacted. In doing so they will look for a demonstration that the heavy responsibilities which the ecclesiastical exemption brings are accepted along with its privileges.

PETER RUMBLE

Chief Executive

CONSERVING CORRODED IRONWORK

LOW PAVEMENT, NOTTINGHAM

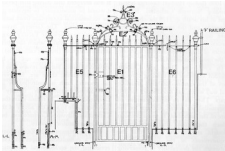
During 1987 and 1988 the original 1733 wrought iron railings to the important early eighteenth century town house, Vault Hall, 24–26 Low Pavement, Nottingham, were the subject of a pioneering conservation and research project at the Ornamental Smiths' Workshop of English Heritage. Ironwork which had been deemed irreparable was carefully

conserved and repaired under the supervision of its Research and Technical Advisory Service (RTAS). Vault Hall is listed Grade II* and the railings are listed Grade II* in their own right.

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

During 1986, in the course of renovations to the building by the current owners, the railings were taken down as it had been decided that they were severely corroded and should be replaced by copies in mild steel. RTAS was contacted by the Conservation Officer of Nottingham City Council for an assessment of whether, despite their poor condition, the original railings could be conserved and repaired. Although corrosion was severe, it was localised. The appearance of the railings was severely disfigured by chips in the thick paint (78 coats) under which much of the metal remained in pristine condition. Most of the evidence required to replace severely corroded or missing parts could be found on the railings, with the remainder coming from the excellent photographs from the local history archive.

The Vault Hall railings were an ideal subject on which to test the practicality and cost-effectiveness of repair rather than replacement. Their historical value and craftsmanship demanded a conservation approach. The project was primarily funded by the owners, the Sun Alliance Corporation, but the research was funded by RTAS, and there were contributions from Nottingham City Council and Nottingham County Council.

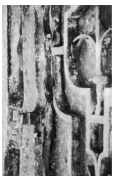


The project began with the preparation of measured drawings and the scheduling of the numerous individual repairs; replacement, shown hatched, was kept to an absolute minimum

THE PROJECT PROCEDURE

The railings had been removed from the site before we became involved. As it had not been intended to reuse any sections, the rails and bars had been cut off a short distance from the masonry, leaving 3–4in stubs of iron *in situ*.

The sections were sorted and labelled before delivery to the Workshop, where the task of arranging the original assembly began. A set of measured drawings of all sections of the railings was prepared by the English Heritage Drawing Office. Next, paint samples were taken for microscopic analysis by the Crown Buildings Monuments Advisory Group, and the original colour identified. This was a warm grey in an eggshell finish. This colour has since been found on two other sets of gates of similar age in Nottingham and is known to have been used on early eighteenth century ironwork elsewhere in the country. The coat of arms of the Gawthorn and Austen families was also researched and the true heraldic colours determined.



Some members, such as this stay bar, had to be dismantled before their true condition could be appreciated: the sections of wrought iron were replaced, with wrought iron detailed and fixed in the traditional manner

CLEANING

In the workshop the railings were cleaned of rust, paint, and loose mill scale by flame-cleaning, so that their features and true condition could be seen more clearly. Flame-cleaning was selected because of its ability to clean into inaccessible areas, such as the roots of water leaves which had been zones of water retention and corrosion. Abrasive cleaning would have meant a reworking of the iron surface, albeit a slight one at low pressure. The slower pace of the flame-cleaning meant the ironwork could be inspected and assessed in detail, in particular noting previous unsympathetic repairs in mild steel and modifications such as the cutting off of scroll ends.

REPAIR AND CONSERVATION

The primary aim of the Low Pavement project was to conserve as much of the original ironwork as possible. Various types of repair ranging from 'doing nothing' through to mild treatments, such as patching and minor repairs, and, as the final resort, replacement were considered for individual areas. Any element which was replaced was prepared in wrought iron by the same traditional blacksmithing techniques as those originally used. It was decided that, to be faithful to the age of the ironwork, its elements should exhibit their age with a certain amount of loss due to corrosion. Therefore, elements were only replaced when they were no longer able to perform their original function, the corrosion zone provided a significant water-trap situation which would encourage further decay, or when the original design intention of an element, or its context, was significantly disfigured.



A section of the gate pier and railing on completion: the original warm mid-grey colour, identified by microscopic analysis of paint samples, has been reinstated, breaking the twentieth century tradition of painting iron railings black

Wherever possible, corroded areas were refilled with wrought iron in preference to replacement. Where this was not possible, an epoxy-based filler was used. Where an original junction between members had to be replaced, the original detail was repeated. Original fixing details were not replaced with the modern technique of fusion welding. Second-hand re-rolled wrought iron bar and sheet was used as the replacement material for the wrought iron sections of the railing. Grey cast iron was used to replace the missing sections of the cast iron railing. Finally, the individual repairs were recorded on a series of detailed drawings.

WORK UNDERTAKEN

The ironwork of the Low Pavement railings had corroded in areas where a continuous paint coating had not been maintained. The sections of iron which had been close to a wall top or building alignment and hence were difficult to paint during maintenance work were found to be the areas which were most heavily corroded and therefore required most extensive replacement. Deep but localised pitting was found where corrosion had been overpainted. Where a continuous paint coating had been maintained, the original metal surface with arrises and tool marks remained. Distortions due to corrosion at water traps were realigned wherever possible. As the ends of all bars which had entered the masonry had been cut off during removal, new wrought iron ends had to be welded on.

The next most common items which required replacement were the scroll ends to the tops of the bars and within the gate and pillars. These were fashioned out of tapering wrought iron bar and affixed to the original scroll, with a minimum loss of original material.

Once a section of railing had been completed, it received a flash-flame clean immediately followed by a coat of primer. The paint system used was two coats of zinc phosphate epoxy primer followed by one of an alkyd undercoat and two of alkyd topcoat. Great importance was placed on thorough preparation of the iron, as this is known to greatly enhance the length of life of a paint system.

The work of refixing the railings was undertaken in June 1988 by Workshop and RTAS staff. An immense amount of extra work was required because we had not been involved in taking down the ironwork, and therefore had no details as to how it was fixed and installed.



