

December 2008

English Historic Towns Forum  
for prosperity and conservation in historic towns



PAGES 2



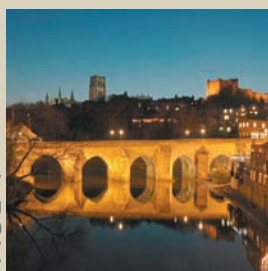
### Opening up the Membership

PAGE 3



### Article 4 Directions research results

PAGE 4



### Photo Competition winner

EHTF is supported by

LandSecurities



GILLESPIES



John Lewis Partnership  
Bircham Dyson Bell

## The Townscape Challenge

'Townscape in Focus: Challenges & Opportunities' was the title of this year's Conference, but for many delegates the hidden question was, 'Is townscape still in trouble?' The answer delegates came away with may have depended on whether they were glass half full or half empty people. What they did get was the clear message that the biggest challenges lie in conserving the undesigned heritage, the everyday fabric that is both a delight to the eye and an essential part of local distinctiveness and sense of place.

They will also have left with the message that as the Heritage Protection Bill take its final shape, new PPS15 and PPS16 begin to emerge and further guidance and regulations follow the primary legislation, now is a critical time to both exert influence on government and key agencies at all levels and ensure the conservation house is in order.

There are four key challenges we need to face.

First, intelligence. There may be a belief that townscape is still in trouble, but the evidence is at best fragmented and at worst anecdotal. English Heritage is planning to publish a snapshot survey of 9,000 Conservation Areas in 2009 and

this will provide a valuable benchmark. We also need some benchmarking of the widely recognised skills and staffing gap in the conservation profession.

Second, resources. There is a deeply felt perception that heritage protection is under resourced in terms of staff, skills, status and finance. Good work is being done by the IHBC, through the CapacityCheck programme and through English Heritage's Historic Environment Traineeships; and the promotion of project management skills aims to make the best use of resources. But is it enough?

Third, integration. Work done on local distinctiveness in Norwich and in-depth characterisation in Lincoln show the benefits of integrating heritage protection and a broader planning approach, married to inclusive techniques of community involvement. Heritage protection needs a less piecemeal approach than is currently the case.

Fourth, confidence. The unique study of Article 4 directions carried out by RPS showed the value of this conservation tool (though applied to only 15% of Conservation Areas) and dispelled some of the fears about compensation. Dudley MBC showed that local listing can be effective in the protection of otherwise undesigned buildings, if it is given the right support. The point from these examples is that we must be confident in using the available tools.

These issues will not be tackled by the new legislation and guidance. The Heritage Protection Act will help, but we need to get on and do what we can. The Forum will help in that by publishing guidance coming out of the Conference. It will help top up the half empty glasses!

Brian Human, Vice Chair, EHTF



Delegates in Lichfield

### Bircham Dyson Bell - EHTF's New Partner

We were delighted to welcome Bircham Dyson Bell LLP as our newest Partner representing the legal sector. The firm has a reputation for quality of work and maintaining excellent relationships between the partners and their clients, who include public sector organisations, businesses, individuals, charities and not-for-profit organisations. They bring with them a wide range of expertise which includes planning, public law, parliamentary, litigation and dispute resolution and real estate. BDB look forward to working with the other Partners and members of the Forum on the issues encountered by historic towns.

## New Membership Fees for 2009

From 1 January 2009 the AGM agreed a small percentage increase to the Membership Fees. The new fees will be:

Corporate Membership	£65 - £595*
Local Authority Membership	£410 - £505**
Town and Parish Council Membership	£200***
Associate Membership	£275
Civic and Amenity Membership	£60
Individual Membership	£50

\* dependent on number of employees

\*\* dependent on population

\*\*\* new category

## New Executive Committee

Sam Howes (Chair) thanked members who were stepping down: Sharon Cosgrove (Oxford), Bill Cotton (Swindon), Ian Heggie (West MASA), David Reed (Canterbury) and Rob Surl (Shropshire).

