

News

from English Heritage

Religion and Place Today: Buildings and Urban Communities

This issue of *Conservation Bulletin* will be launched at a two-day conference in November, convened jointly by English Heritage and the Pevsner Architectural Guides. The conference will investigate aspects of the continuing importance of religious buildings in the 21st century. England's religious and cultural diversity is represented by a range of eminent speakers, and the event will be held at the newly opened London Muslim Centre on Whitechapel Road, Europe's largest and newest Islamic community centre in an area of East London long known for its diversity. Opened in June 2004 amidst the celebration of Tower Hamlets' Muslim community, which raised a substantial part of the funding, the Centre includes a new prayer hall with spacious facilities for multi-faith and multi-cultural activities and is available to all the people of Tower Hamlets.

Grants for Cathedrals

Following a review of the fabric needs of English cathedrals in comparison with other grant pressures, English Heritage has reduced funding for its Cathedrals Repair Grants scheme to £1 million per annum. A survey in 2002 demonstrated that with the help of English Heritage grants, cathedrals had completed 86% of the fabric repairs identified in the 1991 survey. For most cathedrals, projected repair costs to 2006 are on a smaller scale, concentrating on cyclical repairs rather than major projects.

However, there remains a small number of the greater cathedrals in England still only part way through major long-term repair programmes. It is recognized that a new scheme should continue to offer large grants for such cathedrals as Lincoln and Salisbury, as well as to provide help to cathedrals for smaller projects, including non-repair projects such as metric survey and fire protection.

Early in 2004, Grants for Cathedrals was designed to the same format as all other English Heritage grant schemes, giving cathedrals a choice of two streams of application.

The application packs for 2005/6 grants under the new scheme were sent to all Church

of England and Roman Catholic cathedrals at the end of June 2004. Applications were received at the end of July for a total of 36 projects from 27 different cathedrals costing £4.16 million including VAT and fees. Offers of grants are in the process of being made at the time of writing.

Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England 2002–5

English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund have been working in partnership since 1996 to offer grants to places of worship in England. Through the joint Repair Grants for Places of Worship scheme, begun in 2002, grants are offered to help meet the essential repair needs of the ecclesiastical built heritage. All listed places of worship in England are eligible to apply, and applications are welcomed from all faith groups and denominations, Christian and non-Christian.

Grants are considered for urgent repairs to keep a place of worship structurally stable and weatherproof. Most repairs supported through the scheme are high-level works to roofs, towers, spires, high-level masonry and rainwater disposal systems. Grants may also be given for other urgent repair work if the historic fabric is at risk of imminent loss or if there is an emergency affecting the structure of the building.

In the first two years of the current scheme, grants have been awarded totalling nearly £50 million to 573 Grade I, II* and II listed places of worship across the country. Reflecting England's diverse culture, grants have been offered to places of worship ranging from medieval parish churches to an urban synagogue and a Buddhist temple. The total budget for the third year of the scheme is £25 million. There is a two-stage application process, with funding available for working up projects in stage one and for the repair work itself in stage two. Applications are considered in two annual batches; the closing date for applications for this year has now passed. The next round of offers will be announced in December 2004. For further information on the scheme, please contact Nick Chapple on 020 7973 3267 or nick.chapple@english-heritage.org.uk.

The Anglo-Sikh Heritage Trail

The innovative web-based Anglo-Sikh Heritage Trail highlights 150 years of Anglo-Sikh culture and history. Created by the Maharajah Duleep Singh Centenary Trust, the website draws together Anglo-Sikh sites, significant memorials, rare books and manuscripts, and sumptuous treasures and artefacts. English Heritage is one of its many supporters. At the launch in July, Dr Simon Thurley said, 'We have pledged £135,000 to develop the Trail and have worked closely with the Trust since the start of the project to help bring this exciting idea to life. We are proud of the significance our property Osborne House has for Anglo-Sikh culture. Visitors can see the exceptional Sikh decoration in the Durbar Room, designed and built by Bhai Ram Singh, and the portraits of Maharajah Duleep Singh from when he stayed in the house with Queen Victoria. English Heritage helps communities champion their own heritage, and we hope that this Trail will help everyone to enjoy and understand Anglo-Sikh heritage.' In addition to the Durbar Room, the website includes the battle standards from the Anglo-Sikh wars at the Royal Regimental Museum at Dover Castle, the first British Sikh temple in Shepherds Bush, London, and the burial place of Maharajah Duleep Singh in St Andrew and St Patrick Parish Church, Elveden, Suffolk. For more information, visit www.asht.

Save Our Streets

English Heritage has launched a Save Our Streets campaign to improve historic areas and landscapes. According to Dr Simon Thurley, 'Once, England had some of the most elegant streets in the world, famed for the quality of its street furniture. Today, it is a different story. Our historic streets are being trashed by thoughtlessness and cheap design. 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 ... We are all pedestrians, and we all deserve better.'

The campaign includes giving advice to the Department for Transport on changing regulations to encourage best practice, setting up design workshops across the country, and publishing regional streetscape manuals, based on the widely regarded document published by the London Region in 2000. The aim of the manuals is to set out general principles for the conservation, management and design of streets to promote integrated townscape management.

Places of worship: useful websites

- The Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi Medieval Stained Glass in Great Britain www.cvma.ac.uk
Over 10,000 photographs, mostly from the NMR's collections.
- The Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland www.crsbi.ac.uk
Currently includes 600 reports. When completed, it will include some 5,000 sites in Britain and Ireland (60,000 images).
- Church Plans Online www.churchplansonline.org
Includes some 13,000 plans and drawings in the archive of the Incorporated Church Building Society, which spans the period from 1818 to 1982 and is stored at Lambeth Palace.
- The Ecclesiological Society www.ecclsoc.org
Includes responses of various bodies to the Government's recent consultation paper on the Ecclesiastical Exemption.

Professional training courses

- Building conservation masterclasses and professional conservators in practice. West Dean College, near Chichester, West Sussex.
A collaboration in specialist training between West Dean College, English Heritage and the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, sponsored by the Radcliffe Trust. For details, please contact West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester PO18 0QZ; Tel 01243 818294; bcm@westdean.org.uk; pat.jackson@westdean.org.uk; www.westdean.org.uk.
- Professional training in the historic environment 2004/5.
A wide-ranging programme of one- and two-day courses at the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education, in association with the AFT, the IHBC and the IFA. For details, please contact Dr Alison MacDonald, OUDCE, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA; Tel 01865 270366; alison.macdonald@conted.ox.ac.uk.

St Mary's Church, Bottesford, Leicestershire (Grade I). The chancel contains monuments to eight Earls of Rutland. This late 16th-century monument to John, the 4th Earl, was recorded by Laurence Goldman in May 1969.

Reproduced by permission of English Heritage, NMR_AA99/00536

