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A BULLETIN OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

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Conservation bulletin

Places of Worship

Historic places of worship are among the best-loved and most potent of our cultural landmarks. But they need loving care and creative management if they are not to become lifeless monuments.

St Giles Farmers Market, Shipbourne, Kent, held outside and inside the church every Thursday morning – an inspiring example of the way new functions can often be accommodated at minimum cost to the existing fabric and fittings of an historic place of worship.

ENGLISH HERITAGE

Editorial: *Places of Worship – Places that Matter*

Historic places of worship are integral to our physical and cultural landscape, so how do we understand, celebrate and sustain them?

The vocabulary of conservation is weighted by a particular ethical culture, which previous generations associated with 'the caring professions' or 'voluntary work' rather than buildings and places. We are to *help* others *share* in the historic environment; to manage change on the basis of clear *understanding*; to ensure historic places are *sustainable* for future generations. Such concepts are rooted in a need for good and improving communication between those who own or manage the historic environment, conservation professionals and the wider public.

Places of worship are emotive sites: diverse interest groups compete to ensure that their particular appreciation of significance, their perception of the building's use and their vision of its future dominates over others'. This may lead to conflict and misunderstanding: it does not have to. Improving communication is thus the underlying ambition of this edition of *Conservation Bulletin*.

Candida Lycett Green puts mortar-mixes and gutter-clearance into context with her declaration of the ineffable magic of the places of worship that decorate England. Taking such buildings for granted can lead to a failure to undertake regular housekeeping, thus maintenance was one of the major targets of English Heritage's *Inspired!* campaign. Nick Chapple considers English Heritage's work with three dioceses that have established maintenance schemes and Sara Croft reports on SPAB's missionary Faith in Maintenance project, showing that positive efforts are being made. The challenge for cathedrals is explained by Nick Rank while Richard Halsey sets out the particular issues facing other large and complex buildings. Oddbjorn Sormoen describes the different experience of Norwegian churches.

Cataloguing places of worship is a challenge. The efforts being made to prepare an accurate 'list of the listed' are described by Nick Chapple. Sophie Andreae offers a clear analysis of the Catholic Church's *Taking Stock* while Sharman Kadish illustrates concerns for the Jewish community.

The Heritage at Risk programme is to be extended to include places of worship in 2010 so the Building Exploratory's work with volunteers is of great interest. All faiths and denominations recognise the importance of grants to help with urgent repairs and Guy Braithwaite sets out the story of Repair Grants for Places of Worship.

Demographic change, funding limitations, congregational expansion or exhaustion can mean that a place of worship is no longer needed in a particular location. Ian Serjeant sets out the Methodist Church's perspective on closing and disposing of its buildings in contrast to Crispin Truman's 'myth-busting' view of future opportunities. Efforts to help congregations to use buildings creatively are identified by Janet Gough as she sets out the Church of England's approach. English Heritage's own innovative partnership project to part-fund Support Officers is also recognised as a creative way to help congregations help themselves.

The voice of user-groups is represented: Sarah King describes the value of the Association of English Cathedrals' visitor survey, Jenifer White focuses on burial grounds and Peter Moger expresses an often overlooked but utterly crucial aspect of places of worship – how Christian worship is 'done' in the 21st century.

The review of two invaluable books about the history, development and use of churches is by another theologian, Mark McIntosh: it is an unusual book review for a conservation journal but conservation respects difference! Places of worship have a significance beyond simply existing within the landscape: they proclaim layers of meaning with which we must grapple if we are to manage change and sustain them for the future; they both share and nuance our culture. We care about them.

Diana Evans
Head of Places of Worship Policy, English Heritage

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

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In Praise of Spires and Towers

Candida Lycett Green

Cathedrals, churches and chapels are a vital presence in the landscape of England. They are woven into its beauty and part of it. Spires and towers, rising from a cluster of town roofs, soaring into the sky on the horizon or suddenly upon you around the bend in a country lane, lend a feeling of settled stability, of safety. Churches are at the heart of every community and provide a sense of continuance. They are our history and symbolise, through christenings, marriages and funerals, our way of life and who we are. They tell of generations of the local people and of lives well spent through the names and inscriptions on the gravestones and memorials, or on the flower and cleaning rota pinned up on the noticeboard in the church porch. Each generation has contributed to the adornment of our ecclesiastical heritage and to abandon churches would be to destroy the story of England.

Churches are also islands of calm in the anxious, speeding roar of the way we live now. Atheist or not, it is undeniable they are places where, as in T S Eliot's *Four Quartets,* 'prayer has been valid'. Because of his poem, Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire is one of my places of pilgrimage. 'A people without history/Is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern/of timeless moments ... So while the light fails/On a Winter's afternoon, in a secluded chapel/History is now and England.' I defy anyone to enter Inglesham church in Wiltshire for instance and not be overwhelmed. Once through the door into the cool, the church's still calm wraps around you. The feeling of prayerfulness is tangible, the Saxon carving of a mother and child beautiful and the spirit of William Morris, who loved Inglesham, hovers there.

England's cathedrals and minsters are sublime and the spirit of the men who made them moving beyond compare. They are works of love, religion and art. I know of no nobler works of art than the famous leaves of Southall, still as crisp and fresh as the day they were carved in the 12th(?) century. Nor do I know of a nobler building than Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, a celebration of the city's pride and a great testimony of the faith and determination of a community which was never deflected, not even by two world wars. It was begun in 1904 when times were brilliant and completed in 1978 when they were not. It soars over the city, on St James's Mount, overlooking the great commercial edifices and the Mersey. It is the largest Anglican church in the world and the second-largest cathedral after St Peter's in Rome. For the moment it is my favourite cathedral in Britain. I have only recently discovered that my father, John Betjeman, was also smitten: 'This is one of the great buildings of the world', he wrote, 'the impression of vastness, strength and height no words can describe . . . suddenly, one sees that the greatest art of architecture, that lifts one up and turns one into a king, yet compels reverence, is the art of enclosing space.' In contrast, the pure simplicity of the Quaker meeting house like Come to Good in Cornwall is awe-inspiring in a completely different, equally wonderful way. Where on earth would England be without these great or small, modest or elaborate, but above all *familiar* symbols of faith? We would be rudderless.

The Grade I cob-and-thatch Quaker meeting house built in 1710 at Come to Good in Cornwall – a place of pure simplicity.

Our Shared Inheritance

Before we can plan for the future of our historic places of worship we need to understand what makes them special and why they matter to people.

How many listed places of worship are there?

Nick Chapple
Places of Worship Policy Adviser, English Heritage

The foundation of policy-making in any area should be facts. Yet the apparently simple fact of how many places of worship in England are listed buildings remains uncertain. Ongoing work to address this question will help all those involved in the conservation of historic places of worship by providing a foundation for new research and a context for work in individual areas.

Establishing listed status is relatively straightforward – the difficulty comes in discovering the current use of a building. Those buildings we need to identify are those that are primarily places of worship, used for regular public worship, in line with our criteria for grant aid. Such has been the scale of closures of places of worship that thousands have changed use or gone out of use since being listed. While the many web-based resources make it possible to discover the current use in most cases, personal knowledge is sometimes vital and we are grateful to those dioceses and denominations that have helped with this.

The vast majority of listed places of worship belong to five denominations – the Church of England, Roman Catholic Church, Baptist Union, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church. Other faith groups such as the Quakers or Unitarians have significant numbers of listed buildings, while a wide variety of other denominations and faiths use one or more listed buildings. These often include buildings that formerly belonged to another denomination or that were built as something other than a place of worship: cinemas or schools for instance. The extent to which 'new' evangelical and Pentecostal churches are using listed buildings is something of which we need to be more aware.

Work done by Paul Walker (Walker 2006) has pointed to a figure of something like 14,500, significantly below the 'well over 18,000' quoted in *Conservation Bulletin* 46. It seems likely that the lower figure is more or less accurate, but by going a step further and actually identifying the buildings that make up that number we will have a powerful tool for trying to understand them better. Work in Cornwall by Peter Bibby of the University of Sheffield, commissioned by English Heritage, has already shown how, by mapping listed places of worship, we can relate them to data such as the distribution of population and economic activity and indeed to other, unlisted places of worship, to better understand their context (Bibby 2008).

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Bibby, P 2008. *Churches and Chapels in Cornwall: A Pilot Study Relating Historic Data to their Social and Economic Role*. Unpublished report for English Heritage

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St Mary Magdalene, Trimdon, County Durham: parish churches, typically found at the historic heart of towns and villages, make up more than 80 per cent of all listed places of worship.

Cathedrals – reaching out to visitors

Sarah King
Co-ordinator, Association of English Cathedrals

Cathedrals have played an important part in national life for more than 1,000 years. In 2007, 12 million visits were made to cathedrals, and yet they are not principally tourist attractions but places of Christian worship and the mother churches of their dioceses. Little is known about those who visit cathedrals, whether to worship or to enjoy their heritage. Those responsible for running the cathedrals are aware that they need to know more about who is coming, why and how they respond to their visit and also to know more about those who visit the area immediately around a cathedral but do not go in: what deters them and what might attract them to visit? In September 2009, cathedrals are planning to conduct the first-ever national survey of visitors and non-visitors to cathedrals.

No two cathedrals are the same; they are different in size, location, architectural style and age. Cathedrals range from those of international importance (such as St Paul's and Westminster Abbey) and those in World Heritage Sites (Canterbury and Durham cathedrals) to less-well-known cathedrals such as Blackburn, Bradford and Sheffield. Some, such as Hereford with its 13th-century Mappa Mundi and Salisbury with an original Magna Carta, are home to treasures and artefacts, whereas others, such as Liverpool and Guildford, were completed in the 20th century. For many, the word 'cathedral' creates an image of a magnificent building such as Norwich or Salisbury with a towering spire set in a beautiful cathedral close, yet more cathedrals are located in inner-city urban environments. But wherever it is, a cathedral is almost always the most historic and architecturally important building in its environment and the most significant tourist attraction. Cathedrals are heritage assets that have continued in use from their foundation, evolving to meet changing needs; each generation has adapted existing buildings or added new to ensure that the cathedral fulfils its purpose. This process of development is continuing as cathedral authorities seek to respond to the fast-changing and increasingly plural society of our nation.

A guided tour at Peterborough Cathedral

In recent years, the concept of public value in the context of the nation's heritage has been addressed. Work has been done on establishing how best to attribute value to something it is difficult to measure in purely financial terms, and devising ways of 'showing' what matters rather than just 'knowing'. In relating the concept of public value to the world of cathedrals, it is important not just to know how many people are visiting cathedrals but also to understand how satisfied they are with their visits and what they have experienced and learned, and to ensure that money is invested where it can have most impact. It is essential to be able to demonstrate the contribution cathedrals make to the nation's life and heritage, especially as resources are limited. Whether money is coming from the government or its agencies, from cathedrals' own resources or from donations, it must be used wisely.

In 2004, the Association of English Cathedrals and English Heritage commissioned the ECOTEC consultancy to undertake research into the social and economic impacts of cathedrals, to measure the value they added to communities and the nation. This research showed that cathedrals were responsible for a direct visitor-related spend of £91 million and for a total spend of £150 million, playing an important role in generating significant economic outcomes for their surrounding areas.

To complement the social and economic analysis, the Association of English Cathedrals is working with its members (the 42 Anglican cathedrals in England and two Royal Peculiars, Westminster Abbey and St George's Chapel, Windsor), and with English Heritage's assistance, to conduct a survey to find out about the visitor experience at each participating cathedral; all that is currently known at most cathedrals is the number of visitors. The survey, involving a series of face-to-face interviews over a two-day period in early September 2009, will establish visitor-satisfaction levels as well as explore what visitors most appreciate about their visits and what facilities they use and enjoy. This information will assist cathedral authorities in planning improvements to their visitor welcome, whether through the construction of new facilities, the introduction of new interpretation methods or by

Southwark Cathedral in London participated in a pilot survey of visitor responses.

changes to the training of those volunteers and staff who interact with visitors.

A series of parallel face-to-face interviews with an equal number of people visiting the area for leisure or tourist purposes but not planning on visiting the cathedral that day, will also take place since it is just as important to establish why people do not visit and what might attract them to visit in future.

In September 2006, three cathedrals – Liverpool, Salisbury and Southwark – participated in a pilot survey on which this summer's survey is based. The pilot survey had some interesting findings: 98 per cent of cathedral visitors were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit, which the company conducting the survey, Opinion Research Business, advised was a very high satisfaction rating. There were a number of reasons why people visited, but most were heritage related – to visit the cathedral as an historic attraction and to see the architecture and works of art. The pilot also provided some valuable information from non-visitors – one cathedral discovered that non-visitors were either not aware of the existence of the cathedral or were not able to locate it, so the cathedral improved its own external signage and worked with the local authority to upgrade local signage.

So what will cathedrals gain from the national survey? Why is it important that it is done? Cathedrals want to optimise the visitor experience, so visitors can enjoy the continuing spiritual, cultural, social and aesthetic contribution of cathedrals to English life. Cathedrals wish to identify how they can best reach out to and engage with the wider population, introducing them to England's Christian past and the traditions that have formed our current society. And cathedrals also wish to use the survey data to help them and their communities to invest money where it can have most impact. Cathedrals represent a great Christian tradition but they are still engaged in mission and must be relevant to our increasingly complex and diverse society.

Major places of worship in England

Richard Halsey
Chairman, Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust

Three groups of magnificent places of worship share the fabric complexities of cathedral-status buildings but do not necessarily have the same level of support to maintain them.

Town churches of Benedictine and Augustinian monasteries were often also parochial, a status that probably preceded the monastic foundation. When Henry VIII dissolved the religious houses of England at the Reformation, town authorities petitioned the King's Commissioners to retain the monastic church, at a price. It cost the citizens of Tewkesbury £453, the equivalent value of the lead roofs and bells of their Benedictine abbey church.

There are well over 100 medieval monastic churches now in use as Church of England parish churches. Often only a part survives, usually the nave as that was where the parish altar had always been. However, about a dozen are really large and complex buildings, bigger than some cathedrals,

with transepts and extra chapels of little practical use, but their visual appeal attracts tourism. Situated in sizeable towns, they host many civic occasions and are a focal point for wider community activities like concerts. There is also an expectation that they have an organ, choir and bells to maintain worship and a musical tradition on the scale of a cathedral (as that seems to be most appropriate to the building) as well as the usual tourist facilities like shops, cafés and lavatories.

Selby Abbey has been a parish church since the dissolution of the Benedictine Abbey in 1539 and so its repair is the sole responsibility of the local congregation. The problems of natural decay present throughout the building in the late 1990s led the parish to adopt a long-term repair strategy. Selby is not well known or in a tourist centre and the area is economically depressed. Nevertheless, with much effort nearly £5 million has been raised and spent so far, with a further £4.5 million to be spent on the organ, bells and lighting as well as the fabric.

A second group of 'major places of worship' are those large-scale parish churches built in wealthy medieval towns, like St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol or St Nicholas, Great Yarmouth. The area around such churches may now be beyond the modern town centre and with few residents which, combined with the general decline in church attendance, means that their congregations will be eclectic. Attracting visitors and events to develop their ministry and augment their income involves forming partnerships with others in the town and will require a lot of effort. An interesting development in the north of England is the re-naming of such churches as 'Minsters' and making them the basis of an area ministry, reflecting their earliest existence as bases for peripatetic priests and their extra-parochial appeal.

The third group comprises the huge Victorian masterpieces built on a colossal scale in our major cities, often as mission centres in the poorer suburbs. These are frequently the result of personal patronage, such as Father Wagner's St Bartholomew in Brighton, or they were built by the Roman Catholic religious orders, like the Dominican church of Our Lady of the Rosary and St Dominic in north London. Where the patron did not leave a sufficient endowment or the religious orders have now withdrawn, the congregation can have a real problem in maintaining these massive churches – tragically demonstrated by St Francis, Gorton, Manchester, which was almost demolished.

Other denominations and faiths also built some big places of worship, like the 1,500-seat Westminster Chapel in London or the so-called 'cathedral synagogues' such as Singer's Hill Synagogue in Birmingham. Although large and internally ornate, these are essentially galleried halls and do not share the complex plans and architectural complexities of the Gothic Revival styles. They do share the same problems of distant and reduced congregations and their physical situation may not encourage visitors or use by secular partners.

Selby Abbey, Yorkshire: the north side of the choir in 2007, following extensive grant-aided repairs. The repair of this magnificent former monastic church is today the responsibility of the local congregation.

For all large places of worship, looking after buildings that are not just large, but also architecturally complex and sensitive is a major challenge. The quinquennial inspection system designed for much simpler buildings needs to be augmented by more frequent inspection to highlight fabric issues before they become crises. Ideally, there should be a local fabric committee or officer to keep a focus on the building. None employs craftsmen (like some cathedrals) and the day-to-day maintenance is in the hands of volunteers or is organised by a member of staff. When major fabric repairs are addressed, an appeal and careful financial planning, often using professional fundraisers, is essential.