The overthrow and top of the lesser gate on completion of the job: the delicacy and irregularity of the early eighteenth century forge work is a visual delight in this important civic context

THE VALUE AND UNIQUENESS OF THE PROJECT

The Low Pavement project has shown the high importance of preliminary research and inspection of ironwork, prior to the preparation of detailed documentation in which the appropriate conservation or repair technique selected for each element is identified. This must be done by those experienced in ironwork and its decay. It is essential if historical ironwork is to be truly conserved and repaired rather than replaced. In the commercial sector, this is the only way of ensuring truly competitive tendering.

On 22 July the completion of the project was celebrated by a ceremony at which the Chief Executive of English Heritage handed over the keys of the gates to the Lord Mayor of Nottingham, who in turn presented them to the owners. The project is a 'first' in the conservation of historical ironwork to the standard it deserves and had already captured the interest of many individuals and bodies throughout the country. It has also injected new enthusiasm into the creation of the historic walk between the Lace Market and Castle of Nottingham of which Low Pavement forms part.

NICOLA ASHURST

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CHURCH GRANTS

Earlier this year the Government announced a package of measures designed to relieve churches in England of some of the burden of the new community charge. There are three main elements of the package:

- i an increase of £3 million a year in English Heritage's grant-in-aid from 1990–91 onwards for spending through our existing church grant schemes
- ii an increase in both the share and amount of funding provided by the Government to the Redundant Churches Fund, which maintains and manages redundant Anglican churches of major historic and architectural importance
- iii some widening of rate relief for church property.

Since the announcement was made, officers of English Heritage and members of its Advisory Committee on Churches have been assessing the various options that exist for spending this additional money. We are to take account of the scale of the proposed increase, which is equivalent to more than 50% of our present level of repair grants to places of worship in use, and the consequent need to ensure that the necessary staff and administrative procedures are in place, and that the extra resources available are deployed effectively, stimulating new work rather than merely forcing up prices.

We have so far identified four options which would take up about half of the additional resources to be made available:

i To increase our expenditure on grants for the conservation of contents of churches. Current expenditure through the Council for the Care of Churches is about £90,000 a year, with a few additional single large grants made directly to the churches concerned, and we are thinking in terms of at least doubling the amount we spend in this area in the future. This still will not be nearly enough to meet the total need, but increasing expenditure any further will require an increased flow of trained conservators and improved arrangements for managing the projects.



The Jireh Chapel, Lewes: a good example of the sort of nonconformist chapel, with fine contemporary fittings, which could be helped by the creation of a trust to assist in the preservation of such buildings

ii We propose to provide some extra resources through Section 10 grants for places of worship seriously at risk in conservation areas. We think that this will particularly benefit non-Anglican churches and chapels, many of which are not eligible for grant under the normal grant scheme for outstanding churches.

iii One of the most threatened historic building types is the redundant non-Anglican church or chapel. Their interest as historic buildings frequently lies in their interiors and almost any economic alternative use will tend to damage or remove their fittings and galleries and is likely also to destroy to a greater or lesser extent their essential spatial qualities. There is no equivalent to the Redundant Churches Fund for non-Anglican buildings; English Heritage would therefore like to use some of the extra money to promote the creation of a trust, either an entirely new body or an existing organisation, which would look after the very best of our redundant non-Anglican churches and chapels.

iv Finally, English Heritage's current budget provision for church repair grants is not sufficient to meet all eligible demand or to enable us to fund longer-term repair programmes as opposed to the most urgent and immediate repairs, and we propose to increase it to meet these needs.

We estimate that the cost of these four measures would be about £1.5M a year, the fourth item being the largest. The choice facing us for the allocation of the other £1.5M is whether to use it to increase the size of grants to those buildings which presently attract a grant or to increase the number of churches to which grant is offered. The former could be achieved by retaining the existing criteria for grant eligibility and generally increasing the level of grant offered; the latter would involve a redefinition of the requirement that places of worship receiving grant should be of outstanding historic or architectural importance in national terms to cover a somewhat wider range of buildings. Both proposals have obvious advantages and disadvantages, but a choice has to be made as the additional resources to be made available will not allow both options to be implemented.

We have begun to consult interested bodies about the choice of measures for the use of the extra funds and how certain options could best be implemented.

In parallel with the distribution of this additional money, English Heritage will also be increasing its involvement in the assessment of repairs and alterations to churches. The Church of England has agreed to English Heritage representation on the Diocesan Advisory Committees, which consider repair and alteration proposals for historic churches

in their area; and once new regulations under the Housing and Planning Act 1986 have been implemented, English Heritage will be formally consulted about a specified range of alterations to listed buildings under a revised faculty jurisdiction measure. We hope that the combination of additional resources and greater involvement in decision-making will allow English Heritage to provide a more substantial input to the work done by the Church of England and other denominations and faiths in looking after their great store of outstanding historic buildings.

OLIVER PEARCEY

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AWARDS FOR ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE PROJECTS

For several years the European Commission has made awards to conservation projects involving monuments and sites of European renown. It acts on the advice of a committee of national experts. This year there was a budget of 3 million ecus (around £2M), and the United Kingdom secured four awards worth around £235,000. These were for Robert Owen's New Institute and Mill at New Lanark in Scotland, the Mast House and Mould Loft at Chat ham Dockyard, Winchester Cathedral, and the Jireh Chapel in Lewes.

Hitherto applications have had to be submitted in the spring and awards have been made by about the end of July. The European Commission has now decided that awards should be made at the beginning of the year and applications submitted in the preceding autumn. It is therefore expected to issue a notice soon, requesting applications for the 1989 awards to be submitted by November this year. People with conservation projects should consider now whether to submit an application and begin to prepare it.

This year over 80 applications went forward from the UK. This is gratifying, but quite a number did not comply with the terms of the award scheme. As English Heritage has the task of advising the European Commission on the eligibility of applications, we are concerned that more regard is paid to the criteria. The principle ones are:

the monument or site must be of *European renown* and illustrate some aspect of the national or regional architectural heritage; too many projects at present are of mainly local significance

projects must be in receipt of a subsidy from another public or similar organisation, at least equivalent to the Commission grant

the public must have access to the monument or site

the monument or site and the proposed works must be described not only on the standard form (obtainable from the Commission's office in London), but also in supporting documentation.

As one of the judges for the 1988 awards, I can underline the importance of good supporting material: it needs to be visually attractive, to highlight the merits of the monument or site and the quality of the proposed conservation work, and to be succinct. The judges were faced this year with assessing over 400 projects in two days!

