Historic Places of Worship
The English Heritage strategy for historic places of worship

Richard Halsey *Places of Worship Strategy, Implementation Manager*

English Heritage will be working with many partners to support local communities caring for places of worship in order to secure a future for these buildings.

There are well over 18,000 listed places of worship in England, nearly 13,000 in the care of the Church of England. The buildings range in date from the 7th to the 20th century; many stand on sites that have a much longer history of human activity, and they contain some of the country's best art and craftsmanship. As active support declines in some areas, denominations are rationalising available human and financial support to maintain their core activities of mission and worship. Many congregations struggle to maintain these historic buildings, which are their sole responsibility and which have no realisable financial value until they cease to be used for religious purposes. Such specialised buildings are not easily converted to other uses, however, without the loss of the intrinsic architectural and historic interest for which they were listed. Of at least equal importance, their value as the central focus of a community and the embodiment of its history is also threatened.

It is now widely recognised that keeping these buildings in use for worship, in whatever form that takes, and possibly in combination with another subsidiary purpose, is most likely to secure their future (see Derrick, 12–13). There are many national and local organisations devoted to maintaining historic places of worship, which help congregations or trusts financially, but as congregations fall, concerted action is needed.

Securing the future

A recent survey revealed that 42% of people think that central taxation and Government are responsible for funding what are, in effect, publicly accessible buildings (see Griffiths, 7–9). In fact, from the abolition of Church rates in 1868 until the introduction of Government grants for places of worship in 1977, no regular funding came from taxation. Neither do the central denominational bodies regularly support fabric repairs, though a few grants and loans can be arranged locally. In particular, the Church Commissioners of the Church of England have no responsibility at all for existing parish churches; they essentially fund the clergy, new churches and central functions.

We all need to work in partnership to harness the huge support that exists within the general population.

It remains the task of thousands of volunteers to maintain and repair their places of worship, using whatever grants and advice they can get and, most importantly, seeking the active, as well as financial, support of the wider community.

That support is often readily given, but there is an uneven spread of historic church buildings in the population; eight rural Church of England dioceses contain 25% of the nation's churches set within only 11% of the population. Something like 12% of parish churches are in the smallest communities representing less than 1% of the population. They cannot organise fundraising and repairs alone.

Already, many professional people, such as architects and accountants, give freely of their time, but their help ought not to be presumed to continue forever. Others volunteer to help in many ways (see Cooper, 10–11). They need guidance and support to ensure that their aspirations are fulfilled. Running a medieval parish church is quite beyond the normal working experience of most people, and mistakes can be very expensive to correct, however well intended. English Heritage would like to help train and fund people to ensure that

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Church of All Saints, Newborough, Staffordshire (Grade II), by J Oldrid Scott, 1889–1902, on a medieval site. An integrated designation system will in the future facilitate recognition of the whole site value.

volunteers make the most of the support and resources they already have.

Rising costs

Since the introduction in 1977 of state-aid for places of worship in use, between 350 and 450 buildings have been offered major repair grants each year. Since the establishment in 1996 of the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage has worked in partnership jointly to offer a total of over £193 million (at 2003 prices), an average of £24 million per year for major works to all listed places of worship. In recent years, the number of buildings in receipt of grant-aid has remained steady at around 400, with almost the same number of applicants being turned down for lack of funds. Many of these grants, however, are awarded to places that have received them before – inevitable, perhaps, if small congregations are tackling a backlog of work. It is clear, though, that many more congregations should be applying.

According to a survey conducted in 2001, £98 million is the best estimate for annual expenditure on repairs and maintenance to places of worship per year. The same survey pointed up the wide variation in expenditure between denominations and types of buildings, but it also showed that a large number of congregations spent less than £10,000 per year. In one respect, this could be seen as encouraging, indicating that small-scale maintenance and cyclical repair are being addressed. On the other hand, it could indicate that only the symptoms, not the causes, of fabric problems are being attended to.

It is notoriously difficult to discover the size of the national bill for repairs or the timescale for getting them done. Estimating urgency and cost is not an exact science, being subject to an individual surveyor's philosophy of repair as much as any technical ability. In 1973, it was estimated that, if Government offered grants to the value of £1 million per year to listed places of worship, congregations should be

able to tackle the backlog of repairs. In *Church Needs Survey*, published by English Heritage and the Council for the Care of Churches in 1998, an estimation was given – based on an inspection of 119 Church of England and 18 non-Anglican places of worship (not all listed) in five representative areas – that annual grants of £38 million were needed to keep listed places of worship in good repair. Our Commissioners recently agreed to support initial work to establish these immediate fabric needs.

Adapting to change

Ensuring that a historic building has a viable and, therefore, sustainable use is the key to keeping it in good repair. One of the great joys of visiting churches is to understand how they have been adapted over time to match contemporary forms of worship and interests. Today's congregations also need to adapt their buildings to current needs, though re-orderings of interiors and external additions have always been controversial. To achieve changes that enhance rather than damage the architectural character, without losing important historic fabric or fittings, requires both knowledge of the significance of what exists and the skill to design and make new work worthy of its setting (see Pordham, 14–15; Serjeant, 16–17; O'Donnell, 18–19; Velluet, 20–21; Barter and Hatton 26–7; Durran, 28). Such issues are, of course, common to all historic buildings in use, but they become more critical for places of worship because these buildings are often the most significant in their locality and are seen to be part of the surrounding community.

English Heritage, as the lead body in the historic environment sector, wants to secure the future for as many historic places of worship as possible. It is the duty of English Heritage to protect the historic environment, but we need to have an eye on the future as well as the past to offer advice on what needs to be done now. We are, therefore, working with many partners to provide better information on the state of the historic places of worship in England. Money continues to be needed to pay for essential repairs, but where should the available funds be targeted? So far, grant schemes have been successful in putting many places of worship all over England into a good state of repair. Will those that have been repaired, however, be kept in good order (see Russell, 35)? How many buildings that require repairs have *not* been included in grant applications and for what reasons? Is it practical to expect the denominations to keep and use far more buildings than they need or to ask the gallant few to shoulder the burden of building maintenance without strong external support? Can new uses be found for these buildings to ensure that they continue to play a key role in the community?

New strategy

The first stage of our strategy, to be developed jointly with a number of partners, will include:

- Taking stock of the condition of the historic fabric, as well as the number of buildings with 'fabric at risk of loss'
- Examining the feasibility of running a maintenance grants scheme alongside established grants for major repairs
- Training people to help congregations understand the history and significance of the buildings in their care
- Creating a network of advisers to help congregations maintain the fabric of their place of worship
- Guiding congregations on the re-use and adaptation of historic places of worship, based on the experiences of the last 30 years.

If people understand their building, they will value it; by valuing it, they will want to look after it; in caring for it, they will help others enjoy it. From enjoyment comes a greater thirst to understand it and the 'virtuous circle' begins again.

With their graveyards, rectories and parish halls, the parish churches of England embody the social memory of communities.

We cannot expect congregations to have the same needs today as they did in the 1840s. Liturgy, like any other form of etiquette, is always in a state of subtle change. Today's ordering certainly wasn't yesterday's and is very unlikely to be tomorrow's.

We need to work out how we can help the daily worshipper and user of the church to understand just what it is about the building that they cherish and enjoy – what drives them to care for it.

Dr Simon Thurley, Chief Executive, English Heritage, from a speech to the annual conference of the Council for the Care of Churches, Canterbury, 11 September 2003

The Future of the Ecclesiastical Exemption
A way forward

Peter Beacham *Heritage Protection Director*

A far-reaching review of the future of this exemption is part of a major reform of the heritage protection system.

No statutory framework for the protection of England's historic environment could claim to be truly comprehensive unless it embraced our historic places of worship. English Heritage has always supported the Government's decision to review the future of the ecclesiastical exemption – the opt-out from the secular system of heritage controls for certain denominations which have parallel regulatory regimes in place – as part of its wide-ranging reform of the heritage protection system in this country.

This review should be welcomed by supporters and critics of the exemption alike. It is only by seeing the exemption in the wider perspective of managing the historic environment as a whole that we shall be able to judge its true value and performance.

Before looking at the Government's suggestion for the future of the exemption, it is important to understand the scope of reforms to the heritage protection system itself. In June 2004, the Government decided to proceed with reform in stages between now and 2007/8, the earliest likely date that legislation could be passed to implement the new system in full. Because the reforms are so radical, primary legislation will be required to create a unified single Register of Historic Buildings and Sites in England, matched by a single heritage consent regime.

The Register will bring together the current listing, registration and scheduling regimes, while the single consent will integrate scheduled monument consent and listed building consent. Crucially for the future of the exemption, provision will be made for statutory management agreements that can take the place of regulation by individual heritage consents for complex sites.

Exemption as a model approach

Looked at in this perspective, the way in which the ecclesiastical exemption is used by the exempt denominations to manage their historic sites and buildings has much to offer to the reformed heritage protection system. The protection afforded is generally more comprehensive than that offered by the listed building consent mechanism, embracing fixtures and fittings as well as matters of artistic and aesthetic judgement.

The way in which the Church of England's Faculty Jurisdiction system sees the church and churchyard as a consecrated entity, subject to Faculty control, prefigures the holistic designation of church and churchyard envisaged by the reformed heritage protection system of registration. Also, some of the exempt denominations have long-standing systems of inspection in place that encourage longer-term strategic thinking about the repair and maintenance of their assets.

English Heritage has warmly welcomed the Government's suggestion in its consultation paper, *The Future of the Ecclesiastical Exemption*, that the strengths of the exemption are such that the system deserves to continue and to be helped to be even more effective. English Heritage believes that the exempt denominations should be encouraged to demonstrate that their individual systems are robust and effective enough to deal consistently with all their varied constituencies, especially with reluctant or downright recalcitrant local operations. We believe that the solution must lie in developing more effective partnerships between those denominations which are exempt, local authorities, English Heritage and other interested parties.

Pilot projects

English Heritage, through our experience of working in partnership with the Government, local authorities and owners in piloting reforms to the heritage protection system, believes that such partnerships are best constructed from the ground up. We are exploring with the exempt denominations the possibility of setting up a small number of local pilot projects to test the feasibility of a management agreement approach that could become common practice under the reformed system throughout the historic environment. We need a range of sites: a group of urban and rural places of worship, a cathedral and its precinct, perhaps a group of Methodist chapels.

For each pilot project, an agreement would be drawn up on the same principles that the new system would apply to all complex historic assets: comprehensive designation of the whole site and its future strategic management seen as an entity. This could include the same freedom from close regulation through listed building or scheduled monument consent procedures that any other historic site (from a great house to a farmstead) might enjoy under the new system. The agreement – between the exempt denomination, the local authority and English Heritage where appropriate – could be run by the denomination for an initial period of ten years, reviewable and renewable thereafter for further quinquennial periods. It would default to the normal regulatory mechanisms if the agreement were seriously or persistently breached.

There is a huge amount of work to be done. If we can proceed steadily and in partnership, building confidence and trust, learning from our experience of piloting the new heritage protection system in all its many aspects, it is possible to see a way forward in which the so-called 'exemption' would actually become the norm, the rule not the exception. That would be the moment to lose this misleading phrase from the language, representing as it would the recognition that the way historic places of worship are managed is indeed mainstream.

Medieval decorated floor tiles in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey, depicting King Edward the Confessor (d. 1066), one of the founders of the Abbey, giving a ring to St John the Evangelist.

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Building Faith in our Future
The future for church buildings

Paula Griffiths *Head of Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, The Archbishops' Council (formerly Assistant Regional Director, East of England Region)*

The Church Heritage Forum's policy statement, launched on 18 October 2004, called for more support for the nation's church buildings.

Nobody who cares about the historic environment can ignore the significance of church buildings. Professional and public interest covers many aspects of that significance: how churches illustrate the development of architecture from Saxon times onwards, the historic continuity they represent, their beauty, the quirkiness of their memorials, their treasury of art, sculpture, wall paintings, stained glass and many other crafts, or the way they fit into the landscape of a rural village, a market town or a city. All aspects of the historic environment are there. Indeed, 45% of all Grade I buildings are Church of England churches. (Although this article is written primarily from a Church of England perspective, the arguments that follow apply equally to places of worship of other denominations and other faiths. Please read it accordingly.)

So far, the arguments are uncontroversial, but who looks after these buildings? How can they be sustained for the future? There is often an impression that church buildings are a public utility, available for everyone. In terms of the Church's wish to serve the whole community, this is true. It is the regular congregation, however, who must maintain the buildings and support the activities within them.

Even in this apparently secular age, faith matters. A recent survey of the 2001 census to a Home Office report, published early this year,[1] indicates that between 72% and 74% of the population say they are Christian. Setting aside the question of why they do not fill the churches on Sundays, these figures indicate that the activities within those buildings matter. Research sponsored by the Church of England in conjunction with English Heritage last year strikingly supports this survey,[2] revealing that 86% of adults in Great Britain had been into a church or place of worship in the previous 12 months, including 89% of Christians, 75% of those of other faiths and 80% of those with no religion.

Besides attendance at regular services, reasons given for visits included:

- Attending funerals (59% of respondents), memorial services (33%), weddings (49%) or baptisms (37%)
- Attending concerts or theatrical performances (17%)
- Attending community events (16%; 20% in rural areas)
- Visiting with family or friends (17%)
- Seeking a quiet place (19%; nearly 40% in inner-city areas or city centres)
- Going past and feeling the need to go in (13%).

In addition, views were expressed on the importance of the church building as part of the historic environment and the life of the local community:

- 84% saw their local church as a place of

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St Philip's Church, Leicester. This late 19th-century church serves as a focus for the local Anglican and Muslim communities. Rebuilt after a fire in 1996, it now includes flexible space for community and multi-cultural activity as well as Christian worship and activities.

worship, 59% as a local landmark and 53% as a historic place.
- 63% would be concerned if their local church or chapel were no longer there.
- 75% agreed that churches should also be used for activities other than worship.
- 24% thought the Government already funded maintenance of church buildings, 42% thought it should – and 16% believed that local taxes should contribute.

Increased interest in churches

Against this background, we face an extraordinary dilemma. Never has there been so much interest in the historic environment, but never has there been so much to manage, whether churches or other historic sites and buildings. What gives churches a special place is that they are buildings of living communities still used for their original purpose. We include also those churches in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, which, although no longer used for regular worship, remain consecrated, many holding a small number of services during the year. The Trust, funded by the DCMS (70%) and the Church Commissioners (30%), is in fact the only part of the Church of England that receives guaranteed funding from the Government as opposed to discretionary repair grants, although the DCMS contribution has remained constant in cash terms since 2001/2.

