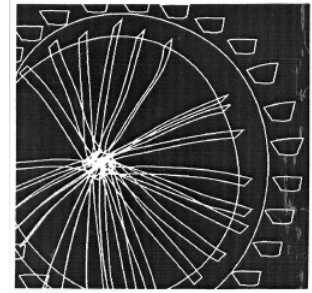




LONDON BRANCH

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN/WINTER 2010



Heritage Protection in the Age of Austerity

The Government has made its position clear that the “Age of Austerity” has begun. The publication of the much vaunted “Bonfire of the Quangos” (which in reality was much less far reaching than had been discussed during the lead up to the Election) and the Comprehensive Spending Review both of which have far reaching ramifications for all heritage professionals.

It's clear that these changes herald significant change for the role of heritage protection and that all sectors will need to rise the challenge of providing a valuable service whilst at the same time as delivering ‘value for money’.

The most high profile victim of the cuts, from a heritage and design point of view, has been CABE. Whilst their contribution to the planning system and the creation of spaces and buildings of high quality may be challenged theirs will be a difficult role to fill. There are already groups claiming they are the rightful successor, however, there is life in the beast yet with a potentially dramatic last minute reprieve. It seems that CABE may rise from the ashes of the Quango bonfire or simply refuse to die like some undead horror. Either way the future of a national design review service is uncertain.

The dramatic cuts to the budgets of Local Authorities and English Heritage will have a significant effect on many members of the Branch and there is concern from all sectors about the effect on the service that can be offered. The Government has offered a lifeline to cash strapped local authorities with a recent consultation paper issued by DCLG that moots the possibility of giving Local Authorities the right to set their own application fees in order to more accurately reflect the cost of processing applications but importantly not make a profit. If the proposals are taken forward local authorities will be able to set their own fees from April 2011 and will be given six months from April to October to publish their fees. It is anticipated that after October 2011 the fees set by central Government would be withdrawn.

Whilst doom, gloom and uncertainty prevail there is the potential for glimmers of positivity to shine through. The rise of localism may empower local communities to take a more of an interest in their local environment and create a more responsive and proportionate planning system. Of course the opposite is equally possible and we may find ourselves in a situation where the NIMBY is King and even more paperwork is required for an application. Either way it looks like there is an interesting journey ahead.



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CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

You will have no doubt read all about this year's IHBC Annual School in the latest edition of Context. I hope that those of you who attended found the event as enjoyable as much as I did. I should like to take the opportunity to thank all London members who were involved, even if it was only attending the Day School. Even that will have assisted us in balancing the books, and I have been informed that once all the accounts have been settled, there may be a small profit for the IHBC. We intend to use some of that profit to subsidise our Christmas event at Leighton House, which has already been over-subscribed.

So where does the Branch go now after the excitement of the Annual School has died down? Of course, if you are employed in the public sector the consequences of the Comprehensive Spending Review are becoming clear. English Heritage's required 32% savings will quite significant staffing implications. Every London Borough is affected, though not equally. The Heritage of London Trust is carrying out an informal survey of staffing levels in local authorities with the aim of making a case to John Penrose MP, Minister for Tourism and Heritage that there is a real threat to the historic environment because of the loss of local authority conservation officers. If you have received the questionnaire from HOLT I do urge you to fill it in. If you have not received one, please contact Diana Beattie for a copy at info@heritageoflondon.com Tel 020 7730 9472. The IHBC will soon be publishing guidance on its website on how to deal with jobs under threat.

I recently attended a meeting of the London Historic Environment Forum at which it was clear that jobs are being lost throughout the sector. The one glimmer of hope is that the Heritage Lottery Fund will not be losing out (providing the lottery income stays at its current level of course). The HLF will be doing what it can to assist those on-going projects where the matched funding is being reduced or lost altogether.

Meanwhile, the Branch Committee is planning events and visits for 2011. One date for your diaries is the afternoon of 20th January on which we will be holding a joint event with the Institute for Archaeology at Cowcross Street. The topic will be London's Historic Environment Record, (or lack of it). If there are other topics, which you think we might cover in the future, do contact me or any other member of the Branch Committee. I have already had a request for an up-date on Article 4 Directions. If you would like to contribute to this, get in touch with me direct.

Finally, apologies to those of you who were unable to book a place on the Leighton House visit. Otherwise I look forward to seeing many of you on 13th December.

