

**Awards Special**

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## Welcome to the Spring edition of the IHBC North West Branch Newsletter.

Thanks to our industrious members, we have actually been embarrassed by too much good material for this edition and so we have taken the tricky decision to keep some pieces over for the next edition – so you can look forward to reading about Liverpool's Florence Institute and a Wigan windmill next time!

The theme of this edition is design awards and we are pleased to showcase some of the region's longest running local schemes. The experiences of Ian Bond in West Lancashire, John Healey in Cheshire West and Chester, Stockport Council and Salford Council are great adverts for the benefits of running local award schemes and also provide practical tips for setting up your own. The newly established 2010 RTP1/IHBC award was won not by a building but by the excellent SPD produced for the *Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site*.

Positive stories are particularly important at the moment, when we're working in the gloomy context of massive public sector cuts. It's too depressing

to speculate about how all this could affect our jobs and what we do, so I will leave you to read about it elsewhere! But, please let the IHBC know what's going on in your workplace or local authority so we have a clearer picture of how the cuts will affect conservation in the North West. The IHBC nationally has an important lobbying role but this needs up-to-date information.

As you will have read, the Government is keen to remove 'obstacles to development', including 'streamlining' national policy – MP Grant Shapps' view on this is quoted below. The Localism Bill sets out how the Government wants to empower communities in local planning decisions, but the Bill threatens long-established tenets of conservation by removing some protection for the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas. Contact your MP about this, especially if yours is on the Public Bill Committee; for the list of committee members go to <http://ihbconline.co.uk/newsarchive/?p=2364> [sic]

*Marion Barter*

*"Currently there are more than 150 circulars, good practice guides and planning policy statements. Taken together, they contain more words than either the Bible or the Complete Works of Shakespeare. I would be the first to acknowledge that planning requires specialist skill and knowledge, but over-prescription has made the system too opaque. These documents set out planning policy and guidance in so much detail, with so many priorities and so many factors to consider, that the result is internal contradiction, no clear set of priorities, and a great deal of paper produced at local level which no-one actually uses." Grant Shapps, Housing & Local Government Minister, in a speech on 22nd November.*

## Recent Appeal Decisions



*Dismissal of an appeal against refusal of planning permission for rooflights, November 2010*

Trafford is the source of two appeal decisions in this issue. In the first, the Inspector confirmed that rooflights on a building with discipline and elements of symmetry to its frontage were harmful to the character of that building, the wider area – and more importantly to the setting of the adjacent Listed Building. The design of the appeal site on Manchester Road relates well to the Listed Building. The haphazard placement above an ordered facade, and the projection above the roof plane of the non-conservation rooflights were both contributing factors in the decision.

In the second case, an appeal was made against the refusal of retrospective planning permission for 2

front dormers. One dormer was shown on previously approved plans, and the conservation area features many 3 storeyed properties with accommodation in the roofspace, some utilising dormers. However, the Inspector observed that existing dormers do not dominate the elevations, whereas these additional dormer did have that effect. The Inspector concluded that despite being of sympathetic design and vertically aligned with windows below, the proximity of 2 of the dormers to each other, and their prominent position on the front elevation, gave rise to a cluttered appearance dominated by their bulk and glazing (see over).

*Thanks to Elizabeth Read, Conservation Officer at Trafford.*

*Dismissal of an appeal against refusal of retrospective planning permission for two additional front dormers in a conservation area, October 2010*



*Allowal of an appeal against refusal of retrospective planning permission for a pvc shopfront in a conservation area, October 2010*

A surprising decision recently caused some dismay among Conservation groups in Wigan. Hindley town centre has been the subject of a Townscape Heritage Initiative grant scheme. An adopted SPD on shopfront design encourages the

use of recessed doors, cornices, corbel brackets, pilasters, and vertical glazing bars, and in conservation areas, the use of non-traditional materials such as fibre-glass and plastics will not be permitted. However, a retrospective

application for a PVC shopfront was allowed at appeal. The Inspector confirmed that:

- Despite either pre-dating the SPD or being unauthorised, nearby PVC shopfronts were considered to form part of the established character of the conservation area.
- The former condition of the building was taken into account; the appellant contended that he had improved a run-down premises.
- In this section of Market Street he found "very few examples of timber framed shopfronts, or those incorporating the traditional features advocated in the SPD."

This last is particularly perplexing in an area where public investment has been made in reinforcing traditional character; timber shopfronts including many traditional features can be found in the same terrace as the appeal site, and in a fine run of 9 shopfronts directly opposite.