If you visit any major cathedral during the week, you will probably find tourists studying guide books, guided tours explaining points of interest, school parties using the building to learn about National Curriculum subjects such as maths, art, history or religious education. You may hear the organ playing, see preparations for a play or concert, see an exhibition of cathedral treasures, have a cup of tea and a cake, and buy souvenirs in the shop. Underpinning all this activity is the daily pattern of worship – the rationale of the building's existence – and its work in the community with groups of all kinds. The same pattern is repeated on a smaller scale in parish churches across the land. A study of the diocese of Norwich[3] identified an extraordinary range of activities taking place in the church buildings: music and drama events, day-care facilities for the elderly, village quizzes and a teddy bear parachute jump from the church tower. Similarly, a church in Leicestershire has provided space for a well-used Post Office, and a programme funded by the Millennium Commission (Rural Churches in Communities Service) has enabled modest adaptations of rural churches to include other activities, such as cyber cafés or luncheon clubs, while continuing primarily as places of worship. Urban and rural churches alike use their buildings imaginatively, bringing all sections of the community together.

St Mary's Church, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire (Grade II*). The quiet tranquillity of this 14th-century rural church, now looked after by the Churches Conservation Trust, sums up the significance which church buildings have for many.

© Kate Weaver 2004

Economic benefits

Churches and cathedrals also directly benefit the economy. A survey in 2003[4] showed that church volunteers in Norwich provide 154,555 hours of social action services within the city of Norwich each year, equal to 80 full-time workers. The cost of employing them would have been £696,000 at today's national minimum wage of £4.50 per hour. Research carried out in 2002 estimated that the 3,600 churches of all denominations in Yorkshire and

the Humber provide social action worth £55–£75 million per year.[5] Trevor Cooper (10–11) suggests that if these figures were scaled up to include the approximately 38,000 churches in England, then the value of social action undertaken by churches in England could be as high as £500–£750 million per year.[6] A recent survey for the Association of English Cathedrals and English Heritage shows that visitors to cathedrals directly generate spend of £91 million.[7]

Repair costs

Much of this activity represents a new confidence among churches and greater readiness to proclaim what has often been unsung work. There is an increasing recognition, however, that the work cannot be done alone. The financial support from public sources, particularly English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund, as well as local regional bodies and voluntary trusts, has been much appreciated. So, too, has the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, which has enabled VAT to be reclaimed on repairs of listed church buildings. There are challenges, though, that remain, including the pressures of small regular congregations, high repair costs, the impact of new legislation on volunteers and the lack of understanding by many potential partners about what the Church can provide.

Existing public funds are not sufficient to support the Church in the role it plays in the nation's life. Church of England churches alone spent £93 million on repairs in 2002; the combination of support from English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and reclaim of VAT together covered less than 30% of the costs. Figures being gathered from parochial returns for 2003, not yet complete, indicate that the outstanding repair costs on listed churches in two dioceses alone – Norwich (£15 million) and Chelmsford (£10 million) – equal the whole amount available from the English Heritage/Heritage Lottery Fund repair scheme for 2004/5. The achievements are considerable but fragile.

New policy

The Church Heritage Forum's policy statement, Building Faith in Our Future, seeks to set out the issues, celebrate existing achievements, develop greater understanding and seek partnership. Its key recommendations are addressed to outside partners: seeking a more explicit recognition of what church buildings provide, as well as a greater level of public funding. The statement also suggests models of good practice for the Church itself. We recognise the need for a professional approach to buildings and building projects, the need to build capacity within the church and the need to keep our own legal structures as effective as possible. In particular, the way forward for many parishes will be to take a careful look at what the buildings can provide and how they best fulfil the needs of their different communities. The best use of a quiet country church with box pews, for example, would probably not suit a large modern town church. English Heritage's policy leaflet, *New Works in Historic Churches*, which supports appropriate adaptations to keep buildings in use for the future, is welcomed (see Derrick, 12–13).

There is a need for more money, but also for recognition and partnership. We hope that our policy statement will stimulate discussion and action and will build on the foundations already laid down, to ensure a sustainable future for our church buildings for this and future generations.

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St John the Baptist Church, Whitbourne, Worcestershire (Grade II*). With the help of a grant from the Rural Churches in Community Service Programme, a new two-storey structure accommodating a kitchen, lavatory and two meeting areas was built.

1 Home Office Citizenship Survey, 2001, *Religion in England and Wales*
2 Opinion Research Business (ORB), October 2003, *Annual Religious Survey of Religious Affiliation and Practice, including perceptions of the role of local churches and chapels*
3 Diocese of Norwich, November 2003, *Church Buildings: A source of delight and a source of anxiety*
4 Survey undertaken by Keswick Hall-based research organisation OPERA in June 2003
5 Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber Ltd, *Angels and Advocates: Church social action in Yorkshire and Humberside* (20 New Market Street, Leeds, LS1 6DG; www.crc-online.org.uk or email info@crc-online.org.uk
6 Cooper, T 2004 *How do we keep our Parish Churches?*, The Ecclesiological Society (PO Box 287, New Malden, KT3 4YT; www.ecclsoc.org)
7 Further details will be published in *Heritage Counts 2004*

The Church Heritage Forum brings together representatives of national and local church interests in matters relating to the Church's built heritage.

Keeping Parish Churches
Facts and figures for Church of England churches

Trevor Cooper *Chairman of Council of the Ecclesiological Society and member of English Heritage's Places of Worship Panel*

The volunteers who look after our parish churches are working hard to maintain them but are under pressure.

At his recent inauguration, the Bishop of Gloucester called for 'a slimmer, fitter Church', suggesting that it might sometimes 'mean letting go even of the church building we've loved all our lives.' Nor is Gloucester alone in having to give thought to the future of Church buildings. Why should this be? This article provides some facts and figures to put the situation in context. It deals only with Church of England (CoE) parish churches (using the term loosely, to include chapels), as these provide the great majority of listed places of worship.

Who cares for church buildings?

There are about 12,000 listed CoE parish church buildings (more listed churches than there are petrol stations), with about 4,000 in each of the three grades of listing and a further 4,000 unlisted. This enormous estate of listed buildings is looked after by small, independent voluntary groups – parish church congregations – using their own money, or carrying out fund-raising in their spare time (see Griffiths, 7–9).

On average, the number of adults in each church building on Sundays is between 50 and 60, totalling something over 800,000 on a typical Sunday. Not everyone, however, turns up every Sunday; probably about 1.5 million adults attend with some degree of regularity. In addition, there is a cadre of full-time staff – the clergy – with about one clergyperson for every two church buildings.

Congregations vary in size. In 2001, some 2,600 parishes (20%) had over 100 adults attending Sunday services. On the other hand, roughly 800 parishes (6%) had ten adults or fewer worshipping on Sunday. One reason for these small congregations is that many rural churches are not close to modern centres of population. For example, 12% of church buildings are today in communities which together contain less than 1% of the population. As might be expected, parish incomes differ enormously. At the lower end, about 1,500 parishes have ordinary income of less than £5,000 per annum.

Many church buildings are already used for purposes other than worship, and this can provide a source of income as well as a service to the community. Uses range from the ubiquitous mother and toddlers group, to major

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Benington Church, Lincolnshire (Grade I). The chancel is a surprise: of Early English date, it has springers on either side for a vault that was never built. The future of the church is uncertain.

© David Digi / Digital Atlas of England

Benington Church, Lincolnshire, a Grade I listed building now up for sale following its closure as a place of worship.

schemes in which the buildings are a focus for urban regeneration. There are no overall figures, but wider use of church buildings is certainly on the increase.

Parish churches attract millions of 'tourist' visits per year (probably between 10 and 50 million visits), and, for many other people, the buildings are an essential backdrop, even if not visited. By encouraging tourism in this way, well-kept churches contribute significantly to local economies. Unfortunately, very little of this money actually reaches the churches to help pay for repair bills.

Pressures

There are various pressures on parishes. One is financial: the CoE has a pensions crisis. Although voluntary giving has been rising – up by more than a third in ten years, after allowing for inflation – many parishes have found that an increased proportion of their income is needed to support the central funding of clergy salaries and pensions. In one diocese, for example, 75% of parish income is now contributed to the central pot, compared with 50% in 1990. This puts real pressure on church maintenance.

Here we must scotch a myth: the CoE is not fabulously wealthy (nor, myth number two, has it lost all its money through bad investments). After pensions, the subsidy to parishes from central investments is only about 50p per week for each adult who attends church.

Another pressure is falling attendance, a problem shared with most other Christian denominations in England. In the last 30 years, all-age attendance at CoE churches has dropped by about 40% and the number of salaried clergy by a similar amount. Fewer than 10% of churches have been closed, however, and new ones (3% of the total) have been opened to meet new needs.

The option taken by other networks, such as pubs and banks, of simply closing their under-used buildings, is not so easily available to the CoE.

Looking ahead, the best estimate is for a rate of closure of at least 60 churches per year on average for the foreseeable future – at least equal to the previous highest rate, seen for a few years only in the 1980s. Many of these closures will be buildings of very high quality, such as Benington Church, Lincolnshire (Grade I). The Churches Conservation Trust, which was set up to preserve the best buildings and has more than 300 already in its care, will be quite unable to absorb those closures, as its grant (about £4 million per annum) has been reduced by some 5% in real terms.

How well are the buildings cared for?

Despite these pressures, it seems that the majority of church buildings are being kept in reasonable condition or better. There is no register of church buildings at risk, however, so we have no firm statistics. Keeping churches in good repair costs a great deal of money. In 2001, parish volunteers raised £86 million for repairs, about £5,000 per church building on average. This was a typical year. About £50 million of this money did *not* come from large grants but was raised by parishes under their own steam. We should all be grateful.

The views expressed here are the author's own and not necessarily those of the Ecclesiological Society. This article is based on his report, *How do we keep our parish churches?* (Ecclesiological Society, 2004, ISBN 0946823162), available for download or purchase from www.ecclsoc.org. Sources for additional material are included on the website.

New Work in Historic Places of Worship

New guidance from English Heritage

Andrew Derrick *Coordinator, English Heritage's Places of Worship Panel, 2002–4*

This document, published in 2003, explores the issues of new use and adaptation of historic places of worship that face all faiths and denominations.

English Heritage wishes to secure the future of the country's historic places of worship as living buildings at the heart of their communities. We believe that they should be well used, and visited and enjoyed by all. We will work with congregations to accommodate changing patterns of use while seeking to protect the special architectural and historical interest of the buildings.

Underlying our advice is the aim wherever possible to sustain these buildings *in use*, primarily as places of worship. Alternative uses are not always easy to find and can be damaging to the special architectural or historic interest of the building – more so than even the most radical liturgical re-ordering. We will therefore encourage the continuation of use, both in our advisory role and through our grants for places of worship.

Demographic change and the decline in formal and regular religious observance mean that many of these buildings may have to be used for additional appropriate purposes other than worship if they are to remain in use and the fabric kept in good repair. Notwithstanding the legal, pastoral or theological difficulties, this is increasingly recognised by both church and secular authorities.

English Heritage considers that new work in historic places of worship should:

- Be based on an understanding of the architectural, historic, archaeological and cultural significance of the building
- Be founded on a clearly stated and demonstrable need
- Respect the special architectural and historic interest of the building, its contents and its setting
- Minimise intervention in significant historic fabric
- Achieve high standards of design, materials and craftsmanship.

These precepts are discussed more fully in *New Work in Historic Places of Worship*, which also contains advice on practical issues such as heating and lighting, redecoration and window protection, as well as advice on major schemes relating to liturgical change or provision of additional facilities.

English Heritage recognises the practical advantages of locating new facilities within an existing building, and, where the qualities of the interior allow for this, it is always worth considering as the first option. Liturgical change is of necessity concerned with the interior, and the leaflet contains advice on how such change might be best accommodated within the constraints of an important historic interior.

Seating

Proposals for liturgical change or extended use inevitably give rise to questions about historic benches and pews, often the most dominant features of a church or chapel interior. Pews have many practical advantages, but they can restrict flexibility. Some of the most difficult cases are those 18th- and 19th-century 'preaching boxes', where fixed seating is central to the character and significance of the building, and where the demand for flexibility is not easily reconciled with conservation.

Ian Serjeant (16–17) discusses the criteria used by the Methodist Church when considering proposals that affect historic seating. English Heritage is commissioning research into historic church seating types to increase understanding and establish priorities (see Brown, 22–5).

Building extensions

Extensions to historic churches and chapels also often provoke controversy. They are difficult to achieve successfully, especially (as is usually the case) when the budget is limited. It is unusual these days for churches to be extended, as they might have been in the past, for the purposes of accommodating a burgeoning congregation or some other liturgical function; today, the needs of congregations tend to be more prosaic (meeting rooms, kitchens and lavatories). The guidance note commends the building of freestanding rather than linked buildings to house new facilities. Freestanding buildings can avoid many of the difficulties encountered when grafting a new extension onto an ancient structure, and they often afford greater economy and flexibility of design. The practical advantages of linking new facilities to the existing building, however, are often stressed by applicants, and in many cases such arguments are beyond dispute. Medieval buildings are by nature accretive in character and often able to withstand further addition, provided that care is taken with design, scale and materials. More difficult is the extension of those buildings designed by a single architect.

Where some form of linked addition may be necessary, it is the experience of English Heritage that the most satisfactory additions to historic churches are those that form an harmonious composition with the original building, appearing as a natural development from it. Aisles, transepts, chapels, vestries and porches all provide an established vocabulary for church extension. While the importance of 'good manners in architecture' cannot be overstated, this should not be interpreted as a universal prescription for 'safe' or contextual design. English Heritage welcomes more architecturally ambitious or novel solutions where the site, budget and brief allow for them, as in the new refectory at Norwich Cathedral (see Pordham, 14–15). However, we do not commend the semi-detached solutions often favoured in recent years, whereby new buildings are joined to the old by a 'glazed link'.

