

News



ENGLISH HISTORIC TOWNS FORUM
for prosperity and conservation in historic towns

OCTOBER 2004



FOCUS ON ...

MANAGING RAPID GROWTH IN HISTORIC TOWNS

ELY - 8-9 December

Many small towns may find their destinies dictated by factors beyond their control – for instance the knock-on effect of the growth of a nearby town – or in the case of ELY, the government

requirements for greater provision of housing to meet national demands, combined with all of the associated issues.

On 9 December EHTF will visit Ely to see how this small town in Cambridgeshire, in the shadow of larger towns like Cambridge, Norwich and Peterborough, is coping with the rapid growth it has recently experienced and is continuing to experience.

With one of the highest growth rates of population in the country and with all the pressures and demands that brings, East Cambridgeshire District Council (working together with the East of England Development Agency and CABE) has developed local and regional strategies. These deal with housing development and traffic congestion, whilst not losing sight of the socio-economic benefits of improvements to the public realm – through public art and the streetscape.

As usual, delegates will also be offered opportunities to see the sites which give Ely its distinctive place as a tourist destination.

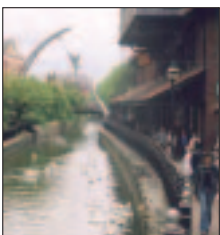
Conference details and booking forms will be available from the EHTF office and via the website: www.ehtf.org.uk/events.asp

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MODERN SPACES – HISTORIC PLACES

EHTF Annual Conference 2004
20 – 22 October 2004



The historic City of Lincoln has been the subject of significant development pressure over recent years, and whilst new public spaces have been created, the historic Public Realm is under stress.

The conference will provide an opportunity to assess the success of the partnership approach which the Local Authority has developed, bringing together the range of public sector agencies and the private sector to tackle the issues.

We will also hear an update on the Government's 'liveability' agenda from Tim Pope of the Urban Policy Unit at ODPM, the approach of CABE from the new Chief Executive, Richard Simmons and from Steve Bee of English Heritage. These national overviews will be complemented by opportunities to study the regional and local perspectives and to take part in workshops and tours of Lincoln.

Europeans meet in Norwich

EHTF was well represented at the International Symposium on 'Heritage for the future – realising the economic and social potential of a key asset' held in Norwich on 8 – 10 September. The event was organised jointly by Norwich City Council, Norwich Heritage Economic and Regeneration Trust and the European Association of Historic Towns and Regions and brought together delegates from twenty six European countries.

Sam Howes, Chair of EHTF, spoke to delegates of the benefits to everyone involved in the management of historic towns of joining together through the national and international associations. They offered the facility to exchange information and good practice and to lobby Government and other agencies for policies which supported and promoted the range of advantages to be gained through the heritage sector. The recent work carried out by EHTF, on the importance of the public realm, he said was relevant in most towns and cities, and we shared many of the same problems. By working together we might also share solutions.

I was delighted to find that EHTF was not only well known among the European towns represented, but also very well thought of and our opinions and participation widely sought. We hope to welcome back some of the delegates to take part in the study tour to be organised for members of the Slovenian Association of Historic Cities next year.

Chris Winter, EHTF



Louis Roppe, President, EAHR (Left)
and Sam Howes, EHTF Chair

Please Circulate this newsletter among your colleagues

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MEMBERS NEWS

New Members

We are delighted to have the following new members, please add their details to your Members' Directory:

GVA Grimley

10 Stratton Street
London W1J 8JR
Tel: 0207 9112750 Fax: 0207 9112560
Web: www.GVAGrimley.co.uk

After his move from Colin Buchanan & Partners we welcome the continued support of Kevin McGovern in his new role as Partner, Planning Development & Regeneration at GVA Grimley.

Maintain Our Heritage

Beechen Cliff Road
Bath BA2 4QS
(see article on opposite page)

Robin Miller

Park Lane Cottage, Park Lane,
Langport, Somerset TA10 0NF

Changes to your Directory

Colin Buchanan & Partners

Mike Wrigley, Director
Tel: 020 7643 5648
Fax: 020 7309 0906

Kennet District Council

Ted Hughes, Planning Services Manager
Tel: 01380 724911
Fax: 01380 729146

Northwest Development Agency

Heather Emery
Head of Design & Built Environment
Renaissance House, PO Box 37
Centre Park, Warrington WA1 1XB
Tel: 01925 400178
Fax: 01925 400401

PLB Consulting

Carolyn Lloyd-Brown, Director
Tel: 01653 698309
Fax: 01653 698327

City of York Council

Bill Woolley
Acting Director of Environment &
Development Services
Tel: 01904 613161
Fax: 01904 551390

Buxton Outcomes - 'Investing in heritage - financing small town regeneration'



Following the success of the conference held in Buxton in June, Ian Poole (incoming Chair of EHTF) was keen that the lessons that had been learned in the town might be shared with the wider membership.