R.B. BUTT

VISITORS WELCOME

The ever-increasing numbers of visitors to archaeological sites and exhibitions around the country testify to a lively public interest. English Heritage has been attempting to develop ways of making excavations in particular more approachable for visitors, and some of these were outlined in the last *Conservation Bulletin*. *Visitors welcome* is the title of a new manual, published in September on our behalf by HMSO, which attempts to offer practical

guidance on the problems of opening a site – or indeed any open-air attraction – to the public.

The manual, written by Gillian Binks, John Dyke, and Philip Dagnall of the Centre for Environmental Interpretation at Manchester Polytechnic, offers project managers who wish to present their work to the public guidance on how to put a complex story across effectively. It discusses what the visitors themselves may wish to learn, what means of communication may be most rewarding, and suggests many different ideas for the presentation of the site or its materials to stimulate interest and to increase the visitor's enjoyment. Sections of the book deal with school visits, with the potential for generating income, and with opportunities for sponsorship and maintaining good public relations. A long technical appendix gives a number of specific tips and examples, as well as providing samples of the sorts of costs involved.

Although the manual is written primarily for archaeologists who are keen to interpret to visitors what they are doing and why, many of the techniques which it describes will be applicable to any attraction where visitors are made welcome. Copies of the manual cost £25.00 each, and are available either through HMSO booksellers or from Room 235, English Heritage, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 2HE.

W LARKIN PORTRAITS AT RANGER'S HOUSE, BLACKHEATH

The Suffolk collection at Ranger's House, Blackheath, is best known for the outstanding series of nine Jacobean full-length portraits attributed to William Larkin (d 1619), which are among the finest – and also the very last – productions of that iconic, 'costume-piece' portraiture which dominated English painting during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. In 1978 a programme of conservation began to clean and restore this unique series, which had come into public ownership in 1974 with the gift of the Suffolk collection of paintings to the Greater London Council. When Ranger's House was transferred in 1985 to English Heritage, the programme continued, and six of the nine portraits in the series have now been conserved. This article examines not only the methods of restoration used and the key decisions taken in each case, but also the way in which findings made during conservation enabled us to arrive at a much clearer understanding of the portraits themselves. Questions of attribution, long and hotly debated, and our understanding of how an artist's studio functioned at this period were, although not resolved, certainly clarified by what was revealed, and the process is instructive of the way in which curator and conservator can collaborate fruitfully.

Collaboration was all the more important in this case, since so little concrete evidence survives as to how they were produced. With two exceptions this set of portraits, two male and seven female, are all of sitters related to the family of Thomas Howard, 1st Earl of Suffolk. However, although Sir Roy Strong has suggested that the set of female portraits was painted to commemorate an important dynastic marriage in 1614, that of Thomas Howard, the Earl's second son, to Elizabeth Cecil (five of the seven sitters are relations of either the bride or groom), there is no firm evidence to link any of these portraits with the Suffolk family until 1801. The artist who painted the portraits remains, as so often in Elizabethan or Jacobean portraiture, a shadowy figure. Despite references, which associate at least one of the sitters with Larkin, it had by no means been established that he was the artist, or that this set of portraits was by one man. Cleaning and restoration has provided a great deal of evidence to place the attribution of the paintings on firmer ground.



William Larkin's portrait of Lady Diana Cecil

Cleaning began in 1978 with the portraits of *Lady Isabella Rich* and *Lady Dorothy Cary*. However, it was with the later cleaning of the *3rd* and *4th Earls of Dorset* in 1982–4, and the sisters *Diana* and *Anne Cecil* (1985–7) that the project really came to maturity. With the exception of *Lady Dorothy Cary*, all of the portraits in the series have been cleaned by Alan Cummings, and the findings discussed here were made either by him or with his help. Conservation of the *3rd Earl of Dorset* began in 1982. This is unquestionably the finest in the collection, but the decision to conserve was taken entirely on the grounds of its poor condition; the adhesion of canvas to ground was breaking down, and the 'cupping', or raising of paint layers was by now disturbing. Before work began, the painting was X-rayed by the Courtauld Institute of Art's Conservation Department. The portrait was also examined under ultra-violet light and on an infra-red *videcon*, while the cross-sections taken were invaluable in showing us the layers used as the painter built up his paint. Although the X-ray itself yielded little information directly relevant to conservation, the distinctive bands of highlighting on the face would later provide a direct technical link between this and other 'Larkins' in the collection when they, in their turn, were X-rayed. This was one of only two portraits in the series where it was decided, reluctantly, that it would be necessary to reline the canvas. In addition to the raised edges of paint, the tacking edges were so weak that this proved inevitable. The corner bar stretcher was also unable to bear the extra weight of the new lining and had to be replaced. Cleaning, which preceded relining, threw up a number of intractable problems. While the paintwork on the sitter's costume was relatively intact, vast areas of the red curtains behind the Earl had been overpainted by an earlier restorer, whose dull, opaque brown paint now disfigured the bright crimson glazes underneath. This was particularly evident on the crisp 'metallic'-looking highlights which are a hallmark of Larkin's style, and which first enabled him to be identified as a separate hand, 'the curtain-master'. The original sharp highlights, like streaks of forked lightning, were in pink, not a matt orange, as now. The overpaint proved resistant even to strong solvents. While in places it could be softened and then removed with a scalpel, this was in most cases unacceptable, as damage would have occurred to the original paint layers. 'Corrective retouching', that is retouching on top of the restored layers, was therefore undertaken. Modern retouching is of course entirely reversible, and the evidence of the original paint layers was left intact, while the painting's surface appearance was substantially improved.



William Larkin's portrait of the 3rd Earl of Dorset

Another problem area was the carpet – a copy, reproduced by Larkin in meticulous detail, of the geometrical patterns on the oriental 'Lotto' carpets produced in Western Anatolia and imported into Europe in increasing numbers at this period. Here the crisp, geometric pattern in its bright primary colours of red, yellow, and blue had been lost by the darkening of the lead tin yellow pigment and the fudging by later restorers of areas of the pattern. The artist's intentions were so clear that it was possible to reconstruct the carpet to its original clarity and form. For the lace 'handkerchiefs' hanging from the garters, however, a different solution was adopted. Here, the smudgy 'impressionistic' effect was entirely out of character when compared with other pictures in the series – particularly that of the *4th Earl*. Despite this, there was no evidence to show that this detail ought to have been better, so modern retouching was not carried out.