Over the years, most of the formerly monastic major places of worship have been able to build up an endowment from admirers and local philanthropists in their congregations. They will continue to attract worshippers who want a cathedral style of service, tourists and be a focus for large events in their surrounding town. Staff can be employed to manage and promote their full range of activities and to coordinate the voluntary help on which these places rely to welcome visitors and produce income from cafes and shops. As elsewhere, volunteers can be hard to find and keeping activities running in the quiet winter months (even opening the building to casual visitors) can be difficult.

The key to survival seems to be change and adaptation, though this brings its own extra burdens in creating and looking after the extra facilities expected of such functions. Some churches have attracted a new eclectic congregation from their locality; the Holy Name in Manchester now ministers to the students of Salford University. Many have developed other activities within their building, such as the Union Chapel in Islington with its concerts and homeless drop-in centre.

There may not be many of them in total – about 30, perhaps – but these 'major places of worship' are an exceptional body of important buildings, whose continued ability to maintain their fabric requires much greater organisation and management than their simple legal status might suggest. ■

The medieval parish church of St George, Doncaster, was rebuilt, after a fire, by Sir G G Scott in 1854–8 and is now Doncaster's Minster.
© Richard Halsey

A Catholic perspective

Sophie Andreae
Vice Chairman, Patrimony Committee
Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

'Does the Catholic Church in England have much of a heritage?' This was the question I was asked on more than one occasion – including by Catholics – while engaged with the production of the book, *A Glimpse of Heaven: Catholic Churches of England and Wales,* the joint project between the Patrimony Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and English Heritage, prior to its publication in 2006. Beyond a handful of well-known outstanding buildings, what was there? The book, as *The Times* commented, was 'a revelation'.

However, it remains the case that the Catholic heritage in this country is under-recognised and under-appreciated largely because so much of it is comparatively recent. The majority of Catholic churches were built during the Victorian period and during the 20th century. Unlike their Anglican counterparts, which frequently define the centres of towns and villages, Catholic churches usually occupy secondary sites and are less visible, and many have very plain exteriors. They are thus easily overlooked (even by Pevsner) and as a result are significantly under-represented in the statutory lists.

Plain exteriors often hide an interior of grandeur, magnificence and colour. The tradition, particularly in the 19th century, of bringing artefacts and furnishings – sometimes complete baroque altars – from the continent lends Catholic churches in England a particular distinctiveness. The use of colour is also characteristic of more recent churches, particularly the striking use of stained glass in modernist buildings of the 1950s and 1960s.

Because Catholic churches, particularly

Victorian ones, were not regarded as important, and because of the then lack of any system of internal or external control, they suffered terribly from destructive re-orderings carried out in the wake of Vatican II. In recent years, however, it is encouraging to see a number of sensitive restoration schemes attempting to address this damage, much of which is now regretted. Recent schemes at Birmingham and Leeds cathedrals are good examples of this and illustrate the increasingly influential role that diocesan Historic Churches Committees (HCCs) now have in guiding alterations.

The system of Catholic HCCs was established in 1994 in order to satisfy the requirements of government and for the Church to retain the Ecclesiastical Exemption. There are 13 HCCs operating in England and Wales, 3 of them multi-diocesan, the rest covering single dioceses. The Patrimony Committee of the Catholic Bishops Conference oversees their operation and provides help and advice (for more information see **www.catholic-ew.org.uk**). There is no doubt that the establishment of HCCs has done a great deal to raise awareness of the significance of heritage both within the Church itself and beyond. There are good links between HCCs and English Heritage at regional level and the Patrimony Committee works closely with English Heritage and other bodies involved with the ecclesiastical heritage at national policy level as well as giving advice and support to HCCs.

A major challenge facing Catholic dioceses in England and Wales at the present time is the impact of pastoral review. All dioceses are thinking hard about how best to provide for the future given the combined pressures of a decline in Mass attendance, a shortage of priests and population shifts, which has meant that some churches are, quite simply, now in the wrong place. In some places like Liverpool there are too many churches in close proximity to each other for today's needs, a problem also evident in Preston. In other places, congregations are expanding as Catholics from overseas settling in this country swell numbers. This is a very recent phenomenon that in turn can present problems for historic churches, particularly those on constricted urban sites with little room for expansion.

During any pastoral review process it is clearly important that heritage issues are properly factored into diocesan thinking, not least because if it is decided that a listed church needs to be closed its future needs to be considered. However, in order for this to happen, it is essential that dioceses have adequate information available to them. The general under-listing of Catholic churches has led, all too often in recent years, to last-minute spot-listings derailing often advanced redevelopment plans.

In order to address this problem and to provide authoritative information and advice on which dioceses can rely, the Patrimony Committee and English Heritage embarked on two pilot studies in the dioceses of Lancaster and Arundel and Brighton in 2005. This led to the development of the *Taking Stock* project, a partnership between individual dioceses and English Heritage. The 50% grant-funding currently provided by English Heritage for these projects has provided essen-tial encouragement to cash-strapped dioceses. Comprehensive reports are now complete for the dioceses of Portsmouth, Middlesborough, Leeds, and Liverpool and a further tranche is either under way or in the pipeline (Northampton, Plymouth, Shrewsbury, Southwark, Clifton and Westminster). The aim is to see all Catholic dioceses in England participating in *Taking Stock* and the Patrimony Committee is working actively to achieve this. Identifying the Catholic heritage is an essential first step towards generating increased understanding and appreciation that in turn will help ensure proper protection and conservation.

What has emerged consistently during the *Taking Stock* studies is that, in terms of current listing criteria, many churches are either under-graded or not listed at all. Others can be identified as making a positive contribution to conservation areas while some are clearly of no architectural merit at all. There are around 5,000 parish churches in England and Wales of which approximately 750 are listed. On present evidence it appears that this number could increase by some 10 per cent.

St Walburge, Preston: a sad decaying angel in Joseph Hansom's grand Gothic Revival church, a Grade I building whose Roman Catholic congregation has declined since its 19th-century heyday.
© Alex Ramsay

Pope Benedict receives his personal copy of *Glimpse of Heaven: Catholic Churches of England and Wales*. The new paperback edition of this superbly illustrated book will be published in September, price £20.00 from English Heritage Publishing Mail Order Sales at the address shown on the back cover. The book's author, Christopher Martin, has also written and directed a new DVD version of the book containing extra filmed sequences, including contributions from distinguished architectural historians, theologians and conservationists. Copies of the two-disk DVD set are available from Gracewing, 2 Southern Avenue, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 0QF; tel: 01568 616835; fax: 01568 613289; email: gracewingx@aol.com; web: www.gracewing.co.uk

The purpose of *Taking Stock*, however, is not to generate a raft of new spot listings. Rather, it is to indicate which churches are potentially of architectural and historic interest, to articulate where that interest lies and to give some indication of the potential and scope for alteration both for the purposes of continued use and in the event that, at some future date, a particular church should cease to be used for worship. The benefits to dioceses and all those involved in decision-making of having clear, concise and authoritative information about the heritage value of their building stock cannot be over-estimated. It can inform strategic thinking and discussions with statutory bodies and local communities alike.

It is encouraging to note that in order to ensure proper protection for those churches deemed to be of listable quality, dioceses are generally ensuring that any proposed alterations are referred to HCCs with these buildings being treated as though they were listed, pending a final decision.

There is still a long way to go in identifying and understanding the Catholic heritage but the last few years have seen major progress. The support and encouragement of English Heritage at national level has played a key part. This impetus needs to continue, as does capacity building within dioceses, particularly those faced with the complex challenges of church closure. Despite severe pressure on diocesan budgets right now, it is very much to be hoped that Catholic dioceses will recognise the positive contribution Support Officer posts could make particularly in terms of building partnerships with bodies outside the Church and thus unlocking other potential sources of funding to support church maintenance and repair.

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Identifying the Challenges

There are many different ways in which places of worship can be put at risk – and it is vital that we find out what they are.

Conserving our cathedrals: the funding of repair campaigns

Nicholas J Rank

Director of Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams Architects; Architect to Lincoln Cathedral and Carlisle Cathedral; Chairman Cathedral Architects Association

The current English Heritage grant scheme for conservation and repair work to cathedrals (recently funded jointly by The Wolfson Foundation) is coming to the end after a 19-year period. This is a good time to assess what has been achieved in that time, and more significantly look towards the issues and challenges that face cathedral authorities as they move forward.

When the repair grant scheme was first launched, in the early 1990s, there was a feeling that a major cash injection would enable repair works and conservation of their historic fabric to be undertaken to leave the cathedrals around the country in good general order and needing less work in the coming years. It is indeed true that the significant funding (£51.5 million) that has been made available has had a major impact in the care of these buildings, but it is not possible to suggest that cathedral authorities can now rest easy believing that little further work is now necessary.

While it is true that not all cathedrals will need a major continuing repair programme, nevertheless the experience of the last 19 years has shown that all buildings need constant and continuing care and attention, and that if fabric-repair issues are ignored for a short period of time the consequences can be serious and expensive to rectify.

Normally the general thrust of a programme of conservation and repair work is established in the architect's quinquennial inspection report. The quinquennial inspection system is a well-established formula for enabling an overview of the condition of the fabric of a building and has been used for many years in both parish churches and cathedrals. A report on a cathedral, because of the complexity and scale of the building, should become a working document that is gradually modified as areas of work are tackled. From it can be drawn out short- and medium-term programmes of work, and these have formed the basis of grant applications to English Heritage and other grant-giving bodies.

The nature of repair programmes and the frequency of work will depend on the individual cathedral. Some cathedrals may only need fairly minor routine maintenance works whereas others can be shown to need major repair campaigns that need repeating on a well-established cycle, perhaps

York Minster, decayed carving to door moulding. If fabric-repair issues are ignored for a short period of time the consequences can be serious and expensive to rectify.

Decay to the slate-clad concrete fin of Coventry Cathedral. It might be easy to assume that our more ancient cathedrals are the ones most in need of major conservation work.
© Nicholas Rank

between 50 and 200 years. Other cathedrals find that they need to maintain a permanent rolling programme of conservation and repair work with perhaps no break at any time between one project and the next.

The factors that influence how repair work is thus programmed and managed will include the following:

- the nature of the building stone
- local climatic conditions
- the size and scale and complexity of the construction
- the availability of funding.

As a result some cathedrals – such as Salisbury, Gloucester, Canterbury and Lincoln – have well-established works departments that are permanently employed on a rolling programme of conservation works. The scale of these structures means that they gradually work around the building from one area to the next, perhaps not having the opportunity of revisiting a particular area more than once in every 100 or so years. In other instances major one-off projects can be identified, such as the conservation and repair work to the central tower at Wells Cathedral or the major conservation and repair work to the Great East Window at York Minster.

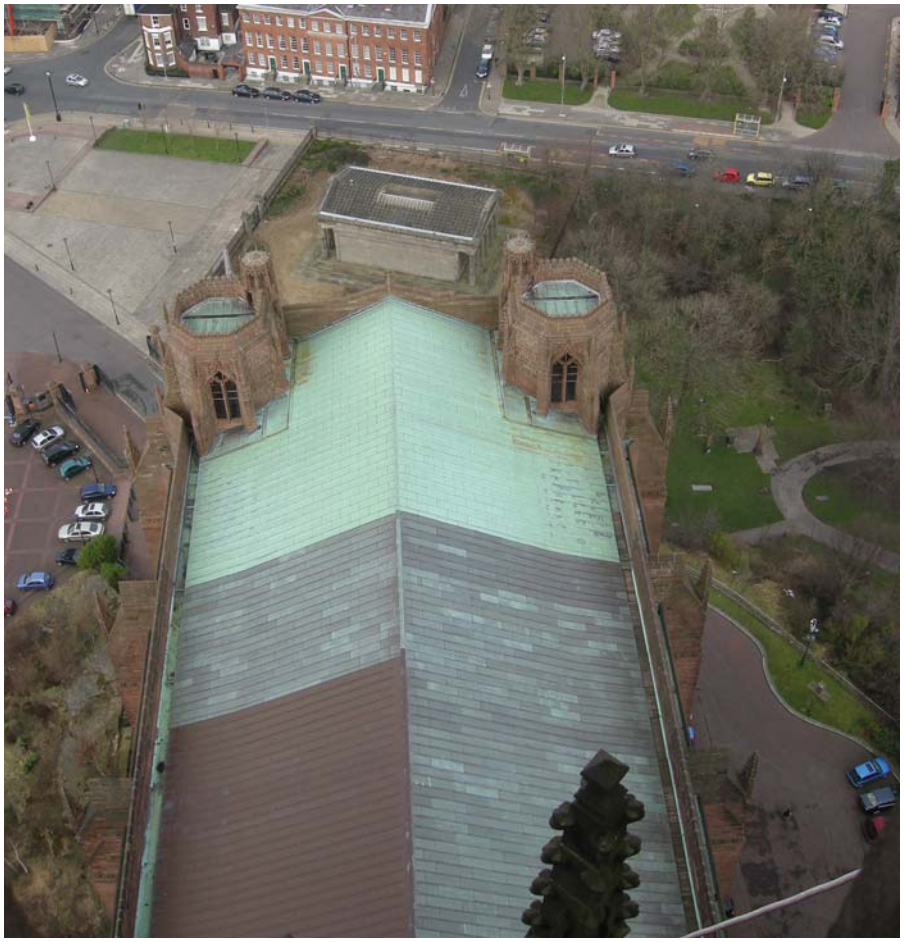
As a result of the differing patterns of conservation requirements, cathedral authorities will need to address different approaches towards fundraising. Some will have to maintain a permanent fundraising campaign, setting aside figures – in some cases in excess of £1.5 million per annum – to be spent on a permanent works establishment. Other cathedrals will look towards more modest fundraising campaigns with perhaps many years between projects being carried out. Others might find it necessary for a major one-off investment of expenditure to deal with significant identifiable projects. Recently, with English Heritage grant-aid, the central tower at Southwell Minster was re-roofed and stonework repairs carried out after a number of years when there had been very little active conservation work.

Cathedral authorities are finding it increasingly difficult to identify sources of funding for essential conservation work. There is a general myth that cathedrals are wealthy but it is very easy to misunderstand the financial arrangements of a cathedral. While some do have what appear to be significant endowments, they also have significant financial commitments. Our major historic cathedrals often have substantial Precinct properties to keep up, as well as maintaining the ministry and mission of the cathedral, the work of the choir and music departments and funding for historic libraries and archives. In comparison the smaller 'parish church' cathedrals often have very restricted financial resources and these cathedrals are often located in less prosperous towns and cities.

Consequently, though the financial background and circumstances are different, cathedral authorities are often found to be raising funds and establishing appeals in a very competitive environment. While there will be many who actively support the mission and ministry of the church and feel an empathy towards the work of cathedrals, many people do not have a particular personal commitment to the work of the church and they consider funding appeals from cathedrals alongside appeals from such bodies as The National Trust, and owners of secular heritage assets.

Another factor that can make funding of fabric repairs to cathedrals difficult is the (sometimes) slightly less attractive nature of some of the work. While it may be possible to excite support and interest for very high-profile conservation works, raising funds for repairs to lead roofs and gutters or pointing areas of fairly plain stonework may not have an immediate appeal. Nevertheless this more mundane work is of critical importance and must be seen as a significant element in the overall conservation and presentation of the building.

It might be easy to assume that our more ancient cathedrals are the ones that need major



The nave of Liverpool Cathedral showing different periods of re-roofing. Raising funds to repair lead roofs and gutters can be more difficult than for more spectacular parts of a cathedral's fabric.

conservation work. However two of our post-Second World War cathedrals have needed repair work. A visit to Coventry Cathedral will show areas of damage associated with slate cladding to thin concrete fins and Liverpool Roman Catholic Cathedral has had problems with its external mosaic-clad concrete frame. Many cathedrals had major repair campaigns carried out in the middle years of the 19th century and much of this work now is needing significant further conservation and repair. At Carlisle Cathedral it has been necessary to replace 19th-century carvings which, being in soft sandstone, have decayed beyond the stage where they can be repaired.

So, in the coming decades cathedral authorities are going to continue to need major cash injections to fund both one-off major conservation projects and also continuing rolling programmes of work, and though much has been achieved in the last 19 years with the English Heritage grant scheme, it would be wrong to assume that this has solved once and for all the conservation needs of these great buildings, without which the heritage and culture of our country would be the poorer.

Historic synagogues: appreciation and challenges

Sharman Kadish
Director of Jewish Heritage UK

Britain's historic synagogues have a significance beyond the miniscule size of the Jewish community, the oldest non-Christian minority faith in the country. The Jewish community today numbers fewer than 300,000 people, barely a half of 1 per cent of the total population, with fewer than 40 listed functioning places of worship. The accolade of Grade I listing has recently been bestowed upon a pair of the finest High Victorian 'cathedral' synagogues in England: London's New West End Synagogue (1877–9), St Petersburgh Place, Bayswater, and Liverpool's Princes Road Synagogue (1872–4). They have joined Britain's oldest synagogue, Bevis Marks (1701) in the City of London, which until 2007 stood alone as the only Grade I-listed synagogue. Both essentially designed by the same Scottish-born architect, George Audsley, in an eclectic 'oriental' style – then deemed fashionably 'suitable' for Jews all over Europe – Princes Road and St Petersburgh Place must

now rank with Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral as landmarks of Britain's national heritage. Princes Road counted among the must-see sights for visitors to Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008 alongside the two Christian cathedrals, the 'Three Graces' and St George's Hall.

