

Local Action Issue

Words from the editor 2

Local action in the NW 3

Haigh Windmill, Wigan

The Florence Institute, Liverpool 6

Conference reports 12

New Light on Vernacular Architecture

IHBC Annual Dayschool 14

Recent Appeals 21

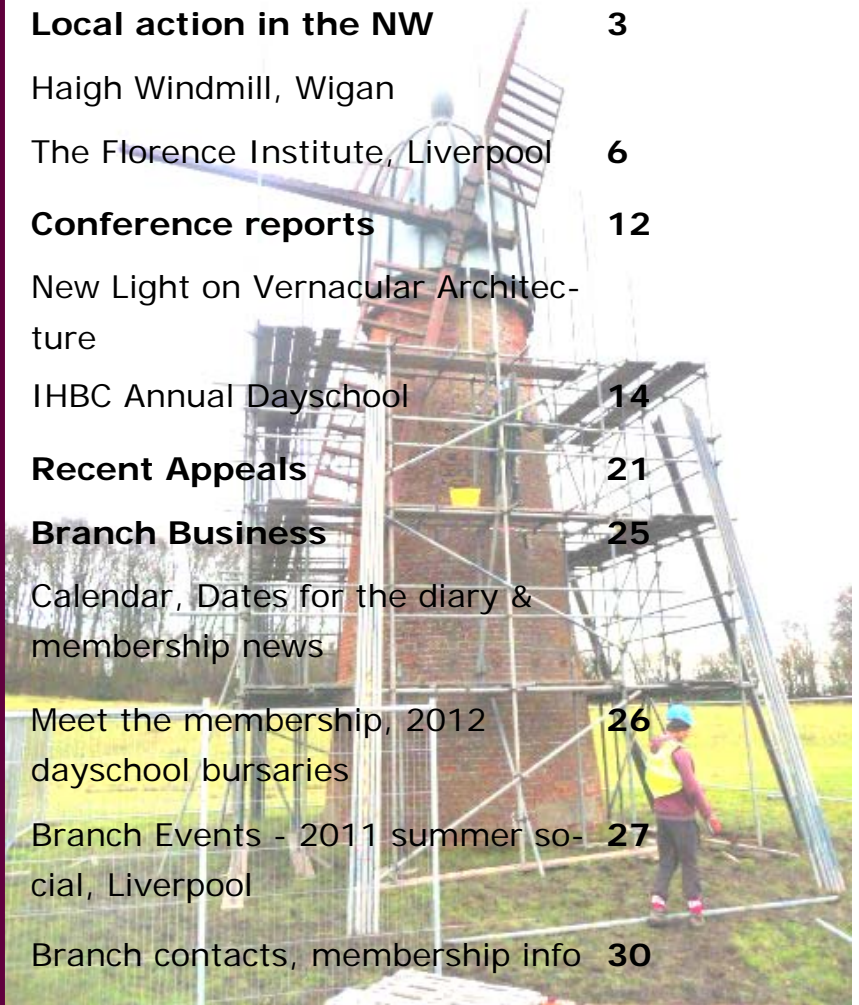
Branch Business 25

Calendar, Dates for the diary &
membership news

Meet the membership, 2012 26
dayschool bursaries

Branch Events - 2011 summer so- 27
cial, Liverpool

Branch contacts, membership info 30



Welcome to the Summer edition of the IHBC North West Branch Newsletter.

This newsletter should be with you in time for the annual NW Branch day conference, the highlight of our CPD calendar. This year we'll be looking at Historic Buildings: Local Action, following on from some of the papers presented at the national conference in Llandudno in June this year, reviewed for you by Matthew Crook. The government's Localism Bill intends to encourage a greater role for people at a local level, not a new idea and one that BPTs and civic societies have demonstrated in many places for decades. This time round there will be much less support and funding; the NWDA is gone and in local government, budget cuts are already reducing the number of conservation officers, a crucial source of local support and advice for community heritage projects. In this issue we bring you two cheering articles about recent community-led projects that have rescued local landmarks – the Florence Institute in Liverpool and the Haigh Windmill, Wigan. Continuing the theme of local heritage, a recent conference on the Isle of Man engaged with the vernacular – architecture of, by and for the people - food for thought in a review from Ashley Pettit.

Across the road from where I live the listed Victorian primary school is closing and a group of local people want to save it for community

use rather than see it converted to private flats. Local buildings for local people could be a good slogan here as this is League of Gentlemen land. As Chris Griffiths says, community projects like this need 'perseverance, self belief and steely determination' to succeed. There is funding out there but to win it projects have to be very robustly campaigned for, developed and designed. I was very struck by John Yates' call in Llandudno for more temporary uses for buildings at risk; rather than leaving a building empty while a project is developed and the full capital project is implemented, why not use it? This can highlight the building's potential, attract support for the project and people will be there to empty buckets and deter lead theft. This model has been actively adopted by the Victorian Baths Trust and at the Gaskells' House, to name just two projects in the NW. As well as dedicated volunteers, this approach needs a willing owner and a constructive local authority able to see the bigger picture and support temporary signage, ad hoc facilities or an unconventional mix of uses.

Share your experience of local heritage and community projects at the day conference - or at the AGM in December !

Marion Barter

Local Action in the NW

Haigh Windmill, Haigh Village Nr Wigan



For many reasons windmills have an important place in our lives. Inventions emanating from the industrial revolution brought the mills to great efficiency and semi-automation, the further development of which affects everyone today. As well as their place in social and economic history, mills are a vital part of the history of mechanical engineering and the development of motive power for the processing of raw materials.

Constructed in 1840, the Haigh Windmill (listed G2) is an unmissable landmark set within agricultural fields contained within the Haigh Hall estate, near Wigan.

The Haigh Windmill has had a chequered history. It was originally designed and constructed to pump and draw water from adjacent ponds and rivers to Haigh Brewery (now demolished) some 500m uphill from the site of the

windmill. However, it has now been unused for some 80 years. Suffering from neglect, poor maintenance and frequent storm damage due to its exposed location the mill is currently in poor condition, serving only as a significant landmark. The existing sails have many lost or broken timbers and the brickwork is showing extensive areas of failed pointing and spalling. Left unarrested this decay poses a risk of serious structural failure.



Originally constructed in brick, with a timber roof, the mill underwent a programme of restoration in the late 1970s and as a result a new roof was constructed of glass fibre. However, this refurbishment was only ever viewed as a temporary measure and left the mill devoid of its original fantail and of the decking which surrounded the tower.

The Windmill was originally owned by Lord Crawford, who at the time of refurbishment transferred ownership to the Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council for preservation for the public good.

Following an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, a small grant of £50,000 has been made available to fund a modest refurbishment,



ishment, raise community awareness and to provide better interpretation. Work began on site in January and has now been completed.

Historic significance: Wigan's surprising role in the development of Windmill technology.

Wigan, and indeed the Haigh Estate, has an important but little known place in the development of windmill technology, going back 100 years before the Haigh Windmill was built, with an invention that continues in use today on some modern wind turbines.

Edmund Lee, a blacksmith working at Brock Mill forge on the Haigh estate, was granted a patent in 1745 for a "self-regulating windmill", and unusually for an English inventor also secured a Dutch patent for the same invention.

This was one of the first attempts to automate the two most arduous tasks a wind miller had to face – setting cloth on the sails and turning either the whole mill, or its cap, to face the wind. This attempt at automation meant that windmills, in an age before reliable



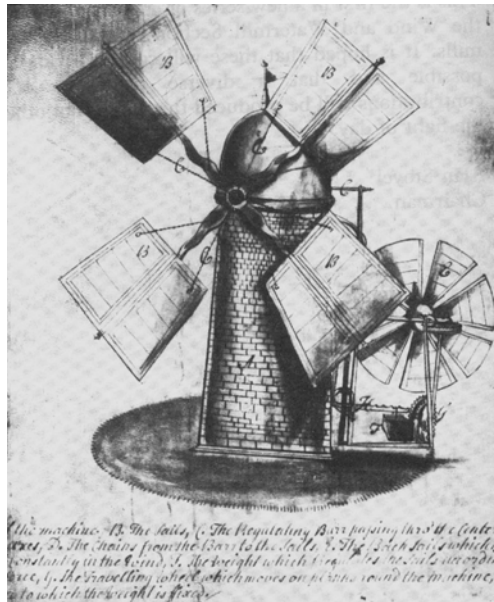
steam engines, could be used for tasks such as draining mine workings without the expense of employing someone to be in constant attendance.

In practice, Lee's design for the sails would have been unworkable, but his fantail, which turned the cap and sails into the wind, was later tweaked by the great Leeds engineer John Smeaton and others and became widespread throughout England and was used across the world. (Stephen Buckland, "Lee's Patent Windmill", SPAB 1988)

From the journal of the Swedish traveller and industrialist Reinhold Angerstein, who visited the area in 1754, it is now known that Richard Melling (who had also been employed at Brock Mill and later went on to survey part of the route of the Leeds-Liverpool canal as well as building cottages and almshouses on the Haigh estate) had built a flour windmill at Upholland (probably the tower which still exists) which used the features of Edmund Lee's patent, namely the fantail to turn the cap and sails which could be set and furled automatically.

Lee and Melling must have made models of their designs for experimental purposes and so the reference in Lord Crawford's mining agent William Peace's letter of 1838, nearly a hundred years after the patent, to the present Haigh windmill being inspired in part by

"a model at Haigh Hall" is tantalising, especially as Lee's patent drawing shows an unusual, tall, domed cap very like the one on Haigh windmill (see below).



Haigh windmill is therefore linked to two inventions: to automated windmill sails, and thus to early ideas of automation in general; and to the fantail, the ingenious invention of two Wigan men in the early days of the industrial revolution, which invention had a huge impact on the technology of wind power (and perhaps also did a little to lower the price of coal) but whose local origins have been almost completely forgotten.

Jason Kennedy is Wigan Council's Conservation & Design Manager, and Membership Secretary for the NW branch.



Haigh Windmill following the HLF funded repairs in 2011, and in former times, below.



The Florrie – a Phoenix now rising from the ashes

The Florence Institute is situated in the heart of Toxteth, Liverpool 8. It is one of a handful of outstanding Victorian buildings which survive in an area known as The Dingle. Its life and times catalogue the undulating fortunes of this fascinating corner of inner city Liverpool. For a decade it has been one of the most emblematic Buildings at Risk in the region, very much a cause célèbre. Thanks to the ground breaking 'Stop the Rot' campaign, launched by the Liverpool Echo newspaper in 2001, 'the Florrie' has garnered steady press coverage.



Since it was initially featured in 2004 (above), the Florrie's supporters and advocates have used this attention to great advantage and have now managed to pull off what the Echo's campaign set out to achieve. Indeed the Florrie has outlived 'Stop the Rot' by two

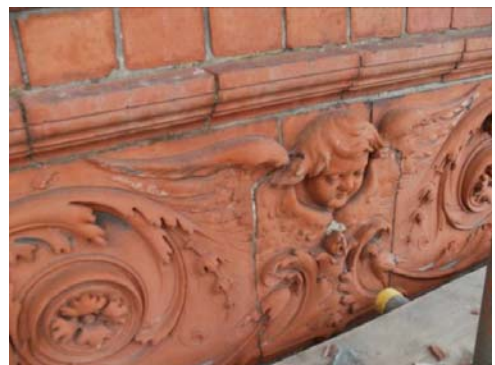
years already and looks set to flourish long into the future.



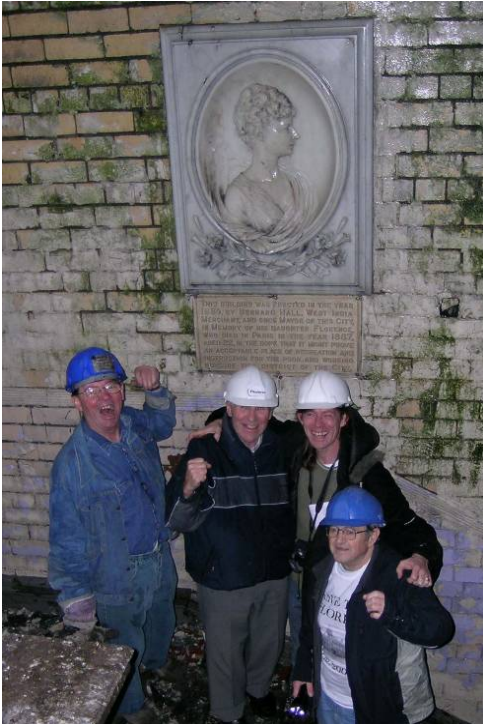
The Institute (pictured above in 1890) was built in 1889 as an institution for the 'recreation and instruction' of working class boys, one of the first of its kind (Salford's famous Lads' Club was not opened until 1904). Its function differed from that of the Gordon Institutes established in London in 1885 and Liverpool (Kirkdale) in 1886. These served primarily as technical schools and provided something more akin to mental and vocational education. The Florence Institute's purpose was to provide extra-curricular activities for young lads in order to help with the development of character during the increasingly challenging years of adolescence.

Fittingly, the building exudes character, taking for its inspiration the elaborately gabled prodigy houses of the Jacobean period. Built using lightweight materials and largely fireproof construction, the result is at once arresting but by no means demanding on the eye. Its fiery

red Ruabon brick is enlivened by sumptuous terracotta detailing applied generously throughout the two principal elevations. It is a zestful performance and epitomises the great flourish of 'Free Renaissance' architecture which was then reaching its peak. Although not formally documented, it would appear that the building was designed by local architect Herbert W. Keef, a partner in the firm Sherlock, Wood and Keef. The more famous Cornelius Sherlock, whose canon includes the Walker Art Gallery and Picton Reading Rooms, is likely to have won the commission. However, Sherlock died in 1888 before work began and Keef most probably took the project in hand thereafter.



The Institute owes its existence to Bernard Hall (1812-1890), former mayor of Liverpool (1879/80) and West India Merchant. It was erected in memory of his daughter Florence Bernardine Hall who tragically died aged 22 in Paris. According to the plaque attached to a fine marble relief of Florence found on the main stairs in the building, the Institute was built, 'in the hope that it might prove an acceptable place of recreation and instruction for the poor and working boys of this district of the city.'



The history of the building's activities and protagonists offers a fascinating and frequently heart warming account of how the lives

of many of Liverpool's young men were nurtured to maturity, stability and often considerable success. Gerry Marsden, of Gerry and the Pacemakers, was a member of the club and made his first stage appearance here at the age of 13. Besides music and theatrical entertainment, the activities of the club included woodwork, boxing, gymnastics as well as the 'Fiesta Club' which organised social events. Many of the Florrie's boys excelled at boxing and two members went on to become famous professional boxers; Alan Rudkin (Bantamweight Commonwealth & European Champion) and John Conteh (World Light-Heavyweight Champion). From the 1920s the Florence regularly fielded Basketball and Baseball teams and in the 1960s the Institute arranged weekend camps and trips for its members to places as far afield as France, Holland and the Isle of Arran. The Florence even owned a site at scenic Thurston in the Wirral for the purpose of staging regular weekend camps.



The Gymnasium in 1890

In spite of such highlights the fate of the Florrie has been in the balance ever since the 1970s. The first 'SOFA' ('Save our Florrie Appeal') was launched in 1975 and raised £5,000 to stave off closure. A revival in interest and appreciation of Victorian architecture and concern over the quantity of important 19th Century buildings being lost lead to the Florrie being listed in March 1975, grade II.

During the 1980s The Florrie was used as a youth training centre in response to massive unemployment and the drive to provide work opportunities for young people. The 'Florence Training Centre Limited' opened for a time but was wound up in 1988 and the vacant building put up for sale. Since then its future has at times hung by a thread, such as when a devastating fire swept through the building in 1999 leaving it at the mercy of the elements. It has remained unroofed ever since.....almost.

As a broken shell stranded in one of the most deprived areas in the UK there was little chance of it being sold, and the freehold simply reverted to the estate of the Duchy of Lancaster through Bona Vacantia. On a visit to Liverpool at the end of April 2007, Prince Charles was shown around the remains of the Florrie. When he enquired as to its ownership he was amazed to discover that the institute belonged to his mother, the Queen.

The main hall in 1890 & 2004, and new trusses in place in 2011.

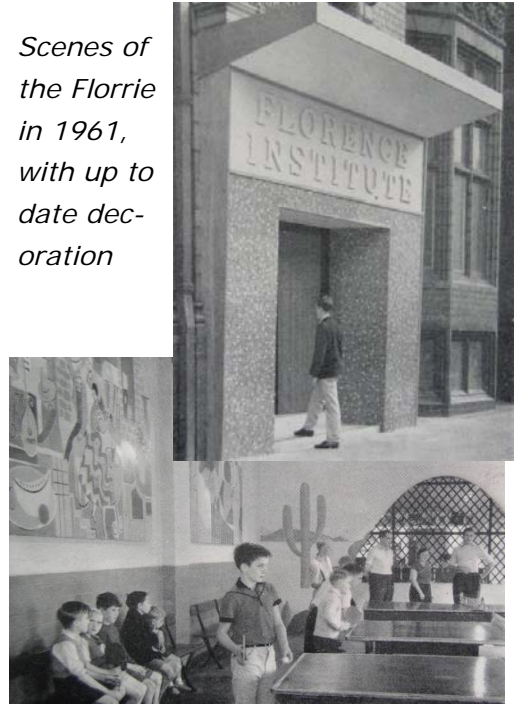


Thankfully, the Florrie's clutch of zealous devotees, local campaigners and community activists exploited the widespread press coverage put out through Stop the Rot. The campaign threw the media spotlight on some of the most pressing cases of heritage at risk in Liverpool. This gave a great deal of impetus to the co-ordinated attempt to rescue the Florrie which was beginning to gain momentum in 2004. With support from the Bishop of Liverpool, the City Council and the Merseyside Building Preservation Trust, 'The Friends of the Florrie' established a new charitable trust for the purpose of restoring and thereafter managing the building in perpetuity.

It should be emphasised that the Trust is composed and very much driven by local people, some of whom are old boys of the Florrie and many others with close links to the club. Although the Trust's incorporation was relatively straightforward, it required great resolve and plenty of dynamism to convince the Duchy to hand over ownership of the building. They only agreed to do this on the condition that the newly formed Florence Institute Trust would be able to raise sufficient funds to restore, open and operate the premises. The estimated cost of this exercise came to £6.6 million on the basis of a detailed feasibility study and Conservation Management Plan. The latter was prepared by Purcell Miller Tritton following a successful

project planning grant from the HLF in 2007.

Scenes of the Florrie in 1961, with up to date decoration



One might have thought that £6.6M would be enough to deter even the most determined of heritage enthusiasts. However, the people involved with the Trust were already experienced at working in the voluntary sector and managing community facilities such as Toxteth Town Hall, itself a recently restored grade II listed building. By dint of relentless campaigning, promotional literature (such as the regular Florrie Newsletter) and endless applications for funding to almost every grant aiding body in existence, the Florence Institute Trust succeeded in

matching their Stage II approval from the HLF for £3.7M in February 2010.

The final cocktail includes contributions from the Tudor Trust, Liverpool City Council (£150,000) and a whopping £1.7M from the ERDF. For those concerned this was a fund raising odyssey with the mantra 'If you don't ask, you don't get' very much at its core. The perseverance, self belief and steely determination of the Trust members meant that they were rewarded with an almighty victory against overwhelming odds.

Phase I of the project was completed in December 2010. This included all the works necessary to clear away years of decay and debris from the battered edifice, stabilise the structure and to provide it with a temporary roof supported by scaffolding. This will allow the structure to begin properly drying out.

Phase II, for the full repair and refurbishment of the building, has already commenced and will take the best part of a year to complete. The Building will be used as a multi-ethnic community centre for all ages and abilities. Further updates will follow in the NW branch newsletter.

Chris Griffiths is Principal Conservation Officer (Buildings At Risk) for Liverpool City Council



The Library and Coffee Bar in 1890, and works taking place in 2011.

Conference reports

New Light on Vernacular Architecture, June 2011

Isle of Man

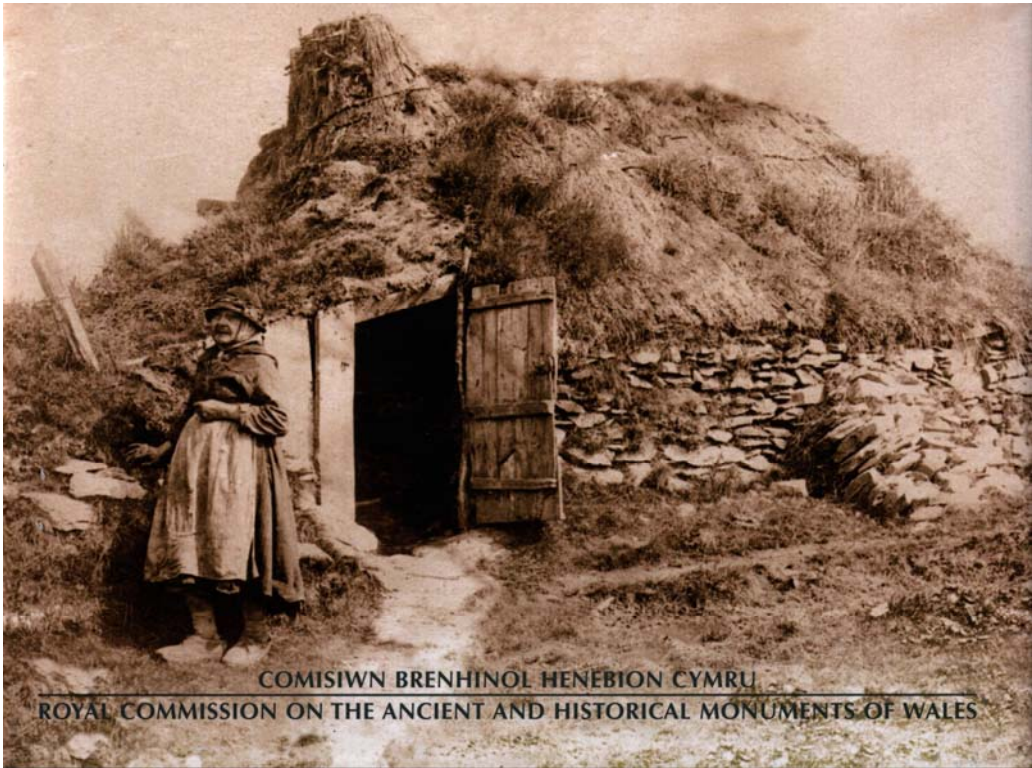
On 22-25 June the University of Liverpool and Manx National Heritage held a conference on vernacular architecture on the Isle of Man. Opening the Conference, **Dr Eurwyn Wiliam**, author of *The Welsh Cottage* (2010), set the tone. His presentation "Of the people, By the people, For the people" showed how these buildings were built, and dendro-dating identified when (often much earlier than expected), but he argued that the 'why' needed more investigation. Placing people and their circumstances into context gives these buildings their full identity. Recent research in Wales has shown the importance of understanding how the rural building was adapted to the environment, and identifies research priorities. At a drinks reception with local politicians, Eurwyn also provided a witty but cutting reply praising Manx vernacular buildings whilst stressing the need to invest in their future.

Dr Marcel Vellinga, Director of Oxford Brookes International Vernacular Architecture Unit, part of the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development, presented a paper that challenged the need for separate study of the vernacular, see-

ing it as a false boundary. To quote from his abstract, "in essence, vernacular architecture is nothing more or less than the architecture of the Other, used to help define and legitimise the exclusive domain of what may be called 'high design' or 'capital A' architecture."

I didn't really understand this until during **Dr Julian Holder's** paper, entitled *Strange Materials and Curious Methods*, on C.F. Innocent's book *The Development of English Building Construction* (1916). This I promise you was not the most extreme departure from vernacular architecture at this conference. Julian, taking time from his role at English Heritage, explained Innocent's engagement with technical building construction, at a time when architects were establishing architecture as a profession. The RIBA was in its infancy, and in establishing the role of the architect as designer of Architecture they needed a word for the Other. The term vernacular architecture was thus born out of the need to define Architecture. I am told this is an 'anchoring vignette', a delightful phrase. Until now I considered my intervention in any building considered vernacular immediately renders it other than Other. Now I realise the distinction is purely an anchoring vignette and my intervention is just an unconformity.

I enjoyed **Britta Kalkreuter** exploring a multi sensory experience: representations of Vernacular Ar-



chitecture in Textiles, but floundered when Graham Aubrey explained *The Influence of Vernacular Architecture on Traditional Music and Dance*, showing my lack of perception on how performance matches the space available. However the last keynote speaker **Professor Henry Glassie** really inspired the Conference. His softly spoken tales of the Irish Cottage, its constant kettle and ever-open door, did not prepare us for the reality that political revolution was first expressed in the lobby. Much as Vellinga's description of the Other needed time, Glassie had me here... The ever-open door was

replaced by the lobbied entrance for fear of attack; the lobby placed your family further from assault. The vernacular lobby preceded civil unrest and anticipated the Irish question. That the same was true in the Americas we leave to Henry's greater knowledge; he certainly believed it to be so. His paper did revisit William's question of why rural life was about co-existence; the yeoman took servants into his household, who were then part of that household. Later, when more independent smaller farmsteads developed they were still interdependent for collective activities such as thatching, when twelve or

more men would re-thatch a house together. As this mutual dependence is lost, thatch is replaced with tin roofing, or more correctly galvanised metal, requiring less labour, less collective effort, but probably more dependence on the bank for finance. The vernacular, the architecture of the Other, is a window into the past but may also offer an alternative, more sustainable future.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that a weed is 'a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered'. This conference showed that there are plenty of stones being turned in hope of finding those virtues, however. Vellinga's issue with Architecture restricting the study of the built environment was my discovery. If I applied this to planning, I would suggest that planners take too much time considering Architecture rather than the interior spaces and the spaces between buildings which make up the public domain.

Back to the vernacular: is this not the essence of our delight in the buildings we study, the sense of contact with people who built and lived in the dwellings that survive? We may be a very urban sophisticated society but we still inhabit the same body, the same sense of touch. This conference's success was that we were constantly reminded of the people who created the Vernacular.

Please contact me if you would like

more information about the Conference, email: [ashley@apa-
iom.com](mailto:ashley@apa-iom.com).

*Ashley Pettit is an Architect and
Isle of Man rep.*

2011 IHBC Annual Summer School:

Navigating the Shallows, Llandudno

The author of this piece approached the IHBC NW branch after a credit warning on the bond markets and later negotiated a bail-out for the annual day school in order to avert a further run on his own finances. The package agreed with the branch included attendance at the day school and a buffet before the commencement of austerity measures in the afternoon and evening. Part of the contractual agreement was a requirement to gain control over his grammar and produce a summary of the day's proceedings. The author is grateful for the branch's support and is sending his children to work in a pin factory to pay for next year's day school.

The title of the day school straight away acknowledged the current state of play with regard to the built environment sector – we all know how and why we find our-



selves in a world where access to new money is routinely denied us. There is no denial about the financial taps being turned off, and it's no use resorting to disaffection or recrimination against any body in particular. Instead the objective of the school was to address the following question:

how do we then best take stock of our resources, and how do we best deploy them going forward in this changed landscape of opportunities?

It was salutary that amongst the speakers there was no politicisation of the issues; instead, each of the speakers, in their own way, looked towards a consensus of how we might together make less use of diminished financial resources, but improved use of our social, intellectual and organisational capacities.

The range of speakers was diverse and included representatives from national grant giving bodies, enabling and capacity-building organisations, English Heritage and Design institutions. Diverting in itself was the choice of venue, St George's Hotel – possibly the

grandest venue in the town and a key component of the terrace of Victorian stuccoed hotels and guesthouses that forms an edge to the southern shore of Llandudno Bay.

This was the first time that the annual Day School has been held in Wales, and the success of the event itself suggested that this was long overdue. The present circumstances of Llandudno are probably familiar to IHBC members in the North West – until now a rather tired resort whose capacity to attract visitors is unlikely ever to reach the levels attained early in the last century. The emphasis is increasingly on a more compact residential offer, with a focus more on quality, historical themes and the proximity to more diverse attractions such as the prehistoric Copper Mines, Snowdonia and the refurbished and extended Oriol Mostyn Gallery. Recent improvement works concentrated on certain core areas have given the whole town a visual lift. Meanwhile, the town, with its good communications and unique setting, appears to be becoming something of a centre for business in North Wales.

Programme

After the video-taped introduction by Huw Lewis AM (Welsh Government Minister for Housing, Regeneration & Heritage), the first speaker was **Judith Cligman**, a director of HLF. Older readers



amongst us will recall, like Judith, that we have been here before: in the 1980s, when there was precious little around in the way of funding for historic sites and buildings, accompanied by economic changes brought about industrial restructuring. Judith was able to cite a number of successful projects that the Fund has completed with its partners in recent years, ranging from new bespoke centres such as the Riverside Transport Museum in Glasgow to the local THI down the road in Penmaenmawr – creating new jobs and changing perceptions of the town. HLF projects were not just about buildings - its staff are involved in every level of delivery on long-term basis.

The HLF has an ability to make heritage meaningful to local communities through projects that they can participate in, from community archaeology at Fin Cop Hillfort to their Young Roots Programme which brings 13-25 year olds in touch with their local historic environment.

Fred Taggart of the Prince's Regeneration Trust demonstrated the contribution of enabling bodies such as the PRT towards helping communities to organise themselves, to keep focused and motivated whilst navigating increasingly complex and demanding funding regimes. Their role is so central to some projects that they become a key stakeholder and negotiating partner themselves. Fred described the many successful projects that the Trust had helped see through to the end, citing the important role that the local authority's conservation officer had in securing a corporate buy-in of a scheme.

In terms of the North-West, the Trust has helped to realise the re-use of Harvey's Foundry in Hale, generating new jobs and new confidence whilst their acquisition of Middleport Pottery has enabled them to retain the production staff as tenants. Looking forward, Fred's main gripe was what he saw as an inflexible approach adopted by some councils and the onerous nature of the information required up-front to secure permissions, and by implication, public funding.

Most conservation officers will be familiar with the difficulties encountered not merely in locating specialist contractors, but also per-



suading owners and contractors to adopt a willingness to repair, rather than replace historic fabric. **John Edwards**, senior surveyor at English Heritage, presented some worrying statistics about the high proportion of the UK's building stock dating to before WWI and the near total lack of professional craft training available to apprentices in the conservative repair and maintenance of historic fabric.

This lack of skills is often matched by the misplaced confidence that many contractors place in their ability to undertake conservation work, and the poor availability of specialist repair materials in local builders' merchants. EH and trade bodies have latterly acted to try and fill this skills gap by establishing NVQs 3 and 4 in Heritage Skills and Master Crafts respectively. The CSCS Craft Skills card has yet to make a real impact on sites, and in terms of tendering has little impact. John insisted that the top-down approach of educating architects and other professionals should be partnered by a bottom-up approach that concentrates on changing skills and attitudes in those actually carrying out the work. The local vernacular is most at risk from bodging.

The Q&A session that followed gave one industry representative the ability to respond by stating that qualified and experienced contractors were often not chosen by clients and were dissuaded

from investing in additional specialist skills as a result. **Harriet Devlin** of the Ironbridge Institute suggested that it was the lowly status of regular maintenance that allowed buildings to get into a neglected state and therefore require a high order of public investment for repairs. Ms Cligman responded by explaining the requirement for a maintenance clause in HLF grants contracts.

John Yates of EH called for more regard to be paid to the potential for temporary uses and the tolerance of quasi-unofficial tenancies – if only one could secure their removal when the preferred user is able to move in. There may be other advantages in undertaking projects more slowly in that they may be more sustainable and durable as a result of their long gestation.

Dr Nicholas Falk of URBED kicked off the afternoon session, following on from Fred Taggart's talk on capacity building and mentoring volunteer groups. Nicholas' tack was more general though, presenting town centres, especially the central periphery of towns, as the most economically challenged environments of today. Many of his projects had centred on the realities of community asset transfer, stating that local authorities were not well set up to be the custodians of vacant, specialised structures.

Many of us are familiar with the dubious luxury of having multiple



Victorian town halls within a single district, and projects such as the transfer of Hebden Bridge Town Hall are often cited as models of community engagement and creating viable new uses for them. The main things to remember are: community need and the importance of getting everyone working together – this happens naturally in more co-operative societies like Sweden, but less so in the UK.

Tony Barton of Civic Voice introduced the new organisation to the delegates, explaining its agenda for increasing local participation in, and ownership of, environmental

projects. The activities of CV are as diverse as the local issues themselves, ranging from street clutter to High Speed Rail. Tony encouraged delegates to learn to look at projects from less specialist, more emotional perspective and to then bring the community into projects and thereby tap into their knowledge and experience.

I hardly know where to begin in describing **Phil Roach's** colourful and wide-ranging talk on Wales and its home grown brand of conservation. Phil began by blowing open the stereotypes of his home nation, explaining that Welsh heritage is different and less tangible

than that of any other nation in the UK. It is to be found less in towns and their formal architecture, and more in rural areas: it is spoken as a language rather than lived in, it is often vernacular and functional and spatially and psychologically more detached from markets than in England. It is to be found as much in the furniture of a building as its masonry and ornamentation. Above all, it is scattered.

Much of the preservation movement is middle-class, Phil argued, and the users of Welsh buildings are more likely to use them as part of their working lives than as adornments or objects of leisure: citing Maslow and his emphasis on self-actualisation in driving forward the conservation movement. Phil also cited a note of caution in the new localism, engaging localism using the story of Blodwyn and her cottage (I'd love to recite it, but you had to be there really) as a metaphor – we all need to understand and connect with our own heritage before we ask the community to make choices that cannot later be undone.

Jim MacDonald of Architecture and Design Scotland continued the grassroots theme of the conference by describing community projects that his organisation has sponsored in the last decade. Jim also explained how governance is changing in his country, with more emphasis on joint working between departments around com-

mon goals, and less reliance on a single department achieving targets that may be irrelevant to the needs of other agencies. The essential question is: by working together and integrating our programmes more closely, can we achieve more with fewer funds? Can we abandon a preoccupation with outputs and look more towards positive outcomes that may take time to take shape, but which promise lasting benefits?

Rob Cowan, official purveyor of cartoons to the IHBC and director of Urban Design Skills introduced their new publication "Quality Reviewer", created to combat the paucity of design skills amongst those that manage development schemes for commercial clients. He cited Chester as the place where a simplistic approach to contextual design - borrowing motifs from older structures and crudely applying them to amorphous new developments – is in danger of diluting the townscape character of the city's terraced suburbs. In order to create continuity and to create places with meaning, we have to be far more focused on creating places: we no longer seem to be able to create streets, for example, losing such basic elements as front doors that face on to public thoroughfares.

The North West could have much to gain by trying out some of these emerging low-cost approaches to conservation, concentrating on local skills and regular maintenance

rather than big finance. By the time of the next annual school we might have a better appreciation of the benefits of this approach. In the meantime, we might pay another visit to Llandudno to see how this resort continues to change with the times.

Matthew Crook is Conservation Officer for the Wirral

Recent Appeal Decisions

Dismissal of an appeal against refusal of planning permission for an external canopy, May 2011

The Manchester superstore in Trafford is an undesignated heritage asset not in a conservation area. Although PPS5 was not cited, the quality of detailing on the purpose-built 1928 retail store provides a focal point in the street scene, and the Inspector considered that any development has to take account of this. A finely detailed canopy without shutters was previously approved, but the built development (seen above in progress) was of lower quality. The bulky supports, degree of projection into oblique views, and green colour of the canopy were felt to be incongruous in the street scene. The likely enclosed appearance with integral roller shutters down



(despite a proposed vision panel) increased the prominence.

Thanks to Elizabeth Read, Conservation Officer at Trafford



Dismissal of an appeal against refusal of advertisement consent for an internally illuminated fascia sign, May 2011.

15-17 High Street, Oldham (see above) has a façade decorated with pilasters and corbels. An adjacent sign cuts across these, but the previous sign at the appeal site left them exposed. The Inspector agreed that additional interruption to vertical dividing features affected the building's architectural composition and the Conservation Area – particularly because at first and second floor the elevational designs differ either side of the pilaster concerned (under the word 'Sports' in the picture). It was felt to be irrelevant that the features would remain intact, as their purpose requires them to be seen.

Thanks to Oldham Conservation Officer Karen Heverin

30 High Street, Cheadle is an early C20 building with good quality stone detailing in a neo-classical style. Signs were placed on the front and side return of the building, while an application for advertisement consent was being considered. The Inspector had regard to design policies requiring proposals to respect the character, scale and proportions of the site, and original fascia sizes on traditional shopfronts. Despite replacing a previous non-original fascia (top, right), the Inspector concluded that the opportunity should have been taken to respect the original signage zone designed into the building. The side fascia was also felt to relate poorly to the architecture and to create a cluttered appearance. Internal illumination of a pro-

jecting sign was also felt to have an inappropriate cumulative impact in a conservation area, even one as varied as this. The Co-op's standard colour scheme and the size of the lettering were not felt in themselves to be harmful.

Crispin Edwards, Stockport



Although not from the North West, it would be remiss not to report two other recent decisions; the first was a refusal for pvc sliding sashes in a conservation area (**35 Blackboy Road, Exeter, left**). The decision commented that although the pvc sashes would reflect existing opening arrangements, "their sterile finish would be unlike painted wood and this would undermine the building's contribution to the Conservation Area" and that despite the fitting of pvc windows elsewhere in the area as permitted development, "it is important that traditional, but unlisted, buildings such as No 35 are maintained in a way that respects the Conservation Area and helps to protect it".

The second concerns unauthorised demolition in a conservation area (**68 Carlton Hill, Westminster**). Having received permission for an extension, the owner applied to demolish the existing building and build a more energy efficient building to match the approval. Despite the house being a building of merit, demolition was not felt to comprise substantial harm to the Conservation Area and PPS5 policy HE9.2 was not applied. This is potentially a weakening of protection for CA buildings. EH assured the sector during discussions on the drafts of PPS5 that this was not their intention, and they are cited in the decision notice as having confirmed their view in this case that total demolition of an individual building should trigger HE9.2.

Instead, the test in policy HE9.4 was applied and the damage weighed against public benefit. Happily in this case demolition was felt to be a public disbenefit and with no mitigating benefit the appeal was dismissed. The Inspector did comment that, "a replica building would be just that, a replica with none of the character or history of the original building", adding that this question goes to the heart of conservation area philosophy – a potentially useful reminder that conservation does not refer only to appearance. Nevertheless, the disregarding of EH's advice on application of PPS5 policies is concerning. The National Planning Policy Framework (which is a material

consideration even in draft) states that loss of a single positive building is substantial harm (para 187).

In case the owner of 68 Carlton Hill feels inclined to ignore the decision and proceed with demolition anyway, they should pay attention to the case of **6 Trafalgar Road, Twickenham**. In very similar circumstances, the owner proceeded to demolish without applying for a varied permission. Magistrates referred the resulting prosecution to Kingston Crown Court, where the owner was fined £80,000 (a 50% increase on the previous record fine for the same offence) and ordered to pay the bulk of the council's £42,500 costs. Failure to pay within a year could result in 21 months' imprisonment.



On a smaller scale, Stockport Magistrates recently fined a developer £1,000 plus costs for failing to comply with a Planning enforcement notice. This was served on a conversion of a house in Heaton Moor to flats which was carried out without discharging pre-commencement conditions. The notice specified finishing works using materials and details which would have been required if details had been submitted prior to work starting.

Please forward details of any recent appeal decisions to nweditor@ihbc.org.uk

IHBC NW Branch Business

Calendar

15th September exec committee, Canada House, Manchester

21st September GCMCOG, Trafford

22nd & 23rd September

Council meeting and NW Annual Conference.

13th October LCOG, Hyndburn

16th November GCMCOG, Rochdale Town Hall.

7th December AGM and annual dinner, Manchester

Dates for your diary:

The IHBC **North West Branch conference** will be on 23rd September at Manchester's Museum of Science & Industry. The topic will be 'Historic Places: Local Action', building on the current Localism agenda.

This year's event coincides with the visit to the region by the IHBC national Council. The Council meeting will take place on Thursday evening, and will be followed by a **Pre-conference reception** at Chetham's School, for Council & NW Branch Committee members and invited guests. Council members are invited to attend the conference as part of proceedings.

This year's **branch AGM** will be held on 7th December at the Portico Library in Manchester. A social dinner will follow (free to those attending the AGM) at a nearby venue to be announced soon. A call for members prepared to stand as officers and members of the Executive Committee will be sent directly to members later in the Autumn.

Membership news

There have been no new or upgraded members. 5 NW members have not renewed their membership this year, mainly affiliate members. While these might be students the committee is monitoring the membership situation carefully given current financial strains across the sector.

Meet the membership

Katie Wray, Events Committee

I am a town planner with the Co-operative Group. I graduated from Durham University with a degree in history, studying architectural history in my final year. I then completed an MPlan at the University of Manchester and worked for Arup for three years on a wide range of projects, developing specialisms in renewable and low carbon energy, green space and the historic environment. I then worked briefly as a freelance planner and heritage consultant, gaining valuable heritage experience, including work for the National Trust, before starting work for the Co-operative Group. I am also currently finishing an MSc in Architectural Conservation part time. I am enjoying my new role with the Co-op investment property strategy team, and especially looking forward to developing a strategy for the Co-op's listed estate.

As well as being on the Events Committee for the NW branch I am currently taking all bookings for this year's conference. Assisting with organising the conference has been enjoyable especially given its synergy with my area of knowledge, and I'm looking forward to assisting with many more conferences.

I am interested in all aspects of

the built environment, especially architecture and strategic city planning - I am MRTPI and a member of the Town and Country Planning Association. I am also a member of The Victorian Society, and hope to share experience and best practice across all these groups.



Annual School bursaries

Bursaries for the 2011 Annual Day School were awarded to A. Fairclough, K. Wray and M. Crook (see report on the event from Matthew Crook earlier in this issue).

Four bursaries were on offer and as you can see only three were awarded. The branch will be offering these again for the 2012 Day School - don't miss out for the lack of applying!

Branch Events

The **2011 Summer Social** was held in Liverpool on Friday 15th July. An Executive Committee meeting was held in the sumptuous surroundings of the Athenaeum, where Chris Griffiths is a member. This is one of the oldest clubs in Britain, founded in 1797. A new building for the club, designed in a chaste Classical style by Harold Dod, was opened in 1924 (see below)



After the meeting, members and guests met at the Bluecoat Chambers. As a light drizzle set in, the majority decided against heading for the Wheel of Liverpool, but several of us still took up Chris's kind offer of an 'alternative' tour of mostly converted pubs and bars, while most followed John Hinchcliffe's tour of mainly purpose-built watering holes. Chris's tour gave us a chance to get a real insight into his work with Buildings

At Risk and how it integrates into wider regeneration and conservation agendas. Chris does most of his enforcement action himself, a model which more of us might have to follow as local authorities squeeze staff numbers. But for much of the evening such thoughts were banished by interesting conversions like St. Peter's Church, The Monro (where we chanced on the enthusiastic owner) and The Little Bridewell, converted from a Police Court with cells intact.



Mammon presides in St Peter's Church—but many original features are retained, it is all theoretically reversible, and there are only so many possible uses for a redundant church.



Members and guests enjoy the hospitality of The Vines (Pic Ashley Pettit)

The evening concluded at the View Two gallery, where an excellent buffet had been laid on and some serious nattering could be done. Thanks are due from all who took part to our hosts, Chris Griffiths and John Hinchcliffe, and Graham Arnold and all who helped to organise the evening.

Crispin Edwards



Warehouse conversions for offices and apartments mingle with the numerous nightspots in the Rope-walks area.



Chris Griffiths talking us through some of the buildings converted to bars before we visited a few of them.



Lime pointing with beach sand, complete with shells!



Georgian warehouses given a new life at Hebbie Jeebies



Original cells at the Little Bridewell.

The lighter side...



'There must be another access somewhere'

(thanks to Dave Hayes)

Branch Officers

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Chair | Paul Hartley | paul.hartley@stockport.gov.uk |
| Vice Chair | David Hayes | dhayes99@hotmail.com |
| Secretary | Kirsten McKnight | kirstenmcknight@hotmail.com |
| Treasurer | Nick Grimshaw | nick.grimshaw@english-heritage.org.uk |
| Consultation Co-ordinator | Ian Lucas | ianlucas@bcernet.eu |
| Newsletter Editor | Marion Barter | marion.barter@architecturalhistory.co.uk northwest@ihbc.org.uk |
| Membership Secretary | Jason Kennedy | j.kennedy@wiganmbc.gov.uk |
| Events Lead & National Representative | Kate Borland | kateborland@yahoo.co.uk |
| NWHEF Representative | Paul Mason | p.mason@manchester.gov.uk |
| County Reps: Cheshire | Dave Hayes | dhayes99@hotmail.com |
| | Louise Wallace | louise.wallace@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk |
| Isle of Man | Ashley Pettit | ashley@apa-iom.com |
| Merseyside | Chris Griffiths | chris.griffiths@liverpool.gov.uk |
| | Graham Arnold | arnold.graham.r@googlemail.com |
| Lancashire | Adrian Dowd | adrian.dowd@ribblevalley.gov.uk |
| Greater Manchester | Paul Hartley | paul.hartley@stockport.gov.uk |
| | Crispin Edwards | crispin.edwards@stockport.gov.uk |

IHBC PROFESSIONALS

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) is the key professional body for built and historic environment conservation specialists. The IHBC represents, regulates and supports professionals contributing to the conservation of valued buildings and places.

What does the IHBC do?

The IHBC encourages its members to develop their specialist skills in conservation. Joining the IHBC will help you recognise and expand your skills and understanding.

The IHBC:

- provides advice to members, stakeholders and government
- promotes standards and skills in historic environment & building conservation and heritage regeneration
- encourages the special care of the historic environment as a sustainable and unique resource that benefits everyone
- supports professional recognition of all the skills needed to secure sustainable conservation

IHBC MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Professional status and career recognition
- News updates, guidance and resources
- *Context*, IHBC's journal, 5 issues annually (retail £50.00)
- *IHBC Yearbook*, the Institute and the sector's annual review (retail £14.95)
- *Building Conservation Directory* (retail £16.95)
- Events: reduced rates & priority access (as applicable)
- Job notices & training opportunities
- Technical support, guidance and specifications
- National, regional & web-based advice and panels
- Tax relief on subscriptions (see IHBC website)
- Access to business support & listings including IHBC's Historic Environment Service Providers Recognition (HESPR)
- Guidance on project development
- Career advice, guidance & support
- Training and CPD events, eg IHBC Annual School
- Networking opportunities, local, national & international
- Participation & CPD opportunities in electronic panels
- Access to advocacy & lobbying
- Support IHBC's wider public services (see IHBC website):
 - Web-based search, training & advisory resources
 - Sector consultations service
 - Volunteering opportunities
 - Awards (IHBC Gus Astley Student Award)
 - Partnerships across built sector interests
 - Help IHBC's CapacityBuild programme invest in the sector

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Affiliates:

- specialise or train in disciplines relating to built and historic environment conservation, and intend to seek full membership

Associates:

- have a special interest in historic places and seek to support and benefit from the IHBC, but are unlikely to seek full membership

Full Members:

- have demonstrated professional skills in line with the IHBC's membership standards (see www.ihbc.org.uk)
- must undertake continuing professional development (CPD)
- may use 'IHBC' after their name

Concessionary rates (renewable each year) are available if you are on a low income (currently under £13,500).

For more information see www.ihbc.org.uk.



the home of
the conservation
professional





· INSTITUTE · OF · HISTORIC ·
BUILDING · CONSERVATION
NORTH WEST BRANCH

The Branch Newsletter is distributed electronically with hardcopies available at events. If you wish to automatically receive a hardcopy, please contact Crispin Edwards or Kirsten McKnight via the details on Page 30.

The home of the conservation professional

North West Branch of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation

IHBC Registered Office: 3 Stafford Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 4QZ.

Registered as a Charity: No. 1061593

Company Limited by Guarantee; Reg. in England; No. 3333780