Art historians have frequently commented on the finer 'modelling' of the *3rd Earl of Dorset*, both as compared with the companion portrait of his brother and successor, the *4th Earl*, and with the female portraits in the series attributed to Larkin. Conservation showed that this conclusion had been reached largely on the basis of the false impression created when the painting was still heavily overpainted. The crispness and overall clarity of the painter's style, in this and others of the Ranger's House pictures, now became apparent, and it was decided that in cleaning the series the general rule of retouching to the same high level of finish achieved by Larkin himself would be adopted.

Different problems arose when cleaning began on *Diana Cecil, Countess of Oxford* in 1985. This portrait has a 'twin' – that of her sister *Anne Cecil, Countess of Stamford*. Both girls are shown in identical 'slashed' dresses – an understandably short-lived fashion of the period – and the portraits are almost exact repetitions of each other. When cleaning began, it became evident that the discoloured varnish held a rare treat in store. The dress, which had been assumed to be white, was in fact a stunning pearly-grey satin. The dark emerald green curtains were entirely the work of a previous restorer: they were painted in veridian, a pigment not in use in Larkin's lifetime. All that was left of the artist's original intentions, over this vast area of the canvas, was the 'grisaille' underpaint, very fully modelled, fortunately, in the metallic troughs and highlights encountered in work on the *3rd* and *4th Earls of Dorset*. There was no option, with full varnish removal, but to take this later pigment off. Fortunately, there was something to match to: the original green had survived on the chair beside the sitter. The 'new' green, 1985 vintage, would have one major difference over the previous restorer's: it would simply be a reversible glaze over the top of the 'grisaille', so that the original modelling from the underlayer would show through to demonstrate the artist's original intentions.

It now became clear that it would not be sensible to proceed with cleaning *Diana Cecil*, without at the same time cleaning the companion portrait of *Anne Cecil*; otherwise vital evidence as to the artist's intentions might be lost. As expected, however, when *Anne Cecil* joined her sister in the studio, this portrait, too, had lost the original green curtains. But at least both paintings could now progress together, step by step.

As with the *3rd* and *4th Earls of Dorset*, opinion had held that *Diana Cecil* was much the finer of these two companion portraits. The theory that *Anne Cecil* was by an inferior assistant also had to be revised in the light of conservation. *Anne Cecil* had been so severely damaged, particularly in the head, one hand, and lower areas of the dress, that little of the original paint had remained on view, while this had also been flattened by relining. The head now emerged from cleaning, not as elegant perhaps as Diana's beautiful Jacobean mask, but fresher, and more full of individual character. The dress was of quite as high quality as in the sister portrait. A major decision here was to decide to do full justice to *Anne Cecil*, by retouching *both* paintings to the same high standard – even though this meant spending four times as much time on *Anne Cecil* as on *Diana*. As a result, both paintings have now emerged in their original and almost identical splendour. With six paintings now cleaned and examined from a technical point of view, it was possible to reach some tentative conclusion as to attribution. While there were indications of studio assistance in this series of portraits, they were largely a homogeneous product, and one artist could therefore be seen as the directing force behind them. The minor differences of handling were outweighed by the similar preparation in each case of the oddly-brushed grounds, the use of pigments, the building up of paint layers, and the pattern of distribution of lights and shadows.

Whether the artist was, indeed, Larkin himself is a rather different question. Marked similarities in technique, however, between the only known paintings attributable to Larkin, two portraits on copper at Charlecote Park, Warwickshire, the Ranger's House pictures, and other works associated with Larkin's name lead to the conclusion that these portraits are indeed his work. Thus, the artist, whose work was at first something of an art-historical invention, can now be recognised as an artistic personality in his own right.

ANNE FRENCH

Ranger's House is open daily, Feb–Oct 10.00–17.00, and Nov–Jan 10.00–16.00, admission free.

EDUCATION BRANCH PUBLICATIONS

The most recent Teachers' Pack to have been published is 'The Avebury monuments', price £3.50. This contains a teachers' handbook, plus separate sections which provide a stimulating variety of materials aimed at pupils in different age ranges, including secondary students preparing for GCSE. The exercises are based on first-hand observation and deduction at the sites and the use of documentary evidence in classroom preparation and follow-up work.

Other new Teachers' Packs feature Totnes and Carisbrooke Castles and St Augustine's Abbey. For a complete list of the Education Branch's publications, including audio-visuals, please contact Ken Glen at its new address, Room 116a, Keysign House, 429 Oxford Street, London W1R 2HD, telephone 01-355-1303.

COUNTY LISTS OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

One of the initial aims of the Monuments Protection Programme has been to review and check thoroughly the existing lists of monuments scheduled under the Ancient Monuments Acts. This exhaustive process is now coming to a conclusion and the first few lists, by county, of monuments on the schedule as at 31 December 1987 are now available. There is now a rolling programme which should result in the publication of all of the lists by early in the New Year. At present, Hertfordshire, Berkshire, and Avon are ready, and these will be closely followed by Northamptonshire, Essex, Derbyshire, and Greater Manchester. Each of them can be purchased separately from Room 235, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 2HE (01-734-6010 ext 401) for £2.50, to include postage and packing.

CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC PARKS, GARDENS, AND LANDSCAPES

Details of the 1988–9 programme of courses to be run by the Historic Parks and Gardens section of the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies at York are now available. Three new courses are being introduced this year, on 'Presenting historic parks and gardens to the public', 'Urban and industrialised landscapes', and a summer school on 'The country house in the 1990s'. For further information contact IoAAS, The King's Manor, York YO1 2EP; telephone numbers there have recently changed: the Historic Parks and Gardens Section is now York (0904) 433966, and the Conservation Studies Section 0904-433963.