Moreover, St Petersburgh Place is the most recent (2009) synagogue to benefit – to the extent of £108,000 – under the English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund Joint Listed Places of Worship Repair Grant Scheme. The significance of major Victorian synagogues to the nation's architectural heritage is now publicly recognised and can no longer be disputed – least of all by the Jewish community itself.

The *Jewish Chronicle*'s headline announcing the upgrading of Princes Road said it all: 'The *Shul* [synagogue] that can't be touched.' It was not so long ago when Princes Road was a building at risk, located in a race-riven Toxteth that Jews of the second and third generations of Liverpool's dwindling community had gladly abandoned for more salubrious suburbs. The battle against redundancy faced by historic synagogues is far more acute than that faced by urban churches because Orthodox Jewish law prohibits travelling on the Sabbath. Synagogues need to be situated within the Jewish neighbourhood and accessible on foot. The functionalist Jewish theological view of the synagogue was neatly summed up by the rabbi who once said 'It's not the *binyan* that's important, it's the *minyan*' (ie 'Not the building but the congregational quorum for prayer'). Synagogues – however old or magnificent – are expendable if they have outgrown their primary purpose. As in other religious communities, the listing of synagogues may be viewed as unwarranted state intrusion, less into freedom of worship than into the operation of the free market. Thus, the biggest challenge remains tackling attitudes towards heritage buildings within the Jewish community itself. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the case of early 20th-century synagogues, the best of which are coming within the purview of 'heritage', thanks to the passage of time. The following case studies will serve to illustrate the point.

The New Synagogue, Stamford Hill, London. Grade II

Architectural significance Behind Ernest Joseph's 'Edwardian Baroque' shell (1915), the interior is a partial replica on a smaller scale of the demolished New Synagogue in Great St Helen's Bishopsgate, designed by John Davies and opened in 1838, and contains some of its original fittings including the concave mahogany Ark, *bimah* (reading platform) and candelabra.

The challenge This synagogue languished on the Listed Buildings at Risk Register for a decade. It had been acquired by a strictly Orthodox sect, the Bobover Hasidim, which comes from a very different worship tradition from that of the United Synagogue, which had built the synagogue. The Hasidim viewed the fabric of the building as incidental to its function as a flexible space in the manner of a traditional *bet midrash* (study hall). The price paid for continuation in Jewish use was liturgical reordering. This involved the removal of the

The New Synagogue, Stamford Hill, London. After languishing on the Buildings at Risk Register, this Grade II synagogue has been acquired by the strictly Orthodox sect of Bobover Hasidim, whose differing liturgical needs demanded a re-modelling of the interior as the price of maintaining the building in Jewish use.

Sunderland Synagogue, Ryhope Road, Sunderland. Listed in 1999, this fine building in art-deco style by the under-appreciated Jewish architect, Marcus Glass, now stands empty and neglected, a candidate for the Listed Buildings at Risk Register.
Bob Skingle

central *bimah*, pews and the installation of a high *mehitzah* gallery screen to completely hide women worshippers from view and to accommodate classrooms.

Sunderland Synagogue, Ryhope Road, Sunderland. Grade II

Architectural significance Rated by Pevsner as 'vigorous and decorative', Sunderland was one of a series of synagogues designed in a distinctive cinematic art-deco style by the under-appreciated Jewish architect, Marcus Glass, who was based in Newcastle upon Tyne. The colourful façade features corner towers, red and yellow *ablaq* striped brickwork, arcaded porch with Byzantine basket capitals, mosaic and abstract stained glass.

The challenge This synagogue was listed in 1999 and even then faced redundancy as the once-vibrant Jewish community in this depressed Tyneside town dwindled. It now stands empty and neglected; the schoolhouse next door has been damaged by arson. In 2006 its sister building, the Clapton Federation Synagogue, Lea Bridge Road, London (1931–2), Glass's only London synagogue, was spectacularly demolished in the face of fresh attempts made locally to get it listed. Ironically, common to both these cases is the fact that they were each sold to property developers within the Jewish community – a salutary warning that keeping historic synagogues within the Jewish community will not necessarily guarantee protection.

Greenbank Drive Synagogue, Sefton Park, Liverpool. Grade II*

Architectural significance A rare art-deco-period synagogue designed in 1936–7 by Ernest Alfred Shennan, who was knighted for his work on the Mersey Tunnel. The 'traditional' tripartite brick-faced façade, by then associated with synagogue design, was given an original twist through the use of tall vertical windows and countervailing curves in the quoins, arches and window surrounds, plus a series of stepped and gabled buttresses on the side walls. The light and airy interior makes extensive use of steel and reinforced concrete in the elegant curved cantilevered gallery and unusual arcaded clerestory girders.

The challenge Following closure early in 2008, this synagogue was upgraded to Grade II*, thanks to the intervention of the Twentieth Century Society. The pressures felt by Liverpool's shrinking Jewish population – under 3,000 people – have thereby been compounded. Already blessed (some would argue burdened) by Grade I Princes Road they now face the challenge of custodianship of one of the best 1930s synagogues in the country. The Liverpool Jewish Housing Association has been encouraged to look afresh at plans to convert Greenbank into a sheltered housing complex without destroying the integrity of the historic building on site. The likelihood now is that the whole scheme will be abandoned and the synagogue sold to a church organisation – a solution eminently acceptable to conservationists, but less so to the Jewish community.

Higher Crumpsall Synagogue, Bury Old Road, Manchester. Grade II

Architectural significance In classical style by local architects Pendleton & Dickinson, Higher Crumpsall Synagogue (1928–9) boasts a well-designed worship space with high-quality fixtures and fittings of marble, bronze, brass, oak and excellent art-deco stained glass. The pair of windows over the Ark and behind the rear gallery, depicting a contemporary 'Vision of Jerusalem' (E window) and the rebuilt Temple of Solomon (W window) and rendering traditional symbolism in modernist style, is particularly notable.

The challenge Despite recent grants totalling about £300,000 under the Joint Places of Worship Scheme, the long-term future for this building

Greenbank Drive Synagogue, Sefton Park, Liverpool. Following closure early in 2008, this rare modernist synagogue was upgraded to Grade II* on the initiative of the Twentieth Century Society. Future options include either sale to a church organisation or conversion into a sheltered housing complex in a way that will protect its historic integrity.
Peter Williams © English Heritage

has not yet been secured. The congregation is in decline. The problem here is not demographics. Higher Crumpsall is situated barely five minutes' walk away from one of the fastest-growing Jewish communities in Europe. The Jewish population of Manchester (estimate 30,000 to 35,000) is the only Jewish community in the UK enjoying a net increase. The immediate neighbourhood of Cheetham Village is being regenerated. Across the road is the King David School, the largest Jewish school in Manchester, which is set to undergo a £20 million state-funded rebuild. There is ample potential for the utilisation of the synagogue both for continued worship and for additional multi-purpose activities. Unfortunately, school and *shul* (synagogue) are separated by the municipal boundary between the City of Manchester and the City of Salford. Moreover, Higher Crumpsall Synagogue is perceived within the Jewish community as a relic of the past, with a formal style of service featuring trained cantor and choir in a neighbourhood no longer 'cool'. Appealing to the imagination as well as to the purse strings of the movers and shakers within the Jewish community is the task we face here.

Places of worship at risk

Diana Evans
Head of Places of Worship Policy, English Heritage

England's Heritage at Risk (HAR) Survey is a world-leader. No other country has taken its human environment so seriously as to attempt to identify those buildings, monuments, wrecks, parks and gardens and local environments that are at risk from damage, destruction or neglect. It would therefore be illogical if places of worship (POWs), which constitute 45 per cent of Grade I buildings in England, were left out of the project. English Heritage is therefore intending to include them in the survey in 2010.

Having said that, POWs are themselves different to other parts of the historic environment because they are not owned by individuals or operated on a profit-making basis but are sustained for the benefit of anyone and everyone by altruistic volunteers. Furthermore, keeping POWs maintained and cared for is not even the primary objective of those volunteers, whose main mission is to use the buildings for the purpose for which they were originally constructed: worship and the service of the community. Managing these highly significant, sometimes expensive to maintain and often complex elements in England's landscape is merely a by-product, an accident of history and quirk of law – not what ministers and congregations regard as their priority.

Open, but not safe.

Which is why English Heritage regards it as vital that POWs are included in the HAR survey, to enable these buildings to share in the benefits of systematic assessment and targeted intervention on an equal footing with other parts of the historic environment. For example, Devil's Dyke in Cambridgeshire, a fine Anglo-Saxon earthwork 12km long, was identified as being At Risk as part of the Scheduled Monuments survey. A sustainable management plan was drawn up to enable farmers, walkers and the wide variety of plants and animals to co-exist to mutual benefit. English Heritage has worked with the county council, Wildlife Trust and Natural England, with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, to develop a strategy to keep this impressive site accessible, well maintained and alive for future generations. Identifying the risk has produced a positive future.

One of the Registered Parks and Gardens found to be at risk was the 20-hectare (50-acre) garden at Lowther Castle in Cumbria (Grade II). The castle itself (II*) was put on the Buildings at Risk Register in 2000 and work is continuing to make it safe so the public can enjoy this 1806 gothic spectacle and its splendid setting. Emergency repairs, partly funded by English Heritage, have been done and following input from the North West Development Agency, the Lowther Estate Trust, Eden District and Cumbria County Council, responsibility for the site has passed to a charitable trust. Identified as at risk but now being constructively conserved: a transformation from a ruin unoccupied since 1942 into a place of recreation and local pride.

Other buildings at risk included Gosport Railway Station Old Terminus (II*), now being developed by the Hermitage Housing Association to protect the listed structure and to provide 35 new homes and 3 work units. The Walronds (I) in Devon, the Dovecote in Shropshire and The Gatehouse(II*) near Selby are all becoming holiday homes while Uxbridge Lido (II) is included in a £22-million project by Hillingdon Council to consolidate the lido within a new sports complex. All these stories illustrate how being identified as 'at risk' has focused attention and identified the threats, galvanising local and national efforts to repair and revitalise not only the sites themselves but the communities around them.

English Heritage believes that it is right that POWs should be able to benefit from the HAR initiative in the same way as other parts of the historic environment. Often what is most needed is not massive funding (although English Heritage recognises the importance of the Repair Grant and Support Officers programmes) but help, first with understanding (of condition and threats) and then with managing the building into a sustainable future.

Many POWs are in better condition now than for generations, thanks largely to the Inspection of Churches Measure, which set out a care regime for Anglican churches that established high expectations of professionals and volunteers. However, we all know that upkeep is a constant demand: more needs to be done to maintain those in good condition and to provide a safety net for others. It might simply be that the congregation needs a plan to clear gutters on a regular basis, advice on regular ventilation, forming a Friends group or making visitors welcome. In other situations isolated individuals need encouragement to access grants, obtain professional advice, find out what local agencies might become partners and promote wider use of the building.

English Heritage hopes that including POWs in the HAR survey will not only help to identify where support is needed but also provide sound statistical evidence to make a clearer case both about the nature of the threats and the need for resources. By assessing the condition of POWs on a regular basis, we will be able to demonstrate the impact of prioritised and targeted action, and assess what the challenges are to the future of this precious resource. Researched facts will also bring POWs into the national agenda, encourage participation in their care and help congregations, denominations and faith groups to make stronger

Catastrophic roof collapse or well-protected repair in progress?

representations to the government, local authorities, regeneration and voluntary-sector bodies. For the first time we will have evidence to describe the situation and positive stories to share.

POWs at risk celebrates all those communities whose buildings are maintained and are constructive about the future. It will draw attention to those that, for one reason or another, need help to fix structural problems, provide practical facilities and find ways to widen the use of the building. English Heritage hopes to use the HAR project to ensure that all such buildings are recognised not as chronic burdens on a few but as irreplaceable world-respected heritage assets.

For more information about the places of worship survey see: **www.english-heritage.org.uk/inspired/server/show/nav.19413**

The 'Places of Worship 2009: Hackney and Tower Hamlets' project

This article was co-authored by the steering group for the project: Emma Tutton and Nicole Crockett *(Building Exploratory)*, Peter Aiers *(Churches Conservation Trust)* and Simon Wartnaby, Timothy Jones, Hannah Parham and Nick Chapple *(English Heritage)*

The London boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets have an unrivalled diversity of places of worship, historic and modern, but are also among the poorest parts not just of the capital but of the whole country. The combination of an important and diverse set of buildings and very limited resources for their upkeep presents a particular challenge for those involved in the conservation of the heritage of this area, which is why it is the focus of a new survey project within English Heritage's Heritage at Risk programme (see p 16–18).

In a pioneering partnership, English Heritage, the Churches Conservation Trust and the Building Exploratory are collaborating on a project that is training volunteers to assess the condition, use and significance of all the listed places of worship in the two boroughs. The results of the project will enable a more strategic approach to be taken in helping the owners of the buildings to conserve and manage them, while the project itself will develop the experience of all three partners in working with volunteers (and with each other).

English Heritage designed the project and is funding it through a capacity-building grant to the Building Exploratory, an organisation with which it has worked fruitfully in the past. Based in Hackney, east London, it is a unique, creative educational resource that works to develop local people's understanding of, and engagement with, the local built environment. In 2007 the Building Exploratory completed the landmark 'Religion

In a pioneering new project, volunteers are helping to record the condition of the 65 listed places of worship in the boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets.

The Sight of Eternal Life Church in Shrubland Road, Hackney, an early (1858) and rare example of a temporary iron Mission church, Grade II listed.
© Jon Spencer

and Place in Tower Hamlets' project, with funding from English Heritage and Arts Council England (*Conservation Bulletin* 55, pp 17–19). This explored the architecture and heritage of 167 faith buildings in the borough with secondary-school pupils, who learnt not just about the buildings but also how their faith communities used them. 'Places of Worship 2009: Hackney and Tower Hamlets' continues the Building Exploratory's investigation of faith buildings, with the focus this time on adults and lifelong learning.

The Churches Conservation Trust has been caring for historic churches no longer used for regular worship for 40 years. Its estate of 341 buildings makes it the third-largest heritage organisation in England after the National Trust and English Heritage. The trust is keen to share its expertise in caring for historic churches outside its own estate and came into this project to give training to the volunteers on how to understand the condition of the building and provide quality assurance by reviewing the survey results.

A team of 25 volunteers was recruited through the Building Exploratory's network of local community groups, including the Senior BEEs (their older people's group) and through English Heritage's contacts in the national amenity societies and faith groups in London. An extraordinary group of enthusiastic individuals came forward, each bringing with them a different set of skills and experiences. In return they had the opportunity to acquire specialist knowledge and skills in the assessment of both the condition and the historic and architectural significance of places of worship.

The volunteers were invited to an induction day held at the Geffrye Museum in Shoreditch, to prepare them for carrying out the survey. They were introduced to the training manual that had been produced to guide them and Churches Conservation Trust staff explained how to identify different building types and materials and assess their condition. This was followed by site visits to two nearby churches. The visits gave the volunteers a chance to practise carrying out the survey, with the support of the professionals from the Churches Conservation Trust and English Heritage. Commenting on the induction day, one volunteer said: 'I enjoyed today enormously and cannot wait to start . . . I learnt a tremendous amount, which will also be useful in my other lives.'

After the induction day, the 65 buildings in the survey were allocated to the volunteers, who were supplied with a pack of information on their buildings including the list descriptions, maps and entries from Pevsner's *Buildings of England*. They were given about two months in which to carry out the survey. Due to the large number of volunteers, no more than four buildings could be allotted to each one, although some chose to work in pairs. A 'blog was set up to encourage volunteers to share information and experiences.

The survey work was in two parts. First, using a worksheet created specially for the project, volunteers recorded observations on the physical condition of the buildings, looking in particular at roofs, high-level stonework and gutters and downpipes. These observations were then collated to produce an overall assessment of condition in one of four categories, from 'good' to 'very poor'. Volunteers were also asked to photograph the buildings and submit those images as a record with the finished survey forms. The second part, again using a worksheet created for the project by English Heritage, was to assess the historical and architectural significance of each building, based on background research and on-site observations. This second aspect of the survey is particularly challenging for non-professionals. The material produced by the volunteers is being collated by the Building Exploratory over the summer.

The information gathered by the survey will help English Heritage's London Region to continue developing a proactive strategy to help those places of worship identified as being in poor condition or out of use. The Building Exploratory will have a huge new resource that can be used in future education projects and events, and much of it will be publicly accessible on their Religion and Place website. Yet while the project is valuable for what it

will produce, it is also a pilot for other possible projects in the future. It is testing the feasibility of working with volunteers to carry out a survey for the whole of London, while the volunteer manual could provide the basis for a simple and easily understood toolkit for assessing places of worship anywhere in the country. Perhaps the most valuable lessons from the project, however, will be about how we can break down the barriers between the professional practice of conservation and public enthusiasm for heritage.