New Work in Historic Places of Worship **(Product Code 50810) may be obtained free of charge from English Heritage Customer Services, PO Box 569, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2YP; Tel 0870 333 1181; customers@english-heritage.org.uk. or downloaded from www.english-heritage.org.uk.**

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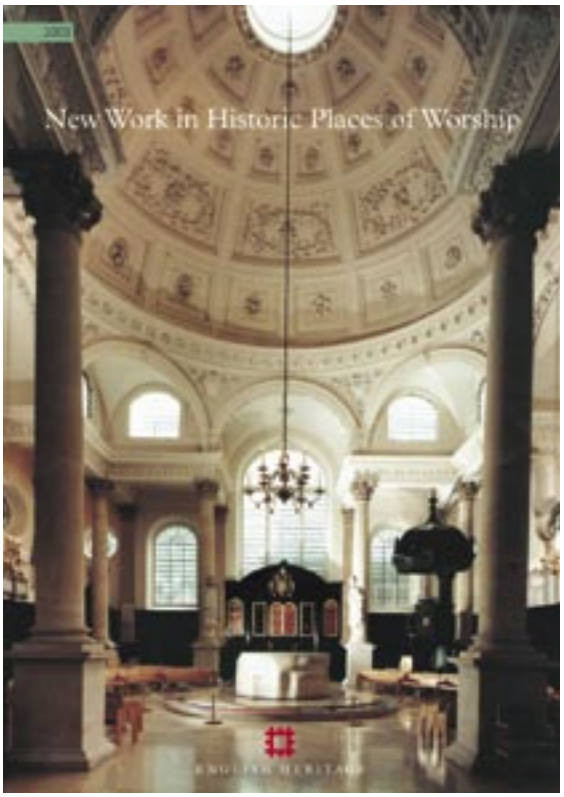


Extended use in St Michael's Church, Cambridge (Grade II). The chancel of this medieval church remains in use for worship. The aisled nave, (above) which had previously lost its historic furnishings, now houses a cafeteria and other community activities.

Norwich Cathedral's new Refectory and Library Extension

The client's viewpoint on the planning process

Colin Pordham *Project Coordinator*

Major development within the cathedral close has shown the importance of regular, informal discussion with approving bodies before formal submissions for planning permission.

The vision of a rebuilt refectory abutting the south side of the cathedral cloister and of a reconstructed hostry or guest hall along the west side was first put forward by the late Dean Hook in a retirement address in 1968. A generation later, and with the need for improved educational and visitor facilities even more pressing, the implementation of that vision has at last begun.

The monastic refectory and the adjoining first-floor chamber at the south-east corner of the cloister were extensive ruins, while the arched entrance is all that visibly remains of the hostry. These were the highly sensitive sites selected, in consultation with the authorities, for the provision of a library extension, restaurant, classrooms, song school, exhibition space, meeting room and shop.

The proposals represented the largest extension to any English cathedral in recent times and were an early test of the new procedures laid down in the Care of Cathedrals Measure 1990. Very helpfully, the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England (CFCE) had produced suggested guidelines for major developments within cathedral precincts, and these were carefully followed. Early archaeological assessments and trial excavations were essential to avoid unforeseen delays at a later stage.

The key to securing the approval of the CFCE was for very early and informal consultation, not only with the Commission but also with all those bodies entitled under the Measure to make representations to the CFCE, namely English Heritage, the local planning authority, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Royal Fine Art Commission (now defunct). As the scheme was developed by the architects, regular contact, including site meetings, was maintained with those bodies before any formal submissions were lodged.

The local Fabric Advisory Committee proved a most useful sounding board during the planning process. Once the CFCE's approval with its detailed conditions was obtained, the grant of planning permission became a much smoother process.

Phase 1 of the new development has been the completion of the new Refectory and the Library extension, thereby avoiding the interruption of any existing Cathedral activities other than the closure of the cloister car park. The smooth working of the contracting process and subsequent building operation owed much to the able and dedicated design team working on the project, a team willing to adapt its plans to accommodate the Cathedral's wishes. Essential to the process were professional project managers reporting to the Project Management Committee that was established by the Chapter and chaired by a local but nationally known architect. The Chapter Clerk was a member of the Management Committee acting as Project Coordinator and representing

© Richard Davies

the Chapter at the design team's monthly meetings.

In a remarkable way the completed buildings preserve the mediaeval footprint and, with their use of traditional materials, sit comfortably alongside the cloister. The incorporated remains of the original buildings are now more evident and much better appreciated. The eating area at first floor level is light and airy, while the interior of the Library extension has a distinctive beauty of its own. The former ruins have been brought to life again to serve the needs of a new millennium.

Interior (left) and exterior (below) of the new Refectory, designed by Hopkins Architects Ltd.

© Paul Tyagi

Removing Pews from Historic Chapels
The Methodist Church's approach

Ian Serjeant *Conservation Officer, Methodist Church*

The removal of pews is frequently proposed to achieve greater flexibility. How does the Methodist Church reach a decision?

In 1995, the Connexional Property Secretary of the Methodist Church took the unusual step of overriding the church's Conservation Officer's advice and allowed the removal of most of the ground floor box pews from James Simpson's Barnby Gate chapel in Newark. This provoked an outcry among the amenity bodies, which thought it demonstrated the failure of the new system of ecclesiastical exemption. The reason for this decision was clear: the mission of the church must take priority. It is interesting to note the growth of that particular church from that point. No such over-rulings have occurred subsequently, but how have other applications been dealt with, and what criteria are employed in reaching decisions?

General policy guidance is based on PPG 15: '[L]isted buildings do vary greatly in the extent to which they can accommodate change ... Some may be sensitive even to slight changes ... not just great houses, but also, for example, chapels with historic fittings …' (3.13), and 'Generally the best way of securing the upkeep of historic buildings ... is to keep them in active use ... [E]ven continuing uses will often necessitate some degree of adaptation' (3.8).

More specific guidance comes from the Methodist Church's Listed Buildings Advisory Committee to which all major schemes are referred, such as those involving wholesale removal of pews and any proposals affecting Grade I or II* buildings. A guidance note, *Removal of Pews from Historic Chapels*, first produced in 1995 and updated regularly since, covers all the main issues that must be considered.

Where major proposals are submitted, the Methodist Church requires the preparation of statements of significance and need. If the proposal is only for the removal of a few pews, an explanatory statement usually suffices. Naturally, the most controversial schemes are those for the wholesale removal of pews from original interiors, but it is interesting to note that the amenity bodies now tend to express regret at removal rather than raise objection. The loss of small sections of pews to create flexible space or to increase capacity for wheelchair users, for example, is rarely controversial.

© Methodist Church

New Room, Wesley Chapel (1739), Broadmead, Bristol (Grade I). A recent proposal for the removal of the ground floor box pews was refused. John Wesley, the first Methodist preacher, was a frequent visitor and preacher.

Do many original interiors survive? In *Diversity and Vitality: The Methodist and Non-conformist Chapels of Cornwall* (Lake, Cox and Berry, 2001), published jointly by English Heritage and the Methodist Church, the authors concluded that few unaltered interiors remain, there having been a regular process of refitting in most chapels. The continuing process of change may, therefore, be viewed as a normal part of the life of any particular congregation.

The following cases illustrate the range of schemes that have been received:

- St Andrew's, Psalter Lane, Sheffield, was formed by the amalgamation of a Methodist and an Anglican congregation. The building dates from 1930 and was largely unaltered. The Twentieth Century Society objected to the loss of the pews, but on balance, it was thought to be justified because of the need to maximise flexibility of use for the enlarged congregation.
- The proposal to remove the majority of the ground floor pews at Truro Methodist Church, Cornwall, proved controversial. The chapel dates from 1820 and is by Philip Sambell, refitted in the late 19th century by Sylvanus Trevail, both notable Cornish architects. Despite objections, permission was granted for the removal of the majority of pews on the basis that the overall scheme was of merit and could not proceed without this crucial element. The subsequent successful implementation of the scheme seems to have allayed the fears over the potential damage to the interior.
- The managing trustees at Winsley, Wiltshire, were advised by the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee that the scheme for the removal of all the interior fittings was unlikely to be acceptable. One of the main features of the 1902 Arts and Crafts chapel was the relatively complete interior. An amended scheme removing a single pew was approved.
- The New Room in Bristol (1739) is the oldest purpose-built Methodist building in the world. A controversial scheme for the removal of the ground floor box pews was recently refused on the basis that even though the pews were of relatively recent date (1929), they had replaced and replicated an early 19th century design, and their loss would damage the fragile character of this iconic building.
- Overstrand in Norfolk, dating from 1898, is the only known non-conformist chapel by Sir Edwin Lutyens. The proposal to remove all pews was uncontroversial, however, because they were not part of his original design and of no intrinsic merit.

© Methodist Church

St Andrew's Church, Psalter Lane, Sheffield (Grade II), now used by an amalgamation of a Methodist and Anglican congregation. The pews have been removed to provide a flexible interior with a central retractable dais.

Where consent is granted for the removal of pews, standard conditions are normally applied as follows:

- Representative examples are to be kept, the location to be agreed.
- A photographic record of the pews shall be made prior to their removal.
- Pews to be removed shall not be destroyed but offered for sale or re-use elsewhere.

It is important to stress, however, that each case is dealt with on its merits. The completeness, age, rarity and quality of the pews are all evaluated, together with the statement explaining the reason for the proposal. What is rarely an issue is comfort: certainly, it does not seem to be an issue in the wine bars and pubs where most recycled pews seem to end up.

The Church of the Sacred Heart, Henley-on-Thames
A threatened dismantling of the Pugins' High Altar

Roderick O'Donnell *Inspector of Historic Buildings, London Region*

The re-ordering of Henley Catholic Church went to inquiry. English Heritage's assessment of the proposal to dismantle the altar is explained.

Changes to the Catholic liturgy following the Second Vatican Council (1962–5) included the use of the vernacular rather than Latin in the Mass, with the priest facing the worshipers. Since then, many churches have been radically stripped of their furnishings to enable this revolution in worship.

The Church of the Sacred Heart at Henley-on-Thames (Grade II), built in 1936, was designed by the architect ASG Butler to include a magnificent high altar of 1848–56 by AW and EW Pugin. The altar, originally commissioned for a private chapel that was demolished in 1908, had been in storage. In his new church, Butler reinstalled AW Pugin's flanking statues and EW Pugin's reliquary and columnar mensa or 'table' altar, with its tabernacle, gradines, magnificent figured sculpture reredos, and the stained glass window of 1862 as the climax of the east end ensemble.

As with many Catholic churches, the sanctuary had been temporarily re-ordered over the period of 40 years since the Second Vatican Council. The Pugin altar was unused, and temporary furnishings, including a fine wooden table altar by the architect Francis Pollen, were introduced to allow Mass to be said facing the congregation.

In 2002, the parish priest applied to the Historic Churches Committee (HCC) of the Archdiocese of Birmingham for a Faculty to install a new altar, chair and ambo, and to change levels within the sanctuary. The proposal involved the truncation of parts of the altar,by lowering its steps and dismantling the columns and stone table (which were to be stored). The tabernacle – the heavily decorated cupboard in which the wafers consecrated at Mass are stored – was to be relocated at a slightly lower level on a lesser sub-structure supported on two new columns. The gilt wood reliquary box under the altar, a rare survival, was to be relocated within a new stone forward altar. The liturgical thrust was thus to

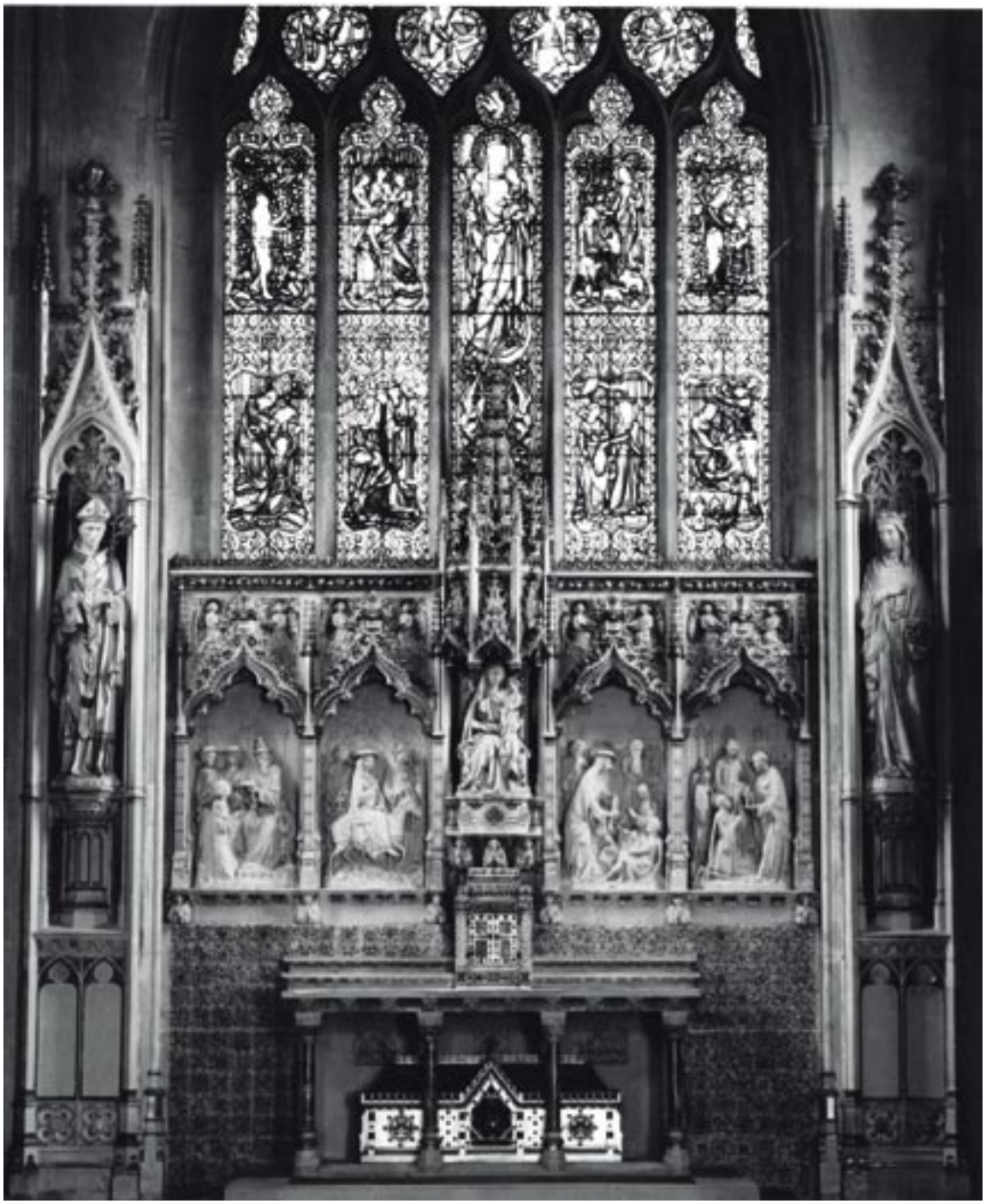
© R O'Donnell

The Church of the Sacred Heart, Henley-on-Thames (Grade II). The east end.

reduce the emphasis on the former east end arrangement.

Following consultation, English Heritage and the local planning authority both objected to the proposals, as did the Victorian Society, the Pugin Society, individual experts and members of the congregation. Following approval of the application by the HCC, the case was referred to English Heritage's Places of Worship Panel. Our particular concern here was not the philosophy behind the liturgical reform but the high art-historical value of the altar, as the work of AW Pugin and his son. Following 40 years of vigorously pursued liturgical re-ordering in the Birmingham Archdiocese, the altar was the last surviving example of a particularly magnificent altar ensemble.