GRANTS OFFERED BY ENGLISH HERITAGE APRIL–JULY 1988

The following statistics cover the conservation grants offered by English Heritage during the period April to July 1988. They include grants offered throughout the country for a wide variety of projects at archaeological sites, historic buildings, and conservation areas.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Cost

<i>Section 3A</i>	Number	(£000)
New offers (churches)	151	2126
New offers (secular)	139	3743
TOTAL	290	5869

In July, a further grant of nearly £60,000 was offered towards an ongoing programme of repairs at **Burghley House, Stamford** (Cambridgeshire). The work includes more re-roofing, masonry repairs, replacement of metal windows, and floor strengthening. **Dairy Farm Barn, Shotesham** (Norfolk) is considered to be the finest timber-framed barn in Norfolk, and contains the only known occurrence of a double queen post roof in a barn. The thatch is threadbare, the barn is clad in a patchwork of cheap materials, and the timber frame is badly rotted and split. However, we have recently offered a grant of £26,500 to carry out repairs.

HISTORIC AREAS

Cost

<i>Section 10</i>	Number	(£000)
New offers	162	1382
Increased offers	31	70
TOTAL	193	1452

Demand for grant has remained high and we have offered over half as much again grant-aid as in the same period last year. Among the major grants was an offer of £70,000 for the repair of the **Military Hospital, Berwick on Tweed** (Northumberland). This Grade II* building is reputedly the first purpose-built regimental hospital in the country. An offer of £40,000 has been made to the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust towards the repair of the **Matlock Bath Old Railway Station** (Derbyshire), which is to be converted into a countryside information centre. A grant of £32,000 has been offered to the Buckingham Town Trust for the repair of the **Old Gaol**, which has stood empty in the middle of the conservation area for a number of years.

LONDON

Cost

<i>Section 3A</i>	Number	(£000)
New offers (secular)	4	143

Increased offers (secular)	3	63
New offers (non secular)	5	239
Increased offers (non secular)	11	78
TOTAL	23	523

Cost

<i>London Grants</i>	Number	(£000)
New Offers	65	203
Increased Offers	9	25
TOTAL	74	228

Cost

<i>Section 10</i>	Number	(£000)
New Offers	35	347
Increased Offers	5	65
TOTAL	40	412

Section 3A grants were made to a wide variety of sites including £9292 for repairs to **Upminster Windmill**, £15,000 for the **Sir John Soane Museum**, £38,401 for **All Souls Chapel, Kensal Rise Cemetery**, and £80,585 for a long-neglected group of early eighteenth century houses in **Albery Street, Deptford**.

Church grants in London are dominated by the problem of the great works of the Victorian Gothicists all coming up for their first major overhaul at the same time. Current grant cases include no less than four of J L Pearson's churches for which the largest grant was £154,239 towards roof and external repairs to **St Peter's, Vauxhall**.

Section 10 grants in London are concentrated in Priority Conservation Areas, all of which at present are in the inner London boroughs such as Hackney, Lambeth, Southwark, and Tower Hamlets. One of the larger grants was £25,000 towards the reinstatement of railings and pavements outside **St Michael's Church, Stockwell**.

London grants are usually relatively small and tend to be used to obtain a standard or extent of repair which could not otherwise be achieved. Cases of particular interest include £7838 towards repairs to the **Milkmaid Drinking Fountain at Gloucester Gate, Regents Park**, £10,000 towards repairs to **St Anne's Church, Wandsworth**, and £7382 towards the reinstatement of the central statue on the elevation of the **Hackney Empire Theatre**.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS

Cost

<i>Rescue</i>	Number	(£000)
New offers	53	414
Increased offers	13	32
TOTAL	66	446

Cost

<i>Section 24</i>	Number	(£000)
New offers	43	419
Increased offers	1	25
TOTAL	44	444

Cost

<i>Management agreements</i>	Number	(£000)
New agreements	14	8
Renewed agreements	17	18

Grants have been made to a number of continuing major cases (for example, a grant of £160,000 to the National Trust for excavation and consolidation work on the Steel Rigg to Housesteads section of **Hadrians Wall**), and also to many new projects including a twentieth century pit-head structure at **Magpie Mine** (Derbyshire) and the Roman site at **Fishbourne** (West Sussex).

At **Wigmore Castle** (Hereford and Worcester), one of the major centres of government in the Welsh Marches, we are beginning a programme of work designed to improve the management of the castle. Wigmore is one of the few major castles to have escaped excavation and restoration, and the objectives of the present work will be to arrest the deterioration of the castle's fabric while retaining as much as possible of its historic integrity and character. Grants have been made for urgent work to prevent masonry collapse and to draw up a detailed survey of its condition on which to base decisions about its future. A programme of archaeological recording is also being prepared.

We are also embarking on an ambitious programme of work initiated by Harrogate Borough Council at **Knaresborough Castle** (North Yorkshire) to carry out essential repairs and improve presentation. Knaresborough is the only royal castle where building work occurred during the reign of Edward II, and the first stages of work, including archaeological excavation, will concentrate on Edward II's keep.

PAUL HOPPEN

RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY FUNDING FROM RESERVE IN 1987–8

For some years the rescue archaeology programme funded by English Heritage has been managed in two parts. First, a programme of projects in progress which is reviewed and agreed with grant recipients at the beginning of each financial year, and second a contingency fund which has been held back for the purpose of dealing with new, emergency projects which arise during the year. The ongoing programme by its very nature is concerned with the preparation of excavated material for publication, and new excavations are funded from the reserve – together with processing work arising from those projects and work undertaken in the past. To obtain a complete picture of the programme it is necessary to take an overview of both parts, and this is done by means of a publication which has appeared every year since 1981.

During the year 1987–8, 192 grants with a total value of £1.53M were made to archaeology projects from the contingency reserve. Apart from a small number of survey grants, the projects thus funded include 82 excavations (£.85M) and 101 post-excavation projects (£.63M), either arising from that programme or from work done previously. These grants are only a part of the resources currently being directed to recording our past before it is destroyed by development. Developers, both public and private, are now increasingly willing to fund an archaeological record in advance of their works, and local authorities are prepared to regard archaeological sites as a material consideration in the planning process, thus placing the emphasis on preservation rather than recording before destruction.

