

Reflections on Netherlands Study Tour



Inspiring architecture, innovative street design and civilized urban living were just three things that impressed everyone on the EHTF Study Tour of the Netherlands. Brian Smith (EAHTR) led 19 delegates on a packed three day (4th-6th June) tour of Utrecht, Hertogenbosch, Dordrecht, Rotterdam and Delft.

Apart from the sheer pleasure of seeing the towns, the size of the conservation teams, the scope of their work and their involvement in the wider urban environment stood out. The Dutch have recognised the need for historic environment training to equip fully those in the profession and they are recruiting staff into conservation from architecture and engineering. Management of the heritage is simply given a higher profile than in the UK.

The tour demonstrated an extraordinary commitment by all governing bodies to the restoration and regeneration of their urban areas. People truly care about marrying the past, present and future, about using the DNA of places to create a good quality of life for all.

Brian Human, Vice-Chair, EHTF