

News



English Historic
Towns Forum

ENGLISH HISTORIC TOWNS FORUM
for prosperity and conservation in historic towns

MAY 2005

Using heritage and cultural assets in regeneration



Culture and Heritage led Regeneration will be the subject of a conference to be held in Gateshead and Newcastle on 8 & 9 June 2005.

Delegates will have the opportunity to visit The Sage Gateshead, The Baltic, the Visitor Centre (former building at risk - St Mary's Church) Quayside in Gateshead as well as Grainger Town, Quayside and other regeneration areas in Newcastle.

The programme will offer national overviews of the topics and in depth examination of how the two cities are addressing the issues and seeking to reinforce linkages across the Tyne.

Full details and an online booking facility is available on the website: www.ehtf.org.uk/events.asp

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Our Newest Partner



The Prince's Foundation
FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Prince's Foundation invited EHTF to partner its programme of conferences which began in November with a visit from HRH The Prince of Wales.

The conferences are offered to EHTF members at a reduced price of only £50 and those I have attended to date have been very worthwhile, bringing together expert speakers from Europe and the US as well as those from the UK.

Michael Loveday, made a presentation entitled 'Capturing the Value of the Local Historic DNA' on 15 February at the conference 'Building Heritage: Innovative Strategies for Successful Regeneration'.

See www.princes-foundation.org for further details - mention EHTF for your discounted place.

Chris Winter, Director, EHTF



Retail led regeneration in historic towns

A conference in Birmingham on 20 & 21 April examined the role of retail development in historic towns and areas - as retail activities and development assume increasing impacts on our lives and our urban environment.

Lessons from completed developments, as well as current schemes and future visions were explored. These presentations included the strategies which can be employed to protect small town shopping centres and secondary areas in larger towns and the associated management of the public realm.

The event, which took place at the School of Jewellery, included:

- A keynote speech by Les Sparks, CABE Commissioner and English Heritage Commissioner
- The role and vitality of secondary shopping - A new direction, including improving the prosperity of small town centres
- Case studies in Canterbury and Birmingham - from a range of perspectives...
- Walking tours of the award winning Bull Ring.

Brian Raggett, Senior Executive Director and Head of Public Sector Consulting of CB Richard Ellis, chaired a panel discussion on the recently published PPS6 with comments from the speakers and delegates.

A full report of the conference will be available shortly on the website, see the News section.

Please Circulate this newsletter among your colleagues

EHTF is supported by

Colin Buchanan Countryside Properties PLC Donaldsons Gillespies Land Securities PLC RPS Planning, Transport and Environment

MEMBERS NEWS

Executive Committee Portfolios

At the meeting of the EHTF Executive Committee on February 18, several portfolio holders presented papers outlining the proposed work programme for the coming year. These included **The Streetscape, Sustainable Tourism and Coach Parking and the Skills Agenda**. Details can be seen on the website.

EHTF Members with an interest or query about a particular subject should contact the office or the appropriate Portfolio Holder:

Ian Poole	The Streetscape
Bill Cotton	Sponsorship/Partnership Arrangements
Steven Bee	Liaison with English Heritage
Nick Hayward	Sponsors' Representative
Sam Howes	Planning Performance in Historic Towns
Brian Human	Sustainable Tourism
Gwyneth Jones	Retail Development
Michael Loveday	Local Heritage Assets
David Reed	24 Hour Economy & Consultation Co-ordination
Brian Smith	European Association of Historic Towns & Regions
Prue Smith	Conservation Area Guidance
Rob Surl	Transport & Traffic Management
Richard Tuffrey	The Skills Deficit

'FOCUS ON... MANAGING GROWTH IN HISTORIC TOWNS'

Ely – 8/9 December 2005



After the traditional civic reception on Wednesday evening at the Stained Glass Museum at the Cathedral hosted by East Cambridgeshire Council, the conference the next day took place in The Maltings which is central to one of Ely's regeneration projects.

Ian Poole, Chair of EHTF, said he was concerned about the effect on historic towns of the pressure for new housing in the south and east of England. He questioned their capacity to cope with this scale and speed of growth and urged everyone involved to think ahead, in order that whilst delivering the housing, we retain local identity. The same accusations about 'clone towns' could easily start to be made about housing as they have recently been made about retail areas.