The excavation projects funded from reserve in 1987–8 cover over 400,000 years of human settlement in Britain from the earliest remains of Palaeolithic man to structures of the Industrial Revolution. The remains of some of the earliest settlements in the country have been investigated at Boxgrove (West Sussex), Clacton (Essex), and Dunbridge (Hampshire). The remains are of the stone tools and the bones of the animals – bear, horse, and elephant – that were hunted at this remote time. Later prehistoric settlements, burials, and ceremonial monuments have been investigated in advance of trunk road

schemes at Dorchester (Dorset) and Barford Park Farm (Warwickshire); building construction at Goldingtonbury Farm (Bedfordshire), Trethellan Farm, and Reawla (Cornwall); the third London airport at Stansted (Essex); agricultural developments at Haddenham (Cambridgeshire); and tidal erosion at the Stumble in the Blackwater Estuary (Essex). Trunk road schemes have also necessitated excavations along the line of Hadrian's Wall west of Newcastle and across a small Roman town at Hibaldstow (Humberside), whilst building developments have resulted in excavations within the Roman towns of Cirencester (Gloucestershire), St Albans (Hertfordshire), and Littlechester (Derbyshire), and within the Roman civil settlements at Papcastle (Cumbria) and Lancaster.

Agricultural operations can damage archaeological sites, and the early medieval settlements at Thwing and West Heslerton (North Yorkshire) have been investigated in advance of deep ploughing. Trunk road construction has also necessitated extensive excavations across the centre of the medieval village of Burton Dassett (Warwickshire), whilst the construction of a reservoir at Roadford (Devon) has resulted in the investigation of a piece of Devon landscape including three farms. Excavations have also been funded in towns where other resources were not forthcoming. These include Kendall and Hartlepool in the north, Spalding, Norwich, Leicester, Hertford, and Chelmsford in the midlands and East Anglia, and Gloucester and Windsor in the south.

The primary duty of English Heritage is to preserve archaeological sites wherever this is possible. Other pressures may result in their destruction and in that case English Heritage looks to developers – whether public or private – to fund the cost of the necessary record. Should this not be possible, then English Heritage will fund the record within a framework of academic priorities that have been set out by the archaeological profession. The projects funded from reserve in 1987–8 demonstrate that commitment to the funding of a record of our past before it is destroyed remains strong in the face of the many other pressures on the English Heritage budget.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

GRANTS FOR STORM-DAMAGED PARKS AND GARDENS

The full English Heritage grant scheme for repair of damage to historic parks and gardens from the storm of 16 October 1987 was launched in late September. Clearance work will be grant-aided at 25%, while tree surgery, planting, and professional fees will be at 33.3%. Applicants are required to produce restoration schemes ensuring accurate historical reconstruction, and a condition of grant will be some degree of public access. Advisory booklets for owners and professional advisors on preparing restoration schemes are being distributed and are available on request from Room 314, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 2HE.

HERITAGE AND SUCCESSFUL TOWN REGENERATION

This is the title of a conference to be held at Halifax under the auspices of the Council of Europe's study programme on 'Integrated conservation of historic heritage' from 24–7 October 1988. It aims to explore the strategy of using heritage assets to revive towns as attractive places in which to live, work, and do business, and will focus on industrial and other towns in Britain, Europe, and America which are successfully using this approach. Further information is available from Conference Secretariat, Calderdale Council, 4–8 Old Arcade, Halifax, West Yorks HX1 1TJ, telephone 0422-47538.

APOLOGY

At the end of Brian Anthony's article entitled 'What is curtilage' in the last *Conservation Bulletin* we acknowledged the assistance of Robert Walker, but assigned him to the wrong

Council staff. He is Conservation Group leader at Cambridgeshire County Council, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AP, which is also the source for the publication entitled *The Cambridgeshire guide to historic buildings law* (price £11) referred to at the foot of the article.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Emergency repairs can play an important role in saving buildings. Often they are the first sign that someone believes the run-down building may have a future. A run-down building often needs investment and a change of ownership is sometimes necessary to achieve a remedy. Where these conditions cannot be met, there is probably a case for low-cost emergency repairs. Not only will these act as a stimulus to confidence in the building's future, but they may slow down the rate of building decay and so reduce the ultimate cost of repair. In some cases, too, important historic features may be saved from theft and vandalism. Emergency repairs will, in effect, buy an additional lease of life while a more assured future is negotiated.

There are many useful guidance manuals and courses on the permanent repair of old buildings. There is little guidance on temporary repairs, however, and no book which addresses the important and wider issues of emergency repairs and interim maintenance pending re-use of a permanent nature. In order to fill this gap, English Heritage has arranged for Eleanor Michell to complete a study of emergency repairs, which it will be publishing by the end of 1988. This action forms part of our wider campaign to identify and save buildings at risk, in particular listed buildings. In this we will be seeking the support of local planning authorities and conservation groups over the coming months.

The actual number of listed buildings at risk has been variously estimated. One of the most detailed and far-ranging surveys identified 7½% of listed buildings as being at risk. This survey, in Kirklees, West Yorkshire, may not be wholly representative, but even if the figure is lower – say 5% – it still indicates that 20,000 listed buildings are in need of attention involving at least some interim measures to safeguard their future. English Heritage hopes that other local authorities will follow this example by systematically surveying the buildings in their areas. The results will help to show where grant-aid and other assistance are most needed.



Rock Hall, Farnsworth, one of the case studies presented in the book, is a good example where prompt action by the local authority enabled a fine country mansion to survive long enough to find a new use and full repair

Eleanor Michell's book, *Emergency repairs for historic buildings*, covers three main themes – temporary repairs, the care of unused buildings, and temporary uses for historic buildings. Within a very carefully structured text, it examines the broad issues of safety, security, exclusion of water, treatment of various types of fungal growth, the external appearance, the protection of features of special interest, and arrangements for a building's temporary use. In doing so, it touches on such diverse subjects as graffiti, cocooning, birds, turret clocks, and community uses.

Particularly interesting and helpful are the 12 case-studies, which have been prepared and copiously illustrated with photographs and plans, rounded off with the details of costs and grants both for initial emergency and for later full repairs. Among the dedicated rescuers of

the buildings described are an entrepreneurial group, a historic buildings trust, bands of volunteers, determined local authorities, conservation teams, and museum groups. Despite the obvious merits of emergency action to save buildings, there is an overriding need to make plans for the future use of historic buildings in good time. Interim aid should not be delayed, even though the building may sometimes not yet appear to be in a desperate condition. Serious damage can occur within a very short time when a building has been abandoned; this can even occur after emergency repairs have taken place, and every effort should therefore be made to secure a temporary use as well.

