

April 2006

ENGLISH HISTORIC TOWNS FORUM
for prosperity and conservation in historic towns

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Conservation Training Seminars

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Our new tourism guidance publication

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'Public Realm Focus'

If you would prefer to receive EHTF 'News' in a pdf format please email ehtf@uwe.ac.uk, giving your name, organisation and email address.

Making the most of heritage assets

English historic towns contribute a significant amount to the economy – locally, regionally and nationally. However, the assets which may be the bedrock for this income generation – through tourism attractions, the distinctive retail offers, appealing environments in which to establish a business – bring with them specific management and funding challenges.

This spring EHTF will be addressing the specific issues surrounding two of these assets – City Walls and waterways. These are features of many historic towns and require focused attention if they are to be used to the best advantage without compromising the contribution they make to the historic environment as a whole.

City Walls - Chester

On 27 April we will explore both the theory of best practice, with speakers who have national and international experience, and case studies from which we might draw on other's experience. The City Walls form a major part of the City's attraction to home and overseas visitors and we will see at close hand the work being done to maintain them and promote their part in the overall package the City offers. Examples of the strategies used in York and Chichester will demonstrate the importance of the understanding of the archaeology and of management plans.

Delegates please note: a change of venue from the original printed brochure.

Waterways -

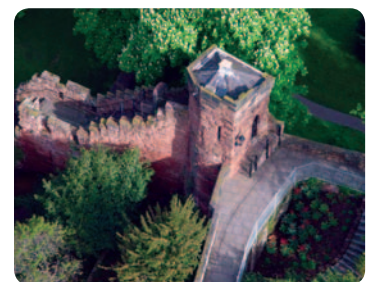
Stratford-upon-Avon

On 8 June the current uses and abuses of the waterways, which are frequently the *raison d'être* for historic towns, will be the focus of attention. Two major undertakings – the 'World Class Stratford' project and moves by British Waterways to widen their sphere of engagement with waterways, offer a unique opportunity to look at the role of rivers and canals. Issues from economic impact to dealing with anti-social behaviour and the iconic buildings associated with waterways, will be addressed. Using Stratford and other national case studies we will be able to draw together best practice from a range of practitioners.

Both events will offer the usual

mix of presentations and opportunities to explore the case study and to network and exchange information with other professionals, and will of course offer CPD certification.

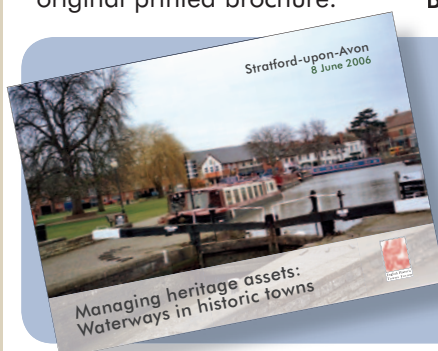
For further details of both events and online booking facilities please see www.ehtf.org.uk.



Bonewaldesthorpe's Tower
Chester



Floodlit City Walls, Chester



Look out for
this brochure
in the coming
weeks.

New Members

Heritage Conservation Consulting Ltd

Paul Johnson
Managing Director
Bankfield House
Bankfield Road
Kendal, LA9 4LA

Tel: 01539 728315
Web: www.conservationconsulting.co.uk

Inkpen Downie Architecture & Design

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Tel: 01206 577244
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Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners

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Tel: 020 7837 4477
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Penwith District Council

Andrew England
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Tel: 01736 336788
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Ward Hadaway

David Brocklehurst
Chartered Town Planner
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NE1 3DX

Tel: 0191 2044106
Web: www.wardhadaway.com

Vicki Worthington

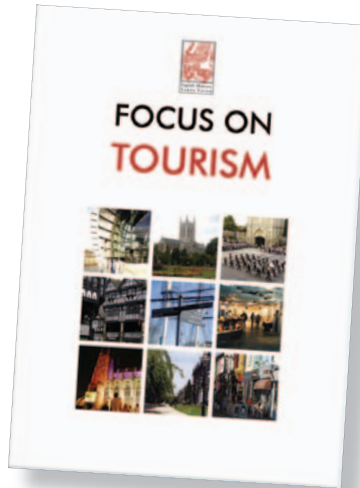
Consultant
Ithelfryn, Nebo
Nr Llanrwst, Gwynedd
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Focus on Tourism

Focus on Tourism sets out the EHTF's vision for tourism in historic towns based on reconciling the sometimes competing demands of residents, the environment, business and visitors. The document considers the challenges for historic towns, the visitor experience, the roles of stakeholders and sets out six key principles: integration, customer focus, positive management, valuing diversity, taking a long-term view and care for the historic environment. It explains how tourism can be integrated into sustainable communities that are safe, thriving, well managed, well serviced and environmentally aware. A score of practical examples illustrate success in tackling these issues.