David Archer, Executive Director of Development Services at East Cambridgeshire District Council, explained the strategy of the recent past and the continuing plans for regeneration using Ely's historic assets. He said that the establishment of 'Ely Perspectives' with good working partnerships and the appointment of a Design Champion were crucial to maintaining the character of the place and achieving a sustainable community.

Gwyn Jones, Regional Design Manager with EEDA and CABE, said that research has shown a clear, demonstrable link between the quality of the built environment and economic and social well-being... and given the high level of new development in the East of England, it is particularly important that it is implemented in a high-quality and sustainable manner. Juliet Bidgood, Senior Enabling Advisor, explained why CABE is championing the use of good design in

buildings and public spaces.

The Ely transport study carried out by Martin Higgitt, of Steer Davies Greaves, had considered the issues of managing parking demand, environmental and economic impacts, access to all modes of transport, social inclusion and the ingredients required for change to take place.

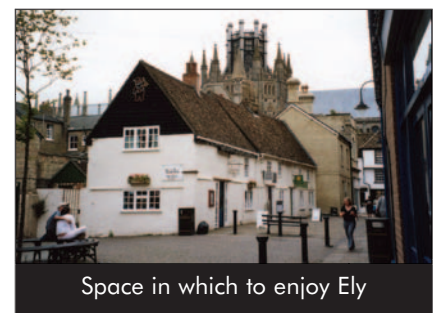
Robert Tregay, Senior Partner at LDA Design considered that "Controlled development can sustain their (historic towns) economic viability and social infrastructure" and identified the key criteria to be considered.

Having explored the issues and some of the projects, delegates were asked to consider "The Way Forward" with presentations from Dr Marion Wells, an independent consultant and member of the East of England Market Town Resource Team and Greg Luton, Regional Director of English Heritage.

Ian Poole explained how the essence of the conference held in Buxton during the summer had been captured for a wider audience in an easy to read guide to "Investing in Heritage". He proposed that a similar document might bring together the crucial points which had been covered on 'managing growth' and invited the speakers to contribute to this.

Plans for this publication are being progressed with support from many of the speakers – for which we are very grateful. Details will be made available as soon as possible.

Copies of speakers' power point presentations can be obtained from EHTF – ehhf@uwe.ac.uk or call 0117 975 0459. View the full report online at: www.ehtf.org.uk/admin/getfile.asp?ID=70



Membership now stands at:

Full	69
(representing 90 towns)	
Corporate	39
Individual	27
Civic & Amenity	17
Affiliated	28
Honorary	2
Total	182

Our main contact at each Member organisation received the 2005 Members' Directory in January.

Since then, **three new Members** have joined us, whom we would like to welcome to EHTF, please add their details to your directory:

Isle of Wight Council

Mrs Janet Dore, Conservation & Design Team Leader, Planning Services, Seaclose, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight PO32 2QS
Tel: 01983 823599 Fax: 01983 823851

QuBE

Mr Andy Thompson, Director, Building 7, Michael Young Centre, Purbeck Road, Cambridge, CB2 2QL
Tel: 01223 271850 Fax: 01223 271851

Michelle Chambers

Consultant, 4 Blackthorn Court, Langdon Hills, Essex SS16 6TJ

NEWS ARTICLES

The newsletter is a valuable tool for informing the membership about the activities of the Forum, but could also provide you with a place to air your views, discuss topical issues and share good practice. This issue has a short item on Section 215 Notices, but let us know if there is a topic you would like covered.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PORTFOLIO

A Voice on Tourism

Tourism is a complex industry with a disparate array of policies about its future. The Forum must have clear, distinctive views of its own. In 2005 the Forum will prepare an up-to-date statement of its tourism policy. Guidance on coach parking will be investigated; and responses will be made to initiatives and policies from the Government and other bodies.



Guidance for coach parking is on the EHTF's agenda for 2005-06

Tourism Alliance

Brigid Simmonds, Chief Executive of Business in Sport, has been appointed as the Chair of the Tourism Alliance. The Alliance also has a new Policy Director in Kurt Janson. Kurt's appointment has seen a spurt in Alliance activity, including a more regular newsletter, development of a policy strategy, preparation of a tourism manifesto aimed at all political parties in readiness for the election, and a promotional leaflet on the value of tourism. The EHTF has commented on these documents. Contact the Alliance on www.tourismalliance.com.