Membership for the coming year was agreed as:

### Representing Local Authority Members:

Ian Ayris, Newcastle City Council  
 Kim Bennett, Canterbury City Council  
 Sean Coghlan, Lichfield District Council  
 Chris Hargreaves, Birmingham City Council  
 Sam Howes, Chichester District Council  
 Brian Human, formerly Cambridge City Council / outgoing Chairman  
 Ian Poole, St Edmundsbury Borough Council  
 Richard Tuffrey, High Peak Borough Council  
 John Wrightson, Worcester City Council

Representing the Partner / Sponsors: Nick Hayward, RPS Planning

**Representing Corporate Members:** Tony Wyatt, Ryders Architecture

**Representing Civic & Amenity Societies:** Freddie Gick, Birmingham Civic Society

Officers were confirmed as: Sam Howes – Chair; Brian Human – Vice Chair; Chris Hargreaves – Vice Chair; Richard Tuffrey – Honorary Treasurer

Contact details for Members of the Executive Committee can be found at [www.ehtf.org.uk](http://www.ehtf.org.uk)

## Opening the Membership in 2009

At the Annual General Meeting held on 8 October, it was agreed that Membership should be opened to organisations and colleagues in Scotland, Wales and Ireland (North & South). This is subject to continued discussions and consideration of differences in law and practice, and the logistical implications of the wider geographical reach of the Forum, but it will make the Forum more inclusive and enable those across the borders who have supported events and used our guidance documents for many years to engage more closely with the Forum. It will also offer wider funding opportunities.

So from January 2009 the organisation will be known as the HISTORIC TOWNS FORUM.

The Annual Report was presented to the AGM and Sam Howes (Chair) summarised the work of the Forum during the past year, which had included the publication of two very successful guidance documents – 'Focus of Retail' and 'Manual for Historic Streets', conferences exploring the value of the industrial heritage, retail development,

streetscape and tourism, as well as a study tour to the Netherlands.

The Forum had also contributed to, and participated in, a wide range of activities and responded to consultations from Government and policy making agencies to represent the views of the Membership.

Membership continues to grow but the move to Unitary Authorities presents a potential threat to the Forum's income from Membership fees. This will be partly addressed by changes to the fee bands (based on population size) and a small percentage rise in fees, which was agreed by the Meeting.

There was also support for the proposal for an additional category of Membership for Town & Parish councils which will be welcomed from January 2009

Sam thanked the Partner / Sponsor for their continued support and welcomed the announcement that Bircham Dyson Bell LLP had agreed to support the Forum.

Visit [www.ehtf.org.uk](http://www.ehtf.org.uk) for the meeting notes.

RPS Planning was commissioned by the English Historic Towns Forum to undertake research into the use of Article 4 Directions by English local planning authorities. These are used to bring under control a range of works authorised under Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Orders of 1995 and 2008.

The EHTF 1992 report entitled 'Townscape in Trouble' highlighted the damage that has been caused to the character and appearance of individual historic buildings and entire areas by the many small-scale works that can be carried out without the need for planning permission. However, a local planning authority can restrict these 'permitted development' rights through the making of an Article 4 Direction which can cover one or more properties and they can restrict one or more classes of permitted development.

The effect of an Article 4 Direction is not that development within a particular category of development cannot be carried out, but simply that it is no longer automatically permitted under Article 3 of the GPDO, but instead must be subject to a specific planning application. This does not necessarily mean that an authority will refuse permission for the works but it does enable the authority to retain some control over the design and detailing of the proposed development and to grant permission subject to appropriate conditions.

Since 1995 a simplified procedure has been available to enable authorities to make Article 4(2) Directions for dwellinghouses in conservation areas, without the need for the Secretary of State's approval. The use of these Directions as well as the earlier 4(1) Directions which require the Secretary of State's approval, for restricting works within conservation areas was specifically looked into by contacting 72 local planning authorities, spread across the whole of England.