BRIAN HENNESSY

CHESTER AND NORWICH – SAVING HISTORIC TOWNS

It takes sustained effort over many years to save historic towns. The essential character of an historic town must be recognised and identified; not just the physical fabric, but the social and economic life of the community which has developed in that place which gives both the people and their city a recognisable quality – a corporate identity and a corporate pride. A respect for the continuity of the evolution of a town's history is essential to conservation and, in these days of comprehensive redevelopment and reinforced concrete construction, there is even more need for care.

Conservation policies are an essential part of the planning process in historic towns. The presumption is in favour of repair rather than redevelopment. Sound conservation policies create confidence and attract the necessary investment, but not too much, to repair that which exists, and to add sensitively that which is needed to provide the framework for a living community in the modern world.

Four towns started this process 20 years ago with the great advantage of being invited by the government of the day to join commissioning reports by eminent consultants on the problems and opportunities facing their historic cities. Each of those councils – in Chester, York, Chichester, and Bath – responded to those initiatives by adopting policies which have survived subsequent elections and been carried through and developed by each succeeding council.

In Chester there has been a close partnership between Donald Insall, the consultant, and Cyril Morris, the Director of Technical Services. Ten years ago they undertook their first major review of the conservation programme and concluded that in most respects the conservation picture in Chester had improved out of all recognition. However, significant problems remained, and they identified both individual buildings and areas which needed priority action. They recognised the value of periodic assessment and recommended that a further review should take place in 1986. It has been a team effort, and the clear guidance which the team has given has transformed Chester into an outstanding example of what can be achieved. There have been problems, and failures too, and there are lessons to be learned for the future.



Magdalen Street, Norwich

Chester City Council has now published its Conservation Review study, and it can be recommended to all those with responsibilities for the care and future of other historic towns throughout the country. It is a fascinating account of the last 20 years work, giving an insight into the problems which have been faced and overcome, and which, hopefully, will inspire and encourage others.

If one wants to conserve an historic town, where does one start? Certainly, consultants can be employed and English Heritage is always happy to advise and assist any local

authority which wishes to ensure that its local plans are conservation-based. A local authority, however, can do much to help itself and the good old-fashioned planning techniques of survey, analysis, and plan should not be forgotten. There is no substitute for planners going out onto the streets with copies of Ordnance Survey plans and coloured pencils, or a sheaf of report forms on listed buildings, to make simple and effective surveys. It would be easy to wax lyrical about the views of the Cathedral, or make sketches of the Market Cross, but much of an historic town will be in good order. Concentrate, instead, on the problems. Which buildings are vacant, in whole or in part, or which are obviously in need of repair? English Heritage has recently helped to complete a sample survey of all the listed buildings in Kirklees, and we can now suggest a standard rating by which buildings at risk can be assessed.

The City of Norwich has, like Chester, pursued conservation policies over a long period of time. During 1985 however, both the Council and the public became increasingly concerned about the condition of historic buildings in the central area. Between June and September emergency works on four buildings caused the closure of three streets and, in addition, the Council was becoming increasingly concerned at the cost of repairing historic buildings owned by the City itself. The City Council, therefore, commissioned the architectural practice of Purcell, Miller, Tritton and Partners, to carry out a condition survey of listed and historic buildings in the central conservation area. The revised list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest of April 1986 contains a total of 972 entries, which represents 1566 buildings, within the city boundaries. There are 983 buildings in the inner conservation areas and 583 in the outer areas. In addition, there are 447 other important unlisted buildings in the central conservation area, giving a total of 2013 buildings which could be surveyed. The survey concentrated on the 1430 listed and historic buildings in the central conservation area, which included 200 buildings in the ownership of the City Council.

Norwich City Council, with the aid of Purcell, Miller, Tritton and Partners, has been able to survey all these buildings in a systematic manner and categorize them on a scale of 1 to 4; that is buildings requiring major repairs within 12 months, within five years, within ten years, or not requiring major repairs for at least ten years. There were 19 buildings classified as category 1, less than 2% of the total number of buildings surveyed, which were buildings requiring urgent repairs within one year without which the buildings would be at serious risk. The number of buildings in category 2, that is requiring major repairs within five years, came to 233. The report is illustrated with photographs of the buildings, copies of the survey sheets, and the notes.

The analysis of the surveys helped to show where grant-aid had been successful in improving the condition of buildings in the past and pointed to those areas and streets where further grant-aid should have a high priority. The survey of the condition of buildings was complimented by another survey of vacant floor space, which again helped to define the priorities becoming apparent from the condition survey and which allowed a programme to be drawn up for the next four years. The results are analysed in tabular and map form.

English Heritage has been contributing to the conservation programme in Norwich over the last five years, both by way of contributions to the town scheme and by way of Section 10 grants. The City Council has contributed its part of the town scheme grants and other grants under the 1962 Act. Copies of the report, and of the City Council's excellent information leaflets on 'planning matters' may be obtained from Anne Rostron, the Conservation and Design Group Leader, working for Brian Smith, the City Planning Officer.

I commend the report as an example of a systematic approach which should be generally adopted, and which helps to give the evidence which English Heritage will be looking for when considering establishing or renewing Section 10 or Town Schemes in the future. We

have to be able to assess need, not just demand, and make sure that what limited manpower and funds we have are used to the best effect. Chairmen of Planning Committees, District Planning Officers, and Conservation Officers alike will all find both the Chester report and the Norwich report to be of great interest.

MIKE PEARCE

Conservation in Chester, Chester City Council, £4.95; *Survey of historic buildings 1986/87*, City of Norwich, £5.00

DAMAGE TO MONUMENTS

Conservation of the man-made heritage is a matter of common interest to local and central government. Local authorities work in partnership particularly with English Heritage in a number of different ways, which include recording and safeguarding of the archaeological heritage and ancient monuments. Not surprisingly therefore, we share a concern about damage to scheduled sites and have agreed a guidance note on our respective responsibilities in instituting proceedings against offenders and about how the costs of these proceedings should be borne. This guidance note was issued by the local authority associations in June of this year.

The power to institute proceedings against those who are suspected of causing damage to scheduled archaeological sites under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 is not confined to the Secretary of State nor to English Heritage. It is open to anybody to do this, and a number of local authorities have already carried out successful prosecutions, using their local knowledge and archaeological expertise. The differing circumstances of each case and the levels of relevant expertise and resources possessed by individual local authorities make it impracticable for the guidance note to lay down hard and fast rules about who should take the lead in each case. The note does establish, however, that if a local authority is able and willing to institute proceedings, the opportunity is there for it to do so in consultation with English Heritage. If the authority is not able to take the matter forward, then the responsibility falls back on English Heritage.