Walks on Line

'Shape', the built environment centre for Cambridge has launched a series of four on-line walks for visitors to the City. The aim is to help tourists to get the most out of their trip and see a bit more than the most obvious sites. The walks include: the Tudors; clocks and sundials; contemporary architecture (post 1990); and the historic highlights, 'must see' sights for the first time visitor with limited time. The web site includes interactive maps, access details, photographs and a wealth of information about the buildings and features. Visit Shape Walks at www.shape-cambridge.org.uk.

Hospitality Stats

In 2003 domestic tourists to London spent twice as much as those visiting the east of England. The hospitality industry employed 1.4 million people, 62% of which were female and 16% had no qualifications. This is a sample of the figures published by the British Hospitality association in Trends and Statistics 2004. There are no local figures below the regional level, but in a sector bedeviled with poor data on which to build plans and strategies this information gives some valuable insights. See www.bha.org.uk.

Customer Contact

Those of us who look at tourism from a planning and environmental perspective sometimes forget how important front line customer services are to managing tourism and getting the best out of it for historic towns. As a new report, Customer Contact Services, from VisitBritain says, 'The information needs and expectations of visitors in the early 21st century – before, during and after their visit – are distinctly different from a decade ago'. The report identifies five areas where there is a need for action: national access to information; services to customers on the move; the TIC network; branding for contact services; and customer relations management. One of the key objectives of this is 'to encourage and influence visitor activity that is sustainable.' The VisitBritain web site is at www.visitbritain.com.



Customer orientation is an essential part of more sustainable tourism

Portfolio Holder: *Brian Human
Cambridge City Council*

CONSERVATION AREA GUIDANCE PORTFOLIO

Making Better Listed Building Applications

At the Executive meeting on 18 February, it was agreed to proceed with the publication of guidance notes on 'Making Better Listed Building Applications'. This will supplement the advice contained in 'Making Better Planning Applications' - a free publication available from the EHTF office or as a Pdf file for printing as required. The new leaflet is aimed at applicants and agents, to promote a better understanding of the type of information required to accompany applications for Listed Building Consent and raise the quality of submissions to improve the way in which the Local Planning Authority deals with such applications. Look out for 'Making Better Listed Building Applications', which will be launched later this year.

'Good Housekeeping?' Section 215 (or tidying up) Notices

Do you have sites and buildings in your district that are neglected and unsightly? Are you aware that the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 gives Local Planning Authorities the power to take action to remedy the situation?

If the amenity of your area is being adversely affected by the condition of neighbouring land and buildings, Section 215 provides for a LPA to serve a notice on the owner to clean up the site. The notice sets out the steps that need to be taken and the time within which they should be carried out. If the owner does not comply with the notice, the LPA also has powers, under the same Section, to undertake the works, and recover the costs.

Although not a new provision under the Act, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has just launched a new Best Practice Guide on the use of Section 215s. The document clearly sets out the procedure, with sample letters and notices, and includes typical case studies. It also cites research, which found that often the threat of serving the notice is enough to prompt the appropriate action.

The Best Practice Guide can be downloaded from the ODPM website at www.odpm.gov.uk

If you have already used Section 215 notices, we would be interested to hear from you. We are looking for examples (successful or otherwise), to share with other LPAs. Please email your contribution to the Forum at ehff@uwe.ac.uk

Portfolio Holder: *Prue Smith
Norwich City Council*

Sustainable Tourism

The World Tourism Organisation may sound a bit remote to most EHTF members, but it offers a valuable perspective on sustainable tourism. Work published recently includes indicators of the sustainable development for tourism destinations, new definitions of sustainable tourism, certification of tourism activities, tourism and poverty alleviation and finance for small enterprises. Visit the WTO web site at www.world-tourism.org.

View from The Chair

I was recently asked to give a presentation on the Historic Core Zones project in Cornwall at a conference organised by CPR Regeneration. The organisation has been established to deliver regeneration to Camborne, Pool and Redruth where there has been significant decline in recent years. What was pleasing about the conference was the genuine desire to improve the built environment and the support for measures which limit the impact of the car. It is a message which the Forum is keen to spread to other historic towns. The English Heritage 'Save our Streets' campaign highlighted the impact which the car is having on the historic environment but the Forum's Core Zone project demonstrates that there is another way. Please see www.ehtf.org.uk/publication_report46.asp & www.ehtf.org.uk/publication_report53.asp for more information and to order online.



