

# SAVE BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

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## Victory at Paddington

There are few things in life that give more pleasure than a thorough vindication of a long held position. With Span Four at Paddington Station, London, SAVE's stance had always been that demolition was unnecessary in railway terms, and that this part of the station roof (completed in 1916) is worthy of preservation in its own right, as well as a part of one of the greatest railway termini in the world. Ranged against us were Network Rail, Westminster City Council and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, while English Heritage (which accepted the principle of demolition in return for restoration of Brunel's roof), and the Victorian Society (which accepted the railway case for demolition) did not oppose demolition. The proposals were to replace Span Four with a large office block on a deck over the tracks.

SAVE's report "*SAVE PADDINGTON'S SPAN FOUR*" argued that the railway case was specious given (a) the increase in capacity at the station that would result from Crossrail, the east-west cross London rail link and (b) that any increase in capacity would be rendered useless by blockages further up the line, most particularly at Reading Station. The report is still available to Friends for £3.20 and £4 to the rest of the world.

The first public signs of a change in attitude from Network Rail came in its Strategic Business Plan of June 2006 (what could be more appealing a read?). The Span Four proposals were no longer classified as a "Committed Enhancement Proposal" but were mentioned under a section entitled "Commercial Development". Then came Network Rail's position over Crossrail, the construction of which requires the retention of Span Four. Network Rail was forced to reveal its position in relation to Span Four when the office scheme's developer petitioned Parliament as a part of the Crossrail Bill process asking for the Span Four redevelopment scheme to be expedited: Span Four would be retained until at the very least the end of Crossrail construction works (currently 2013). SAVE

wrote to Network Rail asking for clarification. Though guarded, the message that comes through in Network Rail's response is clear:

"At this stage we are unable to clarify precisely when the repair will be complete. Nevertheless, please be assured that we will ensure these important works are carried out at the earliest opportunity. Similarly, we anticipate the scaffold will be removed. However, it is conceivable additional issues may be identified during our works meaning the matter becomes protracted. I am sorry that we are unable to be more committal at this juncture.

Once again, please be assured that Network Rail is working closely with English Heritage and Westminster Council throughout the consultation on the Paddington development. We will continue to work closely with them to ensure that the historic features of the station are appropriately conserved."

So there it is. Span Four will be restored and the scaffold crash deck dismantled to reveal this handsome Edwardian trainshed once again.

The questions that follow from this are (1) what will happen post 2013; (2) what was SAVE's role in saving the structure. It is extremely unlikely that having invested heavily in the restoration of the structure that Network Rail will then pull it down. If another scheme does come forward for the demolition of Span Four, SAVE will still be there to oppose it, and the arguments presented this time around in its defence will remain relevant and intact. The impact of SAVE's campaign is probably best judged by considering what would have happened had we not become involved. There would have been no organisation championing its cause, meaning that demolition would have passed unopposed through the planning system. In the event, SAVE's campaign gave English Heritage a reason to hold the line for at least a while, and it motivated the public and members of the engineering profession to voice their concerns, both through the national media and also through the more specialist railway media – even rail magazines that focus on the need to modify the network supported our cause.



*Span Four under construction (Staffordshire Record Office)*

## Other Railway Threats

The victory at Paddington is only one battle won. The threat of demolition hangs over the Grade II listed London Bridge Station, and Network Rail is currently working on plans involving demolition at other major rail termini – whether at Waverley Station in Edinburgh (for a shopping centre no less), Waterloo in London (extending the platforms inland and dropping the concourse below, providing development opportunity above), and even Euston Station. Euston merits reconsidering. The righteous disgust at the wanton destruction of the original station and grand arch proudly announcing the rail link to Birmingham has perhaps blinded people to that which is of interest about the existing station. Proposals are being drawn up for the comprehensive redevelopment of the entire station, and while no one would rue the loss of the trainsheds above the platforms, the architecture of the rest of the station is bold: the arrivals and departures hall is a noble space, with a sturdy coffered concrete roof floating above a glass clerestory and a glass curtain wall. The ticketing area is as spacious with a ceiling that might be considered groovy (in the same way as a Ford Capri). Move beyond this into the open courtyard and you have a lively public space which is unique among London's railway stations (although it suffers from cheap concrete pavements, benches and so forth). This space is separated from the noise and pollution of the Euston Road by a structure not too distantly related to a Roman propylaeum of the Darth Vader / Death Star school of design, flanked by a slick pair of short tower blocks. You may think this mad, but next time you are there, stop and look, and clear away in your mind the clutter of the retail stalls that now inhabit the area and try to ignore the awful bus interchange. Any redevelopment scheme should seek to retain that which is good and successful.

## Crossrail: Presentation to Parliament

SAVE had the joys of another day in Parliament, giving evidence to the committee investigating the Crossrail Bill. Before appearing we had engaged with Crossrail engineers to discuss our concerns with the scheme (the demolition of a city block or two around Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road) and suggest alternatives involving the demolition of buildings of no architectural interest rather than taking out the smaller, more vulnerable and more interesting buildings (thereby creating juicy development sites).

MPs were led through a series of slides outlining what would be lost and suggesting alternative. The attitude of Crossrail was that while much of this was technically feasible, it would all cost rather a lot and so the committee should reject our petition.

While waiting for our turn to go before the committee, Crossrail representatives could be heard horse trading, making expensive deals with commercial interests. Public interests (such as historic buildings) are not able to employ lawyers to strike deals. At the time this made

SAVE's appearance feel a little futile, but we soldiered on, on the basis that it would be worth it if we saved just one building from demolition. Following our appearance, the committee asked Crossrail to reconsider the fate of one building, on Charterhouse Square: Crossrail, however rejected retention as an option. Independently, a campaign has been set up to prevent the destruction of the 1927 Astoria Theatre in Charing Cross Road, also threatened by Crossrail (although the campaign seems to think that it is threatened by a developer). There perhaps is hope yet.

## Pathfinder – Overview

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Ruth Kelly (aged 38) has been remarkably silent on Pathfinder since taking over the sizeable hotseat of her predecessor, John Prescott. The number of houses set to be demolished under the Housing Market Renewal Initiative / Pathfinder has in the last two years sunk from an estimated 167,000 to around 57,000, according to the latest figures from the chairs of the Pathfinder bodies (released in time for the party conference season and the Government's comprehensive spending review). While this represents a significant decrease from the initial estimate of 400,000 homes facing the wrecking ball, the fact is that many of these buildings are lived in and enjoyed by their occupants, form parts of viable communities and the wider historic townscape, and simply do not merit destruction. The fight is far from over.