The ambitious plans for what was described as a town in decline since the beginning of the century, took courage, leadership and confidence – as well as an element of good fortune.

Buxton demonstrates the important role of public buildings and spaces in regeneration, and the conference was part of the series to progress EHTF's 'Focus on the Public Realm' agenda launched at last year's annual conference.

Together, the major projects undertaken in Buxton will transform the town's fortunes and make it a University town, an important tourist destination and, once again, a cultural centre of note.

Details of the processes through which the projects were realised, together with funding sources, and the pitfalls and successes, are being brought together in a concise publication which is planned to be launched at the Annual Conference in Lincoln in October.

Regeneration through heritage has now achieved national recognition but that does not make it easy to achieve. In Buxton it has taken enormous, prolonged effort by a team of dedicated people who have the vision and determination to change the fortunes of a small town in the Peak District.

Through the conference and this document, Richard Tuffrey (a member of the EHTF Executive for many years) and the team at High Peak have offered to share their experiences and to give encouragement to small towns' and cities fading fortunes. Copies will be available from the EHTF office and via the website.

Return visit to be arranged for Slovenians

Fifteen representatives from EHTF enjoyed very generous hospitality in Slovenia in July this year and learned a great deal, as well as being able to offer some advice on the development of the growing tourism industry there.

They also expressed a wish to return the generosity and to continue the information exchange with one of the European Union's newest members.

Initial enquiries are being made about organising a return visit next summer, which might also include invitations to partners in other eastern European countries with whom EHTF has links.

Details of the proposal will be posted on the website and in future editions of 'NEWS' as they become available.

'Building Confidence in High Quality Design' CD-ROM issued

The cd-rom which followed on from the very successful series of seminars held in the north west in partnership with CABE and NWDA in



the spring is now available. Sponsored by the North West Development Agency and produced for EHTF by RPS Planning, Transport & Environment, this comprehensive

collection of the case studies and workshop outcomes is accompanied by conclusions and recommendations and links to a wide range of websites and publications, all aimed at helping to achieve higher standards of design in historic and sensitive environments.

The cd is recommended for use in training sessions for officers and elected members, as well as for reference by all sectors involved in the processes of planning and development control.

In an easy to access format and at a very competitive price, the cd can be obtained from the EHTF office.



Grainger Town is the historic heart of Newcastle upon Tyne where 40% of buildings in the area are listed as of historical and architectural importance. This once prosperous area was overtaken by new retail and commercial activity in the late 80's and 90's which eroded the economic base, leaving properties to fall into disrepair.

Resident numbers were falling and lots of development opportunities were ignored. Primarily, Gillespies was appointed to prepare a public realm strategy as a key component in delivering regeneration to the area. This focused on traffic management (with Colin Buchanan and Partners), urban design and public realm improvement.

Working closely with our clients, The Grainger Town Project and Newcastle City Council, Gillespies prepared design briefs, feasibility studies and conceptual designs for Monument, Bath Lane and Grainger Street. During implementation, Gillespies was retained as consultant design advisor to produce a public realm concept, as well as the design and detailing of all paved surfaces using natural stone. The approach is based on earlier work in Grey Street by the City Council and this has been supplemented by Gillespies' philosophy of simplicity, using high quality materials and a street design which respects the inherent qualities of the place and engages the community. Completed in 2003, Grainger Town has since become a multi-award winning scheme; its most recent accolade is a Charter Award from the Congress for the New Urbanism, a highly influential US organisation.

Katrina Naughton: katrina.naughton@gillespies.co.uk



Photo: Mike Mills

"Historic streets trashed by thoughtlessness and cheap design"

To quote English Heritage Chief Executive, Simon Thurley, "Some of the worst culprits are local authorities which should be setting an example of enlightened stewardship. We need to start by removing the clutter and viewing our streets as historic places in their own right rather than using them as a dumping ground. We are all pedestrians and we all deserve better."