David McDonald
Branch Chairman

IHBC VISIT TO ELEANOR CROSS, CHARING CROSS

In July a few lucky IHBC members visited the Eleanor Cross, Charing Cross. Robert Greer of stonework conservation company PAYE provided a fascinating description of the history of the cross and the recent conservation work.

The cross commemorates Queen Eleanor, wife of Edward I, who died in 1290 near Lincoln. The distraught King ordered her body carried to Westminster Abbey for burial. At each place the procession stopped for the night, a memorial cross was built in her honour. Only three of the original crosses survive today, many were destroyed during the Civil War. The original Charing Cross stood in Whitehall, where a statue of Charles I now stands.

A replacement cross was erected by the Charing Cross Hotel Company in 1865, as a marketing initiative. The cross was designed by E M Barry in elaborate C14th style, based on the form of the original Eleanor Crosses, but in detail related to G G Scott's Martyrs Memorial Oxford of 1838.



The cross is 70 ft tall, octagonal in plan and rises in three main stages, topped by a spire and cross. The shields in the panels of the first stage are copied from the Eleanor Crosses and bear the arms of England, Castile, Leon and Ponthieu. Above the second parapet are eight statues of Queen Eleanor. The cross was constructed by Thomas Earp of Lambeth from Portland limestone, Red Mansfield sandstone and Aberdeen granite and is now listed Grade II

Now for the technical bit! Network Rail engaged PAYE in 2005. The resulting project has involved the removal of harmful atmospheric pollutants from the surface of the stone, harmful cement mortar repairs, accumulated debris and vegetation, clearance of drainage holes and renewal of indent carved detail. The cross was pre washed using the DOFF system, followed by a traditional masons nebulous spray water clean, and sulphation removal by hand held chisel. Where it has been appropriate to renew stonework, replacements have been hand carved, both in situ and off site.

During the course of the works a mason' mark from 1865 was found behind an eroded shield. Nowadays, all mileages from London are measured from the site of the original cross, including Sat Nav settings!

Christine White
Conservation Officer - LB Enfield

Report on Developing in Context Conference at the NLA Store Street

In September a number of IHBC members attended an interesting conference held at the New London Architecture Centre, Store Street.

Leading experts in the fields of planning, development, heritage, design and architecture presented papers on different approaches and experiences in designing and developing new buildings and infrastructure within historic contexts looking at past, present and proposed schemes.



Speakers included Philip Davies, Director at English Heritage, who gave a number of interesting examples of 'polite' traditional and contemporary style new buildings which respect their historic setting, architect Eric Parry discussing his award-winning scheme at St Martin's-in-the-Fields, Colin Wilson giving the GLA view with reference to the Mayor's London Plan and new London Views Management Framework, Robert Ayton explaining Westminster Council's approach citing exemplars across the City, and Edmund Bird giving a flavour of the challenges and opportunities of developing new underground, overground and bus station infrastructure within conservation areas and adapting Transport for London's diverse heritage of listed buildings for today's transport needs.

Other notable speakers included Roger Mascal, Head of Heritage at DPP, Councillor Terence Buxton Chairman of the Planning Committee at RB Kensington & Chelsea discussing the Commonwealth Institute scheme, Robert Evans of Kings Cross developer Argent, Tony Wilson working on the British Museum extension project and Vincent Lacovara of LB Croydon exploring policy and practice within his borough.

Edmund Bird
Heritage Advisor - TfL

Temporary Structures in Historic Places

Love them or hate them, temporary structures are a common phenomenon in historic places throughout the country, ranging from urban squares to country parks. Events are a vital source of income for many heritage sites, and temporary structures are often justified on the grounds that they generate revenue for maintaining heritage assets.

Central London has more than its fair share of temporary erections (just think of Trafalgar Square, for example, the Natural History Museum or the moat at the Tower of London), and the 2012 Olympics are generating additional proposals, which will have a major impact on the Royal Parks. Planning permission has already been granted for the equestrian event in Greenwich Park, where a temporary stadium will be located close to the Queen's House and numerous other structures, including stables and a 'media village', will be sited in the park. The Beach Volleyball event on Horse Guards Parade will require a large temporary stadium for spectators, with ancillary facilities located in St James's Park. In Hyde Park there will be temporary facilities for triathlon events.