One area that remains a problem is that of what to do once a public inquiry into a proposed compulsory purchase has resulted in the proposals being thrown out (ie victory for the campaigners). The promoters of the clearance schemes do not have a plan "B", having expected to win, with the result that those remaining in the area are left high and dry. Indeed the proponents frequently just carry on regardless. In such circumstances the local authority must consider releasing the properties on the open market in a responsible manner (ie not all at once, flooding the market) or renting them out, as part of a series of wider measures to rehabilitate the area.

A big thank you to all the Friends who have contributed to the Pathfinder fighting fund so far – through this SAVE has been able to make small grants to a number of community groups to help them fight the proposals in their areas, whether through covering the costs of producing campaign materials or purchasing computer hardware, such as for the Edge Lane, Liverpool, campaign (see below). Every penny helps level the playing field – at public inquiries, residents' groups find themselves up against consultants paid (we understand) up to £40,000 per week for their services.

## Pathfinder in the Dock

Elizabeth Pascoe, a resident in the **Edge Lane clearance area in Liverpool**, took the authorities to court over their proposals to compulsorily purchase her

home (and a couple of hundred others) for demolition, and won.

The Edge Lane clearance scheme, to which the Merseyside Pathfinder Body, New Heartlands, has contributed £8m, aimed to wipe out a swathe of housing along the principal route into Liverpool from the east, creating an urban motorway with large shopping sheds on either side. 500 residential properties would have to be demolished for the scheme to go ahead, all of them Victorian. At the last count, around 100 remained in private hands, with the proponents of the scheme continuing to pressure people into selling up. However, the improving property market has bitten back, with houses changing hands for up to £250,000 (what housing market failure?).

Within the scheme area, not one of the houses is structurally unsound and all are capable of refurbishment, in spite of the deliberate blighting of the area over the years. The community is still clinging on in spite of being partially decanted (no arrangement has been made for businesses to relocate) and it has all the more reason to remain since Ms Pascoe's remarkable victory over Government.

Mr Justice Forbes at the High Court found that those pushing for compulsory purchase had overstepped their powers, as therefore had the Inspector at the planning inquiry, and the Secretary of State in confirming the Inspector's decision. At first, Government and the Pathfinders dismissed the ruling as irrelevant, a trifling matter of the wrong words. This then morphed into the excuse that they had used the "wrong compulsory purchase order". Currently they are claiming that the scheme will still go ahead. Hopefully the enormity of Ms Pascoe's victory will dawn on them soon and they will start to negotiate a better scheme with her and the other residents, rather than seeking to clobber them with another public inquiry. It is double jeopardy for an entire community, guilty until proven innocent.

**STOP PRESS:** Our hopes were misplaced: on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October the Liverpool Land Development Company sent out a press release stating that it would start demolishing houses in the clearance area on the following Monday. On Friday 27<sup>th</sup> SAVE started legal proceedings challenging the legality of the proposed demolition, in light of Mr Justice Forbes' decision, and on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Robert McCracken QC gained an injunction on behalf of Ms Pascoe and the residents to prevent any demolition until after Mr Justice Forbes hands down his Order in relation to his judgment.

English Heritage did not oppose the scheme.

### **Pathfinder spending, Liverpool 2004-2006**

Housing clearance	£20 million
Housing improvement	£3 million (including £2.5 million from English Partnerships)

### **Darwen's hollow victory**

The result of the public inquiry into the compulsory purchase of 160 houses in the Redearth Triangle area of Darwen, Lancs, was that the proposal was thrown out by the Inspector. This result is to be welcomed, but at what cost? The local authority proceeded to demolish houses in its ownership during the inquiry rather than waiting for the result – an act of total arrogance. By the time the proposed compulsory purchase was thrown out, only 80 houses remained standing, eleven of which were occupied. Before the scheme, around 145 of the 160 homes were occupied. Of the eleven still occupied, ten sets of occupiers are in talks with the local authority to sell up. The remaining properties are naturally in far worse condition than when the process started as all maintenance was dropped. The process has in effect destroyed the community, an outcome that some may argue the local authority wanted all along. The authority is now understood to be considering a legal challenge of the result. Quite what it has to gain from this is unclear.

In his summing up, the Inspector made it clear that there was still hope for the area and community and that it should be pulled back from the brink. Originally the local authority argued that the motivation behind the compulsory purchase was to improve the housing in the area. It now appears that instead the land was wanted for a city academy, sponsored by one Rod Aldridge of Capita, a company that has been very successful in winning public sector contracts. According to the local press, Mr Aldridge has told the local authority that if the land for the academy is not delivered by December, the funding for the academy will disappear. It is depressing that a local authority should be so blinded by the money waved before its eyes.



*The Darwen clearance area – to the right of the road that runs from top to bottom of the picture (Jonathan Webb)*

The Inspector's own words are worth quoting in full as they in effect back-up many of SAVE's criticisms of the scheme in our report "*Pathfinder*" (£8 to Friends, £10 to all others). These criticisms were dismissed by Government at the time of publication as "nonsense":

*"I am not convinced that Elevate and the Council in particular have paid sufficient ongoing attention to market conditions in the area to make a compelling*

*case for intervention on housing market grounds. Indeed, even if the Order area was at one time an area of low market demand, there is no compelling evidence that that is still so...nor in my perception has the Council paid sufficient attention to the views of the local community and consulted with them in an open minded way at an early stage in the process”*

*“The proposals ..... specifying the clearance of 160 houses and the development of the cleared area for employment purposes were published in December 2003, before the outcome of the NRA process could have been known and before the survey to establish the up-to-date position as regards the condition of the houses was undertaken by David Adamson & Partners”* Here the Inspector notes that the decision to demolish all the houses in the area was taken at the start of the process rather than as a result of the process: the process was a sham designed with only one outcome – demolition.

*“I accept that fifteen minutes, and certainly the four minutes referred to by one objector ... would be insufficient a time in which to make an adequate assessment of a typical house with a view to reaching a judgement on all nine grounds of fitness in section 604 of the Housing Act 1985. On this basis therefore ... there is more than a suspicion that the survey process did not come up to the full expectations necessary to ensure that a thorough, objective and convincing assessment could be made”*

This is a notable condemnation of the cursory surveys of the houses made by the local authority’s surveyors, on which houses were condemned as unfit, and on which the local authority based their call for demolition.

He also noted that *“ there is sufficient of the fabric of the area in my view left for it to be rescued from this critical condition. The question of further action would be the responsibility of the Council and its HMR partners and it would be a difficult task, given the change that has already occurred. However it would be harsh on the residents who have fought to keep their homes if the decision on the Order was crucially influenced by the compulsory purchase procedure which has contributed to the deterioration of the area.”* Importantly the Inspector notes that there is still hope for the area and that it is the responsibility of the local authority to come up with a scheme to repair the area, and the blame for the blighting of the area is placed firmly in the hands of the promoters of the scheme – the Pathfinder body, Elevate, and the local authority. The council has to date ignored this specific call for an alternative plan to demolition.

