



· INSTITUTE · OF · HISTORIC ·
BUILDING · CONSERVATION

NORTHERN BRANCH

NORTHERN NOTES

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Valencia Cathedral & Royal Basilica Photo taken by Ken Hutchinson

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2011 and we hope you have all got over the long cold winter and are looking forward to spring. We are unable to bring you a feature on the Royal Wedding but we are sure the subject will be covered elsewhere. I have included some photographs of Valencia taken during a recent visit to inspire those ready for a holiday. Thanks again for your positive comments on the last newsletter and while you are reading this you can imagine reading your article in the next issue as we welcome contributions from anyone in the area who has a conservation story to tell. Many thanks to our contributors for their excellent articles on what is happening out there on the ground. As always we welcome any contributions from those interested in the conservation of historic buildings. As usual we try to include items from all parts of the region and this newsletter includes articles from Newcastle and Cumbria. Any suggestions for further improvements to the newsletter will be welcome.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in reading the newsletter please forward a copy to them.

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1. What's On:

-Heritage Skills events continue throughout the year both in the North East and Cumbria. For details of this years programme contact Andie Harris, Heritage Skill Coordinator for details at admin@nect.org.uk. Tel. 0191 2329279

Conservation Forums hosted by English Heritage. Further details can be obtained from Clair Botham at English Heritage at Clair.Botham@english-heritage.org.uk tel. 0191 2691234

IHBC CPD Event at Seaton Deleval Hall and Blyth Battery on 21 September 2011

IHBC Summer School to be hosted by Northern Branch in 2013.

If you want to keep up to date with all that is happening in the 'Heritage World' log on to the **IHBC NEWS BLOG** on the IHBC national website www.ihbc.org.uk . Up to date information is given including links to other sites to get all the information in full. You can even read all the back issues of Northern Notes on the North Region part of the website. IHBC members can get regular updates as they are published by signing up to the BLOG on their e-mail newsletter@ihbc.org.uk .

2. Committee meeting dates 2011

- 3rd May at Blackfriars, Newcastle 2.30pm

All IHBC members are welcome to attend any meeting.

3. Council Visit & Day Event at Newcastle September 2010

IHBC FULL COUNCIL VISIT & NORTH BRANCH DAY CONFERENCE: CONSERVATION - BRIDGING THE RECESSION: A Delegate's View - Rough Words – More Or Less

By Richard Majewicz

Newcastle greeted delegates and guests to IHBC's first outing to an English region with untypically leaden skies and a mini monsoon – only the fog on the Tyne was missing. Nevertheless, the rain relented sufficiently to allow for the planned perambulation through the City's historic core en route to the Reception in the magnificent Cathedral Hall of the Cathedral Church of St. Nicholas where delegates were warmly greeted by the Lord Mayor of Newcastle and the respective Chairs of IHBC and its Northern branch.

Newcastle's Live Theatre, the venue for the following day's Conference, is the product of an imaginative transformation of a group of previously derelict warehouses located just off the Quayside and includes some interesting architectural and structural interventions. After the brief opening pleasantries, any cobwebs lingering after sampling Newcastle's infamous nightlife were quickly and brutally dispersed by John Grundy's vociferous, energetic and extremely erudite and oft amusing illustrated appraisal of the North's rough and ready character, its many and varied gifts and its contribution to history and the historic environment. Carol Pyrah bravely followed on with a calming, but concerned review of the challenges, opportunities and problems that already face everyone involved in Conservation and which are about to become even more difficult as a result of a further round of cuts in Government spending and policy.

Following the break Fiona Newton expressed her growing concerns over the risks that Local Authorities face as fewer and fewer Conservation Officers remain to tackle their statutory functions, whilst the private sector grows in strength to meet the demand. This was clearly joy to Roy Lewis, representing the private sector, although he despaired at the difficulties experienced in obtaining work from Local Authorities because of the arduous and time wasting efforts to satisfy their tender conditions. Helen Brownlie, on the other hand, exemplified what could be achieved by the Local Authority Conservation Officer with her brave and inspiring work to not only salvage but also improve the town centre of Cockermouth after its dramatic and tragic flood in 2009. This is something that Roy Lewis admitted would not have been possible if left solely to the private sector as it needed the dedication, commitment and considerable input of over-time that only a Local Authority Officer could economically give to the project. The rousing round of applause received by Helen at the end of her presentation was some little reward for her achievements.