The authority's survey had been based on conservation of the stock of fish and 81% of the areas. In fact, for every one (e.g. Hart District) conservation levels of cover City Council of Enfield with Council with While 19% of Article 4 District areas, notably City Council Kirklees Metropolitan 59 conservation a large number only a few Council with conservation

Of the author reported that affected by dwellinghouse Article 4(1) control 'permitted' commercial flats. Notably, Chesterfield introduced a byelaw to the exterior of the Centre Court. The Council have used Article 4(1) under control to agricultural within their and Cleveland.



Unlisted dwelling houses in the Bisley  
Conservation Area Covered by the Article 4 (2) Direction



## of Article 4 Directions

ies consulted as part of the between them designated 2,044 areas, representing some 22% of conservation areas in England, them had Article 4 Directions e or more of their conservation t some authorities had Directions e of their conservation areas strict Council for its 32 (areas), though many had high erage (e.g. Brighton and Hove with 84%, the London Borough th 81% and Canterbury City 47% coverage).

of authorities consulted had no ections for their conservation ole amongst these being Leeds l with 65 conservation areas and ropolitan District Council with ation areas, many others with ber of conservation areas had Directions. (e.g. Stroud District n just 3 directions for its 42 n areas).

orities consulted, the majority at the main type of property the extra controls were es, but a number had used Directions to bring under mitted development' works to properties and residential le amongst these authorities Borough Council has controls over the painting of of all properties within its Town ervation Area. A few authorities Article 4(1) Directions to bring ol permitted development works al and industrial properties onervation areas (e.g. Redcar and Borough Council).

Of the Directions that have been made by the authorities that responded to the survey, 74% had applied the controls selectively within their conservation areas, but some 25% had made 'blanket' Directions, applying the additional controls to all properties within their conservation areas, irrespective of whether they were listed buildings or buildings that were not dwellinghouses.

71% of the Directions made by the authorities that responded to the survey, dated from after 1995 when the streamlined system was introduced; this reflecting the large number of directions that are of the 4(2) variety; that is applying to dwellinghouses in conservation areas.

While the withdrawal of permitted development rights by an Article 4 Direction can give rise to a claim for compensation if a planning application is refused or granted subject to conditions, none of the authorities consulted in the survey reported any claims for compensation being made against their authority.

An increasing number of local planning authorities are making Article 4 Directions as part of the management plans for their conservation areas and now with the extension of permitted development rights for works within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse that came into operation on 1st October, by the Amended GPDO 2008, **authorities need to take action immediately if they are to avoid serious damage to our historic townscape.**

*Andrew Dick, Director - Historic Environment, RPS*

For a full report contact EHTF or RPS.

## Format of NEWS?

The format of the regular EHTF NEWS has been debated for some time – paper or electronic? Responses from Members vary – with equal numbers in favour of each, and the considerations well matched.

It has therefore been decided that the next edition – in the New Year – will only be circulated electronically – as a trial. (It will also be available on-line as it is now.)

Please make a mental note of your response to this paper copy – when you read it? whether you share it with colleagues? – and we will ask you for a comparative assessment after your receive the next e-version. A decision will then be made about future editions – paper, e-news or a combination?

You might also like to compare the e-version with other e-news bulletins you receive to help us to continually improve our communications with you.

If you have any news you would like to share with other Members – successful projects, particular problems, or anything else of interest – please contact the editorial team at [ehft@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ehft@uwe.ac.uk)



## The Forum's programme for 2009 evolves

At the Strategy Meeting held on 8 October, Members met to consider the results of the Membership Survey carried out in August and, in the context of the Strategic Priorities set out in the Business Plan, to prioritise topics for the Forum to address in the coming year.