English Heritage and others pursued their objection through to appeal – uniquely, third party appeal is allowed under the Roman Catholic procedures – which was held in June 2003, when the scheme was refused permission. A revised application submitted a year later was granted permission, and we hope that the former high altar will be repaired and conserved as a worthy element in the re-planned sanctuary.



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The Church of the Sacred Heart, Henley-on-Thames (Grade II). The reliquary, altar, tabernacle and reredos.

The Church of Notre Dame de France, London W1

Re-ordering a 20th-century listed church

Paul Velluet *Assistant Regional Director and Regional Architect, London Region*

The recent re-ordering of the distinctive mid-20th-century listed church of Notre Dame de France in Soho is an example of a successful compromise.

In September 1998, the Secretary of State listed a further 28 post-World War II churches following a national three-year survey. Among that number was the distinctive church of Notre Dame de France in Soho (Grade II). Designed by Hector Corfiato with Thomson and Partners, the church was built between 1953 and 1955 in the heart of the West End, on the site of the seriously bomb-damaged brick and iron church of 1868 designed by Louis Auguste Boileau for the French community in London.

Corfiato's church is circular in plan, like its predecessor as well as the original building on the site, Burford's Panorama of 1789. Unlike Boileau's church, however, the present one comprises a generously proportioned day-lit circular central space contained within a tall arcade of 12 bays, the plain, classical reconstituted stone columns of which support a perimeter gallery above an ambulatory, baptistery, side chapel and vestries.

The significance of the church was twofold. First, its liturgical plan – with the principal altar and sanctuary located within the main body of the church, on the east side of the circle – reflected the influence of the Continental Liturgical Movement some ten years before the major liturgical reforms brought about by the Second Vatican Council; and second, the interior was enhanced by a coherent series of modern art works influenced by the French 'Art Sacré' movement.

The art works include murals on the walls of the side chapel by Jean Cocteau; a fine large tapestry in the easternmost bay by Dom Robert de Chaumac, woven in Aubusson; sculpture and other carved stonework by Georges

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The Church of Notre Dame de France, London (Grade II). One of the two original ambos, or pulpits (above), reconstructed and relocated behind the new sanctuary adjacent to the newly created space around the new tabernacle.

The Church of Notre Dame de France, London (Grade II). The original altar set in the newly created elliptical sanctuary with the new tabernacle, containing the wafers consecrated at Mass, set on the pedestal beyond.

Saupique and his students from the Paris École des Beaux-Arts; and a mosaic by Boris Anrep set into the front of the altar in the side chapel, concealed for many years and only revealed during the recent re-ordering.

Of particular relevance in the original design, both liturgically and artistically, were the matching ambos, or pulpits, set to each side of the original wide sanctuary where it projected furthest into the body of the church: one with incised motifs and the names of the four great prophets and the other with incised symbols and the names of the four evangelists.

Proposals for substantial re-ordering of the church were put forward by the parish community from 2001 onwards, based on a literal interpretation of the Catholic Church's current liturgical teaching. Those consulted, such as English Heritage, Westminster City Council and The Twentieth Century Society, were confronted with proposed alterations that would have resulted in the loss of key features of the interior: the architect Corfiato's original principal altar, ambos and fine marble communion rails. Collaborative discussion during the first six months of 2002 between the architect Gerald Murphy, the parish, English Heritage and the Archdiocese of Westminster Historic Churches Committee, however, led to significantly amended proposals. These gained the support of those consulted as well as the formal approval of the Historic Churches Committee in July 2002, and were subsequently implemented.

Those consulted had consistently accepted the liturgical desirability of locating the principal altar closer to the congregation and supported the proposed creation of a small space behind the proposed new sanctuary for a new tabernacle set on a pedestal (replacing the original tabernacle that had been placed anomalously for some years on top of the font).

Those consulted argued strongly, however, for the retention and re-use of the original altar at its original size. They thus welcomed the preparedness of the parish to adopt this approach in the final scheme; they welcomed, too, the creation of a new, modestly elevated elliptical sanctuary, with ramped access, the altar at its centre, and the relocation of the original communion rails to the side chapel.

Similarly, those consulted argued strongly for the retention *in situ* of the original matching ambos against the strongly expressed view of the parish that current liturgical practice dictated that only one ambo was necessary. This difference of view was resolved by the agreement of the parish carefully to dismantle, relocate and reconstruct both ambos to positions near the curved wall behind the new sanctuary and to provide a wholly new ambo within the new sanctuary.

While aspects of the detailed design of some of the new works may be open to criticism, the overall scheme may be regarded as a successful reconciliation between the perceived liturgical needs of today and the retention of elements of a distinctive 20th-century listed church.

New Research on Places of Worship

'Open Thou Mine Eyes' • Psalm 119

Sarah Brown *Head of Research Policy for Places of Worship*

Research supported by English Heritage will inform decisions affecting historic churches and their furnishings.

Places of worship are central to our cultural and national identity and offer a place of contemplation (see Griffiths, 7–9). The skylines of our towns and cities are dominated by the towers and spires of churches and chapels, and the ancient village settlement clustered around the church is an iconic image of English life. England's historic synagogues are now attracting the appreciation that they deserve (see Kadish, 29–31), and, in many neighbourhoods, the distinctive presence of the Muslim mosque, Sikh gurdwara and Hindu mandir is testimony to other established faith communities. The future of these historic places of worship must be built on knowledge and an understanding of their significance. Research undertaken and supported by the Historic Buildings and Areas Research Department, some of it outlined here, will contribute to our appreciation of these buildings and the communities they serve.

Religion and Place

Religion and Place is a project designed to increase our understanding of the importance of places of worship in shaping the built environment of the past and in helping to reshape it for the future. In Liverpool and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, English Heritage has undertaken rapid surveys of buildings of all faiths and denominations, examining the architectural expression of religious observance and cultural diversity, and forging relationships with communities hitherto unfamiliar with our work. A booklet on places of worship in Liverpool, a contribution to the HELP project, will be published in 2005, and we are working with the Buildings Exploratory on a model-making project involving schools in Tower Hamlets. In November 2004, a conference, Religion and Place Today: Buildings and Urban Communities, organised in partnership with the Buildings Books Trust, will be held at the new London Muslim Centre on Whitechapel Road (see News, 44).

The Commissioners' Churches

In the early 19th century, concern for the godlessness of the rapidly growing population in the new industrial towns of Britain was coupled with a realisation that Anglican church accommodation in many of them was totally inadequate. Without a seat in an Anglican church, it was feared, vulnerable members of the Church of England could fall into the hands of non-conformists or political radicals.

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St George's German Lutheran Church, Alie Street, London Borough of Tower Hamlets (Joel Johnson and Company, 1763, Grade I), photographed *c* 1928. Significant numbers of German Protestant refugees fled to London before 1700, but the arrival of the Hanoverian Court in the 18th century was not the only factor that encouraged further immigration. St George's, the oldest surviving German church in Britain, was built to serve Whitechapel's close-knit community of German sugar refiners. St George's is now in the care of The Historic Chapels Trust, with extensive recent restoration supported by English Heritage.

Consequently, between 1818 and 1856, two government grants totalling the then enormous sum of over £3 million were spent on building 612 churches to accomodate over 600,000 people. Built to a budget, these buildings generally received a bad press: AWN Pugin's view was that 'a more meagre, miserable display of architectural skill never was made', and 'Commissioners' Gothic' became a term of derision. The Commissioners' Churches remain one of the least appreciated aspects of the Church of England's architectural inheritance. Their construction, however, was one of the most significant church building initiatives since the Middle Ages, coinciding with the early stages of the great 19th-century church building boom and bridging the Regency and Victorian eras, a period of rapid change in the architectural history of the 19th century.

Despite the poor reputation of the Commissioners' Churches, many nationally important architects (Sir John Soane, Thomas Rickman, and George Gilbert Scott, for example) were employed on Commissioners' projects. Many other buildings were the work of less well-known local builders and architects, the subjects of recent regional studies.

In 1961, Professor MH Port's *Six Hundred New Churches* (London: SPCK) provided an invaluable inventory of the Commissioners' Churches. A relatively small number of churches had already been lost and many more altered, most commonly by the addition of a chancel extension and vestry, the removal of galleries and the addition of late 19th-century furnishings. Many more are feared to have been lost or altered beyond recognition during the last 40 years.

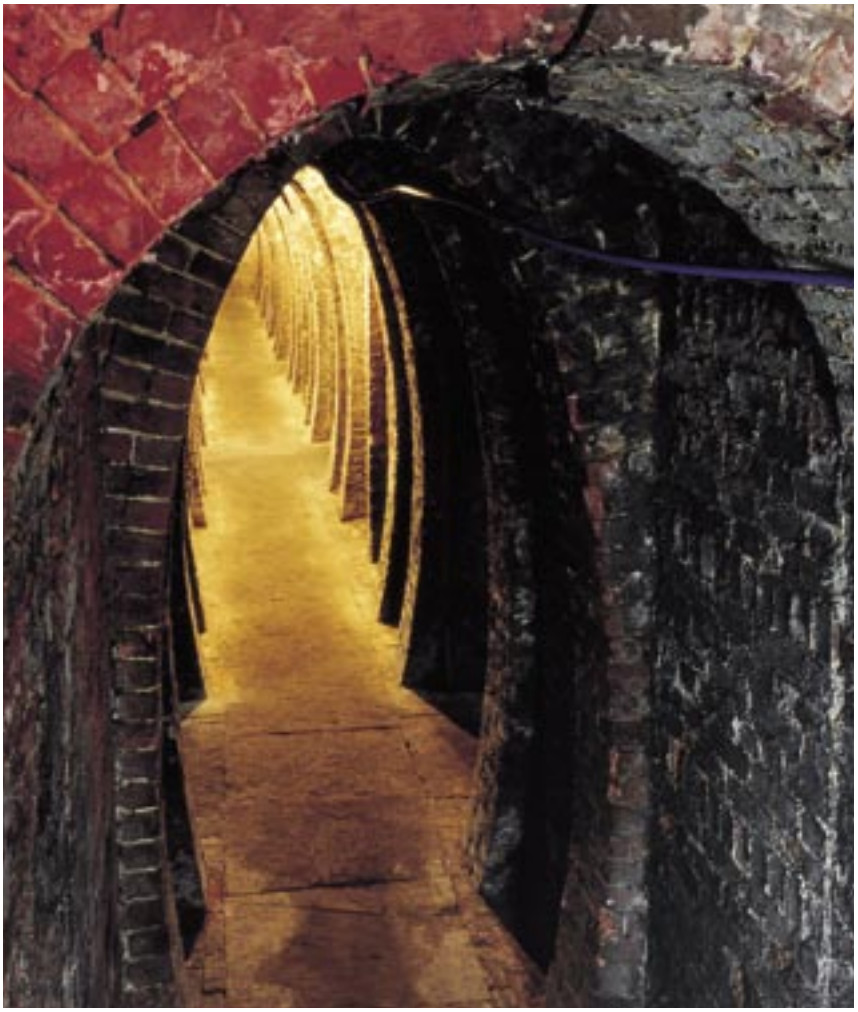
The study of 19th-century church building during the last 40 years, however, has progressed significantly, and a new survey of surviving Commissioners' buildings is long overdue. Most Commissioners' Churches are in inner-city areas increasingly vulnerable to the consequences of rapid demographic and commercial change. In January 2004, English Heritage commissioned the Architectural History Practice to undertake an investigation of these under-valued churches. A national database of churches lost and surviving will soon be available for public consultation.

Benches and pews

The 16th-century Reformation accelerated the tendency to fill churches with fixed seating for the laity. Benches had first been installed in parish churches in the late Middle Ages, but, for much of the medieval period, only a few stone benches along the walls, and occasionally around the piers, had been provided for the elderly and infirm. The Reformation's emphasis on preaching and teaching – the ministry of the word – made seating for the congregation far more important. The pulpit and reading desk replaced the altar as the focal point of the church interior, with benches and pews arranged around the pulpit to ensure maximum visibility and audibility.

Features were introduced to increase comfort during long sermons in unheated churches, such as doors to exclude draughts and provide privacy, cushions, fabrics and even fireplaces for the private family pews of those who paid pew rents. As the seating arrangement reflected the social hierarchy of a parish, competition for the best seats was fierce and could provoke discord. Locks added to pew doors safeguarded the claims of pew proprietors, and sextons were required to usher them to their seats, though clearly not quickly enough for Samuel and Elizabeth Pepys, parishioners of St Olave's Church, Hart Street, in the City of London: 'In the morning to church, where at the door of our pew I was fain to stay, because the sexton had not opened the door' (Samuel Pepys, 25 December 1661).

The appropriation of the most prominent church spaces by the wealthier families of the parish forced the poor to the margins. By the 1820s and 1830s, the inadequacies of



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The atmospheric but little-known crypt of St Anthony's Roman Catholic Church, Scotland Road, Liverpool (John Broadbent, 1833, Grade II). Built on the site of the so-called French Chapel, St Anthony's is Liverpool's earliest Roman Catholic church to survive in use.

© English Heritage / Jonathan Bailey

The tower of St John's Church, Bethnal Green (Sir John Soane, 1826–8). The eminent and elderly Sir John Soane designed three of London's Commissioners' Churches, though the final designs for St John's attracted criticism. The original designs of 1825 were similar to those for St Peter's Church, Walworth (1823–5) but exceeded the budget of £16,000. Consequently, Soane submitted two variants for the tower; unsurprisingly, the short cheaper design was constructed, attracting criticism from pundits and local residents. Bethnal Green's dominant local politician Joseph Merceron described the eccentric tower as having 'mortified and disappointed the Expectations of almost every individual.'

church provision in rapidly expanding and industrialising towns, particularly for the poor, caused considerable concern in the Church of England. The Incorporated Church Building Society, founded in 1818 to support the building and enlargement of Anglican churches, required that all churches in receipt of ICBS money should provide free seats in some, if not all, of the church. Non-Conformist chapels, in contrast, were plentifully supplied with seats set within interiors of majestic, even theatrical character, enhancing the eloquence of the highly regarded preachers of their day.