The afternoon session started in a much more peaceful and sobering, although nonetheless important, manner than the morning's session with Graham Bell's consideration of what we were here for, how we can engage the younger generation in the historic environment and how much more can be achieved by 'blurring' the edges between government, private and public sectors to the benefit of the community. His brief review of the North of England Civic Trust's role and work was followed by his Learning and Skills Manager, Andie Harris, who has successfully blazed a trail of Heritage Skills training across the northern counties which has involved some 50,000 people over the past few years. She has worked tirelessly to ensure that the masterclasses arranged by the Initiative fit into the NVQ syllabus, and those that satisfactorily complete the courses obtain their CSCS heritage skills cards. She clearly wants to see accredited contractors working on historic building projects, and is working with a variety of partners from funding and heritage bodies down to schools and museums to 'raise aspirations through understanding and practical activities.' Accordingly, another northern 'heroine' was warmly applauded for her commitment to her cause.

It was left then, for Ian Ayris, Conservation Team Manager for Newcastle City Council, to expand optimistically, about the future of Conservation work in the public sector. He explained how the 'localism' agenda, PPS5, 'At Risk' registers and the sustainability agenda were all pointers as to how to rescue the public heritage sector. It should ensure that senior management are aware of their responsibilities, and should promote flagship projects and events, and critically, the specialist heritage skills that already exist in the public sector. He considered this to be a legitimate strategy for the future with low financial input and not a strategy of job creation.

Question and Answer sessions in between each set of speakers gave rise to many interesting queries, but perhaps more interesting was the competition between Charles Strang and Dennis Rodwell for the longest question asked. On balance I suggest that Dennis's last question, if it was indeed a question and not a soliloquy, gave him victory by a short head!

Sean O'Reilly's Irish eloquence emerged as he succinctly summarised the day's proceedings with a play on the words and phrases spoken during the conference – from Carol Pyrah's concern's that we shall end up doing less for less, to suggestions that we are already doing more for less, to Sean's architectural observation that 'less is more' and then the confusion over past and future – is there a future for the past or does the past dictate the future. Much to ponder?

The day ended with a rousing vote of thanks to Stewart Ramsdale, as host chair of IHBC North, in recognition of his tireless efforts and the considerable time he has personally spent in making this a most successful event. This all bodes well for the North's future as host for the 2013 Summer School when delegates will be able to see much more of the 'rough, grim and wild' northern counties so well illustrated by John Grundy earlier in the day.

Richard Majewicz is a Chartered Architect and currently a Conservation Officer working with Carlisle City Council. He is secretary of the Cumbria Conservation Officers Group, a member of the IHBC North Branch Committee, and is in his final year of a part-time MSc course in Architectural Conservation at UCLAN.

4. Ventilation & Condensation in Historic Buildings & The Cockermouth Floods, notes from members of Cumbria Conservation Officers Society by Richard Majewicz

'VENTILATION & CONDENSATION IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS' (Dianne Hubbard):

Dianne opened the presentations with a report on her Masters Research Study, which concentrated particularly on the adequacy of ventilation levels in a small terrace of stone buildings located in the Lake District. The focus of her research was to discover whether or not the "rule of thumb" for historic buildings quoted by English Heritage and R. Oxley of "twice the normal level of ventilation" was valid for dwellings constructed from stone and rubble in the Lake District.



Although it is generally accepted that traditional buildings should be treated differently to modern ones, this view is not substantiated by a comprehensive body of research. Information on ventilation in traditional or historic dwellings is particularly poorly served. Dianne's

approach to the problem was to study a terrace of 5 late 19th Century dwellings constructed of Lake District stone slates.

Whilst the study identified that some aspects of the buildings' behavior complies with existing orthodoxy, the lack of evidence of moisture inside the buildings originating from building fabric challenged the accepted view.

The air permeability levels were found to be lower than anticipated, being comparable to the standards currently required for new dwellings. Lastly, the mixture of occupancy density and living patterns within the case study enabled the principle of a single recommended ventilation rate or *rule of thumb* to be contested.

The conclusion drawn from the case study was that the "rule of thumb" of twice the level of ventilation was not valid for these particular buildings. However, the analysis remains incomplete without the inclusion of moisture production rates. On a wider basis, the study had increased the body of knowledge on ventilation in traditional dwellings, but it was not possible to consider an encompassing response to the research question with respect to traditional dwellings as a whole.

'COPING IN A CRISIS – THE COCKERMOUTH FLOOD' (Helen Brownlie):



Helen guided us all too quickly through her trials and tribulations during the flooding of the town centre of Cockermouth. She was literally thrown in at the deep end trying to prevent builders from unnecessarily stripping out flood damaged listed buildings and to educate them into retaining the existing fabric and allowing it to dry out naturally. English Heritage's flood guidance document proved to be a valuable tool and, together with the

assistance of EH's engineer, particularly, and their other technical advisors, many properties were brought back into use much quicker than would normally have been the case.