There was general consensus that high quality design should cut across all areas of work. Key issues of concern were agreed as:

- Conservation & historic environment protection
- Retail development
- Quality public realm
- Transport
- Housing growth (the current 'pause' offers an opportunity for reflection)
- Tourism

Bearing in mind that in the past year the Forum has carried out work (guidance or conferences) on: - retail development, historic streets, tourism and transport, it was agreed that there is potential for further guidance on:

- Heritage protection
  - Conservation area management
  - Managing growth
  - Park & Ride update
- (See the message from the Chair on the back page)

These topics will therefore form the basis for projects and events in 2009. A programme will be published in the New Year. For notes from the meeting see [www.ehft.org.uk](http://www.ehft.org.uk)

## Manual for Historic Streets

### The Why? and How? of achieving high quality streetscape

This document brings together a collection of articles by experts in both the theory and practice of good streetscape management. National policies and guidelines, the purpose and economic benefits of the public realm and the risk debate are explored in Part 1. Part 2 looks at achieving high quality in the various elements which make up the streets - from paving and street furniture to lighting and public art. The document concludes with Key Principles and an extensive reference list.



£12 (£9 to EHTF Members)

Due to high demand, Manual for Historic Streets is now available as a PDF on CD. To order your copy visit [www.ehft.org.uk](http://www.ehft.org.uk)



Lichfield was an excellent venue for our Annual Conference: a relatively small city with plenty of examples of the issues and opportunities facing our historic environment. Some of those issues have been around a long time (e.g. the impact of permitted development rights on the appearance of non listed domestic frontages); others are more recent (e.g. the measurement of the impact of air quality on the fabric of buildings and monuments).

The Conference explored how we have responded to the pressures created by a range of challenges over the past 15 years or so. As Brian Human's article on the front page explains, there are a number of future challenges we need to address if we are to respond positively to these issues: intelligence, resources, integration and confidence. The Forum will help in the delivery of these.

The venue was also used as an opportunity to seek Members' views on the future work programme of the Forum. A consultation on the Forum's strategy resulted in over 60 responses and the common areas where Members feel more guidance and research is needed are:

- **Heritage protection:** preparing for the implementation of the Heritage Protection Act and particularly the resultant PPS advice;
- **Conservation Area Management:** linked to the first area but with more emphasis on good practice in the delivery of CAM Plans, not just their preparation;
- **Managing Growth:** a key issue for many Member towns. Not only how to physically accommodate what are frequently significant levels of expansion around historic towns, but also how the capacity of historic centres is best able to respond to the impact of major growth;
- **Park and Ride:** to up-date our guidance (last reviewed in 2000), in the context of a more integrated approach to transport and with a focus on how P&R works in smaller historic towns.

So there is plenty for the Forum to do, and for the Membership to become involved in, either as attendees or participants at our events, or in contributions to the work. If you would like to assist in any of these areas please contact the Director. We are always pleased to welcome new support!

*Sam Howes*

Sam Howes, Chair, EHTF

## Tunbridge Wells BC Schools' Heritage Project - Historic Shop Fronts

Inspired by German restoration of the traditional, pre-war townscape and architecture of Dresden (that's a place for a future EHTF visit!), I felt that in England we don't do enough in schools to develop pride in our heritage. To ensure its preservation, the Heritage Champions' job needs essentially to educate our young people and harness their enthusiasm to understand their local built inheritance.

I felt also that, as education is about sowing seeds, the project might even address the skills shortage by suggesting an eventual career prospect for some, as conservation architect, conservation planning officer, master mason, carpenter, etc.

I began by going into schools, explaining the work of Heritage

Champions. Into this was slotted the project. In order to introduce the local built inheritance, I decided to sponsor the recording, first of all, of historic shop fronts through children's accurate drawings of them. These went on show in the Town Hall and prizes were awarded for the best examples.

Children learnt about building styles, were involved in visits to examine and draw interesting shop fronts. The project grew to include literature / writing, craft work (models as well as tiles), religious studies, IT and music.