Redundancy of listed chapels within the Methodist Church

Ian Serjeant
Conservation Officer, Resourcing Mission Office, the Methodist Church

Decreasing congregations have an inevitable consequence – the closure of buildings used for worship. Not all closures can be attributed to decline – there may be strategic reasons for a decision to close. But this article does not attempt to look at the underlying reasons; rather it examines issues of redundancy and disposal of buildings within the Methodist Church.

Unlike buildings owned by the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church, Methodist places of worship are not consecrated; they are simply buildings which, once their function has ceased, may be disposed of for other uses. There is therefore no redundant churches body like that operated by the Church of England. In the 1987 SAVE publication, *Churches – a Question of Conversion* (Powell and De la Hay 1987), the following statement is made: 'Non-conformists refused to accept consecration: holiness, they argued, resided in the people, not the building. The closure of a non-conformist church puts an end to any status it enjoys. It becomes a saleable asset, to be sold off to finance the work of the denomination.' This is certainly true but it may have arisen from a misunderstanding of the nature of ownership. A central body of custodian trustees holds all Methodist chapels in trust for future worshippers but the day-to-day responsibilities fall to local managing trustees – the Church Council, which enjoys charity status. It is only this local body that can make the decision to close, and it cannot be compelled to close against its will. If a congregation ceases to exist for whatever reason, it becomes a failed charity. Charity law demands that buildings are sold for the best price, but if the surveyor's report says that a sale is in the best interests of the charity a building may be sold to someone other than the highest bidder. This, however, is rare.

In the case of outstanding buildings, listed at Grade I or II*, there is provision for disposal to the Historic Chapels Trust at below market price. This has previously happened at Penrose in Cornwall and is expected to occur again at Westgate in County Durham.

At one time covenants were imposed centrally that restricted future uses in sold buildings. These included the prohibition of such things as gambling and the production or sale of alcohol. A decision by Methodism's governing body, the Methodist Conference, amended this rule to allow decisions to be taken locally on the basis that local trustees were better placed to judge the impact of their decision. This reversal of policy allowed the sale of the impressive Grade II* Carver Street chapel in Sheffield, which is now a theme pub. This was a case where the building had become isolated from its residential community as the area around it was redeveloped. The higher sale price resulting from its potential use provided much-needed income for different initiatives within the wider area.

The Methodist Church has no input into what happens after a chapel is sold, save for the continuance of any restrictive covenants. The responsibility for permission to alter or extend, or for change of

Westgate Primitive Methodist chapel, County Durham. Noted for its remarkably complex and complete scheme of decoration, this redundant Grade II*-listed chapel may soon be acquired by the Historic Chapels Trust.

The former Wesleyan chapel, Carver Street, Sheffield. The chapel was built in 1804–5 to designs by the Revd William Jenkins, and was recently sold for conversion into a pub.

use, rests with the purchaser. As a result there are no detailed data on the eventual uses to which buildings are put. Ecclesiastical Exemption no longer applies, so it is up to local planning authorities to determine applications. This is entirely as it should be. However, it is galling to find, as we have on occasion, that whereas the Methodist Church has refused to allow the removal of fittings while the chapel has been in use, once the building has passed into the secular system such removal has been allowed. It is worth pointing out that it is our general policy not to entertain applications for the removal of fittings when we know that a chapel is likely to be sold.

One welcome area of collaboration with English Heritage in Cornwall has been the joint preparation of development briefs for the more noteworthy buildings. The intention of this measure is to forewarn potential purchasers of their responsibilities as well as their opportunities and to counter any false hopes they may have about the levels of intervention that may be possible.

So, what are the trends? The table overleaf shows the disposals of listed chapels between 1998 and 2007. This covers England, Wales, Scotland and the Channel Islands. In total 85 have been sold. The greatest concentration of closures is in Cornwall, which accounts for 22 per cent of the total. There is a simple explanation: Cornwall has been a stronghold of Methodism with a consequent high volume of chapels. As result, 12 per cent of all listed Methodist chapels are in Cornwall, and of these 12 are Grade II*, representing 30 per cent of all Methodist II* chapels. Cornwall is also one of the most economically disadvantaged parts of England, one result of which is potential lower levels of expenditure on maintenance and repair.

The rate of closures of about eight per year is offset to a degree by new listings – around four per year. There is no discernible pattern regarding the rate of closures but it may be assumed that they will continue.

So, what of the future? Many listed chapels have found new leases of life through the introduction of facilities that allow greater involvement by local communities. Where this has occurred there has generally been stabilisation or growth. But this involves changes to fabric that are not always welcomed by the various bodies that are consulted on such proposals. The evidence seems clear, however: without ordered change many more chapels will be declared redundant and sold.

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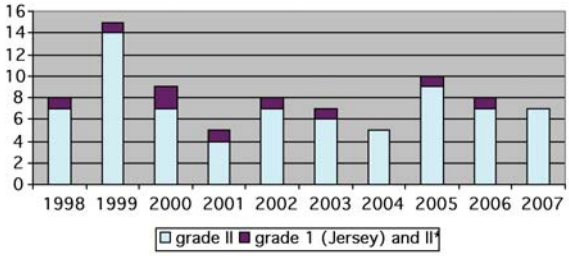
Table showing the disposals of listed Methodist chapels between 1998 and 2007.



Maintaining the Legacy

Conserving our precious places of worship depends on good maintenance – and in turn combining specialist skills with local commitment.

The Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England scheme

Guy Braithwaite
Advice and Grants Manager, English Heritage

This article examines the origins of the Repair Grants for Places of Worship (RGPOW) scheme and how it has performed against its central aims over the past seven years.

English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) have been collaborating on grants for places of worship since 1996, when the first joint scheme was launched. This was only two years after the establishment of the HLF but it had rapidly become clear that, whatever their different powers and priorities, the two organisations needed to work together to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure a rounded and complementary approach for applicants.

The first Joint Grant Scheme for Churches and Other Places of Worship (JPOW1) created a single application process, but it fronted two essentially different sets of priorities, with HLF seeking a far wider range of outputs that encompassed unlisted as well as listed buildings, contents as well as structural fabric and new facilities as well as fabric repair. Dogged by overdemand and an increasing backlog of applications, the scheme was suspended in 1998. The following year saw the launch of a more focused joint scheme (JPOW2), which confined its scope to listed buildings and which insisted that urgent repairs were addressed in manageable phases before non-structural works and new facilities. It also introduced streaming and annual deadlines, enabling a batched process in which comparative decisions could be made between applications within each stream.

However, although JPOW2 laid down a more logical application and assessment process, it was complex for applicants and staff alike to navigate and did little to address the difficulties that recipients of grant offers faced. They were typically volunteers, working largely alone on their first heritage project. They struggled to cope with the competing demands of their roles as custodian of a historic building, informed client, fundraiser and project manager. Many projects saw delay, with the result that the cost estimates on which grants had been based became increasingly unrealistic, leading to many requests for increases. Besides these operational problems, the scheme faced a level of demand for urgent structural repairs which easily accounted for the budget. The daunting scale of the repair bill facing historic places of worship was underlined by research within the sector.

In 2001–2, during the third and final year of JPOW2, a small English Heritage/HLF project team set to work to devise a new scheme that would address these challenges. Specifically, it aimed to:

- devote the scheme entirely to urgent high-level repair and to other structural fabric at risk of imminent loss, in recognition of the critical need to keep buildings wind and weathertight;
- respond to heavy demand by using the batch process to prioritise strictly according to urgency of repair. In other words, in any annual round, those bids involving the most urgent work (which the applicant could not afford on their own) would be taken forward;
- limit the number of abortive detailed technical assessments carried out by introducing a sift at the beginning of the process;
- maximise the number of offers by focusing on tightly defined packages of work under £200,000;
- provide a separate project development grant for each successful applicant enabling them to commission research and investigative work before seeking tenders for the agreed repairs,

Pastor Vernal Stewart inspects the work at the Assemblies of the First Born Church, Lozells, Birmingham, where grants totalling over £940,000 have ensured the future of this landmark building

thereby reducing uncertainty and risk;
- reassess the repair grant offer after a clear period for fundraising and in the light of tenders;
- build the scheme around firm but realistic deadlines both for English Heritage/HLF as grant-giver (6 months to assess applications) and for the applicant as project-leader (12 months for project development);
- clarify the applicant's role and responsibilities by publishing the standard contract and a guide for grant recipients.

Measured against these aims, the RGPOW scheme has been a success. Since 2002, we have made 1,697 offers totalling £156 million, all of them towards structural repairs required within two years or sooner. Of the 270 offers made in the first year of the scheme, 237 successfully completed their project development and accepted a confirmed offer for repairs. Of these, all but five have since completed. This high carry-through rate has continued.

While the prime intention of the scheme is to deliver repair projects, a number of other benefits are guaranteed by means of the grant conditions. First, the project development stage includes a requirement to draw up a costed maintenance plan for the building to help prevent avoidable problems in the future. Secondly, an assessment of the building's accessibility, both physical and intellectual, must also be made, if no such audit has yet been done. Thirdly, for 10 years following the completion of the repairs, the building must be open to the public on at least 28 days per year (and for more recent grants, 40 days). Details of access arrangements at 625 grant-aided places of worship can now be viewed on the English Heritage website: **www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.17628**

Some other benefits have emerged. An electronic database and casework system devised for the scheme has subsequently become the model for a wider English Heritage casework system. Beyond English Heritage, the annual application round has become well known within the sector, providing other grant-giving bodies with a reliable timetable in which to make their decisions. Professional advisers specialising in historic places of worship are now familiar with the principles of the scheme. The Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association has devised specialist training that complements the scheme. A national tourist initiative working across several denominations is building on the growing database of public-access agreements. Many aspects of the scheme have been replicated in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Given the very specific focus of the scheme, it will not have achieved all the aims that the sector may have hoped for. Most importantly, there is still significant demand, such that just over 50 per cent of applications are rejected each year. Congregations also face major challenges on funding other repairs, ongoing maintenance and improving facilities to cater for wider use. But the continuing success of the scheme in addressing urgent repairs is helping a growing number of congregations make a secure future for their place of worship.

Counting the cost

In 2006, English Heritage published estimates of the costs of bringing the fabric of all listed places of worship into good condition. At January 2006 prices this was estimated at £925 million over five years, or £185 million each year, based on an average cost per building of £63,777 and a total of 14,500 listed places of worship (see page 4). The average conceals a wide range of circumstances: 58% of the sample faced repair costs of £50,000 or less over 5 years; 37% faced costs of £51,000 – 200,000 and 5% had potential costs of over £200,000.

Saltburn-by-the-Sea Methodist Church, Cleveland, during recent repairs to the tower and spire carried out with a grant of £63,000.

Good maintenance – three pilot projects

Nick Chapple
Places of Worship Policy Adviser, English Heritage

The importance of maintenance in the conservation of historic places of worship will not need explaining to any reader of *Conservation Bulletin*, but all too often we see it being neglected. This is why English Heritage since 2004 has supported pilot maintenance schemes in three Church of England dioceses – St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, London and Gloucester – in an attempt to find the best, most cost-effective way of providing maintenance to large numbers of places of worship.

In the Church of England, the responsibility for maintenance and repair lies with the parochial church council (PCC) of each parish, which means that dioceses are unable to enforce a regime of work on individual churches. The emphasis in the pilot schemes is therefore on offering a service to parishes and encouraging them to take advantage of it. What is on offer in all three schemes is an annual (or in some cases bi-annual) visit to clear gutters, rainwater goods and drains so that rainwater is effectively taken clear of the building. The contractors doing the work have taken advantage of being at high level to take photographs and list any defects they find, which are then reported to the parish. Beyond these shared characteristics, the schemes differ in a number of ways.

The scheme in the diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich was organised as a pilot for three years in one archdeaconry of the diocese, with a view to expanding across the diocese once established. English Heritage was asked to subsidise some of the cost of the work to make it more affordable for parishes. Seventy churches chose to take part in the scheme, just fewer than half the churches in the archdeaconry. The participating churches were divided into clusters and five local contractors were asked by the diocese to tender for work on one cluster each. The diocese drew up the specification for the work. The cost per church ranged from £195 to £554 (average £352), excluding VAT. The involvement of the diocese was intentionally limited after the initial phase of setting up the scheme. The parish arranged with the contractors for the specified work to be done and was responsible for paying them, although two-thirds of the cost was provided by English Heritage, via a block grant to the diocese. The three-year pilot having come to an end, the scheme is now in abeyance, but the diocese would be keen to restart it if another source of funding could be found.

The Gutter Maintenance Programme run by the diocese of London is the biggest of the three schemes. This is largely because the diocese itself pays for the work at 119 churches in what are known as 'diocesan-supported parishes'. Other parishes have joined the scheme, but have to pay for the work themselves. Unlike the scheme in St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, the diocese manages the Gutter Maintenance Programme on a day-to-day basis. The contract for the work is between the diocese and the contractor and it is the diocese that pays for the work. The diocese in turn has an agreement with the parish that it will enable the contractor and the diocese to fulfil their contractual commitments to each other and where relevant reimburse the diocese for the cost of the work. The scheme currently operates with a fixed fee of £237 (excluding VAT) per church. English Heritage in this case helped to fund the initial set-up costs and has offered funding towards the ongoing administration costs.

In the diocese of Gloucester the GutterClear scheme was set up in collaboration with Maintain our Heritage (Maintain), an independent organisation that promotes and campaigns for a long-term, sustainable approach to conservation. The scheme is aimed at places of worship in and around Gloucestershire, not just Church of England parish churches. In the first full year of the scheme

At what is otherwise a well-maintained church, water has plainly been leaking into these walls for a number of years – a typical problem that a regular maintenance visit would have prevented.

Gutter clearance in action at a church in Gloucestershire. Specialist equipment is often needed to carry out such work safely and efficiently, particularly on large and complex places of worship.

(October 2007 to September 2008), 49 churches participated. An extra service has now been added – the application of SmartWater to discourage theft of metal from roofs – which sensibly takes advantage of having people working at high level. Costs range from £150 to £900 (average £332) depending on the size of the building, the complexity of its roof and the ease of access. The contractual arrangement is that the diocese agrees with the parish to provide a maintenance visit using its chosen contractor and the parish pays the contractor directly for the work done. In this scheme none of the parishes is subsidised. The absence of a direct financial incentive for potential participants means that unlike the others, this scheme requires a constant effort of marketing to build it up. The scheme was set up with the backing of English Heritage, but the success of Maintain's private fundraising has limited the need for public financial support, at least for the initial three-year period.

So what have we learnt from the schemes so far? Taken together, they show that the involvement of a third party, in the shape of the diocese, in the maintenance of parish churches has three advantages for PCCs:

- a reliable and competent contractor is selected for them
- an appropriate specification for the work is provided
- operating on a large scale with a small number of contractors reduces costs.

Are these advantages enough to persuade PCCs to join a scheme? The experience of the pilots suggests not, since none of the schemes have had even 50 per cent participation in their area of operation, and without the subsidies that have been put in, the numbers would probably be much lower. It seems likely that regular maintenance is simply not seen as a necessity by a majority of parishes, no matter how much or how little it costs. If this is the case, the marketing of schemes will need to include promotion not just of the scheme itself but of the whole idea of maintenance. Without a greater volume of work in a scheme it cannot be self-sustaining in the long run.

The dioceses that established the pilots have set a laudable example. It is too soon to say, however, if any of these models are capable of becoming a self-sustaining scheme in which fees paid by parishes for the work would cover the full costs. More work is also needed to establish ways of providing maintenance for places of worship outside the Church of England.

Maintenance of churches in Norway

Oddbjørn Sørmoen
Special Adviser Places of Worship, English Heritage

When there are 20 centimetres of snow for a couple of days in southern England, schools close, buses stop running and life comes to a virtual standstill. When there is a metre of snow for four months in most parts of Norway, life is just normal! The climatic differences between the various parts of Norway, and between England and Norway make the challenges of building maintenance seem very different. Melting snow easily turns into heavy, expanding ice. Clean and effective gutters and good drainage are even more important than in England.

Wood is the traditional Norwegian building material and it is still the most common for private houses. The vast majority of the 1,600 churches are also of wood, although the ones built after 1930 are more likely to be of concrete. Wood is a living material, relatively abundant, easy to form and in a Norwegian climate, very durable. Some of these wooden churches are 800 years old.

As a traditional building material wood has many advantages but also challenges. One of these is the issue of the congregations' expectations of comfort. While churches in the past were heated once a week, if at all, churches now are likely to be in use all through the week, and what is considered a comfortable temperature is higher than before. This causes problems because wood shrinks and expands with the change of relative humidity. The latter also affects painted interiors and old valuable painted wooden artefacts, as well as church organs.

