

News from AHF

“May you live in interesting times” goes the Chinese curse, and there is no denying that now is certainly nothing less than an interesting time. Rather than focus on funding cuts and all of the challenges ahead, I want to look briefly at ways in which our sector can help itself and perhaps some opportunities to consider.

This summer I was elected on to a body called the Culture Forum, put together by Arts & Business and the National Campaign for the Arts. I was nominated as Deputy Chair of The Heritage Alliance, to lobby overtly for heritage to be seen as an equal partner to the performing and visual arts in the debates about funding and the future structure of our culture life. This has been an interesting experience, not least because it was quickly apparent that most of my arts colleagues on the Forum had little idea of the breadth and range of work undertaken by voluntary sector heritage organisations, including building preservation trusts. The Culture Forum is reporting directly into Government in October to try to influence the way in which spending is allocated and to make the case for the economic and social importance of the arts and heritage, and I am pleased to have had the chance to ensure built heritage plays its part in this.

A couple of conclusions from the report we are writing for the Forum to

present have resonance for all BPTs. One is around compiling the evidence base for the impact of our work. The study which the AHF, APT and others commissioned two years ago into the wider impacts of heritage-led regeneration revealed a lack of objective longitudinal research in this area, and the same conclusion has been reached in work done for the Culture Forum. To quote from the draft report:

“If the evidence base is improved, the cultural, social/personal and economic/financial benefits of the arts and heritage will be better understood. This understanding will, in turn, make it possible to assess return on public investment and guide future investment decisions.”

I fully understand the reasons that it is difficult to compile this evidence beyond the basic needs of funders’ evaluations, but it is in all of our interests that we have really compelling examples over the long term of the difference BPT projects have made to people’s well-being, showing the wider social gains from our work.

The other area which I felt was very relevant to BPTs was around collaborations, whether with other heritage groups, ones from the wider voluntary sector, or from the public and private sectors. Many BPTs already do this very effectively, but it is certainly true to say that the

Government is looking keenly at mergers and other forms of joint working as a way to reduce costs, and the more we can do as a sector to demonstrate that we are taking a proactive approach to this, the better.

More generally, the AHF has been encouraged by the fact that applications for loans in particular are up this quarter. We continue to impose a limit on our grants for each of our quarterly meetings, but have managed to accommodate almost all eligible applications within this. In order for us to be able to do this, it is very important to have early discussions with a member of our projects team (Barbara, Gavin and Ian R), so that they can help you to prioritise costs, look at the timing of your application and ensure that it is more likely to be assessed positively by our Council of Management – in other words, please help us to help you!

Finally, look out for the AHF Annual Review, to be published at the end of October, in which the usual array of fine projects, completed and in development, will be featured, and I will also announce an initiative aimed at tackling areas of the country where there is less than optimal activity in heritage-led regeneration.

Ian Lush
Chief Executive
The Architectural Heritage Fund

REVIEW

The Lye & Wollescote Cemetery and Chapels

A Victorian Cemetery and its Notable Burials *Jean Weston and Marlene Price*

You would not have expected a dry title such as this to yield entertaining tales of competing grave-diggers, attempts to use gravestones for commercial advertising or details of where the ‘women’s lib’ movement really began. Nor would you have thought such an ordered array of relatively unadorned headstones could yield such intimate and lively insights into ‘frost cogs’ ‘hollowware’, ‘picklers’, and ‘tis-as-

twassis’ But all of this and much more is to be found in this entertaining and informative read, which literally brings the whole social and economic life of this industrial community to life.

For in the Lye and Wollescote Cemetery and Chapels, built in 1879 on the borders of the Black Country, are buried pioneers of industry, religious leaders, public figures, local personalities and ordinary folk; their

stories – some humorous, some tragic – are beautifully captured and illustrated in a selection of well-balanced entries. These are sandwiched by chapters dealing with the origins and building of the cemetery, its history and future, thus providing a solid context and framework for the impressionist sketches in between.

This book, some 20 years in the making, is yet another demonstration

REVIEW (continued)

of how a BPT – in this case the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust – can take an innovative approach to a project and build so much more into it. For apart from its intrinsic social and genealogical interest, publication is intended to do three things. First, it is promoting the ambitions of the Trust to refurbish the cemetery buildings to a

new sustainable use as offices. Second, its sale will raise funds to assist with the costs of developing that scheme. Thirdly, in knitting together so vividly the intimate connections between the occupants of the cemetery and the past history and development of the town, the book forms a bridgehead to assuage local fears – this is a sensitive location

for a change of use. The promoters of the scheme demonstrate here that careful research can be a very creative method of outreach, ensuring that the community is fully engaged in its delivery.

James Moir

EVENTS

The 2010 UKAPT National Conference

Investing in the Past:

Funding Heritage Projects: Global and Local
Glasgow 18-20 November 2010



Glasgow is a city celebrated internationally for its successful transformation using its unique architectural legacy. It is wholly fitting therefore that it should be the location for this year's National Conference, addressing the theme of securing the right investment for heritage projects – the biggest challenge for the built heritage sector today. As BPTs are only too aware, global issues and local outcomes are increasingly intertwined in the 21st century, while resources are more constrained than ever. This conference will therefore provide a unique global perspective on the issues and challenges of creatively sourcing and managing funding for heritage projects.

The Conference is being held in conjunction with one of our members, Glasgow City Heritage Trust, and the Institute for Historic Building Conservation. It's been a real pleasure working with these partners, Glasgow

City Heritage Trust providing a rich 'place-making' context for the Conference and engineering the stunning Old Fruitmarket and City Chambers as spectacular historic venues for the three day programme, as well as a splendid Civic Reception to be hosted by Glasgow's Lord Provost in the City Chambers on the Thursday evening. As members of APT, you should all have received copies of the May Edition of IHBC's *Context* magazine, which spelt out the reasons why UKAPT needed to forge ever-closer relationships with IHBC members. This being a much larger collaborative event, I am extremely grateful to Liz Davidson of the Merchant City's THI, Anne McChlery at Glasgow Building Preservation Trust and Sarah Mackinnon of Strathclyde BPT – all based in Glasgow – for the hard work they have already put into the planning of the Conference, together with the help and input from many other members of

APT Scotland. We are also very grateful for the involvement of many other sponsors and supporters listed on the Conference website – www.investinginthePast.co.uk

The three day programme has something for everyone. Day 1 focuses on international perspectives for heritage and regeneration funding, providing inspiration and new ways of funding projects in a variety of different countries. The day commences with a keynote presentation from Loyd Grossman, chair of Heritage Alliance, followed by speakers from across the globe presenting key issues of funding heritage projects in their areas. – Dr Rob Pickard, author of *Funding the Architectural Heritage: A Guide to Policies and Examples* and Susan Denyer of ICOMOS UK will provide international and European perspectives on the funding climate. Ratish Nanda of the Aga Kahn Trust for Culture, Frank Pieter Hesse, Lluís Bosch-Pascual and Graham Bell of the North-East Civic Trust will contrast funding mechanisms and initiatives in the Muslim World, Germany, Barcelona and Hungary respectively. There will also be insights into Glasgow's successful funding initiatives with presentations by Alistair MacDonald of Glasgow City Council, Liz Davidson of the Merchant City and Torsten Haak of GCHT. The day concludes with the reception in the magnificent City Chambers.

Day 2 examines funding partnerships between Government,