I introduced the project by means of a slide-show of local historic shop fronts, to illustrate just what I meant and provided a list of literary texts and writing ideas, as well as of historic shop fronts in the borough.



Tile showing the doorway of an 18 Century shop in Cranbrook

Linda Hall, Cllr and Heritage Champion for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

## Photo competition winner!

URBAN SPLASH

From the 30 excellent submissions of images illustrating the USP of historic towns, 12 were chosen by the Executive at their July meeting to feature in the 2009 calendar, which will be circulated to Members later this year.

The overall winner of a two night stay at The Midland Hotel, Morecambe, sponsored by Urban Splash, was Roger Elphick for the image of Elvit Bridge Durham, lit at night.

A long time supporter of EHTF, Roger retired in October, so we wish him well and an enjoyable break in Morecambe.



Top Wilf Newall from Durham County Council with Cllr David Smith and Sam Howes.

Bottom - the winning picture



## Membership Survey draw winner!

The response to the Survey in August was very gratifying and the information has been useful in determining the issues which the Forum will address in the coming year. All respondents were entered into a draw, which was made at the Annual Conference Dinner on 9 October.

The winner, Mike Fenton of Hawkins Eades Planning, (Corporate Members), has received a celebration bottle of champagne.

Congratulations Mikel!

## New Members

**Addagrip Surface Treatments Ltd:**  
Mr Roger Critchley  
Managing Director  
Addagrip House  
Bell Lane Ind Estate  
Uckfield, East Sussex  
TN22 1QL  
T: 01825 761333  
W: [www.addagrip.co.uk](http://www.addagrip.co.uk)

**ATCM (Assoc of Town Centre Management):**  
Mr Simon Quin  
Chief Executive  
1 Queen Anne's Gate  
Westminster  
London, SW1H 9BT  
T: 020 7222 0120  
W: [www.atcm.org](http://www.atcm.org)

**Beacon Planning Ltd:**  
Mr Andy Thompson  
Director  
PO Box 1121, Willingham  
Cambridge, CB24 5WY  
T: 01638 572078  
W: [www.beaconplanning.org.uk](http://www.beaconplanning.org.uk)

**Birmingham Civic Society**  
Mr Freddie Gick  
Chairman  
Birmingham Midland Institute  
9 Margaret Street  
Birmingham, B3 3BS  
T: 0121 236 8110  
W: [www.birminghamcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.birminghamcivicsociety.org.uk)

**Bristol City Council:**  
Ms Tina Speake  
Coordinator Conservation Programme  
Urban Design and Conservation  
City Development  
Brunel House, St Georges Road  
Bristol, BS1 5UY  
T: 0117 922 2915  
W: [www.bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk)

**Hamilton-Baillie Associates Ltd:**  
Mr Ben Hamilton-Baillie  
Director  
Dean House,  
94 Whiteladies Road  
Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2QX  
T: 0117 911 4221  
W: [www.hamilton-baillie.co.uk](http://www.hamilton-baillie.co.uk)

**Laidler, Mr Keith:**  
Retired Local Government  
Greenfields  
Far Lane, Waddington  
Lincoln, LN5 9QG  
Email: [keithlaidler@hotmail.com](mailto:keithlaidler@hotmail.com)

**Lichfield Planning LLP:**  
Mr Steve Kemp  
Senior Partner  
26 Westgate, Lincoln, LN1 3BD  
T: 01522 546483  
W: [www.lichfieldplanning.co.uk](http://www.lichfieldplanning.co.uk)

**Steintec UK Ltd:**  
Mr David Burton  
Technical Director  
728 London Road, West Thurrock  
Essex, RM20 3LU  
T: 0870 7555448  
W: [www.steintec.co.uk](http://www.steintec.co.uk)

**Stratford Voice:**  
Mr Kevin Gildea  
PO Box 4700  
Stratford-upon-Avon, CV31 1FB  
T: 01789 204554  
W: [www.stratfordvoice.org.uk](http://www.stratfordvoice.org.uk)