HELM 'INFORMED DECISION MAKING' SEMINARS

Raising awareness of the importance of the historic environment among non-heritage officers is a challenge we accepted by delivering part of this English Heritage project.

As part of the Government's programme to improve skills in the sector, we were able to offer development control officers, planning officers, traffic engineers, and many others working in authorities across the English regions the opportunity to talk to experts to find out what strategies and resources are available to them to help in their everyday work.

Seminars were delivered in all of the nine English regions over a period of three months, each one addressing the issues of particular relevance to the region.

Feature Town: Birmingham



The success of the Old Grammar School, Kings Norton, in last year's 'Restoration' series with the idyllic images of the 15th Century timber frame building, the magnificent mediaeval church and churchyard, will have surprised many. Kings Norton is one of half a dozen mediaeval villages within the City all of which are now conservation areas and rich in archaeology.

A rather different conservation area, but one of European significance, is the Jewellery Quarter, an area of 93 ha., where an additional 130 buildings were statutorily listed last May. Working very closely with English Heritage, a programme aimed at protecting the buildings and also the traditional craft industry has been underway for five years during which time there have been very real pressures for residential conversion and redevelopment in the area.

In July 2004 the Back to Backs opened in the City Centre, the result of an innovative partnership between the Birmingham Conservation Trust and the National Trust; the national interest has been astonishing. Over in the core of the business district, St Philip's Cathedral, a key example of the English Baroque has seen the re-introduction of magnificent railings around the Churchyard, largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A new iconic image of the City is the spire of St Martin's in the Bullring set against the background of the new Selfridges store designed by Future Systems, further proof that the historic environment is playing an important role in the renaissance of the second city.

Executive Committee Member: Chris Hargreaves

Do you represent a Full Member organisation? To feature your town in 'NEWS', please send a short article (150 words) and an image (300 dpi, tif) image to EHTF by email to ehf@uwe.ac.uk.

European Association of Historic Towns & Regions

The International Symposium to be held on 15 and 16 September will take place in Gothenburg, Sweden. Entitled "Heritage Led Regeneration - Delivering good practice", the event is being organised as part of the EU funded project - INHERIT.

The Conference programme will include -

- A civic reception hosted by Gothenburg City Council and a conference dinner
- keynote presentations on: -
 - o The importance of a strategic focus and a culture of creativity as a basis for success
 - o Realising social and economic benefits: the regeneration of Grainger Town, Newcastle, UK - a case study
 - o The importance of heritage to current and future EU regional policy
- A presentation about Gothenburg followed by guided site visits
- Overviews of heritage led regeneration in a number of European countries - e.g. Finland, England, Malta and the Netherlands
- Presentations on the INHERIT project and two related INTERREG 3C projects QUALICITIES and CULTURED outlining opportunities for cities to collaborate in the future
- Opportunities to join themed group discussions and time to network with other delegates from across Europe

For further information and booking details contact Anna-Johanna Klasander by email klasander@sbk.goteborg.se or by fax +46 31 61 22 39.



RPS's extensive UK coverage means that it is uniquely placed to offer a complete range of planning and environmental consultancy services to local authorities.

As a corporate sponsor of EHTF, RPS is tuned into conservation and historic environment issues facing LPAs. Through its Planning and Historic Environment Team headed by Chris Miele, a former English Heritage Inspector and a member of CABE's Design Review Panel, it is able to offer the following services:

- Conservation area appraisals and management plans
- Heritage statements for listed buildings
- Auditing of cultural landscape elements of EIAs
- Advice and viability on enabling development proposals
- Advice on area action plans in historic environments

More broadly RPS's work for local authorities covers the following areas:

- Transportation studies
- Ecology advice
- Noise and pollution control
- Land contamination
- Architecture
- Preparation of development briefs
- EIA audits
- Landscape assessments
- Planning appeals
- Secondments to Local Planning Authorities (e.g. to support DC workloads, provision of design advice etc)
- Urban design, masterplanning and design codes
- Urban capacity studies
- Land availability studies
- Assistance with public consultation strategies including Planning For Real events.

For more information, please contact Nicholas Hayward (Planning Director) in the first instance on 01793 814800 or email haywardn@rpsgroup.com.

RPS offices in England include Abingdon, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Chepstow, Durham, Huddersfield, Leeds, London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Newbury, Newcastle, Southampton and Swindon.