English heritage has published a new guidance note on temporary structures in historic places. The guidance has been developed in consultation with a stakeholder group which included representatives of the Greater London Authority, Royal Parks, the Historic Houses Association, the Country Land & Business Association, the Greenwich Foundation, Historic Royal Palaces and some London Boroughs. A public consultation on the draft guidance in 2009 highlighted several issues, including the lack of clarity in planning law in relation to temporary structures and the importance of temporary structures in relation to the viability of historic sites and estates. Overall, there was a clear consensus on the need for the guidance note.

However, the issue of temporary structures can be controversial. Owners are often concerned about the cost and time involved in securing regulatory approvals and the uncertainty surrounding the need for planning permission. Conservationists, on the other hand, have concerns ranging from the visual impact of temporary structures on views and the setting of heritage assets to physical damage and general 'wear and tear'.

The guidance provides a framework for evaluating the benefits and any negative impacts arising from temporary structures, and a list of practical measures to mitigate the risks. It can be downloaded from the English Heritage website at www.english-heritage.org.uk/temporary-structures. Hard copies and a set of potential model conditions are available on request from gheu@english-heritage.org.uk

Illustration and caption: The 2009 summer pavilion in Kensington Gardens, commissioned by the Serpentine Gallery, designed by SANAA

Will Holborow

Head of Government Historic Estates Unit - English Heritage



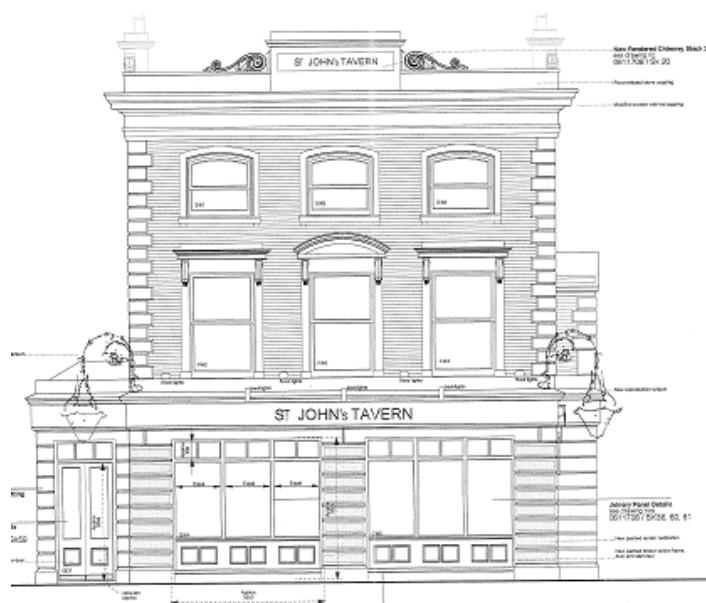
St John's Tavern, Islington – A Pub Restored

Islington's Conservation & Design Team has been delivering grant projects for 15 years and has an outstanding record in helping to improve vulnerable businesses in some of Islington's key shopping areas. These projects have been the result of a partnership between the Council and English Heritage and are intended to encourage public and private investment in some of Islington's most deprived wards.

A recently completed project as part of English Heritage's Partnership Scheme in a Conservation Area (PSICA) is the restoration of St John's Tavern. When built, in the 1860s, St John's Tavern was an architectural landmark and a source of local pride. By the 1950s, probably following war damage, the once handsome building had been stripped of its fine architectural detailing and clad in inappropriate ceramic tiles. By 2008 the tired appearance of the building concealed the fact that a vibrant local business was operating within.



The grant project proposed to restore the building to its former glory, once again becoming a landmark, source of community pride and helping to boost local business confidence. Extensive works to the building's facade included the reinstatement of the original decorative stucco, chimneystacks, timber pub front and the impressively large projecting brass lanterns. The architects were Butler & Hegarty and the contractors were Peter Loe Restorations Ltd.





The finished works have exceeded all expectations and have contributed to the economic well being of the area. Nic Sharpe, leaseholder of St John's Tavern said "I'm thrilled with the grant-aided works. The restoration of this historic building has created a great buzz in the local community and the business is going from strength to strength". Prior to the project the business employed 28 people and these jobs have been safeguarded during the recession. Employment is actually expected to increase due to an increase in trade following the project's completion.

In addition to the grant funding, the Heritage of London Trust donated £4,000 towards the lanterns. Notably, the project levered in £192,000 worth of private investment, a substantial contribution towards the economic regeneration of the area.