Helen's persistence, on-site presence and the help of local professionals also helped to retain and restore many of the town's historic shopfronts, and convince others to improve on their existing shopfronts. Property owners in the Market Place area took to redecorating their properties, and Helen is now focusing on helping to advise and find funding for the decoration of properties along the Main Street.

'COPING IN A CRISIS – FLOODING & THE BRIDGES OF WEST CUMBRIA' (Jane Jackson, Capita Symonds)

With time running out, Jane managed to condense her subject without loss of impact. She illustrated the reasons for the catastrophic flooding of Cockermouth, Workington and other parts of the County, and detailed the work carried out by Capita in surveying 1500 bridges resulting in the closure of 20 roads. Costly diversions had to be put in place financially affecting businesses and schools, and even a temporary railway station was provided to help the community north of Workington. Bridging the Derwent at Workington was now a priority and designs had been produced for new road and pedestrian bridges. The construction of a temporary road bridge is now underway.



‘WALKABOUT TOUR OF COCKERMOUTH’ (Guided by Darren Ward of Cockermouth Civic Trust)



On an extremely cold but dry afternoon, Darren guided us safely around the key sites previously affected by the flood, constantly stopping to provide us with informative anecdotal images of what it was like at the time. The first, and perhaps most dramatic stop, was on the footbridge in the picture opposite, where Darren explained that anyone standing on the bridge would have seen a 30 foot high wall of flood water rushing down towards them from the Lorton Valley along the narrows of the River Cocker. That the bridge survived was a miracle, but it acted as a stop to the flood water as it became blocked with trees and other debris, with water spilling out sideways into the adjoining side streets. As we walked around, there remained plenty of evidence of damage yet to be repaired, examples of surprising survivals, many successful restoration works and the occasional good restoration marred by inappropriate windows. A very worthwhile afternoon which maybe should have ended with a nip or two of something warming!

5. Ecclesiastical Exemption

By Stewart Ramsdale

The Ecclesiastical Exemption Order 2010.

Phil Thomas Church Buildings Officer & Secretary to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches for the Diocese of York has very kindly provided this helpful advice note on recent changes to the Ecclesiastical Exemption rules for listed places of worship. The changes are relevant to all local authority planning and conservation staff and private practitioners working with places of worship.

As you are no doubt aware, the church buildings of the Church of England, and several other exempt denominations, are not subject to listed building control under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* - a situation usually referred to as 'the ecclesiastical exemption'.

However, this exemption has not in the past extended to structures within Church of England churchyards which are separately listed in their own right, for example: -
mausolea
boundary walls
gates
lych gates
table tombs
memorials
bell towers
parson's stables
former school-rooms and so on.

Relevant works of repair or alteration to these structures, affecting their special interest, consequently required both Listed Building Consent from the local authority and a faculty from the Chancellor of the diocese - the so-called 'dual control' or 'dual jurisdiction'.

In October 2010, the *Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010* came fully into force, bringing an end to this system of dual control. It revoked the need for Listed Building Consent, and indicated that:

'any object or structure within the curtilage of that building which, although not fixed to that building, forms part of the land shall be treated as part of the church building'.

In other words, separately listed structures previously subject to both forms of control are, from October 2010, subject to faculty jurisdiction only.

The 2010 Order was introduced by the Government, following public consultation, to reduce the administrative burden of caring for these ancillary structures, and to remove the possibility of applicants receiving conflicting advice from two statutory bodies.

The Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010 can be downloaded from:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1176/pdfs/ukxi_20101176_en.pdf

The Operation of the Ecclesiastical Exemption and related planning matters for places of worship in England can be downloaded from:

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/OPSEEGuidance.pdf>



Lych-gate at Church of St Michael & All Saints, Newburn Photo by Stewart Ramsdale



*Repairs to Grade 1 listed Church of St Cuthbert at Kirkleatham
Photo by Stewart Ramsdale*

6. Bats and Listed Building Consent

By Heather Grimshaw and Ian Bond

LBC & Bats

Heather Grimshaw, Conservation Officer, Darlington Borough Council and Ian Bond, Ecologist, Hartlepool Borough Council have collaborated to produce the following useful advice which also has the support of Darlington Borough Council's Legal Team.

A Local Planning Authority as the decision taker under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in carrying out a regulatory function has to have regard to the Habitats Directive, but is not empowered to impose conditions - either precedent or subsequent - on a Listed Building Consent because there is a risk or evidence of bats. The correct way to address the issue is to attach an informative to the LBC and forward a copy of this to Natural England, rather than relying on the applicant acting on the informative.

Two useful informatives have therefore been prepared as follows: -

No Evidence, but Risk of Bats:

Bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb bats or to recklessly damage or destroy their breeding sites or resting places. The applicant should remind the building contractors to be vigilant for bats during the building work. If at any time bats are found or suspected then, as a legal requirement, work must cease in that area and further advice must be sought from Natural England.

Evidence of Bats:

Bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb bats or to recklessly damage or destroy their breeding sites or resting places. As evidence of bats has been found on the site the applicant is reminded that, as a legal requirement, work must not start in that area until further advice is sought from Natural England.

References:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 [in place of 'the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)']
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Sources:

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7. New Members and Movers

Good Luck to: Richard Majewicz and Peter Messenger who will soon be taking voluntary redundancy from Carlisle City.

Welcome to all new members.

8. Caption Corner

Have a go at thinking up suggestions for this recent photo taken during a visit to the City of Arts and Science in Valencia. (“A truly mind-blowing confection of some of Europe’s most awesome architecture”)

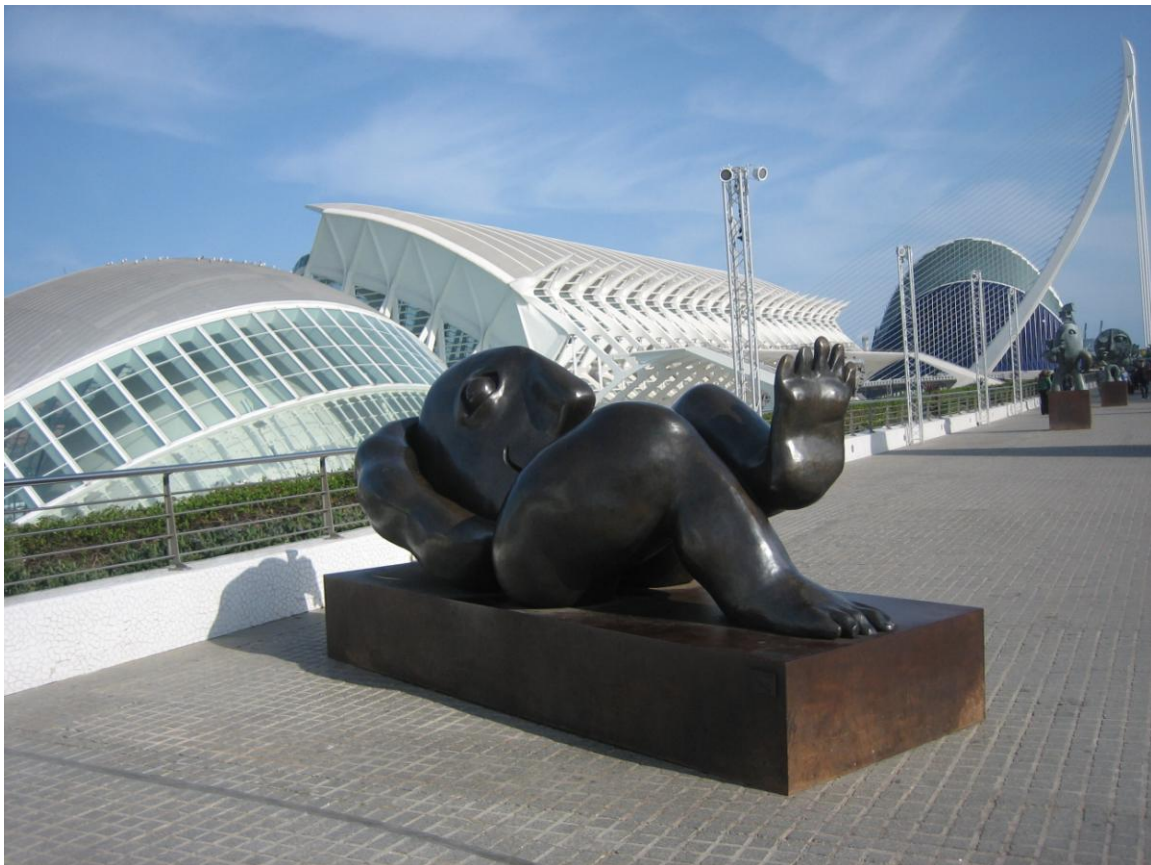


Photo by Ken Hutchinson

e.g. “After designing these buildings I need a rest”

or “I’m not sure what style the architecture is but it is certainly laid-back!”

9. Contact Details

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