Where local authorities are willing to take cases forward themselves, English Heritage will provide any evidence which may be required on the scheduled status of a site or reports of the inspection of the damage. It will also be prepared to consider making a contribution towards the costs of the local authority, provided that it has supported the case for prosecution and agreed financial assistance in principle before proceedings are instituted. The circular is intended to improve collaboration between local government and English Heritage, so as to strengthen the prosecution process and make expert and informed evidence readily available as required. By this means we hope both to increase the number of cases brought to court, where there is clear evidence that an offence has been committed, and to improve the chances of conviction. Copies of the circular can be obtained from either the local authority associations or from English Heritage.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

I think we all realise the huge pressures on you for grants and advice and we understand your reticence to consider aiding Grade II buildings. However, I would like to see a system of support given for regional characteristics such as thatch in Devon, tile cladding in Kent, pargetting in Essex, to ensure that they continue. Our local authority, for instance, do encourage retention of thatch and yet their total budget for all aspects of conservation is £15,000 per annum.

It seems that the more 'listed' buildings we have, the less there is to go around as the conservation budgets are being kept at the same level.

Yours sincerely,

Pauline Brain (Mrs)

Hon Sec, North Devon Conservation Society

Mrs Brain's letter raises some interesting problems. The statutory basis of our existing grant scheme confines our aid to historic buildings in conservation areas and to those judged to be of outstanding national importance. In practice this excludes many Grade II and Grade II buildings.*

However, we do encourage the preservation of regional characteristics in three ways: i by encouraging local authorities to resist the substitution of traditional materials and techniques by more modern ones when they are considering listed building consent applications, except where there are other overriding reasons for allowing their use; English Heritage adopts a similar line in advising on listed building consent cases that are referred to the Secretary of State for the Environment

ii by requiring the use of appropriate regional materials in the repair of buildings that we are grant-aiding; this indirectly assists buildings which we cannot grant-aid by improving the availability of traditional materials and techniques by maintaining a continuing demand for them

iii through direct financial assistance to producers of materials; in selected cases in the past we have grant-aided, for example, the re-opening of quarry faces in order to provide stone for the grant-aided repair of a building; we have occasionally provided grants for particular materials in an area, for example tilestones in parts of Cornwall. We are considering whether there is scope for providing more general assistance to the producers of hard-to-obtain traditional materials, although there are legal and practical difficulties in so doing.

We would certainly support the comment in Mrs Brain's last paragraph; while the majority of listed buildings will, now and in the future, have to be maintained by private owners without financial assistance, other than, perhaps, from a local authority. It is a matter of concern to English Heritage that the resources available to it for grant and for the provision of advice are standing still in the face of inflation, a growing number of listed buildings, and increased building costs.

CHAIRMAN

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu

and

COMMISSIONERS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

P W Rumble

CENTRAL SERVICES

Legal Services

D Trafford-Owen Ext 676

Administrative Services

D Begley Ext 492

Secretariat

Miss V Croft Ext 884

CONSERVATION GROUP

R Butt Ext 400

Room 243, Fortress House

Assistant Chief Inspector Historic Buildings

B J Anthony Ext 336

PROPERTIES IN CARE GROUP

Functions of this group closely related to conservation work include architectural, engineering and surveying services, the research and technical advisory service, the conservation studios and education.

HISTORIC AREAS DIVISION

M S Pearce Ext 850

Room 10,14 Clifford Street

Buildings at Risk

Mrs V Brand Ext 853

Planning Issues

T M Forde Ext 856

Research and Development

B A Hennessy Ext 854

Case work on Grants and Planning

Issues in Conservation Areas

South and West Region

Mrs A M McPherson Ext 855

Midlands and East Region

N P de Lange Ext 851

North Region

J J Read Ext 894

CHIEF INSPECTOR'S DIVISION

A D Saunders Ext 407

Room 240, Fortress House

Historic Buildings Listing Resurvey

P R White Ext 365

M B Robertson Ext 374

Ancient Monuments Scheduling/Monuments Protection Programme

D W Startin Ext 405

Ancient Monuments Laboratory

Dr C J Price Ext 523

Central Excavation Unit

J Hinchliffe Ext 390

Records Office

N Clubb Ext 555

Publications

Dr S Johnson Ext 892

HISTORIC BUILDINGS DIVISION

O H J Pearcey Ext 383

Room 324, Fortress House

Listed Building Consent Casework

Redundant Churches and Ecclesiastical Exemption Issues

Repair Grants for Outstanding Historic Buildings (Section 3A)

Local Authority Purchase Grants (Section 5B)

Historic Buildings Taxation Issues

Historic Gardens Issues

Historic Buildings Advisory Committee

Western Region

Miss J Kerr Ext 463

Northern & East Midlands Region

I K Jardin Ext 882

Eastern Region

R Halsey Ext 490

Principal Architect Ext 440
ANCIENT MONUMENTS DIVISION
Mrs E J Sharman Ext 429
Room 304, Fortress House
Scheduled Monument Consent Casework
Ancient Monument Grants
Rescue Archaeology Grants
Countryside liaison issues
Ancient Monuments Advisory Committee
South and West Region
Dr G J Wainwright Ext 413
Midlands and East Region
G J Fairclough Ext 420
North Region
P B A Hoppen Ext 474
LONDON DIVISION 01-734-8144
Miss S Andreae Ext 1
Room 202, Chesham House, 30 Warwick Street, London W1R 6AB
Divisional Architect
Dr P Whitbourn Ext 75
London Advisory Committee Secretariat
D Simpson Ext 3
Listed Building Consent Casework
Area Conservation
Redundant Churches Casework
Planning Issues
City, Camden, North East & North West
H Duckett Ext 132
Westminster, Kensington and South
J Lee Ext 128
Repair Grants for all Listed Buildings in London
Dr D Simpson Ext 3
J H J Yates Ext 137
Scheduled Monument Casework
Ancient Monument Grants
Rescue Archaeology Grants
Miss G Chitty Ext 62
Works Branch
T Bidwell Ext 18
Research, recording, blue plaques
V Belcher Ext 10
Telephone extension numbers relate to 01-734-6010 unless otherwise stated