*Thanks to Jason Kennedy, Wigan Council's Conservation & Design Manager.*

If you have been involved in or are aware of any recent appeal decisions which would be of interest to readers, please forward details to [nweditor@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:nweditor@ihbc.org.uk)

## IHBC NW Branch Business

### Dates for your diary:

**The IHBC North West Branch conference** will be on 23rd or 30th September in Manchester.

The topic will be '**Historic Places: Local Action**', building on the current Localism agenda.

*Confirmation of dates and further details will be circulated soon.*

### **IHBC Council in the NW**

IHBC Council meets quarterly and the autumn meeting usually takes place in the regions; this year the NW is to host. The meeting will take place the day before the conference, and will be followed by a reception. Council members are invited to attend the conference as part of proceedings. Due to the hosting of Council the branch annual conference date is tied in with the meeting, allowing Council members to attend our highly thought of event.

### ***Membership news***

One member has upgraded from Affiliate to Full membership - congratulations to Jenny Whetton IHBC, who works for Kathryn Sather Associates. The branch remains at 141 members.

## Calendar

**16th March** GMCOCG, Stockport. The business meeting will be followed in the afternoon by a short visit to the recently restored Plaza Cinema and Market Hall, a reprise of last year's summer social for those who weren't able to make it!



**14th April** LCOG, Pendle

**18th May** GMCOCG, Manchester  
Possible afternoon event tbc.

**16th - 18th June** Annual School, Llandudno (see opposite)

**14th July** LCOG, Fylde

**20th July** GMCOCG, Wigan

**[TBC Summer Social - more details will be announced soon]**

**21st September** GMCOCG, Trafford

**22nd & 23rd September**

**OR 29th & 30th September**

Council meeting and NW Annual Conference.

**13th October** LCOG, Hyndburn

**16th November** GMCOCG, Rochdale Town Hall.

**7th December** AGM, venue tbc

## Annual School Bursaries

In the previous issue we included a report from the 2010 Annual School by Katie Wray. Katie and 3 other members were given bursaries of £100 to attend the school. Increasing branch representation at this national event is one of the aims of our Business Plan, and this year we will again be offering four bursaries covering the cost of the day school (excluding travel or accommodation).

This year's event will be at St. George's Hotel, The Parade, Llandudno and runs from Thursday 16th June to Saturday 18th June.

The title is **Navigating the Shallows: Conservation and stewardship in uncertain times.**

The Dayschool takes place on Friday, with the Fringe School and Dinner on Thursday and tours on Saturday. If you are interested in applying for a bursary, please contact branch secretary Kirsten McKnight at the email address on page 26, explaining why you would benefit from attending. Submissions no more than 1 side of A4 should be made by Friday 15th April.

<http://www.ihbc.org.uk/llandudno2011/>



## Meet the membership

In this new regular feature we will profile members of the branch. As an introduction we begin with a member of the committee, but we really wish to encourage members to submit their own profiles.

*Crispin Edwards, GM rep and newsletter design.*



Before becoming Conservation Officer for Stockport, I spent 8 years at English Heritage. Lots of CPD, including IHBC events, was essential in progressing. Most recently I took a post-grad certificate in buildings archaeology by distance learning from the University of Leicester. I intend to upgrade this year from affiliate to full member. I recently became a father, so don't currently have much spare time for target shooting or playing rugby. Conservation heroes? My father Ben, the first County Archaeologist in the country (for Lancashire).

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## Branch Events

The **AGM** was held at on 8 December 2010 at the Racquet Club Hotel, Liverpool and all branch officers were re-elected (see P.26). Following the business meeting, members enjoyed dinner in the sumptuous surroundings (see below). Date & venue for this year's AGM will be announced here shortly.



An intrepid delegation from Manchester braves a wintry Liverpool: L-R Mark Watson, Paul Butler, Nick Grimshaw, Paul Hartley, James Gibson, Ian Lucas, Kate Borland, Kirsten McKnight. (pics Philip Powell)



## 2010 IHBC NW Branch Conference: Understanding Significance

The day at the Liverpool Institution opened with 2 speakers looking at significance from a theoretical viewpoint.

**Steven Bee**, Director of Planning & Development at English Heritage, discussed the terminology of PPS5. Defining terms and being consistent is necessary, Bee said, because the terms are vital in avoiding future objections.

However, although PPS5 focusses on 'significance', other terms are in use, for example in the primary legislation and in Conservation Principles. Bee considered that 'importance' was the same as significance and that 'values' and 'interests' were synonymous; and they are the means by which we define significance.

Perhaps more importantly, we need to ask ourselves whose values we are discussing and to whom heritage assets are significant. Assessing the importance and interest of an asset from a professional standpoint is a 'top-down' model, whereas a more inclusive approach is now expected. Establishing a wider recognition of historic significance is essential - underpinned by what Bee described as a 'community of interest'.