For the Anglican reformers of the 19th century Ecclesiological movement, private box pews (or 'pues') were a potent symbol of the decadence of the Regency church: 'For what is the HISTORY OF PUES, but the history of the intrusion of human pride, selfishness and indolence into the worship of God?' (JM Neale, 1841). A campaign for their removal and replacement with open, eastward-facing benches, to emulate what was believed to have been common medieval practice, was launched by the Cambridge Camden Society, and war was waged in the pages of their influential journal, *The Ecclesiologist*. By 1847, the Society could claim that 'if we cannot yet announce that every battlemented enclosure, every towering partition has been levelled with the dust… so many breaches appear everywhere… that no reasonable doubt can now be entertained of a complete and speedy victory.' In successive decades, many thousands of parish churches installed new pews, or replaced old ones, in the Ecclesiological style. As a result, the box pews, for example, of St Anne and St Lawrence Church, Elmstead, Essex, once a commonplace, are now a cherished curiosity (opposite below).

Many late 19th-century pews included refinements such as a book slope for Bible and hymnbook, a kneeling board or hook to support a suspended hassock or a gentleman's hat, and a rack with a small tray for wet umbrellas. In many new 19th-century churches, pews were part of an harmonious scheme. The architect William Butterfield, for example, designed pews for many of his churches and published articles on their utility and comfort. A fierce opponent of the hassock, he advocated kneeling boards as a more sanitary alternative to the infested kneeler found in many an impoverished city parish.

The habit of pew proprietorship was hard to break. Pew rents continued to be charged well into the 20th century, and pews continued to be treated as the property of their regular occupants. Pews were often numbered or painted with the name of the family or the estate to which its occupants belonged. A small brass plate might hold a discreet card with the occupant's name. In England's increasingly popular seaside resorts, proprietors of the better boarding houses maintained a private pew for the use of their church-going guests. Pews, therefore, contain valuable evidence of the devotional and social lives of our church and chapel-going predecessors.

In the 21st century, many thousands of churches and chapels face further transformation (see Serjeant, 16–17; Barter and Hatton, 26–7; Durran, 28). With declining congregations, few now require the historic fixed seating that accommodated many hundreds of regular Sunday worshippers. Changing styles of worship, as well as the desire to include new religious, secular and even commercial activity, mean that many congregations now prefer a flexible interior to the constraints of fixed pews. The most endangered seats are often the finest: chancel seats intended for the choir and clergy. In many churches, the altar has been brought out of the chancel to the east end of the nave or even placed in the midst of the congregation. In these circumstances, choir stalls and clergy seats seem stranded and redundant.

For these reasons, English Heritage is commissioning a study of the history and typology of historic church seating,

Stanmer Church, Brighton (Ralph Joanes of Lewes, 1838, Grade II), one of the churches threatened with closure in the recent Brighton and Hove deaneries review.

© English Heritage / Sarah Brown

Some historic elements, such as the late-18th-century box pews, pulpit and reading desk that add much to the character of the early-14th-century church of St Anne and St Lawrence, Elmstead, Essex, are now considered a constraint by many 21st-century worshippers.

particularly of 19th-century and early 20th-century developments. What are the basic pew designs, and can they be dated? How rare are particular forms, and are there regional and denominational characteristics that ought to be taken into consideration in deciding about future use, re-use or disposal? What can be done to adapt historic pews, retaining their character and quality of materials and craftsmanship, while providing greater comfort, especially for the elderly, infirm or disabled? The next few decades may well witness a transformation of church seating every bit as far-reaching as that of the 1840s and 1850s. This research will inform all those involved in the process.

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The Churches of Brighton and Hove

In June 2003, the Pastoral Strategy Review Group's report was met with dismay by many in the deaneries of Brighton and Hove (Chichester Diocese). The report made a number of recommendations for church closure, merger and redevelopment, affecting churches both of national significance as well as local importance. The plans envisaged, among other things, drastic changes for the churches of Barry's St Peter's (1824–8, Grade II*), Emerson's St Mary, Upper Rock Gardens (1877–9, Grade II*) and Pearson's majestic All Saints, Hove (1888–91, Grade I).

To ensure that the architectural and historical significance of each building is taken into account, English Heritage has commissioned Teresa Sladen to undertake a thorough assessment of the churches of the two deaneries. Her work will inform guidelines for similar diocesan and deanery reviews in the Chichester Diocese and beyond.

The Diocese of Manchester
Strategy, capacity and advice

Marion Barter *Historic Buildings Inspector, North West Region*
Tim Hatton *Historic Church Buildings Officer, The Diocese of Manchester*

An Historic Church Buildings Officer develops strategies for historic church buildings and links between parishes and the wider community.

The challenges facing the Diocese of Manchester were outlined in *Conservation Bulletin* 41, 30–32. Of the 350 churches within the Diocese, about 190 are listed buildings; many are Victorian churches built during Manchester's rapid 19th-century growth. Due to population changes and other factors, some of these historic church buildings are vulnerable to decline and potential closure. Recognising that the capacity within parishes to manage church buildings and develop projects is a particular issue, the Diocese approached English Heritage in 2001 about the potential for a jointly funded advisory post. At the same time, the English Heritage regional team wanted to ensure that funds within the Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme reach parishes most in need of financial support for repair projects.

Positive discussions between the Diocese and the regional team led to the appointment of a Historic Church Buildings Officer for a three-year period. Tim Hatton took up the post in October 2003, based in Church House, where he is part of a team providing a range of advice and support to parishes.

The objectives of the post

The post has two distinct, but linked objectives: to assist the Diocese in developing a strategic approach to church buildings and to support joint priority parishes in the management of their historic church buildings.

This appointment will ensure that the Diocese and English Heritage work closely together to address issues of common concern, but there are challenges. New church listings, following English Heritage's review in 2003 of the Diocese's historic church buildings, identified those that are most significant for their architectural or historic interest. Tim Hatton is now engaged in gathering information on the vulnerability and overall condition of each church building. The aim is to establish which churches are joint priorities for English Heritage and the Diocese. This will inform a strategy that directs resources to those most in need, either because of the poor condition of the building or because of a lack of capacity within the parish to manage or develop the building.

Tim Hatton supports the priority parishes by helping to explore options for increasing the viability of their church building, advising on grant sources and liaising with local authorities and other regeneration agencies to develop community partnerships. Another important role of the post is to advise on maintenance. A good practice guidance booklet is in preparation, which will encourage a move from occasional major repair programmes towards planned preventative maintenance (see Russell, 35). To be successful, this approach would benefit from public subsidy, although no sources exist at present.

New facilities in important interiors

Many churches wish to create new facilities, both for themselves and the wider community, particularly where the church building is under-used. While this aspiration may be relatively easy to achieve in church buildings where the interiors have already been altered or damaged or are of low architectural or historic significance, it can be challenging in buildings with important interiors.

An example of the latter is St Peter's Church, Blackley, in north Manchester, a Grade II* listed Commissioners' Church, dating from 1844 and designed by EH Shellard, a local architect. Over the past three years, English Heritage has part-funded masonry repairs,

© Diocese of Manchester

St Peter's Church (Grade II*), Blackley, North Manchester, showing part of the nave and chancel.

re-roofing and dry rot treatment to ensure that the building fabric will be secure for many years to come. The local community needs a community centre, and St Peter's Church is the only public building in 'old Blackley village'. Ideally, the community and church would like the facilities to be provided within the church building. St Peter's, however, is unusual in retaining a complete early Victorian interior with galleries and gothic box pews. This interior is part of the special interest of the church building but also presents an obstacle to its re-ordering. Tim Hatton has encouraged the church to consider various options that include an extension, the removal of some of the pews to create space under the gallery, or even a separate church hall. This process will ensure that the best solution will be found, to meet local needs and retain the special character of the church building.

St Clement's Church, Spotland, in Rochdale (Grade II), designed by Lewis Vulliamy in 1835, is another example of a Commissioners' Church with a galleried interior. In 2002, a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled the church to provide much-needed community facilities at the west end of the building: a new community hall, kitchen and lavatories. A new gallery front further east, and the removal of five rows of pews, has limited the impact of the new scheme on the nave. This is a good example of how a modest scheme can meet the changing needs of a parish within an historic building. It also illustrates the potential for closer partnership between local authorities and the Church of England. Rochdale Social Services now uses the community hall for adults with learning difficulties every weekday; the building has become a focus for the community. The Historic Church Buildings Officer will explore the potential for this type of project with other parishes.

© Diocese of Manchester

A social event at St Peter's Church amid the early Victorian box pews. The church is the only public building in the village, and the congregation is considering options for the provision of a community centre for the church as well as local groups.

The Diocese of London
Church buildings at risk

The Reverend Maggie Durran *Historic Churches Project Officer, Diocese of London*

An Historic Churches Projects Officer describes the responsibilities of advising London churches with major repair needs.

After several years as a vicar in south London, I was appointed in 1999 to a part-time post as Historic Churches Project Officer in the Diocese of London, funded jointly by the Diocese and English Heritage. My job is to advise the 26 Grade I and II* churches that are either on English Heritage's Buildings At Risk register or will be soon unless someone turns the tide. I work with the various archdeacons and the property department but also with others outside the formal structure.

Each church faces daunting challenges, and nearly all lack the people and skills to face those challenges. There is, however, goodwill and commitment that can be supported by someone with experience in management, development and fundraising. I work with clergy, church councils and building committees to enable, wherever possible, local people to face those challenges. Most churches struggling with major building and financial problems are also seeking to understand their mission, the major purpose behind building projects and fundraising. In all cases, a sense of local mission and commitment is essential in securing funds and plans for the continuation of the building as a place of worship.

There is also the question of what to do with a building that has become surplus to the needs of the local mission and possibly could be heading for redundancy. In such cases, it may be in the best interest of the building to draw up a business plan, with or without the support of the clergy and church council, for alternative or additional uses in order to keep it in good repair for the interests of the local community.

Financial advice

In addition to working with Grade I and II* listed churches on or likely to be on the Buildings at Risk register, I run seminars, workshops and conferences on fundraising and financial strategies in London, open to other dioceses.

Large sums of money can be raised only if it is clear that the building is viable, the church's future is relatively secure, and financial management is sound. I advise churches about financial accounts and encourage stewardship programmes, local community networks and audits of need, as well as an understanding of their own mission and how they intend to achieve their aims. The results have been good. One of the churches has now received (and nearly spent) £7 million on its repair and conservation project; another has received £2.5 million and at least ten others from £100,000 to £500,000.

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St Martin's Church, Gospel Oak, Camden (EB Lamb, 1864–5, Grade I). After two years of monthly meetings, church sales, sponsored walks, donations, and an application to the Joint Repair Scheme, substantial funds were secured to repair the roof.

Jewish Heritage UK
New research and recording

Sharman Kadish *Director, Jewish Heritage UK*

A major research project, supported by English Heritage, is recording the vanishing architectural heritage of British Jewry.

The 300-year-old Bevis Marks Synagogue is the oldest in Great Britain. This historic synagogue, on the edge of the City of London, has been in continuous use since 1701. In 1950, it was the first synagogue to be listed and is still the only Grade I synagogue in England. Bevis Marks bears testimony to the stability of Jewish life in Britain. Since the Resettlement of 1656, during the Puritan Revolution, Jews have enjoyed uninterrupted residence in Britain, a record unrivalled elsewhere in Europe.

Unlike parish churches and cathedrals, synagogues have been largely neglected by British architectural historians and conservationists, though the Jewish place of worship has long been part of the urban landscape. English Heritage's *Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment* (2000) acknowledges that 'in a multi-cultural society, everybody's heritage needs to be recognized' and stresses the importance of education in fostering greater understanding of the historic environment, including 'mosques, synagogues and temples as well as churches, chapels and cathedrals.'

© Anthony Harris

The Ark (ehal), Bevis Marks Synagogue, London (Joseph Avis, 1699–1701, Grade I), Britain's oldest synagogue.

Surveying the Jewish built heritage in the UK and Ireland

The need to record the architectural heritage of British Jewry has, in the last 20 years, become urgent because it is disappearing. The population of British Jewry is rapidly shrinking, currently standing at 267,000 (2001 National Census), having fallen from a post-World War II peak of about 450,000.

The Jewish community is not only in numerical decline but is increasingly concentrated in London and Manchester. Jews are seldom encountered in those inner-city areas of primary settlement colonised by earlier immigrant generations, such as the East End of London or Red Bank and Cheetham Hill in Manchester. British Jewry has become a largely suburban phenomenon. Left behind are historic synagogues that are too far to reach on foot on the Sabbath, when travelling is prohibited in the Orthodox Jewish tradition. The *Survey of the Jewish Built Heritage in the United Kingdom and Ireland* was begun in 1997 under the auspices of the Jewish Memorial Council to record and research this important but vanishing architectural heritage.

In 1995, the nascent project was awarded £1,000 seed-funding by the then Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, followed by an Historical Research Trust Award from the Royal Institute of British Architects and a grant of £146,300 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which enabled the Survey to begin in earnest. Principal match-funding partners have included The Pilgrim Trust, the RM Burton Charitable Trust, the British Academy and English Heritage. Indeed,

English Heritage has contributed both grant-aid and technical support.

The Survey is the first thematic building recording project concerning the architectural heritage of a non-Christian minority in this country. Originally embracing Jewish monuments and sites that date from before World War II, the Survey has also included mediaeval and modern buildings and sites, both sacred and secular, such as purpose-built synagogues, Mikvaot (ritual baths), cemeteries, schools, hospitals, soup kitchens, communal offices and meeting halls.

In 2004, a generous grant of £315,876 from the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) through the University of Manchester will enable the Survey to include post-World War II synagogues and sites, in line with English Heritage's Post-War Listings Programme. Following a pilot project in the East End of London in the summer of 1996, some 350 sites have been surveyed in nearly 100 towns and cities across England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic and the Channel Islands. The on-site recording includes the compilation of detailed field notes, sketch plans and drawings, and both internal and external photography. For some historic buildings, a full measured survey has been carried out and architectural drawings executed, in accordance with English Heritage's standards.

Priority has been given to sites in danger of disappearance or radical alteration, particularly synagogues faced with imminent closure. The recording work so far has been carried out by the author, assisted mainly by two part-time professional field workers, architect Barbara Bowman and archaeologist Andrew Petersen, an expert on Islamic architecture. The Survey has benefited from volunteer labour, in particular, student projects in the Department of Architecture at the University of Huddersfield.

Fieldwork is preceded and followed up by library and archive research, which has revealed rare visual material on Jewish buildings and sites that no longer exist, destroyed by redevelopment or enemy action. Repositories and private collectors have allowed historic photographs, maps and architectural plans to be photographed and scanned into the Image Archive of the Survey database.

Database and publications

The database of the Survey of the Jewish Built Heritage contains both text and a digital image library that, together with the paper and photographic archive, will eventually be deposited at the National Monuments Record as a resource for architectural historians, educators and conservationists of the future. It currently contains information on some 350 synagogues, burial grounds and other communal buildings constructed or opened before World War II, as well as details of about 120 architects who designed for the Jewish community. The database has been designed and implemented by the project's computer consultant, Dr Syd Greenberg, using Microsoft Access, in accordance with the Council of Europe's *Core Data Index for recording historic buildings and monuments of the architectural heritage* (1995).