This is just one project of many and we continue to deliver projects in six targeted areas across Islington. Four of these are new schemes, which will remain open to grant applications after 2011 subject to securing future funding.

Kristian Kaminski, Conservation Officer, London Borough of Islington

Return to Strawberry Hill 26th June

19 of us had a second visit to Strawberry Hill during the works, thanks to George Hunter, one of the Trustees of the Strawberry Hill Trust. We were very fortunate to have both Peter Inskip and Stephen Gee of Inskip and Jenkins to take us round.

We just made the roof before the scaffolding came down and it was fascinating to hear about the works to the lead to avoid corrosion, the insulation of the roofs, repair of the stone parapet, replacement of the pinnacles in European oak and to see close up the elaborate chimney pots.

We heard about the plans for the restoration of the gardens from Peter, including replacing the open groves of lime and acacia. There are only two oak trees remaining from Walpole's time. We heard about the works to the south front including the restoring the two storey projecting bay and rebuilding the corner which had dry rot. We also heard about the Robert Adam designed cottage for Walpole where he could retreat from all his 'visitors'. Now this cottage is the other side of the road and looks very 20th century with just a hint of its 18th century origins.



Inside we heard about the innovative windows with horizontal sliders and sliding shutters which, when open, allowed uninterrupted views of the garden. We also discussed the stain glass and the conservation policy behind the repair work by Chapel Studios in Kingslangley. Walpole kept very good records of where the stain glass was placed and, where no original glass has been found, matted blanks have been inserted.

We saw the uncovering of the original trompe l'oeil wall paintings in the stair hall based on Prince Arthur's chantry tomb at Worcester Cathedral. We saw the wonderfully restored Adam mantelpiece, now cleaned, re-gilded and repaired in the Round Drawing Room. There is no record of the design for the fabric walls in this room, only the bright red colour, so a design was taken from the Vine near Basingstoke and rewoven by Richard Humphries in the red colour to match.



We looked at the Long Gallery, which seemed a long way from being finished but looked magnificent in the Papers when the house opened in September, I was glad to see. The Library will be a magnificent room with its restored glass, loaned library books in the gothic bookshelves, originally copied from Old St Paul's 1556 engravings, with original fixings back in place.



With all the meticulous attention to detail, this will be an exemplar of restoration and conservation and I can't wait to visit when it is all finished. Perhaps a third visit for IHBC London Branch!

Kate Ainsile Williams

English Heritage Review of London Underground Stations

English Heritage has now completed its survey of London Underground stations, short-listing some 40 stations for consideration for listing, also including some that are currently listed Grade II but may merit upgrading to II* or I. The first batch has already been submitted to the DCMS and determined. Of the first three tube stations to be assessed, one was recommended for Grade II listing (and accepted by the DCMS) and two did not quite make the grade. This may well give us a flavour of the ratio of listable stations in the tranches to come over the coming weeks.



The DCMS listed Watford Station - the terminus of this branch of the Metropolitan Line, which opened in 1925 to designs by the Metropolitan Railway architect Charles Walter Clark. The DCMS accepted EH's recommendation that this station was the most complete surviving example of this distinctive group of suburban Metropolitan Line stations, with Clark's 'homely, vernacular design and features (such as original tiling) ...which epitomise the aesthetics of 'Metroland', an inter-war movement to the rural suburbs, named by John Betjeman, that captured large parts of the nation's architectural imagination'.



English Heritage decided not to recommend neighbouring Croxley also of 1925 (which they concluded was a well-detailed building of considerable charm but not of sufficient interest to merit listing – photo below left) and nearby Chorleywood (1889 - photo below right) which EH determined was too altered internally and therefore could no longer be regarded as the best representative of its highly standardised type, adding that it possessed only modest architectural interest given its very plain design with little to distinguish it from other stations on this stretch of the line.

Edmund Bird
Heritage Advisor - TfL

NEW BRANCH MEMBERS

A warm welcome to :-

Karen Bewick
Susanna Miller
Sandra O'Brien
James Weeks
Ciaran MacCullagh
Vasanthi Nelliah
David Andrews
Lucy Ashton
John Brown
Alissa Fawcett
Ben Hull
Charlotte Matthews
Ben Pearce
David Pope
Chris Ryan
Matthew Somerville
Ayaka Takaki
Andrew White

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Please e-mail any changes in your
details to me as soon as you can.

Updated details should also be sent to -

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Thanks

Jacinta Fisher

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