There are two more public inquiries in the pipeline – one on the stopping up of the roads in the area to enable the academy to go ahead and a third possible inquiry under the Planning Act. This really is desperately unfair on the remaining residents: the local authority clearly hopes it can brow beat them.

## **Other Pathfinder areas**

Also worth a mention are the proposals for the clearance of over 100 terraced homes in **Barrow in Furness**. The reason given for clearance is not the fitness of the housing, or the levels of vacancy, but the age of the occupants. It is claimed that the area needs more young people to stop it literally dieing, and to attract them it must demolish some of its housing and replace it with “family” homes – ie standard developer fare of a box with a little garden at the front, a little garden at the back and a garage at the side. Apart from sounding unbelievably absurd, astoundingly ageist and laughably wrong, the plans seem to ignore what usually happens in areas such as this – the older population will not live in the same homes for ever – when their innings comes to an end, their old home will go on the market and will be picked up by someone – young or old. It is the amenities of an area rather than the housing and age of the occupants that make it attractive.

Meanwhile, in **Openshaw, Manchester**, around Toxteth Street, a small group of private owners is holding out for their area – 550 or so Victorian terraced homes are up for demolition (down from 700) in an area with plenty of open spaces, shops and amenities. At present the majority of houses are rented out to newcomers to the area (and country) who have yet to put down roots – as such there isn’t a strong and settled community. If Pathfinder is really about creating sustainable communities, it ought to give them a chance to get going rather than moving these vulnerable people on elsewhere (in this case the vulnerable have, by the very fact they are already in the UK, been displaced).

## **OUT OF GOVERNMENT**

### **Government and Heritage**

Government’s continuing ambivalence to heritage was evident in the Prime Minister’s letter to Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell and in her response. Mr Blair outlined seven challenges for Ms Jowell, of which the most relevant was the 6<sup>th</sup> (the others were to do with the Olympics, broadcasting and so forth):

*“I want you to continue your vigorous stewardship of the culture sector in this country, so that our museums, galleries, theatres and artists can continue to be the best in the world and contribute to the quality of life of our citizens, our attractiveness as a visitor destination, and continue to be at the heart of a thriving cultural and creative economy. In particular I would like you to continue to champion the role culture can play in national identity and our image of ourselves at home and abroad, and to maximise the part culture can play in a successful London Olympics in 2012.”*

The notion of a Department of National Heritage is well and truly dead. The “vigorous stewardship” has thus far touched the heritage sector in the form of a series of proposals for major reform of the sector which appear to raise more concerns than they settle, a failure to

stand up for English Heritage in governmental spending reviews and one or two token gestures, such as throwing us the crust of listing one small part of the threatened buildings at Smithfield against the advice of English Heritage (while slapping a certificate of immunity from listing – largely based on a false premise – on the rest). The Department for Culture, Media and Sport seems to make the mistake of seeing heritage as an individual entity, not something that is subconsciously very much at the centre of national life, touching on so many elements of policy.

It does appear that at least one part of the elephantine former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is starting to understand this – in May it published guidance on planning for tourism (see below). However, while one part of the elephant is urging a move in the right direction, the rest is stuck at the watering hole of the developer community. Years on from the initial promise to reverse the effects of the Shimizu decision in conservation areas nothing has been done (see below) and the Housing Market Renewal Initiative / Pathfinder, wiping out areas of Victorian housing, bulldozes on.

No doubt once the realisation that heritage is not an obstacle but a catalyst has dawned, this lot will be out and the next lot in.

## Culture Media and Sport Committee

Parliament has given the heritage sector a hefty stick with which to beat Government in the form of the Culture, Media and Sport Committee's report on "Protecting and Preserving our Heritage" (ISBN 0 215 02995 X).

The report notes, on the positive side, the ongoing popularity of heritage, the contribution of the voluntary sector and the contribution of the Heritage Lottery Fund; and on the negative side the funding shortfall at English Heritage, the effect of this on repairs and maintenance, and the threat posed by the need to fund the 2012 Olympics.

The committee's in-depth analysis of the situation, resulting from the mass of evidence provided to it by the sector (SAVE both wrote to the committee and appeared before it), is stinging, noting the effects of English Heritage's funding shortfall and the resultant loss of expertise on the built fabric, the "patchy record" of DCMS as champion of the cause within Government, as well as the ongoing perversity of the VAT system. The committee did not fall into the trap of attempting to place a monetary value on the contribution heritage makes to national life, instead recognising the importance of the sense of place imparted by historic buildings and areas. With regard to Pathfinder and the Housing Market Renewal Initiative, the Parliamentarians made it clear in a welcome paragraph that Government should take more account of examples of best practice in refurbishment

The committee touched on other important issues, such as the frequent difficulties in accessing the funds of the Heritage Lottery Fund, noting that the mass of professional assessments required act as a deterrent to applying to the HLF for funding. Maintenance was touched on in a number of ways, such as in encouraging public bodies to dispose of heritage assets to organisations with adequate maintenance plans in place for them, through the discussion on VAT and paragraphs discussing incentives to maintain.

**The Department for Culture, Media and Sport's response** was weak, badly drafted and in places factually incorrect. Some issues were avoided or completely ignored. One would expect better of a government department.

*"The historic environment continues to feature prominently in DCMS priorities, as was made clear in the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport's response to the Prime Minister's letter"* the response trumpets. Er, no. In relation to heritage, Tessa Jowell's quixotic response stated *"Our cultural heritage - be it buildings, literature and learning, or works of art - secures us a key role on the world stage. But changes in technology are having a profound affect on how we lead our lives, and decisions we are soon to take on the digital revolution and our place in it will affect generations to come"*

The response included a long defence of Pathfinder / Housing Market Renewal Initiative, which is interesting given that the committee report included only one paragraph (but a very welcome one) out of 220 on the issue. As ever the chocolate box definition of heritage is at the heart of things: *"the historic environment is widely acknowledged by DCMS as a key driver of holiday and leisure activity. Heritage sites are consistently represented in the top ten visitor attractions for both the country as a whole and by region."*

DCMS remains in complete denial with regard to English Heritage, claiming that it *"is funded at a level which is sufficient for it to discharge its responsibilities and to deliver to a high standard"*. Clearly DCMS will not be putting forward a vigorous case for a rise in EH's funding to the Treasury in the forthcoming comprehensive spending review.

Much of the response was about what other bodies were doing, not about what the Department itself is doing. Even when discussing its own activities, the response is factually incorrect, for example stating in relation to Heritage Link, the sector's umbrella body, that: *"David Lammy, the Minister for Heritage, has attended a number of Heritage Link events and debates, including "Heritage Day" in December 2005."* Er, no. David Lammy has attended one Heritage Link event.

Another favourite chestnut of SAVE's is the Shimizu Decision (a High Court decision which led to the redefinition of demolition in relation to conservation areas – partial demolition is no longer counted as

requiring conservation area consent for demolition). Years of promises on the part of government have finally been reneged upon: *“The Government announced its intention to address Shimizu in March 2001. However, in the light of other policy developments such as the Householder Development Consents Review, the wholesale review of the GPDO has not been progressed”*, helpfully adding that, *“little comprehensive analysis or evidence which has been presented to Government suggests that this issue needs to be addressed immediately”*. In other words, civil servants have parked the issue somewhere near the junk yard.

Remarkably, the response also tries to park the issue of VAT being charged on repairs to historic buildings, rather missing the point by claiming that it would not increase employment. The EU created a temporary loophole in the VAT rules on this issue as an experiment, Government chose not to take advantage. Rest assured, neither of these issues will quietly go away.

### **DCLG Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism**

As if to prove that the Department for Communities and Local Government is not all bad, this recent publication proves that there must be at least one person in the largest department in Government with something of an understanding of old buildings. This good practice guide is to be welcomed, and in a sign of the times much of the early discussion focuses on what tourism does for the exchequer (noting that it contributes the equivalent of 70% of the central government education budget). So how long will it be until the next link is made: tourists come to see our historic towns and places, ruin them and you reduce your 70%. It recognises tourism as a spur to regeneration, as a means to bringing derelict land and buildings back into use, and thus the need to plan for vibrant and viable town centres, protect and enhance the built environment and look for the regeneration benefits (even suggesting that old and derelict buildings should be reused in preference to building new to provide facilities for visitors).

### **Get Prodding**

The Public Request to Order Disposal (PROD) is a splendid but little used piece of legislation dreamed up in the 1980s to force local authorities to be rather more efficient in their property management. The Empty Homes Agency suggested to campaigners in the Newsham Park area of Liverpool (a potential Pathfinder clearance area) that this might help sort out the problems of local authority owned mansions on the edge of the park that have been allowed to fall into a parlous state of disrepair. In spite of numerous offers from developers and individuals interested in taking on the buildings and rehabilitating them (the housing market in the area makes it economically viable in spite of the blight created by these ruined buildings)

Liverpool City Council has refused to sell. It has a deal with Bellway Homes which requires it to give first choice on any land over a certain size. Bellway is not noted for its conservation credentials. The campaigners wrote to the Secretary of State, Ruth Kelly, with a Public Request to Order Disposal, and a notice was duly served on the local authority. The local authority appealed the notice and the Secretary of State has given it a year to turn the situation around – it really has no excuse to let such valuable assets continue to rot.

### **Fortfield Hotel, Sidmouth**

The destruction of decent Edwardian urban residential buildings continues to be all the rage. Even in genteel Sidmouth elegant and civilised gentlemen’s residences are considered fair game. The basis for this is, as might be expected, the value of the land the buildings sit on – close to town centres with generous gardens ripe for development – rather than architectural quality, contribution to local character and quality of life.

The Fortfield Hotel was originally built as a private residence for Sir Joseph Francis Leese, in 1890-92, and the building has been used as a hotel since the 1930s. It is a slightly eclectic composition, and as noted by the English Heritage listing inspector, it is certainly a building of historic and architectural interest. Its current owners do not see a future for the existing building as a hotel – it cannot, they claim, provide the spa facilities that a truly modern hotel requires. Oh the perils of the middle ground, the mass market, the standard product, magnolia paint and the lowest common denominator, all susceptible to the whims and wiles of fashion.



Buildings such as this, well built and handsome, provide a range of opportunities to those willing to take them. One only needs to point to the Hotel du Vin chain to see what can be done with old buildings in previously unfashionable locations to create extremely attractive, individual and comfortable hotels. What is needed here is a dose of imagination, not the wrecking ball. Following pressure from SAVE, the Victorian Society and the Georgian Group the owner has withdrawn the planning application to demolish. Let’s hope they come up with something rather better than

the glass and steel concoction they were poised to inflict on Sidmouth.

### **Waverley Mill, Galashiels**



Just as SAVE was celebrating the decision to retain and restore Paddington's magnificent Span Four in August, trouble was brewing north of the border in Scotland. The Waverley Mill stands on the Gala Water within a stone's throw of Galashiels town centre, and until September of this year housed the fully functioning Lochcarron weaving mill. This remarkable ensemble of buildings charted more than two hundred years of development in the Scottish textile industry. Modest mill cottages built in 1805 from local stone and flint rubbed shoulders with more imposing red sandstone Victorian and Edwardian mill buildings.

SAVE was alerted to the submission of a planning application to raze to the ground this historic mill complex in its entirety. In its place would be a retail park comprising of four white-clad, megastore sheds organised into a shopping 'strip'. The initial (if somewhat naïve) presumption was that Historic Scotland would surely assess the site, granting it the listing it deserved and so ensuring its survival. On the contrary, thanks to a longstanding policy that prevents buildings being listed when subject to live planning applications, Historic Scotland's hands were completely tied.

The only hope was for a group of responsible, conservation-friendly members of Scottish Borders Council to push through a building preservation notice, stopping developers Terrace Hill in their tracks. No such luck – the council insisted that the legal and financial ramifications of this would be enormous, especially given Historic Scotland's lack of involvement.

In spite of a SAVE press-release with encouraging local and national press coverage (and a brief flirtation with ITV), it soon became apparent that the characters in this saga were not budging. With a council that seemed to have little regard for the history or even sense of place of its main town and an almost totally inert Historic Scotland, the mill's fate was sealed. With undue haste reserved matters that remained on the planning application were passed (nominally the retention of a rare water wheel to stand in a retail forecourt) and full permission was granted by the Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2006. Demolition began in early September.

SAVE requested that Historic Scotland provided an assessment as to whether the building met the criteria for listing. The answer, which was positive, clearly demonstrates that the existing policy is a nonsense, making it impossible to list buildings of listable quality when they are in danger. The position is the worse because this particular planning application had been live for the best part of the decade and listing criteria had clearly changed in the meantime. SAVE is hopeful that this realisation will provide the key for reconsidering the policy.

### **Middlesex Guildhall, London**

Middlesex Guildhall is not a minor building, nor one that is inappropriately used – it is currently a Crown Court, occupied very happily by its resident judges, with an interior that reflects the full majesty of the law. However, it easily goes unnoticed, nestling behind shady plane trees on Parliament Square among buildings of the highest order of importance, such as Westminster Abbey, Parliament and the Treasury. It is this very location which makes it so vulnerable.

Listed at Grade II\*, it is a masterpiece of the Gothic Revival, completed in 1913. Its exterior, in white Portland stone, is sparingly adorned by muscular angels, delicate foliage and heraldic scenes designed by HC Fehr, one of the leading sculptors of the day. The interior carries on this theme, but in grander style – the principle rooms, courts one, two and three (formerly the council chamber) represent a high point of the Arts and Crafts Gothic Revival, the secular equivalent of Liverpool's Anglican cathedral.

With all this in mind one would have expected the building to be safe. But no. As a part of Government's piecemeal reform of the constitution, it has been deemed that the UK requires a Supreme Court separate from the legislature, both in terms of power and location, a consequence of which is a need for somewhere for their lordships to sit. Following an internal study at the Department for Constitutional Affairs, Middlesex Guildhall was settled on as the ideal location for the UK Supreme Court.



Westminster City Council weakly gave into the demands of the Lord Chancellor and passed listed building consent for a scheme which will strip out a large part of the very fine woodwork in the main court rooms, leaving a hollow building ready to be fitted out with slick new courts and a library (sunk through the floor of court one). Nearly all of the magnificent fittings will be removed, the best stored in a display in the basement. At the council's planning committee meeting, one of the members suggested that the council might be able to find a home for some of the other splendid fittings in Westminster City Hall (the bastard child of the redevelopment of Victoria Street in the 1960s and 70s). The DCA's agents were allowed to make an in-camera presentation to the members of the committee. Objectors were not. The pictures of the proposals for the interior speak for themselves.

At issue here is not whether a Supreme Court is necessary, but whether Government should be allowed to ignore its own rules regarding historic buildings. This important building should not be sacrificed. The dignity of a new Supreme Court demands an appropriately dignified new building (£34 million is earmarked for the conversion, to be paid for through a levy on all court users: over £50m has been spent by the DCA on management consultants over the last ten years, according to evidence given by Keith Vaz MP to the Commons Constitutional Affairs Committee).

Our new report "*The Guildhall Testimonial*" will be launched in the very near future.

English Heritage did not oppose the scheme

## Newark Works, Bath

The privilege of being booted out of the Royal Institute of British Architects is reserved for comparatively few, but amongst that small number is Thomas Fuller. Following his expulsion in the 1850s for some misdemeanour or other, Fuller moved to North America, where he designed the splendidly over the top French Revival New York State Capitol in Albany, NY, before being employed as Chief Architect to the Domain of Canada. In this position he was responsible for some of the most important buildings in the country, such as the parliament building in Ottawa. His remarkable sense of grandeur developed early on in his career with the construction of St. John's Cathedral in Antigua (1845), and can be seen at its most powerful at the arsenal in Toronto.

The Newark Works in Bath dates from the 1850s, and consists of a well composed central section, three bays wide, with the works spreading out to either side. The works sits outside the main conservation area and world heritage site in Bath, in spite of it representing an important period in Bath's history, as industry developed. Indeed the works represents a wider and even more important period in the industrial revolution, with direct links to Abraham Darby's works at Coalbrookdale, and the growth of the major engineering

concern that became Stothart and Pitt – their cranes can be seen in every major port in the world.

With all this in mind, one would have thought that the building would be listed, and that the development of the site, were it needed, would be done with respect to the building, its architect and the site's history. However, the very wealthy James Dyson has offered major funding for an engineering academy and Bath and North East Somerset Council have gone for it, identifying the works as the perfect site for a spangly new building by Wilkinson Eyre, of London Eye fame. Within their domain are other towns which probably need the investment the academy represents rather more than Bath. The controversy has raged in the local press, with the local MP Don Foster calling for its demolition and practically everyone else calling for its retention.

SAVE has called for the spot listing of the works – it is one of the most clear-cut cases we have come across in the last few years. A failure to list would be a failure by the Minister to follow the duty to list laid down in law. The former head of Heritage and Conservation for the Province of Ottawa's stated view is that if built in Canada, it would be regarded as a national treasure and appropriately protected. The process of trying to get the building listed has uncovered some interesting practices on the part of DCMS: it has consulted B&NES Council's development control division on listing. Why not then the conservation team within that authority? As a result SAVE has requested, under the Freedom of Information Act, an explanation of the procedure DCMS follows in relation to requests to spot list.



*The central section of the Newark Works, which would be just as at home on the Grand Canal in Venice*

**STOP PRESS:** On November 7<sup>th</sup>, it was announced that after all it is possible to incorporate the façade of the building into the academy. Wilkinson Eyre revealed fresh plans – which do exactly that, although with a new glass building behind. At least some compromise is now apparently willing to be made. SAVE cautiously welcomes this and will continue to monitor the situation.



## Silver Hill development, Winchester

Winchester remains a city of low horizons, vernacular scale building and winding historic streets, dominated by the cathedral, which remains the focus of the town. The Friargate area suffered the blandest excesses of the last sixty years, and so proposals to redevelop the area would normally be welcomed with open arms and a suitable design brief.

What has emerged, however, is a rather disastrous alignment of the planets – in this case heavy demands from the local authority regarding provision of parking and retail, and our not-so-dear chums at Thornfield (the development company that wants to pull down the General Market building at Smithfield and replace it with seven storeys of offices). The proposals for Winchester try to meet all of the local authority's demands and the need to make a healthy return on the site, resulting in a building that is simply too large for the town, upsetting the delicate balance that makes Winchester special.

SAVE wrote to the local authority asking for the plans to be rejected and rethought, and the City of Winchester Trust has produced an excellent analysis of the problems posed by the proposal and its contribution to the debate was a vital one that helped tipped the balance. There remains the wider question is that of what should the future of an important historic city such as Winchester be: growth through development, meaning an increase in densities (and therefore height), or should it work with what it already has, using it as a framework for economic development rather than hoping that new build will drive the local economy? The Trust has made a start at answering the question with a paper on the need for some form of heritage protection for the whole city. The city needs to recognise that conservation led regeneration has served it very well in the past and can continue to do so.

Following all the pressure the local authority has asked the developer to rethink the scheme – whether this will result in major alterations remains to be seen. English Heritage did not oppose the scheme.

## Elizabeth House saved...Round 2

Elizabeth House in Highgate, North London, was commissioned as the result of a public subscription appeal to house the Mothercraft Training Society (formerly called 'Babies of the Empire'). The building was opened by the then Princess Elizabeth (later to become Queen Mother) in 1930. The important inter-war architects Richardson and Gill put together a well-crafted design that followed the main principles of the Mothercraft movement: spacious, clean and light surroundings in which to raise healthy infants, after the population reduction caused by WWI.

Following the determination of former SAVE Buildings at Risk Officer, Ela Palmer and local residents group CARA, the Department for Culture Media and Sport

decided to list the building in August 2005 at Grade II, on the advice of English Heritage. English Heritage highlighted how the building had witnessed the development of innovative methods of baby-care. These well-regarded architects' pleasing design with its neo-Georgian motifs and multi-storey veranda were also given as reasons for listing.



*The veranda and a wing of Elizabeth House – light, airy and comfortable*

This success was quickly over-shadowed by a listing review request by developers Tenview Services Ltd. The developers had put together plans to demolish the building (in a conservation area) and build a block of luxury flats as its replacement. In a heated legal debate, Tenview accused the DCMS of going against government policy and requested that the buildings be de-listed. The claimant's key argument was that the building was of doubtful historic importance, having been only the second home of Mothercraft, while also claiming that the building had been "no more than a nurse's hostel". Ironically, the Secretary of State's decision was very much influenced by the historical 'commentary' submitted by Tenview itself. This well-researched document made it clear that Elizabeth House contained lecture halls and "nurseries for infants and special apartments for invalid mothers."

This, together with the view that the architecture of the building was of sufficient merit in its own right, resulted in the decision to uphold the original listing. The DCMS are quite prepared for an appeal to this decision. Hopefully this example of DCMS holding the line might deter indignant developers with deep pockets in the future.

## Sports Buildings

As a part of the changes to the General Permitted Development Orders, which govern what one can and cannot do without planning permission, sports buildings will now require planning permission before they can be demolished. The new rules will apply to any demolition of a sports building used for indoor and outdoor sports, where this is not part of a wider application. This covers a whole range of buildings, from swimming pools to ice rinks, with the aim of giving local planning authorities greater control to conserve sports facilities in their area. It may, however, be too late for some:

### Kays' Cricket Pavilion Worcester



The 1878 Cricket Pavilion at the Broughton sports ground in Worcester, originally built for Worcestershire County Cricket Club, recently faced demolition and replacement with absolutely nothing as a part of a residential development on the site of the neighbouring former factory site, owned by Kays, of catalogue fame. The cricket ground would remain intact.

It was at the Broughton Ground that WG Grace made his first appearance in the Midlands, aged 20, for Worcester II against the North of England, before the construction of the pavilion. Since WCCC's move to New Road in 1896 the Pavilion has been associated with the nearby Cinderella Shoe Factory, most recently under the ownership of Kays. The pavilion is a modest but handsome building, redolent of the sound of leather on willow, tea and cakes, polite applause and gentle snoozing on a summer's afternoon.

The pavilion was declared unsafe in 2005 and Kays stopped the local club using the building. Repair costs were estimated at £25,000 and Worcester City Council offered a grant towards this. The offer was turned down. Importantly, the building remains substantially in its original state, with only minor alterations. Kays did start work on demolition, before being stopped by action on the part of Worcester City Council, in the form of a Building Preservation Notice. English Heritage refused to confirm this stating that the building

was unlistable in spite of its original interior: the mystery of what makes a building listable continues.

In the face of English Heritage's refusal to list, the ever resourceful conservation team at Worcester City Council, led by the splendid Will Scott, then managed to prevent further works through the Wildlife and Countryside Act, and then with a hasty Conservation Area designation. This is now being challenged by Kays with a judicial review – a gravy train for the legions of lawyers and consultants who will no doubt milk the case for all it is worth. The refusal to list has in effect neatly avoided English Heritage and Government having to deal with a pesky judicial review, instead passing the responsibility on to the local authority, which deserves every support for its actions.

### Cyclone, Southport

The crested newts and natterjack toads have for the moment also put a stop to the demolition of the 1937 Cyclone, one of only a handful of remaining UK pre-war timber rollercoasters, and the sole remaining example of its type in the UK. 127 were built in the period up to 1960 – the few which remain constitute a pathetic survival rate considering all the pleasure (and fear) they have brought into the lives of more people than most other building types, and surely deserve some protection. Only one has been listed – the Scenic Railway at Dreamland, Margate (see SAVE Newsletter April 2003) and the future of that site is not secure.

The Cyclone is part of Pleasureland, a historic pleasure park at the seaside resort of Southport which is leased from Sefton Council by Blackpool Pleasure Beach Ltd. Before the end of the season BPB called together its workers, made them redundant on the spot, and closed the gates. English Heritage was alerted to the closure and the historic structures on site, but before they got around to visiting to assess it for listing, its owners sent in the chainsaw gangs. English Heritage was denied access, while the chainsaws continued to chop up the Cyclone. One brave chap, Peter Crompton, who is spearheading the local campaign, climbed the structure along with a friend and a large SAVE OUR CYCLONE banner. His protest attracted a blaze of publicity, which rather held up the demolition work. Work was further halted when the resourceful Peter alerted officials to the presence of protected species living under Cyclone.

English Heritage decided not to recommend listing, in part because of the partial demolition (which is repairable and not a great part of the structure) although its report was inaccurate. A mass of new evidence was compiled in great haste regarding its national importance by SAVE Friend and campaigner Ev Cook, and a thorough request to reconsider the listing was put forward, supported by SAVE. The response via the DCMS was again full of contradictions and inaccuracies with seemingly little acknowledgement relevant new information. Although a small part of the structure had in the past been damaged and replaced, like for like, this in itself could not have been enough to

prevent it from being listed – many listed buildings are altered over time. Following further correspondence and protest to DCMS, there is still an ongoing review of the situation. At the time of writing, the chainsaws are halted.

This is yet another sad case of a building or structure that deserves listing failing to receive the protection it deserves, and another example of why an urgent change in the law is required to give interim protection while a listing application is being considered. Expect a SAVE report on listing in the not too distant future.



*Cyclone in its full glory (above) before the chainsaw gangs moved in (below)*



### Conservation vs Conservation

Some people might consider it something of a dilemma, but sticking four 410ft high wind turbines in a Repton landscape in the Cheshire green belt is not a good way of going about things (Tower 42, the tallest building in the City of London, is by way of comparison, 600ft high). The proposals put forward by Tegni Cymru for Aston Grange Farm in Park Royal represent the industrialisation of a landscape and an entirely improper way of meeting the challenge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Cheshire (a county with a massive dairy herd, producing tonnes of methane – a most potent greenhouse gas – every year). The wind turbine lobby is very strong, with the British Wind Energy Association acting as the articulator of its concerns. There is strong local opposition in this rural area, and not surprisingly so – the proposals will blight the landscape and the amenity of the area, which acts as

a rural “lung” for Runcorn. The key question is really whether the small pay-off from this proposal balances the wider damage it causes to landscape, ecology, amenity and community. In this case, the answer has to be no. Sadly, this case is only representative of a number of other lovely places threatened, such as **Kiln Pitt Hill**, Northumberland.

[www.saynotowindfarm.co.uk](http://www.saynotowindfarm.co.uk)



*The effect of wind turbines on Kiln Pitt Hill, Northumberland*

### 119 Poplar High Street, London

Hooray – a success at public inquiry for a conservation area case – in the last newsletter we discussed this perfectly decent corner building in east London, threatened with demolition and replacement by a far larger block. Local opposition backed up with a strong and clear representation from SAVE appears to have convinced a planning inspector at public inquiry to throw out the developer’s appeal against the council’s decision to reject the application. A joy, for once, to see conservation area designation actually protecting buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the area.

### Back to Bradford on Avon

Kingston Mills at the heart of Bradford-on-Avon remain empty as its owner Taywood homes comes up with yet more ideas for massively dense development on the site. The current scheme is the third in six years for the site and while it represents an improvement on previous efforts, this is not really saying terribly much.

The townscape of Bradford on Avon is one of its most precious assets – tightly packed but essentially small-scale, with the occasional building rising a little higher than its neighbours, all in golden stone and mostly with tile roofs.

Kingston Mills is essentially an island site at the heart of Bradford on Avon, next to the mediaeval bridge over the Avon and overlooked by the wonderful Jacobean Manor and many other buildings in the town, which is in essence a giant amphitheatre. The mills originally housed a rubber factory before being sold off for a song to Taywood. The buildings on the site include the

Grade II listed Kingston House, a small Palladian villa, as well as a range of powerful industrial buildings, dating up to the 1950s. Although the new plans seek to retain most of these buildings, the sheer number of residential units the developer is seeking to stick on the site requires a series of large blocks completely at odds with the town's delicate townscape.

SAVE has written to the local authority urging them to reject the application and persuade the developer to reduce the number of units on the site – the town only has so much capacity, and its townscape really is not robust enough to take these proposals. Taywood stand to make a great deal of money no matter what they do on the site, but whatever finally comes forth, if it is grossly inappropriate it will only ultimately be a foot-shooting exercise, damaging the chief attraction for living there – the beautiful town.

## Middlesex Hospital



Rudyard Kipling was something of a follower of contemporary medicine, mostly through his friendship with Sir John Bland Sutton. Bland Sutton was based at the Middlesex Hospital on Warren Street in London, and both he and the hospital feature in Kipling's writings.

At present, the building is being slowly stripped, in preparation for what we do not know. The building sits in a conservation area and makes a clear and positive contribution to it, but architects Make (under Ken Shuttleworth, previously of Fosters) have been commissioned to do something with the site. Expect radical.

The existing building mostly dates from the 1920s and 30s, reflecting post-Great War thinking and innovation in healthcare, and developments in building technology: the use of a steel frame allows seven stories of hospital, with verandas built into the shell of the building. It was designed by AW Hall, who had a number of hospital commissions under his belt. Facing the building on Goodge Street, Hall accosts you with what is essentially a giant Venetian window, four storeys tall, sitting above a rusticated base and an elegant neo-Georgian vestibule. The building is brick with Portland stone dressings. Its

stripped down yet massive classicism is a bold architectural statement, almost pre-empting the post-modernists of the 1980s, but with rather more subtlety – for example central window bays are stepped back in a Soanean manner.

The Cleveland Street frontage is similarly bold with a tall four storey window, divided in three. The tripartite division is echoed in the door below and windows above. Around these windows are expanses of deftly handled brickwork hinting at a confident modernism at work, executed in crisp and neat Flemish bond. The architect did not feel the need to unnecessarily puncture or adorn the walls in spite of the need for natural light for the hospital. The north side of the complex forms a courtyard with open verandas which clearly express the structure of the building.

Much of the interior survives intact, airy and welcoming, with wonderful lecture rooms, fine ceramics, deco influenced internal fenestration, original clocks and mosaic floors. The children's ward contained a remarkable series of scenes from nursery rhymes in ceramic tiles – these have been removed for safe-keeping following the intervention of the Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society.

It is hard to argue that the building does not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and SAVE argues that it merits preservation in one form or another. There are numerous examples of hospital buildings that have been successfully converted to residential uses, creating light and airy accommodation. There is no reason why it cannot be the same for the Middlesex Hospital.

## Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London

SAVE's role as the campaigner of last resort continues with the saga of 23 Savile Row, a case that Westminster City Council, CABE, English Heritage, Legal and General and Stanhope Plc probably wish would quietly disappear into a pile of rubble. There should be red faces at all these organisations over their involvement.

23 Savile Row was English Heritage's HQ up until earlier this year when it exchanged the remaining ten years of its ridiculously cheap rental deal for a few million quid, to move its London division to the old Prudential building on Holborn in London, and the rest to temporary accommodation on Bunhill Row in the City (before moving out to the glories of Swindon). It is a fine neoclassical office building by W Curtis Green, an architect of real distinction, built immediately after the war for Government. Post-war austerity ensured that its interior was never anything terribly special but the building merits listing on the basis of its exterior alone. A certificate of immunity from listing was applied for by the developer (Stanhope), and duly granted on the advice of English Heritage before vacating the building.

Prior to this, conservation area consent had been granted by Westminster City Council for its demolition

and replacement with a building of rather less architectural merit, with the support of CABE. The developer of these speculative proposals for Legal and General was Stanhope, chaired by Sir Stuart Lipton, also chair of CABE.

SAVE was put in contact with Guy Oliver of Oliver Laws. To call Guy an interior designer doesn't seem quite right as he is an architect, but that is essentially what his company trades as. Guy had a scheme for Fortress House (as a hotel, serviced apartments and Turkish bath) and a developer lined up, and so SAVE set about helping this alternative scheme go forward. Guy approached the landlord of the site, Legal and General with a proposal. Its property people eventually rejected this claiming that the Board of Legal and General was not interested. On contacting its Chief Executive it was quickly ascertained that this was not the case: the board had not been notified of this £70million offer. Whoops.



After much toing and froing and a series of constantly moving goalposts, the board of Legal and General considered an offer for the site of around £100million from Anton Bilton's Raven Group, considerably more than might have been gained from a speculative development. Money appears to have prevailed, and Legal and General, in one final move of the posts, stuck the site on the market, with the emphasis very much on the original demolition scheme, asking for more than £100m. The accepted offer was for £115million to demolish and build the consented scheme. Legal and General ought, in a perverse way, to be grateful to SAVE for having helped make it a damn-site more money than it stood to previously. Perhaps they might consider a charitable donation.....

## **BITS AND BOBS Friends**

### **Newcastle Lit & Phil**

Many thanks to SAVE Friend Hazel Fleming for organising an evening at the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society, where your Secretary gave a public talk on the work of SAVE. This was followed by drinks in the neighbouring Mining Institute's library, a wonderful neo-Gothic space right out of Harry Potter. Both buildings are eminently worth a visit should you happen to be in Newcastle – they are located near the glories of the Grade I listed Central Station - and we wish them every success in their combined bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. [www.litandphil.org.uk](http://www.litandphil.org.uk)

### **Donations**

We continue to be surprised and delighted at the generosity of Friends and others who remember us in their wills. Most recently, we were thrilled to receive a substantial legacy from the estate of **Mrs Joyce Hanson**, which will enable SAVE to continue its operation with a degree of confidence in its future (as opposed to the occasional moment of blind panic over quite how we'll pay the next quarter's rent). We would encourage Friends and supporters to follow Mrs Hanson's wonderful example.

We also note, with great sadness, the passing of **Simon Sainsbury** (March 1 1930 – Sept 27 2006). His generous support over a decade was a major spur to many of SAVE's early campaigns and battles. Ours was but the tiniest fraction of the estimated £100 million he gave to charitable causes over his lifetime, but at the time he was SAVE's greatest source of support. Last year he gave us a most valuable further grant for which we remain incredibly grateful.

### **ShareGift**

Yet another innovative way of helping out SAVE. People have small holdings of shares for many different reasons – left over from privatisations, scrip dividends or investments that have fallen in value. Such small amounts of shares are often difficult or even impossible to dispose of because of the costs involved. ShareGift allows you to dispose of these for free – to a charity: all shareholders need to do is send their share certificates to ShareGift and sign a transfer form. ShareGift: 020 7828 1151, 5 Lower Grosvenor Place, London SW1W 0EJ [www.sharegift.co.uk](http://www.sharegift.co.uk)

### **Broadband**

For those of you moving into the modern age and signing up to Broadband, you can help save SAVE a penny or two. If you happen to choose [www.plus.com](http://www.plus.com) as your broadband provider, when signing up mention "savebritheritage.plus.com" as your referrer, we get at least 50p off our bill every month for each referral. If enough people sign up, we will eventually receive a

rebate, which will be most helpful. For more information, please contact the Secretary.

## Other

### The Mausolea and Monuments Trust Gazetteer

The Mausolea and Monuments Trust is a splendid little organization run on even more of a shoestring than SAVE, depending entirely on volunteers. Its achievements since foundation in 1997 include the rescue and repair of two mausolea and minor repairs to three others, and most recently the compilation of a gazetteer of some 330 mausolea across England. Mausolea are a remarkable reflection on both society and the human condition, each with its own story to tell, from the poignant to the downright eccentric. Anyone with the slightest interest in architecture and mortality will find this a fascinating and beguiling resource [www.mausolea-monuments.org.uk](http://www.mausolea-monuments.org.uk)

## Books received

SAVE simply cannot offer full reviews of publications given the limits of both time and space, but never the less all books received will at least be given a mention, no matter how brief

The SAVE office was particularly pleased to receive a review copy of Common Ground's "*England in Particular: a celebration of the commonplace, the local, the vernacular and the distinctive*" by Sue Cliiford and Angela King. It is a wonderful contribution to the debate on what helps form the identity of places by acting as a gazetteer of things one ought to know, and if you didn't already know would probably be delighted to know. Entries include wassailing, ramsons, puddingstone, lynchets, field maple and edible dormouse. Published by Hodder & Stoughton May 2006, 528 pages, nearly 600 essays, over 450 illustrations and costing £30 – but £15 in Waterstones at the moment. ISBN 0-340-82616-9  
Perfect for Christmas.

On a slightly more scholarly note, the splendid Professor Curl has been at it again, and has produced another revision of his "*Dictionary of Architecture*", (OUP) which remains an essential for any architecturally inclined bookshelf. Parked nearby ought to be his wonderful book on **the Egyptian Revival**, now available in paperback.

Nick Laister, noted historian of all things connected with amusement parks, arcades and rides, and heroic leader of the campaign to save Dreamland and the Scenic Railway, has published a marvellous book on the history of Joyland, an amusement arcade in the Yorkshire seaside town of Bridlington, where Nick (mis)spent holidays in his youth. "*Pennies by the Sea*" [www.joyland.co.uk](http://www.joyland.co.uk) is available for £13.99 from Skelter Publishing 2006 ISBN0-9544573-5-8, a small specialist publisher whose list is well worth perusing. [www.joylandbooks.com/skeltershop](http://www.joylandbooks.com/skeltershop)

Bruce Nixon has sent us a copy of his "*Living System*", a book that has an admirable crack at helping us understand what sustainability is all about by looking at the question in the broadest possible sense, while at the same time putting forward so many ideas at the reader to leave you with enough to chew on for a few months. Management Books 2006 ISBN 1 85252-519-3 £14.99

"*The Buildings of Scotland –Borders*", Kitty Cruft, John Dunbar and Richard Fawcett. For the Scottish Borders, Kitty Cruft, John Dunbar and Richard Fawcett (all eminent historians and practising conservationists in Scotland) have put together a sizable architectural anthology on this region's superb historic buildings, from the almost mythical ruins of the great Borders abbeys at Dryburgh and Kelso, to the more secular fineries of the Borders' great castles and houses. The social history of this often troubled frontier land is also well-expressed. The descriptions of many towns and villages such as Galashiels (see above) chart the rise and fall of the region's main industry, weaving. The range of architecture is wide enough to suit all tastes; whether is be Thirlestane Castle's dramatic roofline or John Adam's neo-classical sobriety at Paxton House. To wind your way though the architecture of this idyllic region (both on the road and at home) you could do no better than this splendid addition to "The Buildings of Scotland" series. Yale University Press, London and New Haven 2006, ISBN 0 300 107021 £29.95

"*Decoding Flint Flushwork on Suffolk and Norfolk Churches*" by John Blatchly and Peter Northeast is a useful addition to one's topographical collection, aiding the interpretation of the flushwork display on the wonderful group of over 90 churches in the two counties that are thus decorated. Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, 2005. ISBN 0 9521390 4 9 £15.00

"*Architectural Conservation: Issues and Developments*" ed. Vincent Shacklock, Donhead 2006 ISBN 978 1 873394 77 9 presents an assessment of the state of the sector with a range of essays, including one on SAVE and the Amenity Societies, as a special edition of the always fascinating Journal of Architectural Conservation.

Notified: "*Always Ready, The Drill Halls of Britain's Volunteer Forces*", Mike Osborne 336pp, 300 illustrations £27.50, ISBN 1-85818-509-2 Caliver Books, 216-218 London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3NH; The first study of the topic.

And advance notice of the "**SAVE Britain's Heritage 1975-2005: Thirty Years of Campaigning**" exhibition at Up Front Gallery June 2007, a reprise of the exhibition held at the V&A, although this time in a series of Grade II listed re-used farm buildings, next to Hutton in the Forest, near Penrith, Cumbria [www.up-front.com](http://www.up-front.com)