Focus on Tourism was launched at the EHTF's Strategy Meeting in London on 1 March.

*Sustainable Tourism Portfolio Holder - Brian Human
Cambridge City Council*

Managing Traffic in Historic Towns The Greek example

The Forum's Chair, Ian Poole, was invited to speak at an international conference in Kavala, Greece at the beginning of February. The conference was examining traffic in historic towns and was aimed at informing the authorities and residents of the Greek town on ways of trying to manage the highest levels of car ownership in the country in a residential area of narrow streets and high density living.

It is clear that the traffic



EHTF Chair, Ian Poole and the Mayor of Kavala, Greece

issues that many of our English historic towns and cities are trying to manage are common across Europe. However, what was apparent

is an almost universal use of underground parking as the first option to accommodate parked cars, something rarely used in this country.

The presentation on the Forum's Historic Core Zone initiative was well received and it was clear that many delegates, whether they were local residents or experts from across Europe, would like to be able to implement components of the initiative in their historic towns.

EHTF welcomes new Honorary Member

At the Strategy Meeting held on 1 March, George Ferguson, PPRIBA, was welcomed as only the third Honorary Member of EHTF. Addressing the meeting, George demonstrated his beliefs in the aims and objectives of the Forum, and the need for forward thinking if we are to make the most of the value held in the historic built environment. His long and broad professional experience in architecture, urban design and the historic built environment, together with these shared beliefs, makes him a worthy advocate for EHTF, and we look forward to working with him in the future.



George Ferguson PPRIBA
(Image courtesy of World Future Council Initiative)

Strategy Meeting 1 March



Members come together for the EHTF Strategy Meeting

survey responses, will be used by the Executive Committee, to formulate the strategies and work programmes for the coming year. The meeting will be able to respond to the issues of greatest importance to historic towns and cities, in the context of current local and national government agendas.

Members who were able to attend and contribute to the meeting were very helpful. The work prior to the meeting made it possible.

English Heritage -

'The 3rd Stakeholders Review Seminar on the Historic Environment: Statutory and Formal Advice'

At this event on 3 February at the British Academy, speakers reported back on the performance of English Heritage on providing statutory and formal advice to LPAs and other bodies over the past year to look forward to E-Planning, and to provide a forum for feedback from stakeholders.

'Heritage Works'

This recent report, prepared by Drivers Jonas, is about integrating heritage buildings into urban regeneration schemes. It contains the combined advice and experience of English Heritage, RICS and the British Property Foundation and provides a toolkit of good practice.

The full report can be downloaded from the Drivers Jonas website www.driversjonas.com

Heritage Link - 'Making Consultation Matter'

As members of Heritage Link, EHTF welcomes this recent survey and its contribution to the information base of the sector. The findings and the accompanying press release issued on 4 April are available at: www.heritagelink.org.uk

Championing Members' Perspectives

EHTF is regularly invited to respond to Government consultation papers, which it tries to do taking account of the broad needs of the historic towns and cities represented through the membership. Below are very brief summaries of recent responses. The full item can be seen on the website: – www.ehtf.org.uk.

PPS25 - ODPM

EHTF welcomed the comprehensive approach which focuses the attention of local authorities on this critical area, although the exceptions clause (5) should be used sparingly – applying the precautionary principle. Several points were made regarding:

- the potential impact of long-term climate change and the need for support from the Planning Inspectorate on appeal
- the importance of cross boundary co-operation and consistency
- the application of the exceptions test as early as possible.. reinforcing the plan-led system... discouraging developers from bringing forward unacceptable sites ...
- the priority given to brownfield land is welcome
- the urgent need for clarification of roles in relation to SUDS
- HLT5 indicators are too process driven
- the proposed Practical Guide also needs to consider design matters
- need to improve EA response times in order to meet DC performance targets
- importance of 3 year review of PPS25 to assess success of policies, effectiveness of SUDS and to keep up with development in climate change

PPS 3 Housing

The EHTF recognises that the planning system needs to be more responsive to the housing market in terms of its impact on housing delivery and outcomes, and supports the government's housing objectives of giving direction to housing choice and affordability, balance in the local housing markets and the creation of mixed, sustainable communities (as set out in paragraph 1).

However, the new PPS will introduce tensions and dilemmas into the current planning system. The draft guidance does not seem to address locational or spatial direction beyond asserting a clear priority for brownfield residential development and an implicit reliance on regional, spatial strategies and local development frameworks to deliver these. At face value, this might be seen as being in line with the government's new planning approach, however, what is lost from the system is the sequential test approach embodied in the current PPG 3.