A lot of research has been undertaken to find ways of heating churches so as to cut down on costs as well as conserving the interiors. The favoured approach is to keep a low 'resting temperature' during colder periods when the church is not in use, and when it is in use to heat the areas where people are, making the heating periods as short as possible. Carefully placed electrical radiating panels quickly lift the 'comfort temperature' for the congregation, the priest and organist but keep the rest of the building relatively cold. Short heating periods do not give the wood time to react so the risk of damage is limited.

In Norway churches were always built by the local community and were the pride and centre point of the local village or town. This is still very much the case. More than 80 per cent of the population (4.5 million) are members of the Lutheran state church and in most places the only burial ground is still the graveyard surrounding the church.

According to the Church Act (1996), the maintenance of the church should be funded by local government, a tradition going back over a century.

The wooden Hegge stave church, in Valdres. After more than 800 years, the church still is the local centre of Christian worship. The building has had some alterations and restoration, but regular maintenance and care has made it stand up against the wear and tear of time.
Jiri Havran © iksantikvaren

By working in the traditional way the Norwegian craftsman keeps both the craft of making shingle roofs and the medieval church alive. Good maintenance is to understand and work with the buildings. Experience shows that taking shortcuts may be costly to the fabric in the long run.
Thomas Kofstad © Riksantikvaren

The financial responsibility is therefore clear, although there are often insufficient funds to pay what is needed after the political priorities have been addressed. In practice the churches are under-resourced. In fact there is, in many places, a considerable maintenance lag and an accelerating need for repairs. In Norway, as in England, neglecting maintenance is an expensive way to save money!

The responsibility for the generally poor maintenance of church buildings has frequently been the subject of public political debate during recent years. The previous government offered a system of interest-free loans for major repair work on churches. This was abandoned but now, after some years without it, has been reintroduced by the present government, because even this relatively limited financial help triggered a great deal of local-government funding for repairs that had been left undone for years.

The Church Act also regulates the way that local parishes are organised. Every parish has its own Parish Church Council (PCC), which is responsible for normal church activities like services, social work, educating youth and children and caring for the elderly. Maintenance is the responsibility of another body, the Common Church Council (CCC), which covers all the parishes in the municipality. The CCC consists of members elected from each PCC in the municipality, a member appointed by the municipal administration and one priest appointed by the bishop.

The CCC employs its own full-time administrator, who is responsible for administration and financial matters, including the management of churches and graveyards for all churches in the municipality. The administrator often, but not always, has a background that is relevant to the management and care of buildings. This professional approach, which replaces the previous system of voluntary churchwardens, has improved the situation considerably.

Good management means a strategic overview of needs, sound plans and budgets, which makes it easier to get a clear message through to the politicians and persuade them to fulfil their responsibilities. After all, the churches are *common* heritage.

Staving off decay by daily care: maintaining places of worship

Sara Crofts
Faith in Maintenance Project Director, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

As many practitioners in the heritage sector know, a great deal of time, money and other resources are expended each year fixing problems caused by a lack of maintenance or neglect. Damage to roof timbers, masonry, plaster, wall paintings and other important features can often be traced back to faulty downpipes, loose flashings, missing slates or tiles and blocked gutters. This is particularly true of the large number of projects carried out at historic places of worship.

In order to address this problem the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) set up its Faith in Maintenance training project with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage in 2006. The aim of this initiative is to promote sensitive and timely maintenance and encourage the many thousands of volunteers who care for historic churches, chapels, synagogues, mosques and temples to look after their buildings more effectively. The project provides free training courses for volunteers, a telephone helpline and a website (**www.spabfim.org.uk**) and has also produced *The Good Maintenance Guide* and a free DVD, which is currently being distributed to faith groups across England and Wales.

While we hope that our initiative will lead to an improvement in the care of historic places of worship our dialogue with churchwardens and others dealing with these buildings has highlighted some interesting factors which have an impact on why volunteers choose to undertake maintenance or not.

'We don't have a problem … do we?'

The majority of people accept that maintenance is a good idea but often do not realise what this means in practice. They may look at their large, solidly built place of worship, which has stood for centuries, and find it hard to believe how fragile it really is and how rapidly decay can take hold once water begins to penetrate the fabric. Anecdotally, there is evidence that volunteers frequently fail to make the connection between the buddleia growing in their cast-iron hopper head and the patch of damp and blistering plaster above the aisle window. Essentially, there is a lack of understanding of the consequences of failing to tackle maintenance tasks, exacerbated by an 'out of sight, out of mind' mentality. To counter this, our Faith in Maintenance training courses feature a practical exercise where we lead participants around a 'typical' place of worship pointing out what can go wrong and more importantly how to remedy such problems when they do inevitably occur. This kind of practical teaching is invaluable in helping volunteers understand the need for regular preventative maintenance and swift action when problems are identified.

'Working at height is too risky!'

There is a real and very worrying misunderstanding of health-and-safety legislation and the principles of risk assessment among volunteers. We frequently encounter people who wrongly believe that ladders and stepladders are banned or, at the other end of the spectrum, those who fail to adequately assess the risks present in and around their buildings. As a result, gutters remain blocked because volunteers often lack the knowledge, skills and equipment to tackle them safely. Others are nervous of employing a contractor for the task

Volunteers taking part in a Faith in aintenance practical exercise at Meopham St John the Baptist in Kent.

A blocked gutter in need of attention at Norwich St Julian – the kind of minor maintenance task that can save enormous amounts of time and money if dealt with on a regular basis.

because they fear the potential cost implications. Sensible health-and-safety advice is therefore a key element of the guidance produced by the Faith in Maintenance project and we work hard to explain to volunteers what they can sensibly tackle themselves and when to call in professional help. We also wholeheartedly support initiatives such as GutterClear, run by Maintain our Heritage and the Diocese of Gloucester, and the equivalent Gutter Maintenance Programme in the Diocese of London because they provide a means to allow congregations to employ a contractor to clean their gutters at a reasonable cost.

'Are we allowed to do this?'

There is a sense that volunteers are wary of taking on practical jobs such as gutter cleaning in case they do more harm than good or perhaps incur the disapproval of their denominational body. Conservation practitioners are also perhaps a little guilty of over-stressing the need to hand tasks over to s uitably qualified professionals when in reality they could be undertaken by competent volunteers. Through the Faith in Maintenance project we demonstrate that maintenance is not 'rocket science' and does not necessarily have to be the preserve of the professional by providing guidance on what volunteers can and should do themselves, and when it is appropriate to call in a professional. Making practical guidance on maintenance issues readily available is fundamental to renewing volunteers' confidence in their own ability to care for their buildings effectively.

'We're not buildings people!'

Churchwardens and their equivalents in other denominations are often appointed to their roles for their faith in God not in Maintenance. They may be focused on outreach and mission and so the care of the fabric becomes only one of many voluntary roles they assume. Maintenance therefore becomes part of a set of competing priorities and often does not seem as urgent as preparations for the next service or plans for re-ordering to make the church more welcoming. Within our guidance we suggest that congregations consider appointing a fabric officer to take on the responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance tasks. Ideally, this might be someone who has some knowledge of buildings but more importantly it should be someone who has the time and skills to do the job well. It might even be someone in the community who would not normally come to a service but might welcome the opportunity to help care for the building.

Conclusion

Although most places of worship are generally in good condition, organisations such as English Heritage are frequently asked to meet the costs of repairs which could have been avoided, at least in part, by diligent inspections and routine preventative maintenance. The Faith in Maintenance project is attempting to reduce the need for costly repair projects by promoting good practice and providing practical support and guidance at a national level but there remains a need for others to help tackle maintenance issues at a local level if we are to secure the future of these fantastic buildings.

For more information on maintenance visit the following websites:
www.spabfim.org.uk;
www.maintainourheritage.co.uk;
www.gutterclear.org;
www.london.anglican.org/gutters

Looking Forward

Places of worship depend for their future on people, but how can we best tap the energy of congregations and local communities to keep them alive?

Inspired! in action: Support Officers for historic places of worship

Diana Evans
Head of Places of Worship Policy, English Heritage

The *Inspired!* campaign began in 2006 with the aim of making a case to government for more support for the army of stalwart volunteers caring for and using historic places of worship. One of five practical solutions suggested was to 'Help congregations to help themselves by appointing advisers who can offer support and practical assistance in making the most of buildings'.

English Heritage believed that providing people to help congregations and communities would result in a significant increase in local and national capacity, increasing confidence and enthusiasm. Support Officers, as they came to be called, would help congregations to manage changes to their buildings with more understanding and greater sustainability. They would work alongside communities overwhelmed by the cost of repairs or unable to cope with basic maintenance. On a larger scale, Support Officers would help those with local/regional responsibilities, such as dioceses, synods, circuits, or with historic buildings spread across the country, to take a strategic view of resources, ambitions and needs.

Posts were offered on a pilot basis to the Anglican dioceses of Chichester, Coventry, Exeter, London and Manchester. It rapidly became apparent that their viability depended on a number of factors. The partner organisation must be the post-holder's employer; the job description must be tailored to meet the needs of the partner; English Heritage's active involvement in the development of the job description, on-going support and training for the post-holder and as 50%-funder were all crucial to the success of the posts. It was also recognised that there would be no one model for the Support Officer role; each job would be unique and require particular skills for a specific set of targets. The posts would all be part-funded by English Heritage for three years, after which time the partner would be encouraged to take over the role. Each Support Officer would be special: professional, experienced, aware of conservation issues and the sensitivities of places of worship but, above all, able to get on with people.

Responses from the partner dioceses hosting pilots were very positive. The Bishop of Middleton, speaking at the National Launch by the Secretary of State in Salford in December 2008, spoke of the experience of having a Support Officer, who began work as a pilot part-funded by English Heritage in 2003 but is now employed full time by the diocese because of the recognised value of the post. 'It's been about helping congregations and parishes to recognise their church buildings as assets and not burdens … encouraging parishes to make the vital link between repairing much-loved church buildings and serving communities.' In Coventry, where the Support Officer post has been a job-share under the *Divine Inspiration* initiative, the diocese has commented that 'the project has engaged many churches and individuals who would not normally participate in diocesan or regional initiatives'. Similarly, in Exeter, where the Support Officer is working closely with the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), the DAC Secretary has reported that she has provided 'the human face of what could otherwise be a fairly bureaucratic organisation'.

English Heritage has developed a core job description that can be the basis of discussions with potential partners. These will be negotiated as locally as possible, through English Heritage Regional Offices, and be developed to address agreed priorities. The 2008 launch of the scheme attracted widespread attention and three new partnerships were introduced to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Andy Burnham, after he had warmly supported the initiative. Two of the new posts will be in the North West; one is the Carlisle diocese with the Churches Trust for Cumbria and the second is the North-West Multi-Faith Tourism Association. The third post is based in the Worcester diocese in partnership with local authorities. These indicate new ways in which Support Officers can be employed and financed; creative opportunities exist to work ecumenically so that places of worship, of whatever denomination, can be helped holistically. Equally, inter-faith groups can provide scope for places of worship representing Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Sikh communities to work together for mutual benefit and understanding. Linking up with local

Former Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Andy Burnham, The Bishop of Middleham, Incumbent and Churchwardens of St Clement, Salford

authority agendas can also be a dynamic way of bringing historic places of worship into the centre of regeneration plans and resources, ensuring that these important buildings are not side-lined because of poor communication or a (false) perception that faith groups would not want to work with statutory authorities.

Since 2003, when the first pilot Support Officer post was agreed, the climate has changed enormously. There is a much greater sense of the imperative to keep places of worship open and in use for their original purpose. This is true not only from the perspective of conservation but also among congregations using buildings. The Church of England's *Building Faith in our Future* marked the start of a celebration of church buildings and their contribution to community and social cohesion. It was also the first stage in an on-going discussion with government departments about the role of faith groups within society that is the subject of a formal report and other publications, including *Moral, But No Compass – Government, Church and the Future of Welfare* and *Faith in the Nation; Religion, Identity and the Public Realm in Britain Today*. The work of OneChurch100Uses, rooted in the United Reformed Church, and the recent developments within Methodist Heritage, all point to a fresh awareness of the need to use places of worship, including historic ones, to their fullest community potential, while keeping them open for the specific needs of the faith-practising.

English Heritage's Support Officer programme therefore meets the spirit of the age in terms of positive approaches to places of worship. Hand-wringing is not the answer to challenges and English Heritage is enthusiastic about making the £1.5 million set aside to fund Support Officers work effectively across as many denominations, faiths and geographical areas as possible. ■

For more information about Support Officers, visit **www.english-heritage.org.uk/inspired/server/show/nav.19415**

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Busting the myths: how historic churches have a future

Crispin Truman
Chief Executive, Churches Conservation Trust

The Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) is the national charity for historic Anglican churches at risk of closure. It protects and opens to the public 340 wonderful buildings across England, ranging from tiny rural gems to large urban landmarks. Our directly managed estate provides a unique opportunity to identify, test out and share solutions to the problems facing the thousands of historic places of worship in our country. We not only help churches in our care, but can work in partnership with others who seek a community-led, sustainable future.

The stories of how the churches in our care – churches no longer used for regular worship – came to be at risk are many and varied. They involve local personalities, the enthusiasm of individual priests and ancient geographical and historic rivalries just as much as any simple decline in churchgoing. That decline is itself a symptom of a wider failure in participation and community life across UK society which cannot be blamed on old churches.

Historic churches are iconic public buildings with an important role to play in reversing the decline of community and local identity. This fact is the key to their survival and to justifying the investment necessary to keep them standing and relevant to 21st-century society.

It is time to bust some myths in the world of historic churches. First for Room 101 is the biggest myth of all: that our parish churches are somehow obsolete, that they have been overtaken by modern life, and that only nostalgia and a certain esoteric

appreciation of the eccentric few and the church crawler stand between them and collapse. In our desperately individualised society these fine, internationally unique, public buildings are essential if we are to remain sane, socially coherent and, dare I say, happy.

The next myth is that it is always 'declining congregations' which cause churches to fail. It is all too easy to blame the community for a problem which is more complex than that and often greatly exacerbated by other factors, including poor decision-making by institutions who should know better. Take planning. The roll-call of churches where bad planning decisions have at least added to the problems of a struggling congregation and at worst killed off a perfectly viable one is huge. Just at the Churches Conservation Trust we can point to Toxteth St James, shut for a motorway junction that never was; Ipswich St Mary at Quay, strangled by a one-way gyratory; Bristol St Paul's, cut off by a multi-lane sliproad; Leicester All Saints, left alone amidst demolished high streets. The list is endless.

The third myth that urgently needs busting is that closure for regular parish worship, 'redundancy', is the end of the story for a building which may have been there in some form for almost 1,000 years. The stories of CCT's churches over the trust's 40 years demonstrate how closure by the parish is far from the final stage in a church's life. Churches have life cycles and their prospects can go up as well as down. Repair problems can seem overwhelming, the community and congregation weak and disinterested, the vicar under too much pressure. But ten years later with the roof repaired, an enthusiastic new family in the village and a change of priest it can all look very different.

CCT's Bridgnorth St Leonard's, Cambridge All Saints, Edlington St Peter's (South Yorks), Sandwich St Mary (Kent), all were facing demolition in the 1970s, all were saved by community action despite institutional indifference and hostility; all are now vibrant centres of community life, open daily to visitors and in the first two cases, renewed places of occasional Christian worship. They are not the only ones. In Toxteth and Colchester, the Church of England is even taking steps to return two CCT churches to parish ownership.

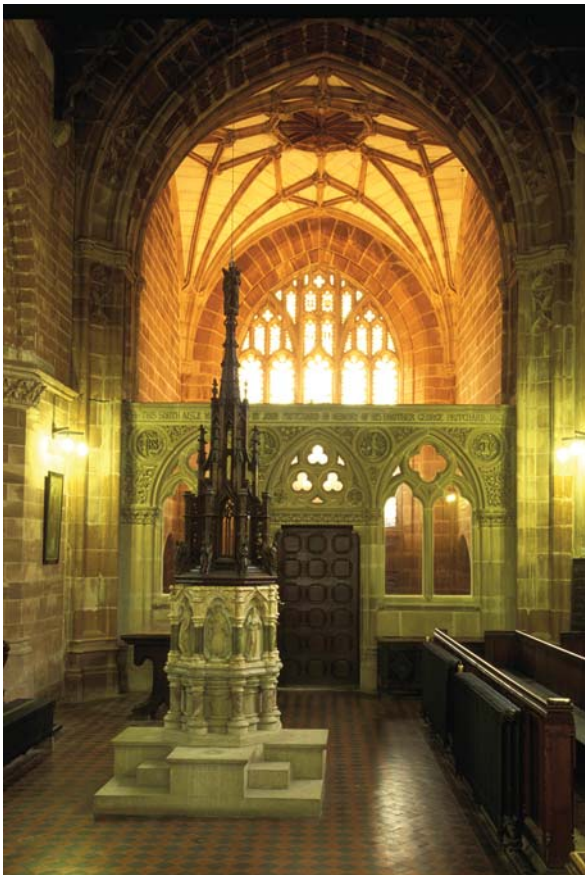
The next myth is that there will be a 'tidal wave' of redundancies that will leave CCT and our sister charities swamped by hopeless cases. As psychologists well know, the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour and for the past 40 years the number of Anglican redundancies has stuck resolutely at 30 a year. Diocesan predictions of which churches will close are famously inaccurate. When a church is seen to be under threat, people rally round.

