



## **IHBC SOUTHWEST BULLETIN AUTUMN 2020**

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**Alex Marsh**  
**Editor**

# **1. Heritage News**

## **Local List**

In October 2019, the government announced the local heritage campaign. The campaign will encourage communities to nominate historic buildings and other heritage assets which they value most for inclusion in their council's local list, helping to protect them through the planning system.

To support the campaign, the government is providing £700,000 of funding to councils in 10 English county areas to develop new or updated local lists.

The government is inviting expressions of interest from local authorities keen to take part in the campaign and work up projects.

Charles O'Brien, a leading architectural historian, commissioner at Historic England and editor of the Pevsner Architectural Guides, working closely with Historic England, will make recommendations to the government on the areas to receive a share of the funding and work with those selected to support the creation of new and updated local lists.

The funding is intended to support projects, which involve a county-wide approach to developing local lists. We will, however, consider other proposals, for example, from civic/heritage groups and local historic building societies, provided there is a lead authority working in partnership with other groups.

Authorities should submit their expression of interest to [localheritage@communities.gov.uk](mailto:localheritage@communities.gov.uk) by Friday 13 November 2020.

Expressions of interest will be considered by the independent adviser alongside advice from Historic England on areas of particular need. An announcement on the successful schemes is expected later in November

The Scope and election Process information is available at the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website.

## Permitted development homes to meet space standards

For anyone who has had to deal with the Government's various Planning Permitted Development Regulations, changes to enable change of use of a variety of buildings to dwellings under Permitted Development will find some light relief that at least a small element of common sense has found its way to those that make decision on these things. Lets hope its not too long until they remove these sloppy regulations that have resulted in producing modern slums from offices and large numbers of inappropriately and unsustainably located new buildings in the countryside.

September 2020: Government press release -*"Permitted development" homes to meet space standards*

### **The government states its intention that new homes delivered via PD rights will need to meet the nationally described space standard:**

The government has issued a **press release**, which states its intention that **new homes delivered via permitted development rights** will need to meet the **nationally described space standard**

*"The measures announced today will mean that **all new homes in England delivered through [PD] rights will in the future have to meet the Nationally Described Space Standar***

*- "The space standard begins at 37m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for a new one bed flat with a shower room (39m<sup>2</sup> with a bathroom), ensuring proper living space for a single occupier."*

*- "This change builds on reforms introduced by the government last summer to ensure that all new homes delivered through permitted development provide adequate natural light."*

## 2. Buildings and Culture

### Retrofitting Traditional Buildings

The Briefing page of the most recent edition of Context No.165 August 2020 gave a Climate Change update from John Preston Heritage Chair of STBA that stood out as significant concern to all in the Heritage Building Sector.

It highlighted a worrying 2017 report by the Spatial Economic Research Centre on 'Energy costs of Historic Preservation' that it advised had been shaken off and had the potential to be widely adopted and that this 'presented a serious obstacle to carbon reduction.'

The Introduction to this report comments: *'In the absence of preservation Policies, households can be expected to invest in energy efficiency improvements as long as the expected private benefits from potential energy savings exceed the additional upfront investment costs. Preservation policies drive a wedge into this decision process because they often mandate restrictions on the type and extent of changes—both internally and externally—that can be made to properties in designated areas. Restrictions on say the types of windows that can be installed may increase the cost of adopting energy efficiency technologies or, in fact, may legally prevent such installations altogether. Preservation policies may thus directly affect the energy efficiency of affected dwellings.'*

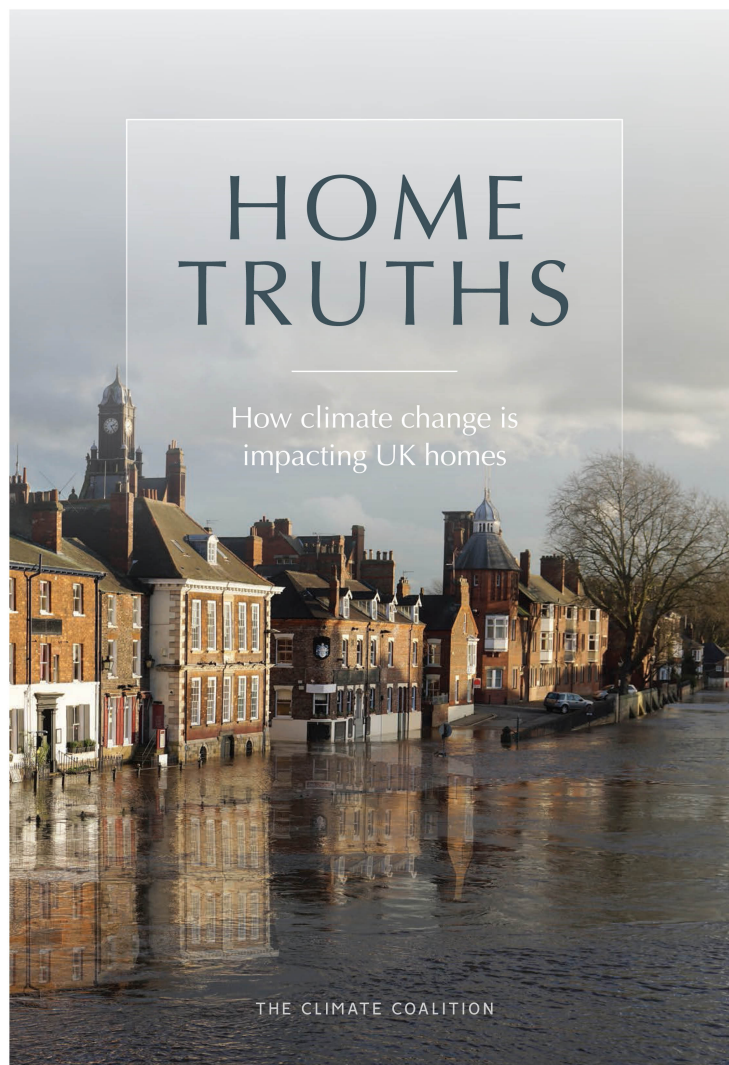
The Conclusion to the Report states *'in this paper we uncover a trade-off between improvements in energy efficiency and preserving built heritage. We present evidence that restrictions on alterations to dwellings that are either lying in Conservation Areas or are designated as Listed Buildings substantially increased domestic energy consumption in England between 2006 and 2013. We find that rising energy prices induce an increase in home energy efficiency installations and a corresponding decrease in energy consumption.'*

*However such energy savings are significantly less pronounced in Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. Our findings imply that policies that aim to induce energy savings and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the*

*UK's housing stock ought to account for the unintended consequences of regulations induced by preservation policies.'*

It was viewed that the UK Historic Environment rather than being at the forefront of the Green Recovery from the Covid 19 Economic downturn may instead be severely damaged in the efforts to achieve this policy.

The Briefing urged readers to read the Climate Coalition 'Home Truths ' Report.



This informs a plan for making all homes energy efficient by 2030 'no qualifications or exceptions.'

The report at page 41 includes the following quote from Dr Kate Simpson from the Dyson School of Design Engineering at Imperial College London.

*"The fact that they're old is not necessarily a problem. Energy performance is important but we should also consider the embedded carbon and social value of old buildings to avoid unnecessary demolition. We need to improve decision-making for each property, considering retrofit options through more rigorous data driven tools, which go beyond operational energy use And consider factors such as embodied carbon, indoors environment and potential risks including moisture and structure impacts, considered in parallel with local area priorities and householder perspectives.*

*Monitoring the impact of measures following retrofit can evaluate the measured success and householder satisfaction levels from retrofit. This could feed into future decision-making. To deliver, we need urgent up skilling of the Construction industry, relevant to local housing stocks and demographics, linked to upcoming opportunities for building professionals. It is a big challenge, but we need to do it and we need investment now.*

The Report however suggests that our current building regulations are out of kilter with achieving that goal.

The current Building Regulations Part L B 2010 Conservation of Fuel and Power in existing buildings Approved Document. - Last updated 2018 are from a Conservation Practitioners viewpoint invaluable in securing the balance between Conservation and historic fabric and maintaining traditional buildings so that they can function as they were designed too. The issue is as identified in the report that there is a need for urgent up skilling in the area of retrofitting in the Conservation and Construction industry.

The current Building Regulations at paragraph 3.6 to 3.10 provide the background on applicable dwellings exempt from the energy efficiency requirements where compliance would unacceptably alter the character of the buildings including listed buildings, building in conservation areas

scheduled monuments and historic and traditional buildings where special considerations may apply.

When undertaking work on or in connection with a building that falls within one of the classes listed above, the aim should be to improve energy efficiency as far as reasonably practicable. The work should not prejudice the character of the host building or increase the risk of long term deterioration of the building fabric or fittings.

3.10 The guidance given by English Heritage should be taken into account in determining appropriate energy performance standards for building work in historic buildings.

*In addition English Heritage has produced detailed technical guidance on how to implement specific energy efficiency measures.*

The Consultation for review of the Building Regulation's is expected. As such as a corner stone of the Conservation of traditional buildings the exemption is essential to provide that space in which to discuss and negotiate retrofitting measures that improve the performance of traditional buildings but not at the expense of their character. The need is to recognize the benefit in the current Building Regulations that acknowledge that buildings of traditional construction have permeable fabric that both absorbs and readily allows the evaporation of moisture.

It is important at this time to remind ourselves of the background literature and case studies such as pioneering guidance 'A Bristolian's Guide to solid wall insulation' 2015 and as a sector to assess and champion the good work of groups like the Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance and research by Historic England and SPAB that support the need to retain and enhance the valuable Building Regulation Exemption.

The Sector must be ready and able to stand up with evidence and case studies that show how well traditional solid wall construction performs, and that there is a need to provide evidence that current estimates of U value calculations underestimate the actual performance of traditional solid walls.

The current Building Regulations elemental U value of 0.3 as a requirement for upgrading traditional buildings appears unrealistic, and a more workable U value should be found.

The potential otherwise is that inappropriate retrofit insulation programs will be increased backed by Green Financial Lobby that does not fully understand or consider the potential that large scale inappropriate retrofitting will have detrimental consequences both in loss of character but also heighten risk to fabric ability to allow the movement of moisture in and out of the fabric.



### 3. IHBC Training

#### **Historic England /IHBC SW VIRTUAL CONFERENCE: Damp, masonry decay & sustainability**

The *Damp, Masonry Decay & Sustainability Conference*, jointly organised by IHBC SW Branch with Historic England, is being held online on three consecutive Thursdays, commencing 19 November. The event is free to attend for IHBC members and other conservation professionals, and bookings are now open.

We will be using the platform developed by Historic England for their excellent Technical Tuesdays webinars, and we have a glittering cast of speakers covering the very latest developments in this field.

Book through the PDF sent to all members from the IHBC SW and use the links on the PDF to book your place.

2.00-3.45pm online on three consecutive Thursdays: 19 & 26 November & 3 December 2020 Free to attend for IHBC members and other conservation professionals

Moisture is a key factor in almost all forms of decay, and damp fabric increases heat loss. However, identifying its source can be complicated as moisture is so mobile. It can condense from humid air onto cold surfaces and it can spread through a structure by capillary action and gravity.

Understanding these mechanisms and their consequences is vital, particularly now that we are increasing insulation levels in historic buildings and restricting ventilation.

Getting it wrong can be disastrous.

Speakers include leading conservation specialists Marianne Suhr and Tim Floyd; Robyn Pender, Alison Henry and others from Historic England; Roger Curtis from Historic Environment Scotland and Bath Abbey project architect Alex Morris.

Papers will include:

- Latest research from Historic England
- Planning for climate change and the need for increased resilience
- The science of moisture movement and the misdiagnosis of damp
- Best practice for damp survey and investigation.
- Role of lime mortars in keeping building fabric dry
- Risk of moisture accumulation owing to insulation and solid floors

This is the first of two events organised by the IHBC South West branch and Historic England. The second, to be held in March 2021, will focus on timber structures.

### **DAY 1, 19 November**

**2.00 pm Welcome by the afternoon's chair - Alison Henry, Head of Building Conservation & Geospatial Survey, Historic England**

**2.05 pm Reflections on damp: An overview of decay mechanisms, health/comfort issues, heat loss and sustainability - Marianne Suhr, Old House Consultancy**

**2.30 pm Rising damp? The science of how moisture moves through a building and its fabric, and why misdiagnosis is rife - Robyn Pender, Historic England**

**2.55 pm Climate change adaptation: Traditional details for shedding rainwater and the role of historic renders and finishes - Roger Curtis, Historic Environment Scotland**

**3.20 pm Questions for the panel**

**3.45 pm Close**

## **DAY 2, 26 November**

**2.00 pm Welcome by the afternoon's chair - Jonathan Taylor, IHBC South West Branch**

**2.05 pm Damp measurement and monitoring: the non-destructive investigation and modelling of moisture in masonry walls - Tim Floyd, Floyd Consultant**

**2.30 pm The need for old buildings to sweat: the role of lime mortars and coatings in dissipating moisture - Alison Henry, Historic England**

**2.55 pm Damp Towers Project update: Options for reducing damp penetration in solid masonry walls in exposed locations - Nicki Lauder, Historic England**

**3.20 pm Questions for the panel**

**3.45 pm Close**

## **DAY 3, 3 December**

**2.00 pm Welcome by the afternoon's chair – Maureen Pearce, IHBC South West Branch**

**2.05 pm Solid wall insulation: Assessing and mitigating the risk of moisture accumulation from retrofit - Soki Rhee-Duverne Historic England**

**2.30 pm Moisture movement beneath solid floors: research into the effect of floor slab material on soil moisture and damp in walls - Kevin Briggs, University of Bath**

**2.55 pm The Bath Abbey project: an overview of the scheme, its heat source, and the practicalities of adapting a Grade I listed abbey - Alex Morris,**

**Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios 3.20 pm Questions for the panel**

**3.45 pm Close**

## 4. Books and Exhibitions

### Alternative Histories

I recently came across this Exhibition which at the time passed me by but I was taken by the idea and thought it worth putting it out there as the Exhibition is moving to Dublin this month to the Irish Architectural Archive at the end of the project.

Acknowledging that architecture is a corpus of inherited ideas, Alternative Histories invited more than 80 contemporary practices in the UK and Europe to imagine an exchange with architects from the past. Each office was assigned a different drawing from the collection of Drawing Matter – from the frontispiece of the abbé Laugier's 1753 *Essai sur l'architecture*, a plan of the Villa Snellman, to studies for a theatre by Carlo Scarpa.

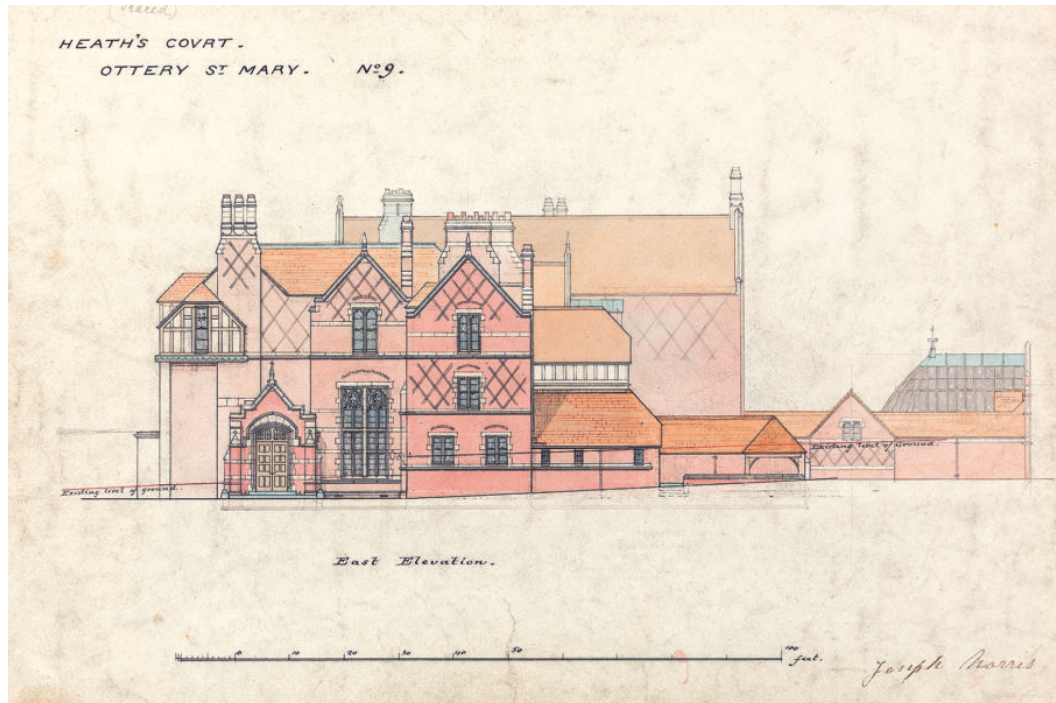
The architects were then tasked with making a model that not only responded to what they saw, but envisioned an alternative future for the original drawing while adhering to the constraints of the project: although comprising different materials and scales, the models had to be transportable, and their footprints had to fit within the surface area of the historic drawings.

Taken as a whole, the responses challenge the facile understanding of concepts of reference, history or influence as drivers of contemporary architectural thinking. From methods to materials, the project opens up not only new ways of looking at the past, but also a series of conversations about how architects today shape their present.