English Heritage recognises that it is the distinctiveness of our historic streets that make them special. On 14 October the 'Save Our Streets' campaign is being launched aiming to tidy up the streets by:

- Lobbying the Department for Transport to change regulations which control the use of traffic signs and street equipment
- Publication of a good practice guide in street design
- Promoting integrated townscape management
- Design workshops throughout the country
- Asking the public to carry out street audits

Does some of this sound familiar? EHTF has demonstrated that design sensitivity in the implementation of traffic measures can make a difference. In the 'Historic Core Zones Project and Review Reports', the success of projects studied show that there is a way that heritage and traffic can co-exist.

PLANNING ISSUES

News from the Built Environment Working Group

The group is keen to progress several issues on the EHTF agenda. The popular "Conservation Area Management" guide published in 1997, has been under review for some time, but 'imminent' changes to PPGs 15 & 16 caused a delay. Following recent discussions with English Heritage it will now be possible to decide a way forward. These discussions were also useful in providing further opportunities to work in a complementary way with EH. These will include the training agenda and programmes to help to improve the street-scape, with reference to the work carried out by EHTF for the Historic Core Zones Project. (See above)

A close working relationship with English Heritage has always been beneficial to EHTF and our members, enabling us to lobby on their behalf, with very useful exchanges of information. Following many changes at EH it was good to establish contact with those who are leading some of the high profile programmes for EH.

Following the success of the leaflet "Making Better Planning Applications", Prue Smith, Chair of the Group, and Clive Alexander will shortly start work on a 'sister' leaflet on applications involving listed buildings.

For further information, or if you would like to contribute to the work of the Group, please contact pruesmith@norwich.gov.uk

Tourism Issues

Here today.....



In 2002-03 Britons made 5.3 leisure day visits, 80% of the adult population

had taken a trip in the two weeks before the survey and spending totalled over £71 million. These are just a few of the results published in the GB Day Visits Survey.

Visits to historic towns are not analysed separately, but some key findings for all leisure day trips to towns and cities overall were:

- They accounted for 71% of visits
- Eating and drinking out were the most popular activities, 19%
- 57% of trips were by car
- On average 2.3 hours was spent at the destination
- The average spend was £15.60

Tourism leisure day visits showed a higher spend per trip, a larger proportion favouring eating and drinking, longer distance trips, longer stays and greater reliance on the motor car.

The survey is available as a pdf from www.countryside.gov.uk

Tomorrow's Tourism



The Government (DCMS) has spelt out how it intends to work with partners to develop

Britain's tourism industry. Tomorrow's Tourism Today identifies the responsibilities of Government, the industry, the regions and local government to deliver improvements in: marketing and e-tourism, accommodation quality, workforce skills and data. The DCMS has also committed itself to be an advocate for tourism across Whitehall and Europe.

The aim is to increase the value of tourism from £76 billion a year to £100 billion a year in 2010.

A Tourism Review and Implementation Group has been set up to oversee and monitor delivery in the four key areas. It also has a remit to look at planning and sustainability issues that are not covered by the four main themes of the Government's prospectus.

Tomorrow's Tourism Today is available at: www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2004/tomorrowsourismtoday.htm

Brian Human, Tourism Working Group Chair Head of Policy & Projects, Cambridge City Council

PUTTING IT OFF

Many owners wait for things to go wrong with their building before acting.

Yet systematic and preventative maintenance is the optimum strategy for the care of buildings.

Maintain our Heritage is to call for a change in approach from passive endorsement to pro-active encouragement of maintenance. Its report, 'PUTTING IT OFF How lack of maintenance fails our heritage', will be launched during Maintenance Week in November.

The report is based on six research reports that are available now on the MoH web site:

www.maintainourheritage.co.uk.

The research was financed mainly by the Department of Trade and Industry, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. It highlighted how current policies do not adequately encourage maintenance. Owners were found to take a short term view and do not see the benefit of maintenance that would prevent major faults appearing later.

'PUTTING IT OFF' sets out the



Regular inspection is the key to systematic maintenance.

challenges and makes recommendations to encourage and facilitate the maintenance of historic buildings. The report will be posted on the Maintain our Heritage website on publication.