Better for us all to focus on the problem that is there now – hundreds of congregations and churches hanging on by the skin of their teeth and needing help. The inclusion of churches on the new English Heritage 'at risk' register will be a big step forward.

One more myth, already well on the way out, is that centralised bodies can sort things out by sitting in London and handing out instructions. The 13,000-plus highly listed and mostly autonomous historic places of worship are too big a job for anyone to take on alone. The solution is not command and control but bottom-up support to, and capacity building with, local people – broadening the constituency so that non-churchgoers and organisations who want to help are welcomed in, and bringing together partnerships between the main church, state, and voluntary-sector bodies at a local, project level and in a targeted way that is designed to meet the specific, practical needs that have led a particular church to be placed at risk.

What difference does all this make to the future? Apart from wanting to embarrass the officials who ruined our town centres in the 1960s and

St Mary at the Quay, Ipswich – a church whose redundancy owed more to a hostile one-way traffic system than a naturally declining congregation.
© Dave Kindred



St Leonard's, Bridgnorth, Shropshire – having once faced demolition the church was saved by community action and is now a vibrant centre of community life where occasional Christian worship still takes place.
© Eddie Brown

1970s, a more informed understanding of what has put our churches at risk in the past will help us find better ways of helping them thrive in the future.

It also gives us hope. There is not an unstoppable, inevitable historic force at work which means churches are obsolete. If urban and rural centres are carefully regenerated, if society begins to place more value on community life, if we really mean it about sustainability … then there is hope.

Finance might be a problem. For the last 50 years historic churches have received considerable financial help from the public sector. Now every single channel of funding is in decline and it is hard to see any change ahead. Historic churches have to demonstrate the huge benefits they bring in terms of regeneration and community life if they are to become noticed by the regional and local authorities that have money. We are also going to have to get better at attracting support from private individuals and institutions. The need for a unified, cross-sector fundraising campaign to the public has never been greater.

The key has to be to work together in locally tailored combinations of skills and organisations, to fill the gaps in skills and finance particular to the individual situation. Some communities need building expertise, some fundraising help, some use-finding and business planning, often in different combinations. If the national bodies work in isolation then we are going to look like a confused and conflicted mess when we arrive on the doorstep of churches at risk. That does not mean mergers – small is often cost-effective – but it does mean working together much more than we have in the past.

Historic churches and chapels came out of local communities. There is a growing consensus that the solutions for the 21st-century challenges lie within those communities. Free of the old myths, we in the heritage sector now need to work together to put those solutions into practice. ■

The Churches Conservation Trust is 40 in April. See **www.visitchurches.org.uk** *for a summer of celebrations.*

Building Faith in our Future: five years on

Janet Gough
Director, Cathedral and Church Buildings Division of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England

With more than 16,000 parish churches, 12,200 of which are listed (including 4,200 Grade I-listed buildings), no one has greater responsibility for England's heritage than the Church of England. In our 2004 strategy document for church buildings, *Building Faith in Our Future,* we argued the best way to sustain churches was to understand and maximise their uses as centres of their communities. We also called for a greater symmetry in church/state funding.

Greater use of churches

Five years on, individual parishes continue to fund most of the £110 million spent annually on maintaining churches and in the immediate term the notion of direct government funding of church buildings, as in some other European countries, looks very unlikely. What is interesting is that making better use of our churches as community hubs is proving key not only to sustainability but also to attracting greater government funding for church buildings.

Churches currently provide a wide range of services to the community, properly as part of the church's outreach. Provision of these services is also an important vote-winning government objective. The parish churches of England constitute a countrywide network covering inner-city and rural areas where places of public assembly and service are in short and often diminishing supply.

For this reason it is essential that parishes can tap into local, regional and national government funding programmes to improve their usefulness as community hubs, with appropriate modern facilities such as kitchens and lavatories.

Tapping into existing government funding

Churches and Faith Buildings: Realising the Potential, a paper produced jointly by five government departments (the Treasury, DCMS, DCLG, Office of the Third Sector and DEFRA) and the Church of England was launched by the Bishop of London and the Rt Hon Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in March at St Martin-in-the-Fields (a central London church which has recently completed a £36 million renewal project and comprises a social-care centre, café and other musical and community facilities). *Realising the Potential* aims to address any 'squeamishness' that funding providers may have in allocating public funds to churches. There is no new money but the document affirms the position of churches as part of the Third Sector, identifies some sources of funding for the physical alteration of churches to ensure they are fit for community use and sets out to build the capacity of churches to engage strategically at local and regional levels around the delivery of local priorities and to get access to funding allocations.

Examples of extended use

By and large, communities today are happy with the medieval notion of the church as the centre for secular community activities as well as mission and worship. Up and down the land well-established and new uses for churches are springing up, from the outreach post office held twice weekly in the church of St Bega in Eskdale to libraries, heritage centres and community shops, from asylum-seeker support centres and gyms to farmers markets. To show what is possible and to encourage others, the Church Buildings Division is busy collecting examples of good practice to post on the Church-care website and hopes to encourage the simultaneous placing of local examples on individual dioceses' websites.

Partnership

Almost without exception churches benefit from working in partnership with others, who can bring expertise and access to a wider network. This is well developed in the area of church tourism, where churches are learning to work with tourist and heritage bodies. Churches are grouping together for music festivals, to create tourist trails and for special opening events, such as the Norfolk Broads and Rivers Open Churches week in August, which over the last three years has attracted more than 100,000 visitors. Helen McGowan who runs the Divine Inspiration project in Coventry, which helps smaller churches to tell their own story, also puts the emphasis on attracting visitors to churches. In July 2008 the Church of England's General Synod passed a motion calling for the formation of a Churches tourism group and/or a tourism officer in every diocese and we are looking to support the motion with regional church tourism seminars and by disseminating model schemes being developed by the Churches Tourism Association's ASPIRE programme.

Support Officers

Having a person to work alongside a congregation as the members develop a vision of what they want to do with their church building and then to help with practical requirements such as preparing Statements of Significance and Need or assisting with project management and fundraising, like Tim Hatton, Historic Church Buildings Officer in urban Manchester, has proved key to the success of church building projects. (for further information about the Support Officers project, see Evans pp 30–1).

Provisions in the law to facilitate extended use

Recognising that some organisations wanting to work with churches require more security, new

Andy Burnham, then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, The Bishop of London and Sadiq Khan, then Department of Communities and Local Government Minister, at St Martin-in-the-Fields on 24 March for the launch of *Churches and Faith Buildings: Realising the Potential.*

All Saint's Church, Northampton. The newly introduced Pastoral (Amendment) Measure allows the lease of part of a church building for other purposes, provided the church continues to be used primarily as a place of worship.
© Simon Cozzolino

legislation under the Pastoral (Amendment) Measure (P(A)M) came into force on 1 January 2007, which allows the lease of part of a church building, provided the church continues to be used primarily as a place of worship. At Holy Trinity, Smethwick, Birmingham, a funeral service now leases the vestry, and the independently run Abingdon Park Café operates in the narthex of All Saints in Northampton under a P(A)M scheme. The P(A)M gives legal security to tenants and in both cases the church is open for longer hours and attracts more people as well as significant income for the church. The P(A)M thus provides another tool that can be employed by a church when considering sharing space with an independent organisation and it is only one of the various options available. Careful thought should always be given to ensure that the most appropriate mechanism is used for the circumstances involved. In most cases the best solution is to keep things simple, both in terms of building alteration (is any in fact required?) and contractual arrangements.

St Martin-in-the-Fields, London: the spectacular new window by Shirazeh Houshiary, installed as part of the £36 million development of this great landmark church.
© James Morris

Crossing the threshold

Five years on from *Building Faith*, a primary objective of the Church Buildings Division is to provide dioceses and those with responsibility for church buildings with the tools to make better use of their buildings. We are working with our colleagues within the Church of England to help parishes better understand how they can look at their buildings afresh and make them work more effectively as places of worship and also as tools for mission, by which we mean community outreach. Over the next 12 months we plan to offer dioceses a series of toolkits and training modules covering subjects from understanding your church liturgically to simple steps for a church to control its carbon output, from developing community projects which will include a better understanding of working within local strategic partnerships to a variety of piloted schemes to attract visitors to cross the threshold (for further information email: enquiries.ccb@c-of-e.org.uk).

For information about the care and development of church buildings visit the Church Buildings Division's website resource at **www.churchcare.co.uk**

Liturgy and spaces: some recent trends

Peter Moger
National Worship Development Officer for the Church of England, working with the Liturgical Commission to enable good practice in the preparation and leading of worship

The changing arrangement of church buildings over time offers a fascinating commentary on the development of Christian worship. The Reformation saw east-facing altars give way to communion tables placed lengthways in the chancel. The 18th-century fashion for box pews and three-decker pulpits reflected the stress on preaching at the time. The ornate sanctuaries and elevated high altars of the late 19th century grew out of Anglo-Catholic concerns to restore the sacramental dimension to worship.

A major 20th-century development was that of the Eucharist taking centre-stage. The 'Parish Communion Movement' led to churches (across all traditions) making Holy Communion the main Sunday service. Practically, this meant the installation of nave altars, a presiding priest facing the congregation, and attempts to articulate spatially 'the Lord's people gathered around the Lord's table on the Lord's day'.

Another important feature of late 20th-century worship was the influence of Charismatic renewal within the historic churches. This led to greater freedom and informality, with the exercise of the Holy Spirit's gifts, and changes in musical style (hymns and choirs giving way to songs and mixed vocal and instrumental groups). Choir stalls were removed to accommodate music groups and interiors were often re-ordered to enable greater informality.

Musicians lead singing at an informal Anglican service – an example of the influence of Charismatic renewal within historic churches. © Tim Lomax

Revision of liturgical texts

The Church of England has always articulated its theology through its worship – and in particular, through liturgical texts. Apart from the proposed 1928 revision of the Prayer Book, its liturgy remained virtually unchanged from 1662 until 1966. Then, in common with other churches – significantly the Roman Catholic Church after Vatican II – a comprehensive programme of liturgical revision began. This addressed the shape, structure and language of worship. These revisions were drawn together in the *Alternative Service Book* of 1980, which remained in use for 20 years.

Anglican worship continues to develop. Perhaps the most striking feature today, compared with a generation ago, is the sheer variety of types and styles on offer – both between parishes and within parishes. The post-modern context we now inhabit accepts diversity (and choice) as a norm. The Church of England's most recent liturgical revision has sought to address this while still uniting the church through common liturgical structures and core texts. These principles underpin *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (2000–2008). Within this resource, there are several significant trends, all of which impact on the ordering of buildings.

The centrality of baptism

Recent thinking stresses the centrality of baptism – the sacrament that confers Christian identity. Historically, fonts have been at the church door – symbolising the entry of the new Christian into the Church. Renewed interest in baptism has brought two developments. One is a growth in the number of baptismal pools, recalling ancient practice and reflecting a shift towards immersion baptism (principally for adults but also for infants). The second is the strategic placing of the font at the West end of the building, to ensure its immediate visibility as a reminder of baptism (as in the recent example at Salisbury Cathedral).

Seasons, movement and senses

There was little official provision for the celebration of the seasons of the Christian Year before the 1980s. *Common Worship* offers extensive seasonal material, which has been enthusiastically adopted.

Salisbury Cathedral. In 2008 the new bronze font by William Pye was placed at the West end of the building to ensure its immediate visibility as a reminder of baptism.

Prime examples include:

- Ash Wednesday service with imposition of ashes
- Palm Sunday procession with dramatic reading of the Passion
- Eucharist of Maundy Thursday with foot-washing
- Easter Vigil with lighting of the Paschal Candle and renewal of baptismal vows
- Carol services and processions in Advent.

Many seasonal services involve significant movement within the liturgy. A Palm Sunday procession begins outside and moves into church, representing Christ's entry into Jerusalem. An Advent procession typically involves West–East movement, illustrating progression from darkness to light. At baptism, too, movement to and from the font is encouraged. Within all traditions, there is a growing use of 'prayer stations' at points around the building, and the concept of 'liquid worship' depends on the ability of a congregation to 'flow' from one worship station to another within a service.

Traditionally, in Anglican services, worshippers' participation is auditory: they listen and respond! A greater proportion of people, though, prefer to engage visually, and far more still are kinaesthetic learners. The imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday and foot-washing on Maundy Thursday make a genuine impact on those who prefer to engage in worship other than through words. These traditional ceremonies, now reclaimed as part of the official liturgy of the Church of England, are just part of a burgeoning of multi-sensory worship which spans the traditions. These developments raise serious issues for church ordering, not least where existing furniture is fixed! It is hard to seat 12 people in a circle for foot-washing if there is no available space. Likewise, a procession to the font is difficult if the aisle width is narrow.

One sign of the impact of technology on worship is the growing numbers of screens in churches for projection of text and image. There are clear benefits from their use, but also questions to be asked: both aesthetic and liturgical (does, for instance, the person controlling the projector become the effective 'leader' of screened worship?).

Domestication

Some re-orderings are clearly motivated by a desire to make church buildings more 'user-friendly'. While buildings should aid mission, questions need to be asked about their primary purpose as worship spaces. Are they 'houses of God' (places of holiness) or 'meeting places for God's people' (places of homeliness)? Strong views (not always in line with the perceived Evangelical/Catholic divide) are held on both sides of the debate, but it is clear that there are moves towards the 'domestication' of church interiors. At the same time, there is evidence of reaction, with a growing following for emerging forms of worship in which mystery is a core element.

The current diversity in worship is both exciting and bewildering for those attempting informed decisions about the ordering of worship space. What remains to be seen is how many of the current trends will endure in a culture in which the rate of change is ever-increasing.

Making room for mystery

Mark Macintosh
Professor of Theology, Loyola University, Chicago

This article reviews two books in Ashgate's Liturgy, Worship and Society Series: Allan Doig, *Liturgy and Architecture from the Early Church to the Middle Ages*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. xxii + 224pp; and Nigel Yates, *Liturgical Space: Christian Worship and Church Buildings in Western Europe 1500–2000*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. xi + 199pp

We have all seen it happen, even if we do not quite know how it works. Across the crowded room, Ingrid Bergman (or maybe Jude Law?) shoots you a glance full of meaning: 'how nice to see you' says the look to a casual observer, but to you it means, infallibly, 'meet me on the terrace, quickly'. Somehow, in that electric moment, all the conventional rhythms and gestures of ordinary life begin to pulse with unaccountable urgency, all their usual meanings lofted and transcended into another realm of significance. This is the very essence of successful espionage, romantic affairs and, of course, all ritual, liturgy and worship. It is how mystery, ineffable wonder and beauty, speaks itself – by taking over the language and expression of our world to become the language of another.

How does this happen, how does the meaning of heaven express itself in the language of earth? And how does this ritual action, this electric, overflowing communication, so charged with new kinships and relations, build a space for itself – throwing out long aisles that echo journeys into life-unending, numinous thresholds that mark entrances into identities new-found and ever yet unfolding? How does this encounter of human beings with each other, and with that deepest dimension of reality they call God, bring about these places of new birth and supernal banqueting, making room for mystery? 'Architecture was a powerful tool', writes one of our authors, 'after all, it shaped the spaces where heaven and earth met' (Doig 2008, 30). The fine and complementary volumes by Doig and Yates in Ashgate's enterprising 'Liturgy, Worship and Society' series provide some rich and thought-provoking background for pondering these important questions, and for thinking about church buildings of every kind.

Both works proceed in roughly chronological order, though both also allow the topical and thematic questions present in each era to ride, appropriately, above the constraints of mere sequential order. In particular, Doig (a member of the faculty of Theology at Oxford) offers splendid reflections on the ways in which urban plans and patterns in antiquity were comprehended within the development of church buildings, uniting a city population in one common journey towards the new Jerusalem. He also draws deftly throughout on recent theoretical work about public imagination, for instance Paul Binski's most intriguing *Becket's Crown: Art and Imagination in Gothic England* (2004), and the important work of David Brown, *God and the Enchantment of Place: Reclaiming Human Experience* (2004).

Yates (Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Wales, Lampeter) provides perhaps something more akin to a handbook, working his well-informed way through the main currents of the Protestant, Anglican, and Catholic reform movements and their impact on the re-visioning of worship and liturgical spaces. Both works make instructive use of ample illustrations. It might be fair to say that Yates offers a slightly more practical analysis of church structures, fittings and placements, in detail, and the reasons for their adjustments, whereas Doig offers perhaps a more sweeping vision of the meaning of ritual spaces across the ages, grounding his portrayal in telling details and evocative primary sources from each era. In this way he conveys a strong sense of the flavour of ideas and ardent intentions animating the stones and structures of ritual life.

In one particularly suggestive passage, Doig illuminates a fascinating two-fold pattern at work

Christian pilgrims at the site of the Cenacle on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. A Crusader chapel built on Constantine's 4th-century basilica and the supposed site of the Last Supper, this sacred space has been a mosque since 1552.
© Stephen J Evans

Pilgrims in St Peter's, Rome

in the development of liturgical architecture. First it happens that people become aware of a certain power or holiness at work in various places, perhaps because of life-changing events that occurred there, and this gives rise to buildings and structures that can express and facilitate something of the local community's wonder and joy in these places: a designated sacred space in which to mark out symbolically the events of a sacred time, a ritual in which that time and the worshippers' time can communicate with one another. As Doig (pp 51–2) puts it: 'The hallowed time of worship would naturally unfold most effectively in holy space, which was quintessentially provided by the cult of martyrs and places of witness associated with the life of Christ, or theophanies, as at Mamre [where God appeared to Abraham]. So the identification of these sites (often said to be by direct revelation) was exceedingly important, as was their architectural articulation. Once authenticated and framed architecturally and liturgically, the place, as a point of connection with the worship of heaven, could paradoxically become highly portable.' And this already points to the second moment in this pattern, ie when the holiness or 'worship of heaven' as Doig puts it, enacted liturgically in this highly symbolic ritual space, reveals itself to be 'portable', universal, a pattern of new life that can come to inhabit and reconfigure communities and spaces everywhere.

The paradox is that the sacred seems to call local communities into very particular patterns and structures of new common life together – structures both of architectural and inter-personal kinds; and yet the more articulated, localised and elaborate these patterns become, the more they end up pointing beyond themselves to a universal significance. This is particularly obvious in the case of the events of Jesus's passion, death and resurrection: over time in the Jerusalem community, a single night-long participation in Christ's journey into death and new life was elaborated into a week-long pilgrimage, celebrated step by step in locations marking the distinct historical events. Doig points out, most correctly, that even as this elaboration and extension into detailed time and space takes place on the ground in Jerusalem, it also comes to fire the imaginations of communities all throughout the late antique and medieval world, re-creating their lives together around and within this time and space of dying in Christ's death and rising into his inexhaustible life.

Anyone who has ever stood before the serene greens and blues in the mosaics of the great churches of Ravenna, or who has wandered bleakly into the bare, windswept sanctuaries depicted in the poetry of R S Thomas, cannot help but sense this liturgical beckoning. It is the power and presence of ritual space, created by communities in order to find a way into the truth of their own relationships with each other, with their neighbours, and with the One they believe taught them to love their neighbour as themselves. Both Doig and Yates help to explicate this space as the locus of communities being drawn into a deep level of communication. Any great artist uses the rhythms and gestures and conventions of our cultural language to communicate at a depth that is almost another language itself, so far does its power and meaning carry us beyond the ordinary into truthfulness. So ritual space and art, language and motion and colour and sound, all make possible a communicative language in which human persons are able to encounter the deep reality of each other from that particular depth that believers call God. Christians explain this as possible precisely because that depth of reality, they believe, has given itself into our hands as Word, as a language of communication, as pattern of new action and life, as opening up within the very fabric of this world the infinitely significant space of another. For the Christian, prayer takes place within this infinite space opened up for the world by Jesus's communication with the One he calls Father in their Spirit. These books by Doig and Yates cannot of course tell the whole of that story, but they do provide a helpful view into its structural embodiments, and the aspirations and ideas of the human makers of these spaces. ■

Monumental problems?

Jenifer White
Senior Landscape Adviser, English Heritage

Is your local authority attracting headlines over memorial safety? Even though the Ombudsmen issued guidance in 2006 some local authorities are still laying memorials flat. Public reaction around the country should have alerted us all that while memorial-safety issues need to be addressed, actions need to be sensitive to the special nature of these places and individual graves (Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and The Commission for Local Administration in England 2006).

So what prompted these memorial-safety concerns? Three deaths and eighteen serious accidents (Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and The Commission for Local Administration in England 2006) were reported for the five-year period up to 2004 and it was thought this was an under-reporting. Some of these tragic accidents involved children playing around memorials, or elderly people using stones as props to help them stand up after tending graves. Local authorities felt pressurised to take action to remove perceived risks by cordoning memorials off, laying them down or staking them, and often started with oldest sections of cemeteries with their grand memorials as it seemed logical that these were likely to be the most unstable. Pressure tests or topple testing can damage memorials and render them unsafe yet the Ombudsmen estimated that fewer than 10 per cent of Victorian memorials failed safety checks by local authorities (Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and The Commission for Local Administration in England 2006).

The problems still abound. In November 2008 John Mann MP reported that 859 families in his constituency had contacted him about graves being staked (Mann 2008). Other authorities continue to use topple testing. The Ombudsman even now has a web page, 'Complaints about safety testing in cemeteries and graveyards controlled by councils' (see **www.lgo.org.uk/complaints-about-safety-testing-cemeteries**). The effects are unsightly and disrespectful, and sometimes damage the memorials. As well as being very personal commemorations, memorials represent a biography of the community through the decades and reflect changing ideas. The best, and many of these are not listed, are of historic importance for their architectural or artistic interest, or for the person they commemorate.

Risk in cemeteries needs to be reappraised. The facts are that eight people have been killed during the last thirty years and given the number of memorials and visitors the risk of an accident is low. To paraphrase John Mann MP: we do not dismantle railings even though there are several deaths each year involving railings. English Heritage's Legal Director pointed out in the last edition of *Conservation Bulletin*, 'only reasonable steps have to be taken to see that people are reasonably safe. You do not have to take every last measure to ensure absolute safety.' (Harlow 2009.) The Ministry of Justice, as the department responsible for burials, published *Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials: Practical Advice for Dealing with Unstable Memorials* in January 2009 for all burial authorities, parochial church councils, companies and others involved in cemetery management. This guidance was developed on behalf of the Ministry by its Burials and Cremation Advisory Group, which was set up following the Parliamentary Select Committee on Cemeteries. English Heritage is on

Brookwood, Surrey. The largest cemetery in England, founded in 1852 to house London's dead, serviced by its own railway line and laid out to J C Loudon's principles. It remains a working cemetery and is owned by a limited company. The scale of maintenance and restoration work required is immense. There is an urgent need for a conservation, repair and funding strategy. The cemetery was added to the Heritage At Risk Register in 2009. Jenifer White © English Heritage

The Elswick Road cemetery in Newcastle upon Tyne is registered for its special historic interest and the register boundary is being reviewed by English Heritage to include the Jewish burial ground. Young volunteers from Development Training North East Ltd are supporting the Friends Group on the restoration of the cemetery as part of The Prince's Trust Team programme, which is being promoted locally by the Newcastle branch of New Deal for Communities. © Andrew Hayward

this group along with the Local Government Association and of course the faith groups and professional bodies for the sector. The guidance starts with a foreword signed by ministers from three departments (Justice, Communities and Local Government and Work and Pensions) and the heads of the Health and Safety Executive and the Local Government Association that underlines the status of the guidance and the recommendation for a risk-based approach in order to develop a proportionate approach to managing risks and good practice. Although memorial safety is not a priority for the Health and Safety Executive as the risk of injuries and deaths are minor, the Executive did help coordinate the drafting of the Ministry of Justice document.

Risk assessment involved identifying hazards, evaluating the risks and planning steps to implement precautions. The guidance says: 'the routine use of mechanical test instruments as inspection is not recommended. Results from these instruments are liable to overestimate the actual risk' and 'where temporary measures have been taken to make a memorial safe, steps to effect permanent repairs should be taken as soon as possible'. The new guidance is available online at **www.justice.gov.uk**.

A new advice note from English Heritage, *Caring for Historic Graveyard and Cemetery Monuments*, will be published this summer. The new publication looks at the range of deterioration issues and how to plan repairs as well as practical treatments.

Proposals for re-use of graves had been anticipated following the publication of various Ministry of Justice consultation documents but this new legislation has been shelved for the time being. The London Local Authorities Bill was passed last year and in London there is now scope to re-use private graves. Burial space remains a big issue for many cities. A Ministry of Justice survey predicates that on average there is only 30 years' provision left in local-authority burial grounds and there are significant pressures at more local levels (Ministry of Justice 2007).

Seven of the biggest cemeteries feature in English Heritage's Heritage At Risk 2009 Register. This is the tip of an iceberg of conservation-management issues facing cemeteries. As we develop our risk methodologies to reflect cemetery characteristics, the number on the risk register will grow. Three HELM training events on cemeteries have so far been held in London, Brighton and Liverpool, and the HELM website (**www.helm.org.uk**) is regularly updated with information about cemeteries and historic environment issues. Other useful websites are the Institute for Cemetery and Crematorium Management (**www.iccm-uk.com**), and the National Federation of Cemetery Friends (**www.cemeteryfriends.org.uk**) with its links to the many local groups undertaking a range of recording, conservation and campaigning work.

Work is under way at English Heritage to review the grades for the cemeteries registered as parks and gardens of special historic interest. The recalibration will result in the upgrading of cemeteries of exceptional and international importance. There are currently just over 100 registered cemeteries and most were initially added at Grade II. The review has also underlined the range of historic cemeteries and their huge local importance whether registered or not. The updated registration criteria will address the social value of cemeteries as well as historic and aesthetic values, and these will be published in English Heritage's heritage protection web pages. In the future it is hoped that the register can address crematoria landscapes as well as the cemeteries. ■

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News from English Heritage

New Policy Planning Statement

The Policy Planning Statement (PPS) on planning for the historic environment should be out to consultation this summer, along with a web-based 'living draft' Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide. The new PPS will replace the existing PPG 15 and 16 in providing a clear framework for planning decisions concerning England's historic environment ranging from buildings and archaeology to areas and landscapes, or a combination of these. The government has stated that the new PPS will see no lowering of the level of protection afforded to the historic environment. Its purpose will be to streamline and clarify government policy on how heritage protection is handled in the modernised spatial planning system. The PPS and its practice guidance are crucial to the reform of heritage protection that is still ongoing, and also forms a major underpinning to the deferred Heritage Protection Bill.

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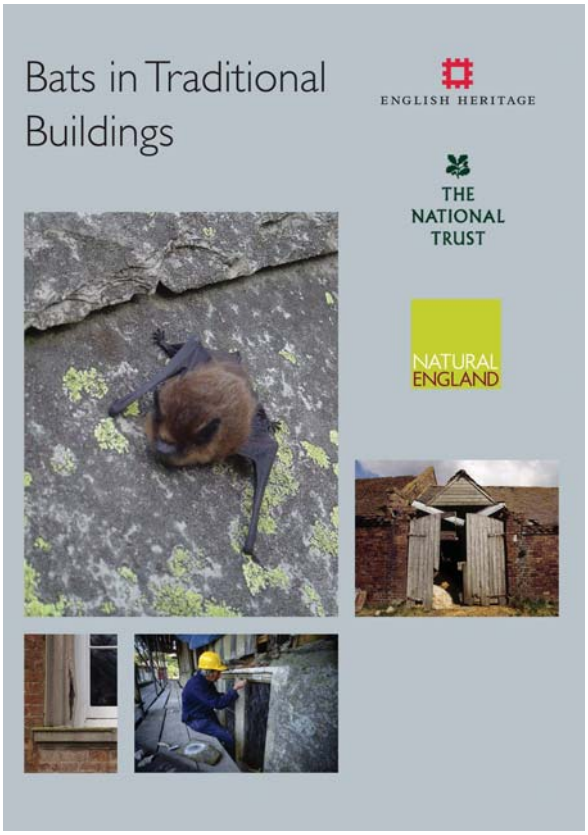
Bats in traditional buildings

The crevices and neglected spaces of traditional buildings offer an attractive shelter to bats, which are themselves 'traditionalists', returning to the same roosts all their lives. Published jointly by English Heritage, the National Trust and Natural England, this new manual provides advice essential advice to building professionals and the owners and managers of traditional buildings about how to live with bats, which enjoy a high level of protection in law.



As well as including a summary of the legislation that currently applies to bats and their roosts, the manual describes the characteristic habits of bats, the kinds of building works that typically affect them, how best to manage such works and where to go for further advice and information.

Copies of the manual can be downloaded from **www.helm.org.uk** or obtained from English Heritage Customer Services (see back page for details) quoting Product Code 51454.

Contact: Alan Cathersides; tel: 020 8878 8838; email: alan.cathersides@english-heritage.org.uk

Taking Part survey results

Final figures for monitoring achievement against the Public Service Agreement (PSA) 3 target covering culture and sports participation are now available. The PSA 3 target for the heritage sector was to increase the proportion of adult attendance at heritage sites by 3 per cent for each of three priority groups – black and minority ethnic, people with limiting disability and people from lower socio-economic group, between 2005/6 and 2007/8.

The results for the heritage sector remain encouraging. For the black and minority ethnic group, attendance has more than met the target increase of 3 percentage points. The other two groups also saw increases which brought them close to the target.

	2005/06	2007/08
Black and minority ethnic	50.7	54.1
Limiting disability	59.5	60.9
Lower socio-economic	57.1	59.4
All adults	**69.9**	**71.1**

Table showing final estimates of proportion of adult population attending heritage sites at least once in previous 12 months (%).

The full PSA3 report along with other Taking Part material on the DCMS website can be found at **www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/5653.aspx**

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Outputs of the Missing Out conference

On 23 March English Heritage hosted a conference on broadening the appeal of the heritage, particularly to lower socio-economic-status family groups. Speakers included Robert Hewison, Ben Cowell, Laurajane Smith, Maria Adebowale, Judith Garfield, Samuel Jones and Jonathan Douglas, alongside historical re-enactors and metal detectorists. Among the topics they discussed were the status of working-class history in the historic environment, the relation between ethnicity and socio-economic status, and the importance of providing a family friendly offer to ensure that an interest in heritage in any form is passed down the generations.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with many delegates stating that a discussion of these issues was much needed. The recommendations of the conference are now being discussed and enacted across the heritage sector and will be featured alongside examples of best practice on the conference website at

www.english-heritage.org.uk/missingout

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Scrutiny committees and the historic environment

A HELM guidance document is being published in June for Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny committees. There is at least one such committee in each local authority, and it is part of their role to review and recommend improvements to policy and service delivery both within the council and with regard to other public-sector organisations.

Making The Most Of Your Local Heritage has been written for non-heritage specialists who either sit on or support scrutiny committees, and it aims to persuade more committees to review the condition and management of their local historic environment. Case studies feature Heritage at Risk, Heritage Open Days and conservation areas, and there is advice to help authorities preparing for Heritage Protection Reform.

Once it has been published, you can download this guidance from the HELM website at:

www.helm.org.uk

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60th anniversary of the National Parks Act

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act was a law passed in 1949. It established how the countryside could be protected and enjoyed by future generations. The Act paved the way for the creation of today's family of 14 UK National Parks and 49 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

This year sees the 60th anniversary of the Act which is being marked be a series of guided walks across the country and events, including the resigning of the Joint Statement on the Historic Environment in National Parks in September 2009.

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Great Tower – the building and evolution of Henry II's keep at Dover Castle

English Heritage is embarking on a major project to re-present the great tower at Dover Castle. This will reveal the tower's original function as a magnificent fortress-palace for the itinerant royal household. The great tower will re-open to the public on 1 August 2009.

This will be followed by an academic conference on 25 and 26 September at the Society of Antiquaries in London that will bring together the enormous and fascinating corpus of research, fieldwork and other contextual investigation that was carried out to inform the creation of a series of period interiors for the re-presentation. All the speakers are leading scholars and specialists in the field, and the sessions will shed much light on the building, development and function of this great monument of English history.

The conference is followed by an optional third day at Dover, where delegates can explore and discuss the great tower in the company of the conference speakers.