EH's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008) categorised heritage values as evidential,

historic, aesthetic and communal. These values reflect the diversity of ways in which people relate to heritage assets. Bee said we need to have greater confidence in places changing without losing their significance.

**Derek Worthing**, Principal Lecturer at the University of the West of England made a similar point: that assessing the values that are attributed to heritage is very important; if a place is to be protected and managed, it is vital to know why the place is important and its significance needs to be assessed through a rigorous, transparent and objective process such as that for Conservation Statements, Plans and Management Plans.

In order to engage communities, we need to consider aspects of intangible heritage, like memory, and bring this together with objective assessments of importance. Professionals should not be telling people what is significant; they should ask and find out. Historic places do not have just one fixed value, they have multiple overlapping values.

Worthing then focused on comparative significance. A place can have exceptional, considerable, some, limited, unknown, none or negative (i.e. detracting) significance. These levels can be used to prioritise limited resources against considerable need.

Worthing ended his presentation with some examples, to illustrate the inherent complexities in establishing social values. Port Arthur, in Tasmania, was recently the scene of a random shooting that had obviously had an important impact on the community. But how important (or significant) would the shooting be in thirty years' time?

Similarly, after the reunification of Germany a replica of the demolished People's Palace in Berlin was built, effacing a modernist civic building which had been built in place of the original during the Communist era. This left those who protested that the modern building should be retained (mostly former East Germans), feeling disenfranchised.

**Marion Barter** of the Architectural History Practice explained that you cannot assess significance in isolation and focussed on practical examples. 'Conservation Principles' provide the context and they define how an intellectual relationship can exist between one place and other places. For example, glass at Bramall Hall (originally C15<sup>th</sup>) was influenced by a pattern book from 1615 and ideas from the Netherlands.

In the C19<sup>th</sup> the hall was remodelled and speculative features were added, which are now regarded as being very significant as antiquarian restoration, e.g. an octagonal bay copied from Little Moreton Hall.

Barter also discussed how mapping significance helped in assessing changes and development in the housing of Blackpool, and how value judgements are often used by Local Authorities when faced with an 'over supply' of housing.

Barter ended her presentation with some 'tips for assessing significance': first research the evolution of the building or place; second understand all the factors that shaped the place; third use comparative analysis and look for similar examples - locally, regionally or nationally; and finally use a hierarchy to assess the place in comparison with other examples.

Consultant **Christopher Pound** focused on philosophical issues. If we look at Bath for example, much of the significance depends on buildings, activities and history now gone. The significance is, therefore, abstract or rooted in memory. He also cited Hagia Sophia in Istanbul: a monument with spiritual significance to Christians and Muslims, as well as being an iconic landmark in the city.

During the Enlightenment people began to see landscape as pictures or scenery. People saw beauty and place as the work of God, although industrial landscapes were not viewed in this light. These ways of thinking have been passed down through the generations in Europe and the UK. Perhaps this is why we find it harder to appreciate industrial buildings.

Rounding off the morning was **Stephen Dean**, a Staffordshire County Archaeologist, assessing the significance of the recently discovered Staffordshire Hoard. With reference to PPS5, the hoard is certainly significant in terms of archaeological interest and possibly also in terms of artistic and historic interest. The value to the general public was apparent; £3.2m was raised between January and April and there were record attendances when the hoard was put on display.



After lunch three walking tours/site visits had been organised, so that delegates could consider the issues around significance in some nearby historic places. Peter de Figueiredo led a tour of the Metropolitan (RC) Cathedral, discussing the remains of the workhouse, the Lutyens crypt, the Gibbert cathedral and the later approach steps (see photo courtesy of Nick Grimshaw).

Other groups visited Pembroke Place (an early Jewish butcher's and the last surviving fragment in Liverpool of a court dwelling); and

the Crown Street area (currently neglected early railway structures).

Finally, Ian Bond, Heritage & Environment Manager at West Lancashire Borough Council, presented two case studies, and concluded that for pre-application discussions to be worthwhile the balance of the LPA's resources needs to be front-loaded. These discussions provide the best opportunity to identify the likely impact of development and influence the proposals, where appropriate.

Front-loading advice is 'resource greedy', but more efficient than trying to influence proposals later in the process; in one example of a farm house where an application had been submitted to demolish the building and replace it with two new dwellings, a site visit identified that the building did have some (unknown) heritage value and consultations with a local heritage group highlighted the farm house had historic (and communal) value. Under PPS5 this significance is a material consideration - and with pre-application consultation abortive plans could have been avoided.

In a final question and answer session delegates called for guidance on a 'norm' for a Heritage Impact Statement, and the draft EH document on "setting" was suggested as an example of guidance on how to assess significance.