The project was co-curated by Jantje Engels and Marius Grootveld in collaboration with Drawing Matter and the Architecture Foundation, London. It was first presented at Cork Street, London and then CIVA, Brussels. In October 2020, the models will make their way to the Irish Architectural Archive, Dublin, for their final exhibition.

Some of the Architects examples below:

31/44 Architects Proposals for Alterations to William Butterfield, Heath's Court, Ottery St Mary, Devon

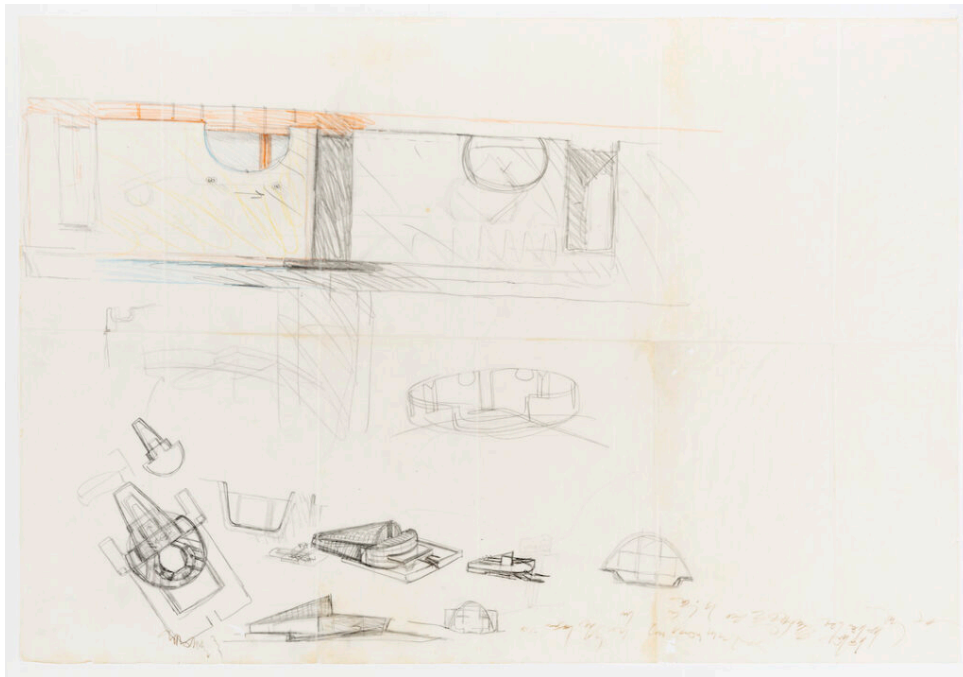


William Butterfield (1814–1900), east elevation (sheet no. 9), Heath's Court, Ottery St Mary's, Devon, 1880–1883. Pen, ink and watercolour on wove paper, 384 × 557 mm. DMC 1111.9.



31/44 Architects, William Butterfield's east elevation of No 9 Heath's Court, 2018. Medium-density fibreboard, valchromat, acrylic, aluminium mesh, 460 × 360 × 160 mm.

## Hugh Strange Architects, Carlo Scarpa's studies for a theatre



Carlo Scarpa (1906–1978), studies for a theatre, 1970. Graphite and coloured pencils on trace, 595 × 870 mm. DMC 2476.



Hugh Strange Architects, Carlo Scarpa's studies for a theatre, 2018. Ash timber, micro-ply, 180 × 180 × 130 mm.



Hans van der Heijden Architect, Josef Hoffmann's perspective sketch of a cottage



Josef Hoffmann (1870–1956), perspective sketch, cottage, c.1900. Pencil on paper, 90 × 85 mm. DMC 2047.



Hans van der Heijden Architect, Josef Hoffmann's perspective sketch of a cottage, 2018. Medium-density fibreboard, 100 × 100 × 140 mm.

### **Bulletin Editors Comment**

This is the quarterly Bulletin for the IHBC SW Branch. It looks to highlight relevant news and best practice in the South West and things of interest from elsewhere.

I would welcome contributions from members in the South West as the best way to make this Bulletin relevant and worthwhile. I look forward to receive contributions on any topic, be it buildings, people or anything else members feel might be relevant and of interest. Please attach relevant photographs with contribution as these help make the Bulletin of visual interest and saves a lot of words!

Please note that Bulletin is made up from a variety of Contributor's and the Editor holds no responsibility for the viewpoints expressed or information provided.