EHTF's full response to these consultations can be seen at www.ehtf.org.uk

Cityscape 2007

EHTF has been invited to partner one of the largest events in the built environment diary. Cityscape 2007 will be held at Earl's Court from February 28 – March 2 2007 and will build on previous events which have been very successfully held over the past three years, in which EHTF had minor roles. As our reputation grows we are increasingly invited to play more active roles nationally, and this event offers a significant opportunity to

work with a wide range of professionals across all of the sectors and disciplines and to continue to promote the special needs of the historic towns and cities that we represent.

We look forward to welcoming EHTF members to special events for them during the programme and will keep you informed via the website and newsletters as details unfold.

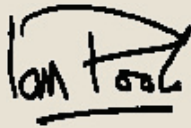
View from The Chair

I attended the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans Training Seminar at King's Lynn recently and came away totally inspired by the content of the day and the contribution of delegates to the debate. Our new partnership working with the University of the West of England is already reaping dividends. It is clear that there are mixed messages across local authorities about the meaning of the Best Value Performance Indicator on producing Appraisals and Management Plans. Similarly, there is confusion as to whether Management Plans should be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents under the new Local Development Framework system.

I came away from King's Lynn with a much clearer picture on the requirements and have some new ideas on how my Council could get the 30+ Appraisals and Plans undertaken much quicker than currently planned. It is planned to produce some good practice guidance at the end of the seminar series to disseminate the findings of our research into this subject and the outcomes of the seminar series.

There are still places available on the remainder of the series; 3 May - York; 5 May - Lancaster; 24 May - Bath.

Book online at www.ehtf.org.uk or contact the EHTF office.



'Public Realm Focus'

In March the EHTF was represented at a key seminar held at the Cathedral Rooms in Bury St Edmunds. The event focused on best practice in the 'Public Realm' in the East of England and attracted over 60 delegates from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Organised by English Heritage as part of its 'Streets for All' initiative, speakers included Ruth Stokes of Suffolk County Council, Neil Smith from the Centre for Accessible Environments and Forum Executive Committee Member Philip Godwin, who described the successful approach taken to street design in Fakenham, North Norfolk.

Speakers outlined the importance of a co-ordinated approach to street design and the necessity for effective and cohesive management of the 'public realm'. Building upon the work of the EHTF (see the 2003 publication 'Focus on the Public Realm') and the Historic Core Zone Projects of the 1990s, English Heritage's 'Streets for All' campaign has brought added prominence and attention to the need to safeguard our streets and spaces from 'over zealous' signage and street clutter in general.

Feature Town: Stratford-upon-Avon



Royal Shakespeare Theatre

Share our vision for a World Class Stratford-upon-Avon

As the birthplace of Shakespeare, Stratford-upon-Avon has long been a visitor and cultural destination of international renown. 3.5 million visitors arrive every year to go to the theatre, to visit historic sites and to absorb the atmosphere of this special market town. Whilst the enduring

appeal of Stratford remains, recent trends have shown a decline in the number of visitors both to historic attractions such as the Shakespeare Birthplace properties, and also to performances at the Royal Shakespeare Company's (RSC) theatres.

The District Council and the County Council are working together with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and other partners to bring about significant investment in the town to enable it to compete at an international level. Delegates to the EHTF seminar due to be held in Stratford in June will have the opportunity to share our bold vision for a 'world class' Stratford.

The RSC are moving forward with proposals to re-develop their estate, which will transform the theatrical experience. The District Council and its partners are committed to create a public realm to complement and enhance the RSC's proposals. A major funding bid of £7.5 million has been submitted to AWM to implement key projects set out in the Waterfront Masterplan.

Work is also underway on the preparation of an Urban Design Framework (UDF) for the whole town. This will be followed by a second phase bid to AWM for funding in the region of £20 million to implement key projects identified through the UDF.

The theme of the EHTF seminar in June is the role of waterways in historic towns. Most delegates will be familiar with the River Avon, which provides the setting for postcard shots of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and Holy Trinity Church. Less familiar to most visitors is the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal, which links the Avon to the Grand Union Canal. The canal currently presents an underutilised resource, which has great potential to act as a focal point for the regeneration of sites beyond the tourist honey pots of the town centre. We will be looking to delegates to share their thoughts on how the potential of the canal can be realised.

*Colin Staves - Policy, Heritage and Design Manager
Stratford-on-Avon District Council*

Out and about

EHTF was represented at the following events:

The 3rd Stakeholders Review Seminar on the Historic Environment: Statutory and Formal Advice' - English Heritage	3 Feb - London
Traffic management in Greece	8 Feb - Kavala, Greece
'Measuring the Liveable City: a Transnational Perspective' - Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)	21 Feb - London
'Building a sustainable future', Cityscape 2007 Preview	22/23 Feb - London
Seminar on the Public Realm and the Historic Environment', English Heritage (East)	1 Mar - Bury St Edmunds