A number of publications have already appeared, including a site guide published by English Heritage to mark the tercentenary of Bevis Marks Synagogue. A major book is planned: *The Synagogues of Britain and Ireland: An architectural history*, sponsored by The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, with the support of the AHRB and photography

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Middle Street Synagogue, Brighton (Thomas Lainson, 1874–5, Grade II*), with a sumptuous High Victorian interior, awarded English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund grant-aid in 2004.

© English Heritage / Nigel Corrie

Menorah (seven-branched candlestick), an ancient Jewish symbol rendered in mid-20th-century stained glass by Hardman Studios at Coventry Synagogue.

by English Heritage. The book will include a CD-ROM *Gazetteer of Jewish Buildings and Sites in Britain and Ireland*. Details of these and other publications can be found at www.jewish-heritage-uk.org.

Designation and Jewish Heritage

In 1989, there were only three listed synagogues, all in London, indicative of the under-representation of non-Christian places of worship on the Statutory Lists. In 2004, there are over 40 listed synagogues and former synagogues nationally. As a result of the Survey, a nationwide assessment is now being undertaken to determine appropriate forms of designation for the most significant Jewish burial grounds. The launch of English Heritage's Religion and Place project (see Brown, 22; *Conservation Bulletin* 43, 14–15) will assist further in redressing this imbalance.

Some synagogues have been upgraded from Grade II to Grade II*: the two surviving Georgian synagogues still functioning (Plymouth, 1762; Exeter, 1763), as well as a group of major Victorian 'cathedral synagogues', of which Birmingham's Singers Hill (Henry Yeoville Thomason, 1855–6) is the oldest surviving example. The Survey is anxious to encourage the preservation through enhanced designation of such major buildings, some with fine orientalist interiors as at Liverpool's Princes Road, Brighton's Middle Street and London's New West End, St Petersburgh Place. These synagogues, which date from the 1870s, face being made redundant, having largely been abandoned by their congregations in favour of the suburbs.

The Survey is active in encouraging public access to historic synagogues through Heritage Open Days, London Open House and the European Jewish Heritage Day, the latter initiated in Britain in 2000 by B'nai Brith UK. Making historic synagogues better known is a key to unlocking vital grant-aid for conservation. Several major synagogues, including those at Liverpool and Brighton, mentioned above, have recently benefited from public grant-aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage's joint places of worship grant scheme.

Jewish Heritage UK

In April 2004, Jewish Heritage UK was set up to complement the research of the Survey of the Jewish Built Heritage. Its aim is the protection of British Jewry's material cultural heritage, including synagogues, cemeteries and moveable property, such as archives, artefacts and ritual silver.

It has been set up with a grant of £75,000 over three years from the Hanadiv Charitable Foundation and operates under the auspices of the London Jewish Cultural Centre. Jewish Heritage UK provides independent professional support to congregations, trustees, burial societies, synagogue and communal organisations that are responsible for historic buildings, sites and collections. They will be able to turn to the agency when faced with the challenges of maintenance and management, the listing and planning process, as well as of carrying out repairs to specified conservation standards and, above all, of finding imaginative ways of keeping fine old buildings in use.

Drawings by © Barbara Bowman for the Survey of the Jewish Built Heritage

Sir Moses Montefiore Mausoleum (1862, Grade II*) and Synagogue (1831–3, Grade II*), Ramsgate, Kent. The Regency-period synagogue was designed by the first Anglo-Jewish architect David Mocatta for his cousin Sir Moses Montefiore, British Jewry's best known 19th-century philanthropist. Beside the synagogue is Montefiore's tomb, modelled on Rachel's Tomb near Bethlehem.

The Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking
An Unexpected Gem

Sarah Brown *Head of Research Policy for Places of Worship*
with acknowledgements to **Khalil Martin**

For over 100 years, commuters on the Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour line have caught an occasional glimpse of one of England's most unusual listed buildings.

The Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking is northern Europe's earliest surviving purpose-built mosque. Its architectural distinction and historical importance are recognised in its designation as a Grade II* listed building.

Its origins and history are as intriguing as its architecture. The building was commissioned by Hungarian-born linguist and scholar Dr Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner (1840–99). The son of Jewish converts to Protestantism, Leitner was educated in Istanbul as a consequence of his widowed mother's remarriage to a Levant missionary.

At a Muslim college, Leitner mastered Turkish and Arabic, displaying extraordinary linguistic prowess at an early age. At 15, he could speak eight languages fluently and was appointed interpreter to the British Commissariat in the Crimea. At 19, he became lecturer in Arabic, Turkish and Modern Greek and at 23 was made Professor of Arabic and Muslim law at King's College, London. In 1864, he was made Principal of Government College in Lahore, a connection of considerable importance in the history of the Woking mosque. He dedicated himself to the study of the languages, art and culture of the Indian sub-continent, transforming the college into the University of the Punjab.

Returning to England in 1881, Leitner devoted himself to the foundation of a European centre for oriental studies, a quest that brought him to Woking. In 1883, he acquired the buildings of the defunct Royal Dramatic College in Woking, a short-lived attempt to create a centre for the performing arts and a home for retired theatrical professionals. This became the home of the Oriental Institute.

The Oriental Institute

The Institute prepared Asian students for careers in the professions and offered language training to Europeans wishing to live and work in the East. Leitner filled the Institute's newly acquired home with an outstanding collection of Greek and Indian art, including a large collection of Punjabi fabrics. It also became a powerhouse for the publication of academic journals in Sanskrit, Arabic and English. By the 1890s, it was offering degree courses affiliated to the University in Lahore, although it failed to secure full independent University status.

Leitner also concerned himself with the spiritual life of the students of his Institute and launched an ambitious plan to build a mosque, a synagogue, a church and a temple, setting aside parcels of land on which to build. Work on the mosque began first, due to generous donations from the Nizam of Hydrabad and the Begum Shah Jehan of Bhopal. The foundations of the Hindu temple were also laid, although further building was frustrated by Leitner's untimely death in 1899. The plots for the synagogue and temple were sold, although the church, St Paul's, Oriental Road, was completed in 1895.

The mosque

The mosque was designed by English architect WI Chambers, who drew heavily on Indian architectural styles studied in the India Office

Library. It opened in October or November 1889, following considerable efforts to ensure that the building was correctly orientated: 'A seaman of the P&O boat kindly went to Woking and took the bearings.' Although small in scale, the building is dignified and well proportioned, square on plan, with a wide, welcoming portal flanked by apsidal pavilions providing facilities for ritual ablutions.

The interior, under a spherical dome, is simple, with calligraphic decoration its principal enrichment. Gold stars dot the interior of the dome, and the principal focus of the small space is the niche in the east wall, the mihrab, indicating the direction of Makkah.

To the north is the iman's residence, a spacious two-storey brick house with stone detailing echoing that of the mosque. The two buildings stand in a landscaped park with trees screening the nearby railway line

© English Heritage / Peter Williams

The mihrab, indicating the direction of Makkah, of Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, Europe's oldest purpose-built mosque and now a Grade II* listed building.

and a busy road. While the students of the Institute were the most regular worshippers, the mosque has always served a wider Muslim community. Queen Victoria's Indian attendants made occasional trips from Windsor, and the Shah of Persia, the Begum of Bhopal and the Emperor Haile Selasse were among its most distinguished visitors.

Later developments

The Oriental Institute was very much Leitner's creation, reliant on his energy and wealth, and after his death it was disbanded and its buildings, art collections and land sold. The mosque remained closed until 1912, when Indian lawyer and Muslim scholar Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din of Lahore noticed a newspaper advertisement for a 'mosque for sale' while in England conducting a case before the Privy Council. The mosque was on the point of being sold for demolition, but Khwaja took the case to the High Court, arguing that as a consecrated place of worship it enjoyed the same rights as a church and could not simply be demolished. He won his case and acquired the mosque, which he reopened in 1913, with the support of the Lahore Ahmadadiyya Movement, founding the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Society. The Mission published the first English translation of the Qu'ran in 1917 and the influential *Islamic Review.*

Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din had almost been converted by Christian missionaries in India but instead was inspired to bring Islam to England, giving up a lucrative legal practice to do so. His mission enjoyed early success. By 1924, there were 1,000 English converts to Islam, most of them high ranking, well educated and articulate. Woking was the spiritual heart of this nascent convert community. One of its most prominent members was Lord Headley, who campaigned for the foundation of a mosque in London, the capital of an Empire with more Muslim than Christian subjects. Despite the foundation of mosques in Berlin in 1926 and Paris in 1928, London's central mosque in Regent's Park opened only in the 1970s.

In the 1950s and 1960s, growing numbers of Muslim immigrants from Pakistan and the Indian sub-continent arrived in England. Woking's mosque naturally attracted Muslim families to the area. In 1960, for example, over 4,000 people gathered in Woking to celebrate the festival of Eid Al Fitr. In 1968, Sunni Muslims took over the running of the mosque. With a growing community of worshippers,

© English Heritage / Peter Williams

The main façade of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking (Grade II*).

it continues to serve as an important place of prayer, devotion and education. Today, the Woking Muslim population is estimated at approximately 5,000, predominantly from the Kashmir and Mirpur areas of Pakistan. The mosque, which can accommodate about 60 worshippers, is used every day for the five daily prayers. Between 700 and 1,000 worshippers attend the Friday mid-day congregational prayer, and on these occasions, and at other times when the congregation is too large to fit into the original mosque, prayers are conducted in a nearby building converted for the purpose.

The special significance of the mosque is highlighted in a current project coordinated by English Heritage. In May 2004, a group of Indian ex-servicemen from Slough visited the mosque as part of the project, exploring historic sites relevant to the experience of Indian Servicemen who fought in the World Wars. Muslim soldiers who died of wounds in hospitals along the south coast were buried in a purpose-built Muslim burial ground near the mosque. Their graves are now found in the military section of the nearby Brookwood Cemetery. The visits have contributed to an oral history project and will inform a travelling exhibition planned for the south-east in Spring 2006. More information may be obtained from Cynara.Davies@english-heritage.org.uk.

Maintenance
How to protect your place of worship

Joy Russell *Senior Architect, Chief Conservation Architect's Team*

Modest spending on regular maintenance can reduce the need for costly repairs and protect the fabric of a place of worship.

Maintenance is the routine, everyday work necessary to protect the fabric of a building. When carried out regularly, maintenance helps prevent the types of failure that occur predictably within the life of a building and can result in major repair costs.

Maintenance falls into three main categories: *inspection*, to assess the condition of a building, report any problems and decide whether repair or other work is necessary; *specific tasks*, such as testing building services and clearing debris from gutters; and *minor repair*, such as fixing slipped slates, replacing broken glass and making temporary taped repairs to leadwork. Maintenance differs from repair, which is work carried out to put right defects, significant decay or damage, and work to return a building to a good condition on a long-term basis. Most problems suffered by places of worship are caused by water penetration, so a maintenance inspection should concentrate on the external envelope and, in particular, those elements that protect the building from water and damp penetration:

- Roof coverings; gutters, down pipes and associated rainwater goods; external wall surfaces and joinery; and drains
- Internal roof voids, which will reveal any evidence of water ingress and attendant fungal or insect attack
- Internal areas where maintenance problems are identified in the external walls and/or joinery
- Drains and inspection chambers.

Some maintenance tasks should be carried out by a building contractor or other specialist, either because they require a certain degree of skill and experience or because access to a particular element of the building is difficult or dangerous. For example, a building contractor could be employed to clear rainwater goods of debris, and a steeplejack to inspect high-level stonework. Many tasks, however, can be carried out by churchwardens or unskilled volunteers, including using binoculars to inspect roofs for missing or slipped slates or tiles or to check external walls for signs of damage or movement. Any problems identified should be reported to the architect or building surveyor.

Other examples of maintenance tasks are identified in the *Calendar of Care* on the Church of England's Church Care website (www.churchcare.co.uk) and English Heritage's publication *Maintenance Plans* (free copies may be obtained from customers@english-heritage.org.uk by quoting Product Code 50858, or from www.english-heritage.org.uk>Conserving Historic Places>Conservation Advice>Places of Worship).

Maintenance should preferably be carried out on a planned basis, to ensure that necessary tasks are not overlooked and to allow the cost of maintenance to be budgeted for. The maintenance plan should be prepared by, or in consultation with, the place of worship's architect or building surveyor. It should identify each element of the building, list the tasks to be carried out, identify the person responsible and indicate when the task should be done. An alternative is to subscribe to a regular maintenance service such as that planned to start in 2005 by Maintain our Heritage in the Gloucester area whereby, to complement the Quinquennial Inspection, basic maintenance tasks such as clearing gutters are carried out together with a limited amount of temporary repair on small but critical areas of disrepair. A similar service is now being investigated by the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese and English Heritage.

Excavated Human Burials
New guidance on Christian burial grounds

Simon Mays *Human Skeletal Biologist*

English Heritage and the Church of England are collaborating to produce guidelines for the treatment of Christian burials excavated from archaeological sites.

Every year, thousands of ancient burials in this country are disturbed by development of disused burial grounds, by smaller-scale works in churches and churchyards, and by continuing burial in old churchyards. Excavation and study of these burials increasingly add to our understanding of the past and inform television programmes such as *Meet the Ancestors* and museum exhibitions such as the Museum of London's *London Bodies*.

There is, however, considerable uncertainty about how best to treat disturbed burials. The law involved – both civil and ecclesiastical – is complex and unclear. Most archaeologists are conscious of the need to afford the dead respectful treatment and avoid offending religious or secular sensibilities, but standards for best practice have yet to be codified. Clergy and parochial church councils seek advice about when disturbance is acceptable, about how burials should be treated if they must be disturbed and about who should bear the costs. In addition, after archaeological excavation and study, there is the question of whether human remains should be retained long-term for scientific study or reburied.

Feedback from archaeologists, parishes and clergy indicated a clear need for guidance on these issues. As a result, in 2001, a Working Group was convened jointly by English Heritage and the Church of England and included representatives from the Church, archaeological and museums organisations, and the Home Office. Its remit concerned burials from Christian contexts in England dating from the 7th to the 19th century, including both churchyards in current use and disused burial places such as monasteries. This context provides a coherent body of material to which a consistent theological framework can be applied to inform ethical treatment, and for which reasonably specific guidance might be given. As three out of every four skeletons excavated as a result of archaeological fieldwork in England come from Christian contexts, the guideline should have widespread application. The main principles of the Working Group's deliberations were that:

- Human remains should always be treated with dignity and respect.
- Burials should not be disturbed without good reason. It was noted, however, that the demands of the modern world are such that it may be necessary to disturb burials in advance of development.
- Human remains are an important source of scientific information.
- There is a need to give particular weight to the feelings and views of living close family members when known.
- There is a need for decisions to be made in the public interest in an accountable way.

The working group has produced a draft report which describes the current legal framework for the treatment of human remains and makes recommendations for best practice within this framework. It attempts to balance ethical considerations derived from Christian theology against the recognised legitimacy of scientific study of human burials, while being aware of public views about the disturbance of, and scientific work on, human remains.

The report presents overviews of the legal, ethical and scientific considerations associated with human remains and their context (burial artefacts and monuments). It also provides practical guidelines for the treatment of such remains in fieldwork projects, summarising the legal, ethical and scientific considerations pertinent at each particular phase of work.

A summary sets out the main recommendations, which include:

- If a planned development (large-scale construction or minor building work) appears likely to disturb burials more than 100 years old, then the relevant area should be archaeologically evaluated; any subsequent exhumations should be monitored and, if necessary, carried out by archaeologists.
- The developer, whether a religious or secular organisation, should be responsible for the cost of any archaeological intervention (including post-excavation study of the remains and their reburial or deposition in a museum or other institution) necessitated by the development.
- Research excavations of unthreatened burial grounds are acceptable only if the remains are more than 100 years old, if the proposed work is acceptable to close family members of those buried (if known), and if it can be justified in terms of specific research aims.
- If family members request it, excavated human remains should be reburied.
- In some instances, it may be difficult to reconcile different viewpoints concerning the long-term fate of excavated human remains. This most often occurs when the scientific importance of a collection means that it is desirable that it remain accessible for research but that other parties with legitimate interests, such as the Church or the local community, desire that the remains be returned to consecrated ground. A possible solution in such cases might be the deposition of the remains in redundant churches. The Report recommends that this possibility be further investigated.
- A standing committee should be set up jointly by English Heritage and the Church of England to serve as a national advisory body on the treatment of human remains from Christian burial grounds and to provide advice in controversial cases.

The Report will be published in late January 2005 as part of the Centre for Archaeology Guideline series. It will be available from customers@english-heritage.org.uk and from www.english-heritage.org.uk.

© English Heritage Photo Library / Jeremy Richards

A human skull from the graveyard in the deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy, in the Yorkshire Wolds, subject of one of the longest-running archaeological excavations in Britain (1950–90). The human and animal bones from this excavation form part of an important research archive.

© York Archaeological Trust

The redundant St Saviour's Church was adapted by the York Archaeological Trust as its Archaeology Resource Centre. The aisles house an archive of the Trust's excavations, and the nave is used as an educational area.

Archaeology and Building Works
New guidance from ADCA

David Baker *Archaeological Adviser on the St Albans Diocesan Advisory Committee and member of English Heritage's Advisory Committee*

The Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists has published guidance on requirements arising from various works to churches and cathedrals.

The ecclesiastical exemption predates the first systematic listing of historic buildings (in the 1940s), planning controls over them (in the late 1960s) and the recognition of archaeological interests (with PPG16 in 1990). Church archaeology was championed by the Council for British Archaeology from the 1970s, as part of the 'rescue' archaeology movement. The CBA advocated that archaeological advice should be available for works of repair, alteration and construction. There should also be archaeological members of diocesan advisory committees for parish churches, and advisers to Deans and Chapters for cathedrals.

After a long evolution, a network of advisers was completed, and the Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists was formed in 2000. It aims to promote the highest standards of practice in the study of the fabric and material remains of a church or cathedral, above and below ground, in relation to its site, contents and historic setting, and community. More information can be found at www.britarch.ac.uk/adca.

ADCA has just published a guidance note, *Archaeological requirements for works on churches and cathedrals*, providing a consistent approach to the main types of works upon which ADCA members offer advice. The note seeks to support the regulatory authorities by indicating what is expected from parishes and cathedrals when they devise and commission works. It will also help architects and archaeological organisations plan their work. Like the secular planning system, the guidance note presents archaeological work as a potentially beneficial and integral part of the conservation process rather than as an unplanned after-thought or burdensome obstacle. Its primary purpose is to increase knowledge and understanding, through investigation and research that can contribute to repairs, academic studies, formal education and personal or community interest. Archaeological work should take place within regularly reviewed research strategies and address issues based on an understanding of the significance of the church and churchyard in question.

There are four principal occasions for archaeological involvement. During preparation of a proposal, before formal consents are sought, assessment can identify archaeological issues together with the means of resolving them. After consent has been obtained and opening-up works have begun, archaeological analysis and recording can provide hitherto inaccessible information for decisions about the approach to repairs and the detailed design of alterations. Repair or construction work in progress may give opportunities to record temporarily exposed fabric, helping future maintenance and diagnosis of structural problems, and improving understanding of a building's history. As a last resort, archaeological work may be needed to record important fabric or deposits before unavoidable destruction, mitigating the loss by replacing the surviving evidence with information from properly designed investigations.

This systematic approach is intended to deal with long-standing problems. Perhaps the worst is failure by architects and committees to take archaeological matters into account at the appropriate stage. Not budgeting for work because the need has not been anticipated can set up difficult tensions between wilful destruction of the local heritage and yet another perceived fund-raising mountain to climb.

Equally undesirable is the illogical process of requiring assessment of archaeological work, not as part of formulating the original proposal, but as a condition of consent, when it is too late to redesign or adjust budgets.

The types of works frequently encountered in churches and cathedrals are discussed under the headings of repairs, mechanical and electrical services and drainage, the churchyard, development and human remains. They include familiar projects such as the insertion of perimeter drainage, the provision of partitioned facilities within churches, extensions and freestanding new buildings in churchyards. The guidance note cross-refers to the procedures of the secular planning system and the recent English Heritage/Church of England report on human remains (see Mays, 36–7). Generally, it seeks to clarify the archaeological dimension through guidelines about types of cases, rather than lay down rules for resolving conflicts arising from individually distinctive situations.

At a time when the ecclesiastical exemption is under review (see Beacham, 5–6), archaeological considerations are now better integrated than ever, but several problems remain. Funding need is not wholly mitigated by knowing about it in advance; indeed, non-commercial church archaeology sits awkwardly with the 'the polluter pays' principle when the only profit is knowledge; grants are not always available to ease the situation. Some continue to feel that the evidently good motives and objectives of mission exempt them from what others see as an environmental and cultural responsibility.

Voluntary Diocesan Advisory Committee archaeological advisers now have to provide a complex professional curatorial service in what has become a commercial archaeological world: this is increasingly unsustainable. Archaeological organisations hungry for work in that commercial world have to train digging staff also to think in terms of above-ground three-dimensional structures.

Notwithstanding such matters, which can be resolved given the political and professional will, the positive opportunities have never been better. Archaeology has a much increased public profile with usually positive media treatment responding to its intrinsic interest. A powerful way for the church to improve its connections with the community is through its historic buildings and sites. These have stories to tell people of all ages, believers, non-believers and people from other religious traditions.

Norman foundations recorded during adaptation of the 19th-century nave and aisle as part of the Archaeology Centre at St Mary's Church, Bedford (Grade B).

© Albion Archaeology

The National Monuments Record
News and events

ENGLISH HERITAGE
NATIONAL MONUMENTS RECORD

The NMR is the public archive of English Heritage. It includes over 7 million archive items – photographs, drawings, reports and digital data – relating to England's historic environment.

The following information gives details of web resources, new collections (catalogues for the collections below are available in the NMR search room in Swindon) and outreach programmes.

Religious structures recorded by Images of England

The Images of England website (www.imagesofengland.org.uk) has over 38,000 listed buildings and monuments recorded under the heading 'Religious, ritual and funerary'. Items range from parish churches and ancient tombs to lychgates, coffin rests and ancient burial mounds.

Any listed religious building can be searched for by its name, location or simply by building type. For example, when searching for 'place of worship' in the advanced search under 'building type', over 19,000 entries are returned, making the website an ideal starting point for enthusiasts, parishioners, students and professionals researching the history of a particular church or monument, or looking at how churches have developed over time. Churches of almost every denomination feature if they have been listed.

In addition, researchers can also search by 'associated people', making it possible to track down the work of architects, designers or famous people associated with specific individual buildings.

As the website aims to match list descriptions for the 370,000 listed buildings of England with photographs (there are currently over 90,000 photographs on the site), both the modern and old can be viewed side by side. In the Religious section, researchers can view early ritual sites, some of the oldest parish churches, and more modern listed churches which have received a listing to celebrate their unique building designs or the people associated with them.

As well as buildings, the database also has some more unusual listings. There are over 2,000 gravestones currently on the website. Where the inscriptions are legible, they are often included in the list description. For instance, a search for gravestones in Malmesbury brings up the unusual story of Hannah Twynnoy, who was killed in 1703 by a tiger.

Taking a defining photograph of a listed religious building presents a challenge for the volunteer photographers who are part of the project. They have encountered many problems, including battling with the English weather or being stung by nettles to reach the perfect position for the photograph. Perhaps one of the greatest difficulties involved in photographing a church is the need to manage perspective and distortion to ensure that a church tower does not appear to be a leaning tower, unless it really does lean.

Photographing the 38,000 religious listed structures is ongoing work, but almost 11,000 photographs have already been taken, preserving the history of religious buildings in England for the present and future generations.

Churches in the NMR Collections

For many towns and villages, the church is both the spiritual focus and one of the most potent connections with the past. It is not surprising that churches – both great and small – have captured the interest of the photographer as well as the antiquarian and architectural historian. In the NMR's archives, photographs and drawings of churches comprise one of the largest components. The vast quantity and variety of images afford the researcher an unparalleled opportunity to compare views of the same building captured at various times, occasionally documenting restoration work in progress, with stunning coverage of interiors, fixtures and fittings. This note concentrates on archive material that the NMR has acquired

© Mr G Williams 460903

Headstone dated 1703, inscribed to Hannah Twynnoy, a servant at the White Lion Inn (now No.8 Gloucester Street), Malmesbury, who was killed by a tiger from a travelling menagerie lodged in the back premises of the inn. The inscription reads: *In bloom of life/ she's snatchd from hence/ she had not room/ to make defence/ for tyger fierce/ took life away/ and here she lies/ in a bed of clay/ until the Resurrection Day.*

© English Heritage.NMR AA98/07601

St Margaret and All Saints Church, Pakefield, Suffolk (Grade II*). A reed thatcher carrying out repair work on the church roof, photographed by Hallam Ashley in 1949.

from a variety of sources outside of English Heritage.

CONSERVATION-BASED COLLECTIONS: Archive assembled partly to inform and aid church conservation is represented in the life's work of **Gerald Cobb** (1899–1986) – a series of 136 albums created between the 1950s and 1980s, with over 14,000 items including 18th- to early 20th-century illustrations, postcards, late Victorian and Edwardian photographs, indeed almost every conceivable visual reference to cathedrals and greater churches across the country.

The albums are based on themes or sites, and for some of the larger sites, such as St Paul's Cathedral, which has 21 albums, by parts of the building. There are numerous beautiful images, including many comparative views showing buildings before Victorian modification or restoration. Cobb's detailed and meticulous annotations reflect his unparalleled knowledge of the subject.

WD Caroe of the family architectural practice Caroe & Partners, and one of the great figures of the Arts and Crafts Movement, assembled six albums containing 3,000 photographs. These images, which date between 1880 and 1940, record buildings, especially churches, designed, modified or restored by the firm. The images complement a series of architectural drawings by Caroe, now part of the NMR Measured Drawings collection, that show restoration and modifications, including St Winifred's Church, Branscombe, Devon, All Saints' Church, Sherburn-in-Elmet, North Yorkshire, and Bell Tower and Water Tower of Canterbury Cathedral.

© English Heritage.NMR AA013461

St John's Church, Smith Square, Westminster (Grade I). This former church, burnt out during World War II, was photographed by Gordon Barnes in 1967 while it was being converted to a concert hall.

THEMATIC COLLECTIONS: The photographs taken by Gordon Barnes and HS Goodhart-Rendel are exceptional records of Victorian architecture, particularly churches. **Gordon Barnes** (1915–85) was one of the foremost authorities on Victorian churches, especially those in London, and an amateur photographer who used large format equipment to ensure good quality images. His collection of almost 9,000 high quality black and white photographs, taken between 1959 and 1984, is predominantly of churches. Exterior and interior views are well represented, including details of fonts, doors, pulpits, altars and windows. Such is the quality of the collection that many of its images have been used by scholars and by lobbying groups to highlight and help protect the original fabric of Victorian church art.

The photographs by the architect **HS Goodhart-Rendel** (1887–1959) also reflect a life-long interest in Victorian architecture and probably served as a corpus of images to illustrate lectures on 19th-century architecture and architects. In addition, there is a comprehensive card index to 19th-century churches and architects.

GENERAL COVERAGE: The majority of the externally acquired collections depict a wide range of buildings of all periods, often concentrated on particular counties or regions. This is typified in the 19,869 photographs taken between 1931 and 1980 by **Hallam Ashley** (1900–87), a professional photographer based in the outskirts of Norwich. Over 80% of the collection is of East Anglia, and of this, 54% of Norfolk. One quarter of the collection shows churches and other ecclesiastical buildings, with strong coverage of interiors. Shots taken before, during and after restoration work are well represented, including over 500 shots of cleaned and replaced bosses (see News, 45), angels and woodwork, and craftsmen re-fitting conserved stained glass at St Mary's Church, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, in the 1960s.

In contrast, most of the 9,901 images taken by amateur photographer **Laurence Goldman** (1911–88) between the 1950s and 1970s are of south-eastern counties, especially London. Almost two-thirds of the collection features ecclesiastical buildings. Interior views dominate, including church monuments, fonts and stained glass, captured on colour as well as black and white film.

The north-west, particularly Greater Manchester and Cheshire, is the focal point of **Gerald Sanville**'s photographs, taken between 1908 and 1965. A partner in a Manchester-based architects' firm, Sanville was also an enthusiastic amateur photographer. The collection comprises almost 1,000 photographic negatives and prints, of which about half are of ecclesiastical buildings, with an emphasis on interiors, particularly woodwork. Sanville also recorded restoration work, such as the uncovering of a previously hidden arch-brace and timbered roof at St Luke's Church, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, in 1934.

© English Heritage.NMR AA018144

St Mary's Church, Bottesford, Leicestershire (Grade I). The chancel contains monuments to eight Earls of Rutland. This late-16th-century monument to John, the 4th Earl, was recorded by Laurence Goldman in May 1969.

MEASURED DRAWINGS: The NMR holds several large collections of architectural measured drawings, with excellent coverage of churches by some of the leading and most prolific architects of the 19th and early 20th century, including the Scott dynasty, Sir Arthur Blomfield, Sir Aston Webb, JL Pearson and FE Howard. The importance of this resource lies in the depiction of designs, repairs and modifications of the Victorian period. For example, many of FE Howard's (1888–1934) design and working drawings of interior fittings were commissions either for the church concerned or for Warham Guild or Messrs AR Mowbray, the church fitters. Also notable are the full-size cartoons for stained glass windows by J Henry Dearle, who worked in the studio of William Morris, becoming head of the stained glass department at Morris & Co, and whose style was influenced by Burne-Jones.

Catalogues for these collections, and many others, can be viewed in the NMR and on www.english-heritage.org.uk/nmr, where full biographical and content details can be found.

Stained glass online

The Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi (CVMA) specialises in the study of medieval stained glass. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board, it has online over 10,000 photographs of medieval and later stained glass, mostly from the NMR's collections. View these images on www.cvma.ac.uk.

Living Story Project

Members of the NMR's Living Story Project recently took part in a training workshop, led by Cre8 Studios of Swindon, on recording and editing moving images using a digital camcorder. The group is producing two short documentary-style films exploring change and continuity within the community's houses, streets and shops. A programme of workshops, tours, lectures, weekly classes and events will help participants make the best use of NMR resources for work, research or personal interest. Short introductory tours to the NMR Centre are available, and for those wishing to explore the resources in more detail, study days are organised on a number of different themes.

For further information about NMR Outreach events, contact Jane Golding: Tel 01793 414735; **Fax** 01793 414606; **jane.golding@english-heritage.org.uk.**

© English Heritage.NMR BB98/11401

Before and after the uncovering of the arch-brace and timber roof at St Luke's Church, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire (Grade I), recorded by Gerald Sanville during restorations in 1934.

© English Heritage.NMR BB98/11408

News
from English Heritage

Religion and Place Today: Buildings and Urban Communities

This issue of *Conservation Bulletin* will be launched at a two-day conference in November, convened jointly by English Heritage and the Pevsner Architectural Guides. The conference will investigate aspects of the continuing importance of religious buildings in the 21st century. England's religious and cultural diversity is represented by a range of eminent speakers, and the event will be held at the newly opened London Muslim Centre on Whitechapel Road, Europe's largest and newest Islamic community centre in an area of East London long known for its diversity. Opened in June 2004 amidst the celebration of Tower Hamlets' Muslim community, which raised a substantial part of the funding, the Centre includes a new prayer hall with spacious facilities for multi-faith and multi-cultural activities and is available to all the people of Tower Hamlets.

Grants for Cathedrals

Following a review of the fabric needs of English cathedrals in comparison with other grant pressures, English Heritage has reduced funding for its Cathedrals Repair Grants scheme to £1 million per annum. A survey in 2002 demonstrated that with the help of English Heritage grants, cathedrals had completed 86% of the fabric repairs identified in the 1991 survey. For most cathedrals, projected repair costs to 2006 are on a smaller scale, concentrating on cyclical repairs rather than major projects.

However, there remains a small number of the greater cathedrals in England still only part way through major long-term repair programmes. It is recognized that a new scheme should continue to offer large grants for such cathedrals as Lincoln and Salisbury, as well as to provide help to cathedrals for smaller projects, including non-repair projects such as metric survey and fire protection.

Early in 2004, Grants for Cathedrals was designed to the same format as all other English Heritage grant schemes, giving cathedrals a choice of two streams of application.

The application packs for 2005/6 grants under the new scheme were sent to all Church of England and Roman Catholic cathedrals at the end of June 2004. Applications were received at the end of July for a total of 36 projects from 27 different cathedrals costing £4.16 million including VAT and fees. Offers of grants are in the process of being made at the time of writing.

Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England 2002–5

English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund have been working in partnership since 1996 to offer grants to places of worship in England. Through the joint Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme, begun in 2002, grants are offered to help meet the essential repair needs of the ecclesiastical built heritage. All listed places of worship in England are eligible to apply, and applications are welcomed from all faith groups and denominations, Christian and non-Christian.

Grants are considered for urgent repairs to keep a place of worship structurally stable and weatherproof. Most repairs supported through the scheme are high-level works to roofs, towers, spires, high-level masonry and rainwater disposal systems. Grants may also be given for other urgent repair work if the historic fabric is at risk of imminent loss or if there is an emergency affecting the structure of the building.

In the first two years of the current scheme, grants have been awarded totalling nearly £50 million to 573 Grade I, II* and II listed places of worship across the country. Reflecting England's diverse culture, grants have been offered to places of worship ranging from medieval parish churches to an urban synagogue and a Buddhist temple. The total budget for the third year of the scheme is £25 million. There is a two-stage application process, with funding available for working up projects in stage one and for the repair work itself in stage two. Applications are considered in two annual batches; the closing date for applications for this year has now passed. The next round of offers will be announced in December 2004. For further information on the scheme, please contact Nick Chapple on 020 7973 3267 or nick.chapple@english-heritage.org.uk.

The Anglo-Sikh Heritage Trail

The innovative web-based Anglo-Sikh Heritage Trail highlights 150 years of Anglo-Sikh culture and history. Created by the Maharajah Duleep Singh Centenary Trust, the website draws together Anglo-Sikh sites, significant memorials, rare books and manuscripts, and sumptous treasures and artefacts. English Heritage is one of its many supporters. At the launch in July, Dr Simon Thurley said, 'We have pledged £135,000 to develop the Trail and have worked closely with the Trust since the start of the project to help bring this exciting idea to life. We are proud of the significance our property Osborne House has for Anglo-Sikh culture. Visitors can see the exceptional Sikh decoration in the Durbar Room, designed and built by Bhai Ram Singh, and the portraits of Maharajah Duleep Singh from when he stayed in the house with Queen Victoria. English Heritage helps communities champion their own heritage, and we hope that this Trail will help everyone to enjoy and understand Anglo-Sikh heritage.' In addition to the Durbar Room, the website includes the battle standards from the Anglo- Sikh wars at the Royal Regimental Museum at Dover Castle, the first British Sikh temple in Shepherds Bush, London, and the burial place of Maharajah Duleep Singh in St Andrew and St Patrick Parish Church, Elveden, Suffolk. For more information, visit www.asht.

Save Our Streets

English Heritage has launched a Save Our Streets campaign to improve historic areas and landscapes. According to Dr Simon Thurley, 'Once, England had some of the most elegant streets in the world, famed for the quality of its street furniture. Today, it is a different story. Our historic streets are being trashed by thoughtlessness and cheap design. Some of the worst culprits are local authorities, which should be setting an example of enlightened stewardship. We need to start by removing the clutter and viewing our streets as historic places in their own right ... We are all pedestrians, and we all deserve better.'

The campaign includes giving advice to the Department for Transport on changing regulations to encourage best practice, setting up design workshops across the country, and publishing regional streetscape manuals, based on the widely regarded document published by the London Region in 2000. The aim of the manuals is to set out general principles for the conservation, management and design of streets to promote integrated townscape management.

Places of worship: useful websites

- The Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi
  Medieval Stained Glass in Great Britain
  www.cvma.ac.uk
  Over 10,000 photographs, mostly from the NMR's collections.
- The Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland
  www.crsbi.ac.uk
  Currently includes 600 reports. When completed, it will include some 5,000 sites in Britain and Ireland (60,000 images).
- Church Plans Online
  www.churchplansonline.org
  Includes some 13,000 plans and drawings in the archive of the Incorporated Church Building Society, which spans the period from 1818 to 1982 and is stored at Lambeth Palace.
- The Ecclesiological Society
  www.ecclsoc.org
  Includes responses of various bodies to the Government's recent consultation paper on the Ecclesiastical Exemption.

Professional training courses

- Building conservation masterclasses and professional conservators in practice.
  West Dean College, near Chichester, West Sussex.
  A collaboration in specialist training between West Dean College, English Heritage and the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, sponsored by the Radcliffe Trust.
  For details, please contact West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester PO18 0QZ; Tel 01243 818294; bcm@westdean.org.uk; pat.jackson@westdeat.org.uk; www.westdean.org.uk.
- Professional training in the historic environment 2004/5.
  A wide-ranging programme of one- and two-day courses at the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education, in association with the AFT, the IHBC and the IFA.
  For details, please contact Dr Alison MacDonald, OUDCE, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA; Tel 01865 270366; alison.macdonald@conted.ox.ac.uk.

St Mary's Church, Bottesford, Leicestershire (Grade I). The chancel contains monuments to eight Earls of Rutland. This late 16th-century monument to John, the 4th Earl, was recorded by Laurence Goldman in May 1969.

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A New Act for Theatres

Peter Longman *Director of The Theatres Trust*

Theatres need special protection and advice on alterations or changes of use.

Most people's first memory of theatre conjures up childhood pantomimes and a world of make-believe and magic. Today, a visit to the theatre might mean spending a few hours in a modern concrete box, or perhaps an Edwardian time-capsule, with long queues for the bar and lavatories during the interval. To a Conservation Officer, it might also mean that run-down empty building, now blocking the local authority's central redevelopment scheme, which a group of protesters are trying to save.

The power of those protesters derives in part from the fact that theatres are the only secular building type with a statutory body to protect them. The Theatres Trust was established with all-party support and Acts of Parliament in 1976 and 1978, and it covers the whole of the UK. It was set up to protect theatre *use*, on the basis that most theatre buildings occupy prime sites that would be far more valuable in any other use. Indeed, if it had been left to market forces alone, there would probably be no theatres left today.

Theatres in use are now regarded as *sui generis* in planning terms, and the Trust is a statutory body that must be consulted on any planning application affecting land on which there is a theatre. This can include adjacent developments and extends to all theatres, old and new, regardless of whether they are still used as theatres. Most local authorities have planning policies to protect theatre use, and many theatre buildings are now listed. Theatres would appear to be well protected.

Unfortunately, though, theatre operation now no longer generates sufficient profits to pay for modernisation, let alone to create new buildings. Until the last 50 years, theatre buildings were regarded as essentially ephemeral, to be knocked down or altered at will – a process hastened in late Victorian times by the fact that their average life expectancy was only about 18 years before they burnt down.

In conservation terms, a traditional theatre building poses a number of contradictions. It is a highly sophisticated and complex building type, only a relatively small part of which is visible to the audience or passers-by. Externally, traditional theatres are often extremely utilitarian in appearance, except for a decorative principal façade. Décor, both inside and out, is mainly for effect and usually pays scant attention to any architectural rulebook. Features such as plasterwork and curtains, however, contribute significantly to the acoustic properties, while the rake of the stage, stalls and circles will usually have been carefully calculated to ensure good sightlines.

Circulation routes were carefully planned to ensure that audiences would be segregated into different classes. This segregation was also reflected in different standards of decorative treatment and levels of provision, so that, a hundred years ago, only about a third of the audience would have expected to enter through the front door and to have proper lavatory and bar facilities. People were about four inches shorter on average then, and much of the seating was on benches, the location of which is usually still reflected in the dimensions of balcony tiering.

Backstage conditions are often similarly antiquated, reflecting a time when scenery was essentially two-dimensional and would be delivered by horse and cart. Also, the décor does not allow for modern lighting levels or the paraphernalia of equipment that now appears in an auditorium.

In short, modernising one of these buildings is a job for experts, as ill-judged alterations can have unforeseen consequences. Proposals to alter theatres no longer in use must also be considered carefully to ensure that they do not inadvertently preclude a return to theatre use. There are many examples across the UK of 'sleeping beauties' that have been triumphantly returned to life.

There are also many examples of theatre buildings that have been successfully adapted for other uses, such as cinemas, bingo halls or places of worship These new uses neither require significant physical alterations nor put

the buildings into a class use (such as a pub) where the increased land value makes a return to theatre use prohibitively expensive.

The Trust is always happy to advise applicants and planning authorities on the options available and the precedents, and we pride ourselves on our pragmatism. We are regularly consulted on wide range of issues, from valuations, planning matters and organising campaigns, to the appointment of suitable consultants and design teams. We are not, however, a preservation body. It is no part of our brief to suggest that everything should be saved or that no building should be altered. Theatres were made to be altered, and in practice we find that English Heritage and planning authorities like Westminster, which have a great deal of experience of the needs of theatre, are extremely helpful when considering the sort of alterations necessary to enable a theatre to adapt to meet modern expectations. Please make use of us!

Decorative panel at Blackpool's Grand Theatre in course of cleaning as part of an Heritage Lottery Fund supported scheme.

© Ian Grundy

Sheffield's Lyceum Theatre was restored and reopened in 1990 after having been empty and under threat since 1972.

© John Walsom / Arts Team @ RHWL

New Publications
from English Heritage

18th-century London's Smaller Houses

by Peter Guillery

Eighteenth-century London was Europe's biggest city and greatest industrial centre. Three out of four Londoners were artisans or labourers, and 40% of the city's population lived in largely manufacturing districts in Southwark and Tower Hamlets. This wide-ranging study is derived from a number of surveys in inner-London districts where some modest 18th-century houses have survived from the once-plentiful housing stock built for artisans and labourers, though they are largely unrecognised, unprotected and newly vulnerable to regeneration investment. This study of vernacular buildings offers significant insights into an important but neglected branch of urban studies.
Published by Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, in association with English Heritage.
PRICE £40 + £3.95 P&P
ISBN 0 300 10238 0 / PRODUCT CODE 50762
Hardback, 351 pages, 291 illustrations

Acton Court

The evolution of an early Tudor courtier's house

by Kirsty Rodwell and Robert Bell

Acton Court is the architectural study of a Tudor Manor house, where the building itself sheds light on the social and cultural history of the time. For more than 400 years, the Acton family and their successors, the Poyntz family, occupied the substantial manor house at Iron Acton in South Gloucestershire. Successive remodellings and extensions of their 13th-century moated manor house reflected the growth in wealth of the Actons, and later the increasing prosperity and rise to favour of several Poyntz family heirs, culminating in a three-day visit in 1535 by Henry VIII. Archaeological evidence has shown that a new east range was most probably built especially for this royal visit. The last building development in mid 1550s gave Acton Court the outwardly regular appearance of a courtyard house. The surviving structures display much of their mid-16th-century appearance.
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by Simon Taylor and David B Lovie

Gateshead has often been overshadowed by Newcastle, its northern neighbour across the River Tyne, yet its history covers the development of a northern industrial town during the 19th and 20th centuries. This period of great change is explored through a study of the town's everyday historic landscape: the legacy of railway engineering, the construction of the Team Valley Trading Estate (a nationally significant example of a state-sponsored attempt to engineer economic change), new public buildings and rapid growth of new housing. The book concludes with a discussion of the conservation of the historic environment in a new period of great change.
PRICE £7.95 (no P&P)
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Paperback, 82 pages, 88 illustrations

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