Among initiatives Maintain our Heritage is considering for the future are a maintenance service for places of worship, area-wide maintenance blitzes ('Operation Gutter') and producing simple maintenance advice for owners.

Timothy Cantell:
timothy.cantell@maintainourheritage.co.uk

RETAIL ISSUES

A meeting of the EHTF Retail Working Group is planned for 22 September. The main topics for discussion will be a review of 'Retail Guidance' (first published April 1997). A report of the outcomes of this meeting will appear in the next edition of News.

Notes from an easy Chair

So...my term as Chairman is almost up. I know it's an old cliché, but it doesn't seem like 2 years ago that I nervously agreed to take over from Peter Studdert.

What has it been like?.....rewarding, hard work (at times), but above all very enjoyable. It has been a pleasure working with Chris and her team in Bristol, and with members of the Executive and the Working Groups. The strength of the Forum lies in the commitment of its members to continue to debate issues and to share best practice relating to our historic environment.

So as I step down, may I put out a call for other members to consider joining the Executive, so that the extremely worthwhile work which the Forum does can continue. Please contact Chris if you are interested.

I hope to see you at Lincoln.

Sam Howes – Chair, EHTF and Deputy Chief Executive,
Chichester District Council

More EU Competition

The ten new member states of the EU could create three million new jobs and £30 bn in GDP if they exploit their tourism potential, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Much of this can be achieved simply by catching up with the role of tourism in the economy among existing EU members, says the WTTC report.



The new member states bring with them a wealth of new resources, particularly 'their rich cultural heritage, their landscapes, and their nature reserves.' In other words, while the wider economic benefits will be welcome, the new states also bring with them a wealth of competition for our historic towns. To view the report go to www.wttc.org.

Brian Human, Chair of EHTF Tourism Working Group

All night long – what's the future for England's evening economy?

Date: 23 November 2004

Venue: Regent's College, London

For information and booking details, contact: Sharon Coleman,
scoleman@civictrust.org.uk, 020 7170 4294

What do bar owners, nightclub managers and drinks promoters have in common with civil servants, council officers and museum staff? Not nearly enough, says the Civic Trust, which is why it is organising a major conference this autumn to bring them together.

Part of the Trust's three year research programme into making the evening economy work and so creating vibrant town and city centres, this conference is about the role of the private sector. It concentrates on their perceptions, their experience and their role in creating the successful destinations of the future.

"There is a growing awareness of the importance of a vibrant after hours economy in the competitiveness of towns and cities and the role of this sector in supporting jobs, creating wealth, regenerating areas," says Hannah Mummery, Special Projects Manager at the Civic Trust. "Owners, operators and managers of entertainments and attractions are at the sharp end, where market trends and public policy meets the day-to-day realities of making a living, providing entertainment and managing large numbers of people."

Although much progress has been made in bringing together the various groups, the Civic Trust believes that, for the evening and night-time economy to be a success, there is much still to be done.

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This edition of 'News' is available to print or download from our website as a pdf: www.ehtf.org.uk/admin/getfile.asp?ID=63

Feature Town: King's Lynn

Golden Past, Brighter Future



King's Lynn, is celebrating the 800th anniversary of the granting of its Charter by King John, although it was founded earlier as a Norman port. But there is much more to celebrate. Work is well underway on the revamping of the 1960s development in the Town Centre. Work will begin on a new multi-storey car park after Christmas 2004. Two major Heritage Lottery Bids to regenerate the Greyfriars Tower (a finalist in the first series of the television programme Regeneration) and the main urban park, the Walks, are progressing well. Work is also well underway with the major regeneration of the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area in the south-east sector of the Town. The area has been de-contaminated and work has begun on a new regeneration route to serve the area.

However there is more than these projects in the pipeline. King's Lynn has won recognition as the focus of a sub-regional centre in the new Regional Planning for eastern England and this is seen as one of the keystones of its brighter future. A brief for an Urban Renaissance Strategy has just been finalised and consultants will be procured by working in partnership with EEDA, English Partnerships, the Norfolk County Council and other key stakeholders.

So the future really is beginning to look brighter and with work commencing on the Local Development Framework under the new Planning Act a new spatial plan will be prepared to build on the town's golden past. Hopefully, when you next visit Lynn, you will be able to enjoy the results of all this work as you explore the well-known treasures of the old town and its riverside!

Jeff Clarke
Head of Planning
Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk