

IHBC South West Region covering: Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Scilly Isles, Somerset & Wiltshire

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Swindon's Heritage Diversifies

Swindon is rightly famous for its railway heritage, car manufacturing, financial services and pharmaceutical industries, not to mention an intriguing road network featuring 'magic roundabouts' amongst other things! The town's heritage has recently expanded to include two iconic examples of 20th century architecture, including the former Renault warehouse and showroom designed by Sir Norman Foster in the early-1980s (Grade II*) and the 1935 concrete Art Deco style diving platform at Coate Water.



Now Grade II listed, the diving platform at Coate Water is one of only four such structures known to survive in England from the inter-war period

Also listed Grade II is Thomas Ball Silcock's Flemish-Baroque style technical school of 1895 on the Victoria Road; a well-accomplished design in red brick with stone dressings.

Liz Smith-Gibbons

IHBC SW Bulletin: 15 years old!

Bulletin marks its 15th anniversary this month and we are keen to hear from any members with contributions (as always) relating to buildings and/ or events which span the Millennium period. Please send material or suggestions to the editor to be included in Bulletin 28 due out end-October 2014. You could win a £10 book or wine voucher for your efforts!

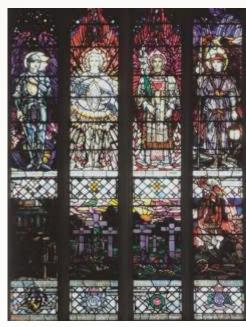
World War I - Remembering the Fallen

History feels very close this month as we commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of World War I on 4 August 1914. Supposedly the 'Great War to end all wars', the four year conflict claimed the lives of over 16 million people with a further 20 million wounded. The names of the fallen who sacrificed their lives in the name of King and Country are recorded on war memorials in the UK, Europe and throughout the Commonwealth countries. Built largely thanks to public subscription and private donations from 1919 onwards, there are an estimated 100,000 war memorials in the UK alone. Most are well-cared for and maintained by their local communities but sadly there are many which have decayed through the effects of weathering, damage or vandalism.

The past few years leading up to the Centenary have witnessed serious efforts to conserve war memorials and afford statutory protection to those many previously unlisted examples. Much of the credit for this work must go to local communities, guided by English Heritage and the War Memorials Trust which administers grant aid for a range of conservation and repair works. Also, to the generous funding provided by The Wolfson Foundation and the Imperial War Museum's War Memorials Archive (formerly the UK National Inventory of War Memorials), who since 1989 have been compiling a detailed record of every war memorial in the UK.



Recently listed Grade II, the war memorial clock tower at Shaldon, Devon was erected in 1921 to commemorate the 26 local men who lost their lives during the Great War; its modest brick form contrasts with more traditional cross memorials



The Wilson family memorial window in St Andrew's, Chippenham by Christopher Whall (1919) serves as a poignant reminder of the tragedy of war; all three brothers were killed in the Great War (© Cathedral Communications)

IHBC Annual School 2014, Edinburgh - The Art of Conservation

'The Art of Conservation': this was the challenging and thought-provoking title for the convention which took place at a time when the impacts of the devastating fire at Glasgow School of Art were still sinking in. Overall it was a well-attended and successful event, with the usual opportunity to pack a lot of CPD into a short space of time.

Day 1 consisted of a bewildering choice of study tours, all reached within striking distance of the city. Delegates fortunate enough to climb The Forth Bridge seemed stunned by the grace and engineering excellence of this 125 year old structure. An evening Civic Reception took place at the City Chambers in the Royal Mile.

It was down to hard work on Friday at the day school, which took place at the University Conference Centre on the edge of Holyrood Park. The opening speech was provided by Prof. Jukka Jokilehto who is a special adviser to ICCROM. In his talk on Art in Conservation and Practice, he threw out a challenge to the English Heritage view that conservation is 'the careful management of change'. Rather, he thought the emphasis must be on 'management of continuity'.