Chair Paul Hartley rounded off the Day Conference with the thought that the key to understanding significance is the quality of reasoning

applied in making assessments and in making decisions based on them.

*Keith Parsons is a Principal Lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire.*

For a more detailed report see the IHBC NW Branch web pages.

## Planning news

### Permission for 96 new homes in historic Rochdale

Salford-based planning and heritage consultants Paul Butler Associates have gained outline planning and conservation area consent for 96 new homes at the vacant Spotland New Mill site in Spotland Bridge Conservation Area, Rochdale.

The scheme, which was approved by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council's planning committee on 2nd December 2010, includes the conversion of the site's historic mill building and gate house into 15 apartments and the building of 81 two, three and four-bed houses. The mill site's landmark red brick chimney will also be retained as a focal point.

The 1.5 hectare mill site was originally developed as a woollen mill in the 1870s, but was converted to cotton production in 1888. In 1941 it was purchased by Dexine Rubber Company Ltd and was used as a rubber works until the company relocated in 2008. The site has been vacant since.

Tom Flanagan, Director at Paul Butler Associates said:

*'We have worked closely with the Council's planning and conservation team and English Heritage throughout the application process and are delighted that the planning committee agrees that the scheme will ensure the long-term retention and viable reuse of the site's most significant historic buildings and that the new build development will be sympathetic to the conservation area's special character.'*

A reserved matters planning application for landscaping will now be prepared.



*Please submit any Planning stories of interest to [nweditor@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:nweditor@ihbc.org.uk)*

## Conservation & Design Awards in the NW

### Royal Town Planning Institute North West & "WYG" Planning Achievement Awards for 2010

The IHBC NW branch was delighted to sponsor the Award for Conservation as part of this year's RTPI NW Awards, which is currently in its sixth year.

Twelve entries were received, including two entries from the National Awards Scheme. The Regional Judging Panel included IHBC NW representative Paul Mason.

The 8 criteria for assessing each individual entry to the Planning Achievement Awards were:

- Does the entry go above and beyond the statutory requirements?
- Is the entry an extraordinary / outstanding scheme?
- Is the entry an example of best practice?
- How is the entry an example of best practice?
- Is the entry capable of being rolled out / repeated successfully across the North West and even Nationally?
- Is the entry timely (i.e. has it reached fruition or is it premature)?
- Is the entry Planner led?
- What is the level of inter-professional networking involved in each individual entry?



The **RTPI NW & IHBC NW Award for Conservation** as well as the **Award for Best Planning Document** deservedly went to Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document which was submitted by Liverpool City Council, Atkins Heritage, Liverpool Vision, English Heritage, Government Office North West, North West Development Agency and the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE). The SPD was prepared following intervention from UNESCO, which was concerned about new developments having an adverse impact on the World Heritage Site. The SPD provides detailed planning guidance for conservation and regeneration in the WHS and its associated buffer zone.

The Judges praised the way the document was set out, covering general guidance for the World

Heritage Site and its Buffer Zone; guidance specific to WHS; and guidance specific to the character areas within the WHS. At the same time, the City Council has not shied away from the issue of tall buildings.

Preparation of the SPD commenced in October 2006 and it was finally

adopted by Liverpool City Council in October 2009. With its summary and evidential report, this SPD is believed to be the most detailed planning document for any WHS in the United Kingdom and an exemplar of best practice.

*Paul Mason is Conservation & Design Officer for Manchester*

## Design moving forward in West Lancashire

### Why do an award scheme?

West Lancashire is an attractive place and whilst the pace of development is perhaps slower than many of the larger, more urban, North West authorities we are keen to ensure that development should reflect and draw on the local characteristics of the area.

We all need to recognise that quality design is often not at the forefront of a client's mind when embarking on development proposals. Too often good design is not seen as something that can be achieved on a domestic extension or development of a single house. Our awards pride themselves in identifying schemes which are achievable by everybody but are none the less important for it.

Since 1989 the West Lancashire Design Awards have been a focus for promoting and rewarding good design in the borough. Our aim has always been to highlight those developments which have shown that good design is achievable even on relatively modest budgets.

In 2009 we celebrated 20 years of the design awards and produced a design awards booklet, to show that whilst architecture often reflects the fashions of the time, creativity, innovation and quality remain constants in well designed buildings and places. I feel the benefits to a small authority have been far reaching, raising awareness in design and providing local developers and architects with the confidence to put forward bespoke and distinctive schemes without having to resort to replicating the designs of the past.



### The process

Bi-annually in February nominations for forthcoming awards are opened. Anybody can nominate a building or development for a design award.

The development needs to have been completed in the last 2 years. We actively seek nominations through direct mailing to architects and agents, