

UNITED KINGDOM – HERITAGE @ RISK!

Responsibility for the heritage in the United Kingdom rests with a complex web of bodies, both official and unofficial, which operate at UK-wide, National and local level. The Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is responsible for the UK's obligations under the World Heritage Convention and is also responsible, within England, for heritage legislation and the statutory protection of "scheduled" monuments and "listed" buildings. DCMS (www.culture.gov.uk) also provides government funding for its statutory advisory body, English Heritage (EH). EH (www.english-heritage.org.uk) is a Non Departmental Public Body charged with the protection of the historic environment through its role in statutory processes and with the promotion of public understanding and enjoyment of the heritage throughout England. Within the other devolved "home countries" of the UK (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) the executive role is fulfilled respectively by Historic Scotland (www.historic-scotland.gov.uk), Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments (www.cadw.wales.gov.uk) and the Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland. In Scotland and Wales the survey and record of ancient and historical monuments, including those at risk, is also carried out by Royal Commissions on Historical Monuments, who also have responsibility for their respective National Monuments Records. The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England was operationally merged with EH in 1999.

The only UK-wide official body with a remit, which includes the heritage at risk, is the National Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). HLF (www.hlf.org.uk) uses money raised by the National Lottery with the aim of safeguarding and enhancing the heritage. HLF will fund "not-for-profit" Building Preservation Trusts for capital projects whose aim is to preserve historic buildings at risk and which cannot be preserved through normal market mechanisms. HLF also provides Townscape Heritage Initiative grants, which support common funds for the repair and the regeneration of historic areas for a fixed period of years. This major UK-wide programme is designed to create new opportunities for economic, social and cultural regeneration through the repair and restoration of the urban built fabric. The first awards were made in 1998-1999 when 35 awards, totalling £17.8m, were made with priority being given to towns in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. HLF also awarded £36.1m to 69 projects under its Urban Parks Scheme. In England HLF also grant aids active places of worship which are eligible under a joint scheme with EH. The main focus of this scheme is to support urgent repair works.

There are also other voluntary organisations with a UK remit including the Architectural Heritage Fund (www.heritage.co.uk/apt/ahf.html) and the UK Association of Building Preservation Trusts. The largest, oldest and most technically expert national pressure group fighting to save old buildings from decay, demolition and damage is The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (www.spab.org.uk/whatis.html). There are also a number of other so-called National Amenity Societies (The Ancient Monuments Society, The Georgian Group, The Victorian Society, The Council for British Archaeology (www.britarch.ac.uk) and The International Council on Monu-

ments and Sites UK (www.icomos.org/uk/) that have both a campaigning role and a statutory role in the determination of planning applications concerning listed buildings within their respective remits. Two organisations, RESCUE and SAVE (www.savebritainsheritage.org), are concerned with issues relating respectively to threatened archaeological sites and historic buildings. SAVE has produced excellent campaigning reports on railway architecture, textile mills, nonconformist chapels, churches, barns, theatres, follies, pubs, military and naval buildings and recently mental asylums. SAVE is also developing a systematic and cost effective approach to the maintenance of the historic buildings of the UK through the promotion of Monument Watch UK, based on the Monumentenwacht in the Netherlands.

Below the national level local government is organised differently in each "home country" and consists of unitary, county and district authorities who provide conservation services. There are also a number of regional, county or city amenity, archaeological and historical societies and building preservation trusts many of whom will be concerned with monuments and buildings at risk.

Given the devolved nature of conservation in the UK it is not possible to give overall comparable statistics relating to heritage at risk and each "home country" has to be considered separately. Furthermore archaeological sites and historic buildings tend to be treated separately, since legislation distinguishes between them, although in practise there is some overlap. Taking the situation in England first EH commissioned the *Monuments at Risk Survey of England 1995* (MARS) from the School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University. The survey was concerned with the 937,484 entries in local authority Sites and Monuments Records, which included about 300,000 archaeological monuments. For financial and practical reasons MARS could assess not every archaeological monument in England. Accordingly, a sampling strategy was developed to look at a cross-section of all recorded monuments through field and aerial photographic survey. Among the topics considered by MARS were monument survival 1945-1995; key causes of destruction; monument condition in 1995; and monuments and land-use. The survey showed that, on average, one recorded monument had been completely destroyed every day since 1945. There has been a decline in the proportion of earthwork monuments having good areal survival from 95% in 1945 to 76% in 1995. Only 5% of MARS monuments were found to show no evidence of recent loss when surveyed. About 2% of all monuments (c. 4520) were at high risk from serious damage or destruction, while 28% of monuments (c. 65,000) were at medium risk. Legal protection (Scheduling) was shown to be effective; less than 3% of all destroyed monuments actually surveyed were Scheduled Monuments, but only 6% of recorded monuments extant in 1995 were Scheduled. The survival and condition of monuments in areas subject to other designations (National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) is generally better than in areas of countryside not designated in this way. MARS was the first study of its kind and has provided a benchmark, which will allow the monitoring of the condition of England's archaeological resource.

EH proposes to repeat the survey in 2015. In the meanwhile MARS is providing EH with a framework within which to manage England's archaeological resource with the object of trying to reduce the risks to monuments. The actions taken include: expanding the number of records of the archaeological resource (the National Mapping Programme using aerial photography is particularly valuable in this context); supporting a programme of increasing the schedule of protected monuments (the Monuments Protection Programme); encouraging National Parks and the authorities responsible for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to develop and expand their important work in managing and safeguarding archaeological monuments; focussing attention on areas which do not benefit from much overall protection; promoting the mitigation of damage through the local planning process; and raising the public awareness of their local archaeological resource.

None of the other "home countries" has developed any survey as comprehensive as MARS. In neither Scotland nor Wales registers of monuments at risk have been prepared. Cadw believes that, thanks to grant aid, most local authority monuments are in good repair. Cadw is aware of monuments at risk in private ownership and is trying to target these with grants. In Northern Ireland a Condition and Management Survey of the Archaeological Resource is at the design stage. It will be loosely based on MARS, but less comprehensive, but will provide a realistic view of the current situation. A pilot project will take place in 2000 and it will involve field inspection of sites on eight land use types.

In England in 2000 there are 30,239 buildings or groups of buildings listed with the highest statutory designation of grade I and II*, together comprising the most important 8% of the country's listed building stock. English Heritage has calculated in its Buildings at Risk Register that nationally 3.8% – 1 in 25 – are at risk of loss through neglect and decay. Including structural Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 1625 buildings and structures, outstanding in the national context are known to be at risk. About 1 in 5 items on the Register remain in the highest priority category: "Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric: no solution agreed". However nationally, concrete progress is being made towards securing the future of more than 1 in 4 – 27.5% – of buildings on the Register. Almost 1 in 3 en-

tries on the Register – 28% – are or were domestic buildings; 77% of them are capable of being returned to beneficial use if repaired. About 1 in 10 entries on the Register are or were industrial buildings; 40% of them are capable of being returned to beneficial use if repaired. Overall, almost half – 44% – of items on the Register are capable of beneficial use sufficient to justify their maintenance once repaired. The remainder need long term stewardship. About 1 in 7 – 14.5% – is economic to repair and bring back into use without subsidy, but the total subsidy needed to bring the buildings on the Register into repair (and, where applicable, use) is in the order of £400m. The full set English Heritage's Registers can be found on its Internet site: www.english-heritage.org.uk

Case Studies of buildings at risk in England:

The Darnley Mausoleum, Cobham, Kent,

is one of the most important listed buildings in England (grade I) to be at long term risk. Never actually used for burial, it has no conceivable use beyond standing on its hill as a magnificently crystalline piece of Georgian funerary pomp. It has been much vandalised, though surprisingly with little effect on its character, and, with its ownership in the hands of the receivers, its rescue is dependent on sizeable investment in a building which will never be more than a monument.

810 Tottenham High Road, Haringey, London,

is one of a symmetrical pair of grade II* listed houses built c1715, with fine gauged brickwork. In the mid-1980s the owner, Haringey Council, set up a building preservation trust in which it vested the property. There began a long process of decline, during which the building suffered from dry rot, theft of features and an arson attack. In 1997 the Council began the painfully slow process of resolving the complex legal issues arising from the demise of the Trust. There is a purchaser for the property, and a grant offer from English Heritage. It stands in painful contrast to its partner, recently repaired through a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme.



The Darnley Mausoleum, Cobham, Kent. One of the most important listed buildings in England (grade I) to be at long term risk.

The role of English Heritage is primarily to provide practical advice and resources to help owners and local authorities to secure the future of important buildings at risk. Since 1998, EH has published *Buildings at Risk: A New Strategy; Stopping the Rot: a step-by step guide to serving Urgent Works and Repairs Notices* and a Policy Statement, *Enabling development and the conservation of heritage assets*, that is particularly relevant to the assessment of development proposals advanced to rescue buildings at risk. In 1998/99 EH spent a total of £35.5m in grants to buildings, conservation areas, churches, monuments, historic parks and landscapes and archaeological projects. EH's primary vehicle for conservation-led, area-based regeneration and for the preservation and enhancement of England's most important conservation areas is called HERS (Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes). The allocation for 2000/2001 is just under £3.3m.



810 Tottenham High Road (c1715), Haringey, London. A symmetrical pair of grade II* listed houses; the one on the right has been repaired while the other remains at risk.

Case Studies of buildings saved in England:

Dalton Water Pumping Station, Stockton Road, Dalton le Dale, Durham.

Water pumping station, 1873-79, listed grade II*. First phase of the project (repair) was carried out in 1998 with a large grant from English Heritage. Building converted to a pub, restaurant and function suite.

St John the Baptist Church, Lincoln,

dating from 1962-3 and listed grade II*, has been removed from the Buildings at Risk Register since the repairs to the hyperbolic roof have now been completed. English Heritage has supported the work with a 70% grant to the Parochial Church Council.

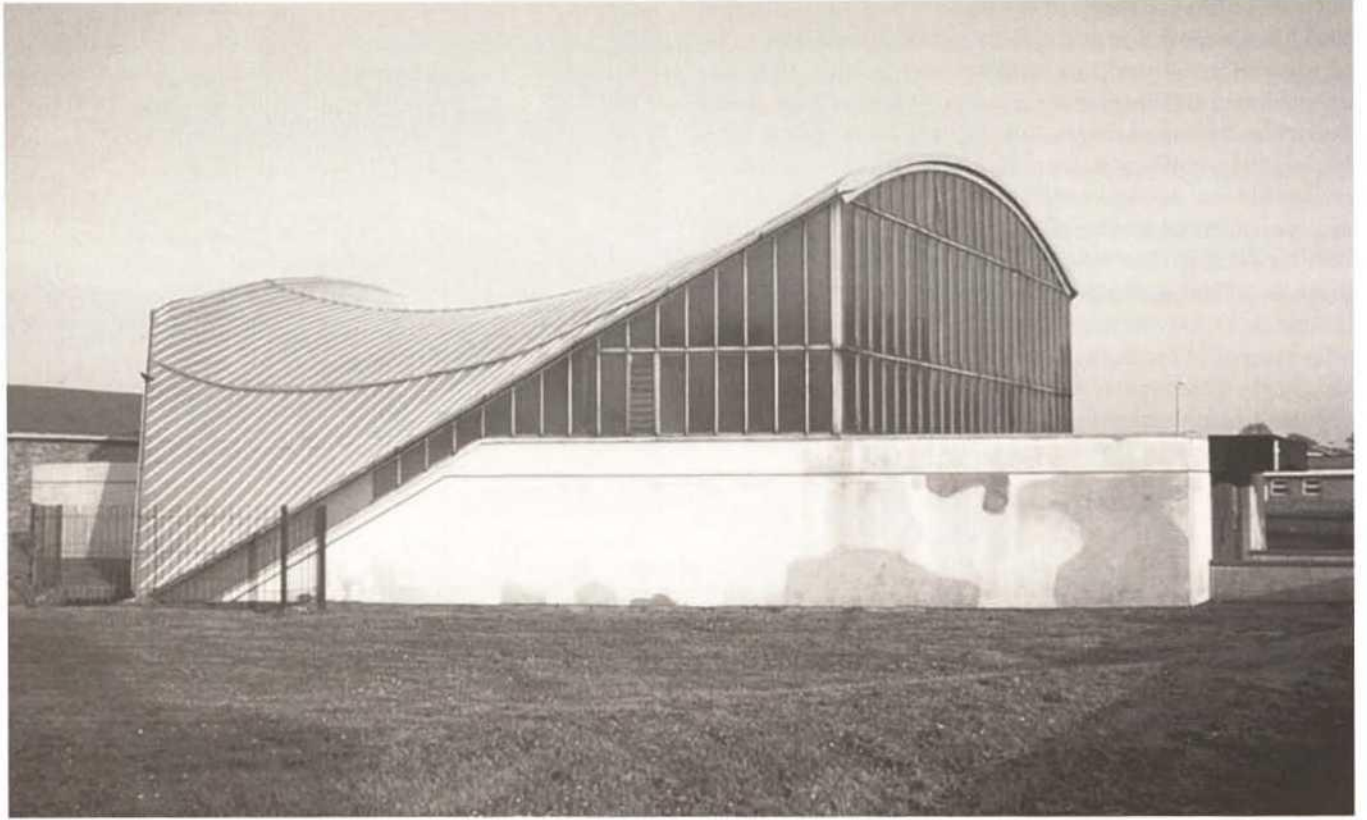


Dalton Water Pumping Station (1873-79), Stockton Road, Dalton le Dale, Durham. Before and after views of this grade II* building which has been converted to a pub, restaurant and conference suite.

In England the local planning authorities are the primary custodians of the historic environment. Many local authorities maintain and use *Registers* of their own, and follow best practice by monitoring the condition of all their historic buildings, the majority of which are listed grade II. Examples of these county registers are to be found in Essex, Hampshire and Kent. A national overview of grade II buildings at risk is maintained by SAVE which has published eleven annual surveys of Buildings at Risk and maintains an online register. In 2000 SAVE had information on about 800 buildings. The register cannot hope to be comprehensive but it continues to fill out as more and more local authorities volunteer information. The primary aim of the SAVE register is to unite people looking for a building to repair with buildings in need of repair.

In Scotland The Scottish Civic Trust (www.scotnet.co.uk/sect) has operated a Buildings at Risk Service on behalf of Historic Scotland for the last ten years. Research on over 1500 Buildings at Risk has been collected during this time and a wealth of information now exists on a database of buildings ranging from unlisted crofts in the Western Isles to A-listed mansions in the Borders. The list is growing at a rapid rate. Information is derived from local authorities and a network of other organisations. Each year a *Bulletin* is published which highlights a representative number of buildings in terms of building types, location, and degree of dilapidation and to illus-





St. John the Baptist Church (1962), Lincoln. This grade II* church was at risk until its hyperbolic roof underwent extensive repairs.

trate the many reasons as to why buildings are considered to be at risk. Like the SAVE register in England the Scottish list is aimed at marrying potential restorers with suitable properties.

In Wales the only national source of information on all grades of buildings at risk is an extension of the SAVE register. Cadw has not itself produced any registers of buildings at risk; instead it has concentrated on the resurvey of listed buildings which is due to be completed by the end of 2005. However as local authority areas are being completed, Cadw is offering grants of up to 80% to local authorities for them to prepare their own local buildings at risk registers. Eight buildings at risk surveys are in preparation. Non-conformist chapels are a particular class of building in Wales, which provide one of the most consistent expressions of religion and culture of any of the component countries, which make up the UK. However they are at constant risk from demolition or crass conversion.

In Northern Ireland the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society in association with the Environment and Heritage Service,

has produced six *Buildings at Risk* volumes. The latest volume published in 2000 summarises the current situation. Five hundred and ninety buildings have appeared at risk, but 23% have achieved a positive new future. A particular feature of Northern Ireland is the large number of urban dwellings that have been at risk as a result of the legacy of the Troubles.

Taking the UK as whole some general trends can be seen. The main natural threat is coastal erosion. This threat was brought into focus in 1999 by EH's decision to excavate and remove from the intertidal zone at Holme Next the Sea a timber circle that had been built in the Bronze Age – about 2000 BC – originally on dry land. In the long term other sites are at risk, including the Neolithic site at Skara Brae, part of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site. The importance of the inter-tidal zone as a sensitive environment in which archaeological sites are preserved has only comparatively recently been recognised. This zone has now taken its place alongside the UK's territorial waters as being particularly significant for shipwreck sites.

Case Study of a shipwreck at risk:

The Anne, Rye, England:

designated as a protected wreck site under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, *The Anne* was a 70 gun 3rd rate warship built at Chatham in 1678. During the Battle of Beachy Head in 1690 she was run ashore on the beach at Rye to avoid capture by the French. Up to 4 metres of the lower part of the hull is preserved. The hull is being degraded by marine life and the upper parts are regularly exposed at low tide. It has suffered from damage by treasure hunters and the hull is being eroded by tidal action. A charitable trust has been established to own the site, but there are no effective proposals to preserve the wreck. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has the powers to list and designate wrecks, but the Department has no powers to take any further action to preserve and protect such sites. Such action is unlikely to happen until the powers of English Heritage are extended to include maritime sites.

Intensive arable production in lowland areas continues to cause the major attrition of archaeological sites. Agriculture is an activity that is least controlled by protective measures or legislation. The continued strong demand for building land and a renewed spate of urban renewal programmes is also an ongoing problem, however, in the last decade, planning policies have been introduced which provide a framework to address the

problem. There is now the presumption that sites will be preserved. Where this is not possible the developer now carries the costs of excavation, analysis and storage.

The introduction of large modern equipment and new working methods is leading to traditional buildings such as barns, warehouses and maltings becoming no longer suitable for their original purposes. Similarly many institutional buildings such as courts, hospitals and particularly mental asylums are also becoming redundant. Redundancy continues to face the Church of England and the nonconformist churches. The major decline in traditional industries such as coal mining, textiles and heavy engineering have brought about the loss of many industrial buildings just when their value is being appreciated. The reduction in the UK's armed forces has also meant that many military buildings, including those associated with the Cold War will face demolition or conversion to other uses.

UK ICOMOS

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 SAVE 2000, *While stocks last...Buildings at risk 2000.* London
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The wreck of the 70 gun warship *The Anne* (1690), Rye. This wreck is subject to daily tidal erosion and continuous degradation of its wooden hull by marine life. There are no proposals for its preservation.