Delegate accommodation at the Edinburgh University Conference Centre with Arthur's Seat in the background

A full summary of the many entertaining discussions on this theme will be provided within a future edition of Context. IHBC has recently commenced development of additional Research Notes, with subjects currently under development including VAT, Listed Building Enforcement Notices and CPD. Further information can be found on the website:

http://ihbc.org.uk/resources/researchnotes/researchnotes.html

Delegate's spirits were lifted by something of a *Cri d'Coeur* from Angus Farquar; looking forward however to a more humble world that relied upon genuine sustainability and creative re-use in a post-capitalist era. Health and well-being will be the most important aims. In the meantime, conservationists need to be intellectually more brave, shout louder, and fight harder for the cause!

Perhaps some political support for this approach could be detected in a key note speech provided by Fiona Hyslop MSP, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Culture. She supported the development of Building Health Checks, and long-term planned maintenance over crisis management.

The recent experience of the Glasgow School of Art demonstrated the fragility of a treasured historic environment and she called for there to be enough specialists to be available if our built heritage is to be handed down to future generations. I would also commend reading, when available, the summary of Andy Miller's paper on *Creative Financing*. He showed what can be achieved to unlock problems by determination and a helpful planning policy context.

The Annual Dinner was held in a former Dissection Room. It was great fun although, it has to be said, the caterers seemed as under-resourced as most local planning authorities!



Delegates enjoying the Annual Dinner 2014

A further six trip options were available on Day 3. I can only speak of my own walking tour of the *Old Burgh of Canongate*. It was interesting to hear the semi-independent opinion of the various recent planning and conservation battles. The understanding by delegates of this enduring urban landscape was greatly enhanced in the

short time available. Towards the end of the tour the answer to the big question gradually emerged!

The jettied 15th century building - that projects in front of the building line that was being established in High Street during the 19th century - was scheduled for demolition. However, it survives today thanks to the quick witted early conservationists who started to describe it as "John Knox's House". There is no evidence that the great Protestant Reformer was anything more than vaguely aware of the building's existence but the mere historical association of his name was enough to ensure its preservation. So now we know, successful conservation is clearly the art of winning hearts and minds!



An interesting architectural intervention in Old Canongate



An early house by architect Robert Adam

The 2015 School will be held a little closer to home, at Norwich.

Ian Lund

Planning Appeals: Mill House, Cerney Wick, Cirencester, Glos. (APP/F1610/F/13/2196690, APP/F1610/A/13/2190411 & APP/F1610/E/13/2190410)

The owners of an early 18th century Grade II listed mill and adjoining dwelling sought planning and listed building consents for a range of works to bring them back into beneficial use and provide domestic ancillary accommodation. Cotswold District Council refused the (retrospective) applications in December 2012 on the grounds that the proposed development (albeit part-implemented at that time) would result in substantial alterations to the building's historic layout and corresponding loss of historic fabric.



Cerney Wick Mill and The Mill House (foreground) seen from the east in 2005 ©Stanley Dicker/ courtesy of English Heritage

Three appeals were subsequently lodged against the local authority's decisions and the listed building enforcement notice issued in April 2013. Visiting the site in February 2014, the inspector observed that the unauthorised works carried out to the listed building were 'extensive' and have resulted in the removal of many features of special architectural and historic interest. The loss of 'copious amounts of original fabric, and the introduction of much, incongruous, modern construction' was specifically highlighted.

In dismissing the appeals, the inspector weighed the desirable public benefits of bringing the buildings back into use against the harm incurred to the designated heritage asset. The decision stated that re-use could have been facilitated through a much less intrusive approach and therefore minimal loss of historic fabric.

Malcolm James

Planning Appeal: Chalhanger Farm, Buckland Filleigh, Devon (APP/W1145/A/13/2203107)

The appeal was made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against Torridge District Council's refusal to grant planning permission for a solar farm with associated electrical and security equipment. Lightsource Renewable Energy Ltd. sought to install capacity for 6 MW of electricity generation using solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on a remote site in an unspoilt area of the Devon countryside.

The inspector identified the key issue of the proposed development as the likely effect of the solar panels on the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape. Location of the rigid structure of the solar panels on the upper slopes of the site would have made them conspicuous from a considerable distance. In addition, their reflective nature would make them stand out from their landscape setting, thus changing the character of the landscape; from both within the site and in the wider context.

In dismissing the appeal, the inspector was mindful of the public benefits to be gained from 6 MW of renewable energy generation per annum over a substantial timeframe (i.e. 25-30 years projected lifecycle) but concluded that the damage to the quality of the landscape was too great a consequence.

Maureen Pearce

Planning Appeal: Dunwell Farm, Ugborough, Ivybridge, Devon (APP/K1128/A/13/2199641)

The appeal was made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against South Hams' District Council's refusal to grant planning permission for a single wind turbine with associated electrical plant and access improvements.

The inspector noted that whilst the proposed wind turbine would not change the overall character of the surrounding land it would have a considerable effect on its appearance. The site's proximity to the village of Ugborough with its Grade I listed church of St Peter (1.4 km distant) and the nearby buildings of Grade II listed Shilston Barton (575 metres away) were

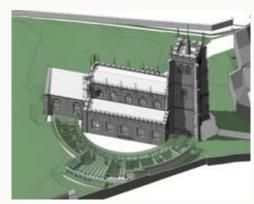
adjudged to be detrimental to the setting of both heritage assets. Viewed from the Dartmoor National Park, the wind turbine would appear as a very prominent structure emerging from the top of a rounded hill (itself identified as an important landscape feature).

In dismissing the appeal, the inspector ruled that the benefits of the wind turbine did not outweigh the considerable harm posed to the landscape and to the setting of designated heritage assets. Ecological factors relating to a protected species (i.e. Hedgerow dormice) were also cited.

Maureen Pearce

Planning Appeal: Church of St Mary the Virgin, Devizes, Wiltshire (APP/Y3940/A/14/2217381)

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St John's and St Mary's sought planning and listed building consents to add a 'new cloister and ancillary accommodation' to the Grade I listed church in New Park Street. The proposed development was argued on the grounds of providing new community uses for the church and an income to support its annual maintenance.



St Mary the Virgin, Devizes showing proposed single-storey extension comprising office, toilets, kitchen, store rooms and meeting rooms ©Batterham-Matthews Design Ltd.

In dismissing the appeal, the inspector cited the loss of important historic fabric to the west tower and erosion of the churchyard/ green space resulting in a 'cramped' context. Accepting that the proposed development would 'fill a gap in the provision of local facilities' and allow the church to continue as a place of worship, the substantial harm posed to the significance of the Grade I listed building was ultimately the overriding factor.

Malcolm James

Local politicians welcomed the proposed electrification of the London to Bristol and South Wales railway several years ago but only recently have Network Rail stated the physical alterations necessary to implement the projected £1.5 bn scheme.

Network Rail has now published their Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) relating to that section of the former Great Western Railway which falls within the Bath and North East Somerset area. It is likely that the majority of line side works will not require planning permission as Network rail's permitted development rights (19XX) apply. However, where works are proposed to designated heritage assets, listed building consent (LBC) will be required.

Published by Atkins Ltd. and with historic environment assessments from Alan Baxter Associates, the EIA is a large multivolume document with several appendices, available on-line at:

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-advice-and-guidance/great-western-railway

EIA Volume 2 (Appendix C2) summarises the visual impacts of the Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) masts and gantries on the Bath World Heritage Site (WHS). Statement 11 (Volume 1B) claims that they will be largely minor or negligible, as the railway is not prominent in many of the important views within the WHS. Impacts on heritage assets in sensitive locations such as Sydney Gardens and around Bath Spa station are deemed only 'moderate adverse' after mitigation.



Sydney Gardens to the east of the city centre is a 'subscription garden' dating from 1795 and listed Grade II* on the English Heritage Historic Parks and Gardens Register; I K Brunel built cuttings with ornate over-bridges and masonry retaining walls as an appropriate 'theatrical setting' for the railway's entrance into Bath



Sydney Gardens looking south from Brunel's c.1840 footbridge to the Sydney Road (A36) overbridge (red box area on map); note the cast-iron open balustrade detail and how the Grade II* structures harmonise with the landscape

Regarding detailed works to the historic railway structures in Sydney Gardens, Network Rail's proposals include:

- A bespoke OLE system where cantilevered supports for the 25 kV overhead wires are attached to the Grade II* listed stone retaining walls.
- Two listed Grade II* footbridges will have their parapets raised for safety reasons. New oval ironwork and infill panels are to be attached to the existing structure in the case of Brunel's footbridge (see above).
- In cases where listed stone bridge parapets are required to be raised, the original copings are to be replaced with anti-climbing copings.
- 4. Modifications to the Sydney Gardens Low Balustrade Retaining Wall (visible at left above). Network Rail deem that this Grade II* listed structure does not prevent unauthorised access to the track and so the ground level in front of the wall will be lowered, with new anti-climb stone copings added.

The EIA states that a number of measures have been taken to minimise the environmental impact of the works. Chiefly, the masts for the overhead lines will be designed to minimise impact, historic fabric will be retained where possible, appropriate detail will be chosen for new work and consideration will be given to the interpretation of historic structures on the line.

English Heritage has said that, "The Great Western Railway through the city of Bath is one of the most impressive and varied sections of urban railway landscape in the world...". Alan Baxter Associates reflect

this view in their Structures Gazetteer for Network Rail, adding that, "Because of the date the main line was constructed its historic value makes it highly significant, not just for Britain but internationally".

When Network Rail submit their LBC applications, the local authority will need not only to consider the levels of harm to the WHS but also to the historic Victorian railway in its own right, because of its acknowledged national and international importance/ interest.

Network Rail will no doubt refer to the EIA in support of their proposals and their assessment on the levels of harm caused to heritage assets. It will be interesting to see if the local authority, English Heritage and other stakeholder groups agree with the proposed works to the identified heritage assets and Network Rail's assessment of the likely visual impacts?

It is of course open to the local authority, and those consulted on the proposals to conclude (whilst bearing in mind the sustainability benefits of electrification as claimed by Network Rail) that additional conservation mitigation measures are still required to offset the levels of harm caused, if consent is to be granted. Such additional conservation mitigation could include, for example, repair enhancement works to historic 'at risk' railway structures. Examples include the Grade II listed Twerton Viaduct and former station building, a unique composite stone structure by Brunel which incorporates workers dwellings.



Twerton Viaduct and access to worker's dwellings; probably the only recorded example of residential accommodation by Brunel ©Bath Heritage Watchdog 2006-11

A contribution by Network Rail towards restoration of other railway structures and wider enhancement proposals for Sydney Gardens may also be warranted.

© Varian Tye 2014 (map ©Bath & North East Somerset/ Atkins Ltd.) Over the past two years, the War Memorials Trust have provided grant aid assistance to several local communities across the south west region in caring for their war memorials. Examples include survey work for the freestanding Celtic cross memorial in Willow churchyard, Lanteglos by Fowey (Cornwall) and structural repairs to the Latin cross memorial at Whiteshill, Stroud (Glos.).

Cleaning and re-pointing works were undertaken to the freestanding cross memorials at Shaftesbury (Dorset) and St Mary the Virgin, Fairford (Glos.). The Trust assisted with the relocation of the Penshill memorial in Swindon to St Peter's church as its original relocation at the local Royal British Legion building was scheduled for demolition/redevelopment.



Designed by local architect Ernest Gimson and constructed by Messrs. Farmer Brothers under the supervision of Norman Jewson, the limestone war memorial at St Mary the Virgin, Fairford was paid for by public subscription and dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Gloucester in 1920

For further information about the grant schemes administered by the War Memorials Trust and England's war memorials in general, please refer to:

http://www.warmemorials.org/grants forwarmemorials/

http://www.ukniwm.org.uk/

The war memorials of Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire have a dedicated website:

http://www.warmemorialsww1.co.uk/

Northernhay Gardens, Exeter

Recently designated for listing by English Heritage (June 2014), the Exeter war memorial is centrally located within a registered Grade II public park. It comprises a cross-shaped plinth and octagonal column of Devon granite with five impressive bronze figures.



Commissioned in 1919 and designed by local artist John Angel FRBS, the war memorial cost £6,000 to build and was dedicated in 1923

The four points of the 6.1 metre height plinth support a soldier at rest, a sailor astride a ship's hull (the figurehead in the form of the city's coat of arms), a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse and a prisoner of war. A statue of Nike, the Greek goddess of victory standing over a dragon (i.e. representing the Demon of Tyranny and Wrong) surmounts the column and gives the memorial an imposing overall height of 9.4 metres.



Plinth detail highlighting the three impressive bronze figures cast by the London-based Morris Art Bronze Foundry (now Morris Singer Co.); the figures of Nike and the prisoner of war were cast by A B Burton's Thames Ditton Foundry

The inscription around the top of the plinth reads 'IN PROUD AND GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF EXETER AND DEVON WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE GREAT WAR 1914 - 1919 THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE'.

The Right Honourable Admiral David Beatty (second-in-command at the Battle of Jutland in 1916) presided at the unveiling ceremony. A bronze tablet in memory of those service personnel who lost their lives in World War II was added to the memorial in 1946: 'THIS TABLET IS DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO FELL IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939 - 1945.'

Thankful Villages

Writer Arthur Mee coined the term 'Thankful Village' in his King's England series of county books first published in the 1930s. It defines a village where all of the men who left to fight in the Great War came home again; sadly, many bearing the physical and mental scars of the conflict. There are a total of 53 such villages recorded in England and Wales, with 14 located in the south-west region and Somerset having the highest number in the whole country (9). Although the villages do not have a war memorial as such, the names of those who served and returned are recorded on plaques.



The limestone tablet inside the south porch at St Andrew, Coln Rogers, Gloucestershire was intended for the north nave but the Diocesan Faculty application in 1920 was rejected on the grounds of it 'commemorating the living' (note slate plaque added to mark centenary in 2014)

Fourteen villages are 'Double Thankful' because all those who fought in the Second World War also returned home safely.

 $\frac{\text{http://www.hellfirecorner.co.uk/thankful}}{\text{.htm}}$

Malcolm James

Training Update

Delegates attending the 2014 AGM at St Stephen's church in Exeter on 18 July were rewarded with an interesting Grade II* listed building to study, as well as two informative speaker presentations.

John Preston's update on energy conservation and The Green Deal highlighted several 'unintended consequences' of applying modern construction 'solutions' to traditional buildings. It also flagged important issues around the Government's (unrealistic) implementation timescales and the limited skills/ capacity available for the programme (Editor's note: The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) closed The Green Deal Home Improvement Fund on 24 July 2014 as the budget limit had been reached).

Phillipa Davies from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in Exeter provided an overview of the grants scheme operating in the south-west region, with several interesting case studies. These included the youth project at All Saint's church in Langport, Somerset and the restoration of St Hilary Old School, Cornwall. St Stephen's church, Exeter was also covered, as the HLF provided funding for the chancel arch repairs and interpretation panels.

Both presentations are available for download from the IHBC website:

http://www.ihbc.org.uk/about/branches/south west/south west.html

Greg Venn has organised an afternoon visit to Montacute House in Somerset on 21 October 2014. The visit will include talks by structural engineer Patrick Stow and landscape architect Will Cookson about their ongoing works at this masterpiece of Elizabethan Renaissance architecture. Places are limited to 20 so please book early through the above IHBC web link.

The National Heritage Ironwork Group (NHIG) has been granted charitable status by the Charity Commission. NHIG's objective is to advance public awareness and knowledge of heritage ironwork and its recently issued 'Conservation Principles' for heritage forged and cast Ironwork:

http://nhig.org.uk/standards/conservation-principles/

The NHIG website also includes links to local blacksmiths offering hands-on experience and training days in metalworking crafts. These include Ironart of Bath who have a programme of one-day 'introductory' events through until February 2015: http://ironart.co.uk/

Committee Changes

Val Harrison (Training & Events) and Kingsley Fulbrook ('Cuba' branch representative) have retired from the committee following many years of service. We would like to record our thanks for their valued contributions over the years. Greg Venn (Somerset branch representative) will take on the role of Training & Events organiser and his first venture will be an afternoon visit to Montacute House (right) in October (see opposite for details). We welcome Guy Bentham-Hill into the 'Cuba' role although its geographic coverage



is still to be agreed with the neighbouring Wiltshire and Somerset branch representatives.

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