For any further information or if you would like to register a place please contact Maud Guichard-Marneur on 020 7973 3880,
or at maud.guichard@english-heritage.org.uk.
Alternatively, please visit

www.english-heritage.org.uk/dovercastle

The National Monuments Record
News and Events

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

Contact the NMR at:
NMR Enquiry & Research Services, National Monuments Record, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ
tel: 01793 414600
fax: 01793 414606
email: nmrinfo@english-heritage.org.uk
web: **www.english-heritage.org.uk/nmr**

Recent acquisitions

London Improvements 1862–73

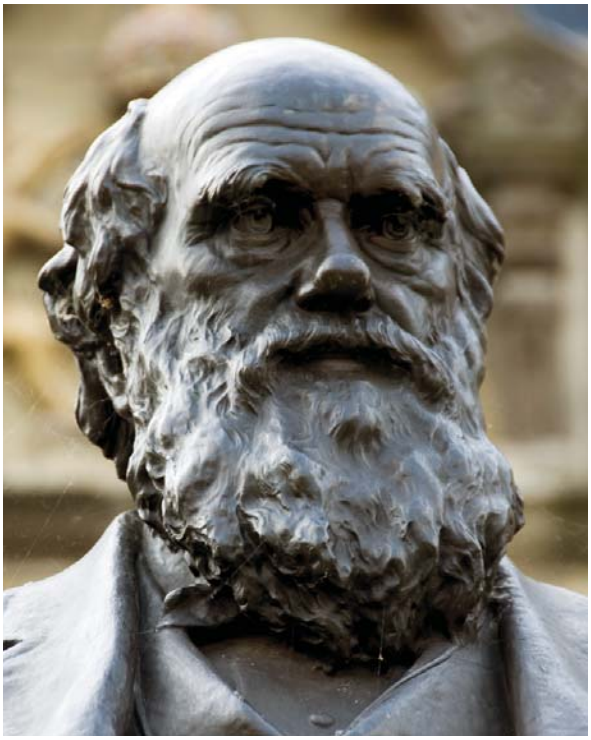
The NMR recently purchased an important series of 28 photographs of the London Improvements undertaken by the engineer Sir Joseph Bazalgette on behalf of the Metropolitan Board of Works between 1862 and 1873. These high-quality images include the demolished Northumberland House, Holborn Viaduct, the Embankments in Chelsea and Westminster as well as the construction of the Grade I-listed Crossness Pumping Station and its huge beam engines. After the completion of this vast public health undertaking, the incidence of cholera epidemics in London largely subsided.

Interior view looking west along the nave of St Michael's Church, Great Witley, showing the baroque decoration – one of the fine photographs from the recently acquired Ted Tasker collection.

Ted Tasker photographic collection

Ted Tasker (1910–89) lived in Bradford but travelled extensively throughout England photographing churches. His important collection of more than 2,000 images has recently been donated to the NMR by the Ted Tasker Photographic Trust.

MPs and other VIPs pose outside the newly opened Crossness Pumping Station, Bexley, in 1864 – one of a series of recently acquired photographs recording the hugely important engineering works of Sir Joseph Bazalgette.



The statue of Charles Darwin outside the former buildings of Shrewsbury School, Shropshire, which Darwin attended.
Peter Williams © English Heritage.NMR

The collection includes interior as well as exterior shots of churches, cathedrals and abbeys, along with images that highlight the medieval artwork and furnishings which Ted Tasker particularly loved. They are not yet catalogued but information about them is available through the NMR's Enquiries and Research Services team.
Contact: Ian Leith, tel 01793 414730
email: ian.leith@english-heritage.org.uk

Online resources from the NMR

PastScape (www.pastscape.org.uk)

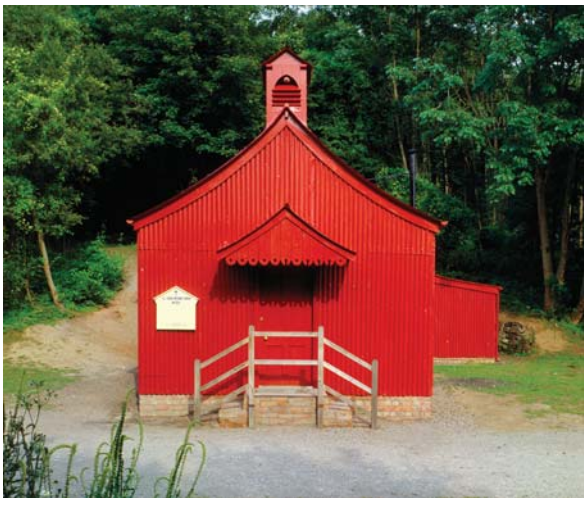
PastScape is the publicly accessible online version of the national database of monuments recorded at the NMR.

Conflict sites

A project to make records of 20th-century conflict sites more accessible has been completed as part of a European Culture 2000 'Landscapes of War' initiative. The recording was carried out in conjunction with Wessex Archaeology and included such themes as: bombing decoys, civil-defence sites, coastal batteries, D-Day preparatory sites, prisoner-of-war camps, radar stations, Cold War 'rotor' early-warning stations and searchlight batteries.

Henry VIII and Darwin

To mark the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Darwin and the 500th anniversary of Henry VIII's accession to the throne, the NMR has enhanced the dataset of buildings, sites and monuments associated with these two men. The sites connected with Charles Darwin range from those associated with his childhood in Shrewsbury, via the venues where his revolutionary theories on evolution were presented, to his private residence at Down House. For Henry VIII, the project has concentrated on the major building works of his reign, ranging from Royal palaces such as Hampton Court and Whitehall to a network of coastal fortifications to defend England against the threat of French and Spanish invasion.
Contact: Robin Page, tel: 01793 414617
email: robin.page@english-heritage.org.uk



St Chad's Mission Church, Madeley, Shropshire, an example of a prefabricated building of corrugated iron. Photographed by Eric de Maré between 1978 and 1980 and now accessible through the *ViewFinder* website.
© English Heritage.NMR

ViewFinder

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

ViewFinder is an online picture resource drawing on the NMR's national photographic collections. More than 75,000 images are available and new material is being added quarterly. It currently includes over 4,500 photographs of churches and church fittings, 500 of them by John Gay, a prolific freelance photographer who was most active between 1945 and 1970s.
Contact: Amy Darby, tel: 01793 414542
email: amy.darby@english-heritage.org.uk

Exhibition

The NMR's major exhibition of the photographs by John Gay (1909–99) will be shown at the Guildhall Art Gallery, City of London, from 3 August to 18 October 2009.
Opening hours:
Monday–Saturday: 10.00am to 5.00pm; Sunday: 12.00 noon to 4.00pm
Admission: Adults £2.50, concessions £1, children under 16 free. Free admission all day on Fridays and from 3.30pm on other days. Free entry for Friends of Guildhall Art Gallery, Art Fund members, and for City residents and workers.

Legal Developments

Curtilage and farm buildings

Mike Harlow, Legal Director, *English Heritage*

When the Heritage Protection Bill eventually becomes law, we will be able to list buildings with certainty. We will be able to draw a line around what is listed and say: 'That's your lot.' But until then, and even after then for existing and unrevised list entries, there will always be a question mark over what has been given listed status.

While the list entry might be perfectly clear that 'Barleymow House' is a Grade II farmhouse, protection does not necessarily end there. The law says that objects or structures fixed to the house, or fixed to the land and within its curtilage since before 1948, are to be treated as listed as well. This does not mean that those other buildings and structures necessarily hold any special interest, but if they do, works affecting that special interest will require consent.

For attached structures to be protected their function must be ancillary to the principal building.

For attached structures to be protected their function must be ancillary to the principal building, otherwise listing a terraced house would bring listed status to the remainder in the row.

The extent of curtilage is a relatively vague concept and has received considerable judicial attention over the years. In the *Calderdale* case (1982) 46 PCR 399, the courts suggested that there were three key factors in deciding the extent of the curtilage: the physical layout; ownership, past and present; and, use and function, past and present.

Reading those rules alone is unlikely to give anyone a real feel for the concept without seeing their application to common circumstances. One such common situation is a listed farmhouse and neighbouring (but not attached or separately listed) farm buildings.

In *R v Taunton Deane Borough Council* (2008) All ER (D) (Oct), the high court examined Jews Farmhouse (Grade II) near Wiveliscombe in Somerset and its nearby Mill Barn (not separately listed but pre-1948). The physical layout and ownership past and present were factors in this case and may distinguish it from other farm situations, but the key point of interest was the way the judge approached function and use.

Mill Barn was being used as a farm building at the date of listing. The farmhouse was used as a house and the hub from which the agricultural business of the farm was being conducted. Everyone agreed that the curtilage could not extend to the outer limit of the fields of the farm, so where was it? Logically it must be either around the collection of farm buildings at the heart of the farm, giving Mill Barn listed status, or be more immediate to the farmhouse and thereby excluding the working farm buildings.

The judge rejected the argument that the farmhouse and Mill Barn were functionally so close that the curtilage should be drawn around all the farm buildings at the heart of the farm. He accepted that the farm was being run from the farmhouse at the date of listing, but did not believe the whole of the farm and all of the agricultural buildings could be sensibly regarded as being within the curtilage of the farmhouse on that account.

The primary use of the farmhouse was as a house. The primary use of Mill Barn was agricultural business. It was not being used, for example, to garage the farmer's car, to store his domestic items, as a children's playroom or staff quarters etc.

So Mill Barn was outside the curtilage and not listed.

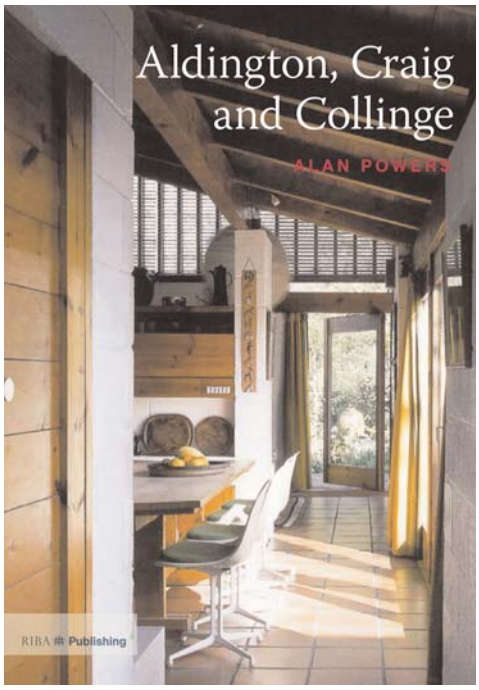
The primary use of the farmhouse was as a house. The primary use of Mill Barn was agricultural business. So Mill Barn was outside the curtilage and not listed.

Although the layout of the buildings, their distance apart and the existence of physical boundaries between them were also factors in this decision, it is hard to see why this functional distinction would not weigh heavily in all farm cases, even where the buildings were very much closer and no boundaries between them existed.

In this case it could also be argued that non-domestic agricultural buildings attached to a farmhouse are not protected by listing either.

Of course each case depends on its facts, which is the most unhelpful phrase a lawyer can ever utter. The obvious advice is: if in doubt, the owner and local planning authority should speak. Hopefully together a clear view can be formed and unnecessary applications and illegal works can be avoided.

New publications from English Heritage



Aldington, Craig and Collinge

Alan Powers

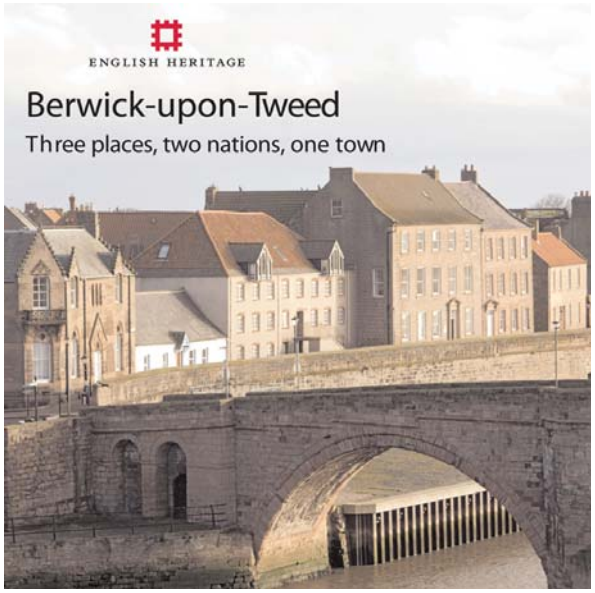
The third title in the series Twentieth Century Architects, this is the first major publication on the work of the architectural practice of Aldington, Craig and Collinge. Drawing on the recollections of the partners and on contemporary documents, Alan Powers positions the practice against the shifting background of modernism in Britain, in which Aldington and Craig played a role as educators and polemicists, calling for better public understanding of the value that architects could bring to every aspect of living and place-making. The narrative casts new light on the continuing work of the practice following the retirement of the two founding partners.

PUBLICATION DATE: August 2009
PRICE: £20.00 + £2.00 P&P
SPECIAL OFFER PRICE: £18.00
ISBN: 978 1 85946 302 4 Paperback, 160pp

Berwick-upon-Tweed: Three Places, Two Nations, One Town

Adam Menuge with Catherine Dewar

Nicholas Pevsner described Berwick as 'one of the most exciting towns in England'. Part of the critically acclaimed Informed Conservation series, this book is a celebration of Berwick as a unique and distinctive town and an examination of the history and geography that have contributed to its development. The authors present the wealth of historic



interest encapsulated in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal, and explain how these places came to assume such varied and distinctive forms. The book is lavishly illustrated with both full-colour and black-and-white photographs.

PUBLICATION DATE: August 2009
PRICE: £7.99 + £2.00 P&P
SPECIAL OFFER PRICE: £7.20
ISBN: 978 184802 029 0 Paperback, 112 pp

The Grandest Station: Excavation and Survey at Housesteads Roman Fort, 1954–95

by Charles Daniels, John Gillam, James Crow and others

Volume 1: Structural Report and Discussion
Volume 2: The Material Assemblages
Alan Rushworth

Housesteads is one of the most important forts on Hadrian's Wall. Combining the results of Newcastle University's excavations of 1974 and 1981 with those of Durham University between 1959 and 1961, we now have a complete plan of the north-east part of the fort. In addition to shedding much light on the material culture of the fort's occupants and the structural and chronological relationships between its various parts, more recent excavation has allowed significant reinterpretation of the original conclusions reached by the Durham investigators and shed new light on this part of the fort.

PUBLICATION DATE: August 2009
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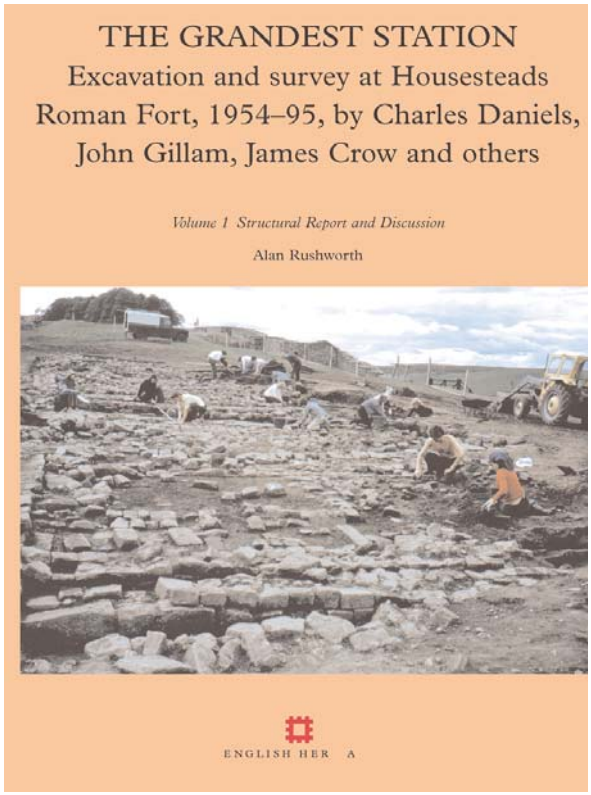
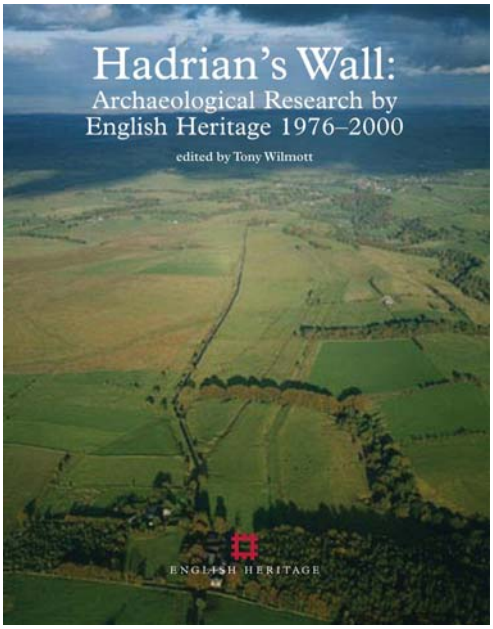
ISBN: 978 1 848020 26 9 Paperback, 742 pp in two volumes





Hadrian's Wall: Archaeological Research by English Heritage 1976–2000

edited by Tony Wilmott

From 1976 to 2000, English Heritage archaeologists undertook excavation and other research on Hadrian's Wall. This book begins with a brief account of these works and includes an appreciation of the work of Charles Anderson, who worked on exposing, consolidating and recording the wall from 1936 to 1974, and the publication for the first time of the James Irwin Coates archive of drawings of Hadrian's Wall made during the years 1877–96.

Among the sites described in this volume are the Turf Wall, the Wall ditch and its counterscarp and the Vallum and several of the milecastles. Important large-scale excavations at the fort of Birdoswald and its extramural settlement in the 1980s are also described, along with recent work on the most western fort on the Wall, Bowness-on-Solway. Finally, an Appendix lists all English Heritage interventions on the Wall between 1976 and 2000.

PUBLICATION DATE: June 2009
PRICE: £40.00 + £2.00 P&P
SPECIAL OFFER PRICE: £36.00
ISBN: 978 1 905624 71 3 Paperback, 320 pp

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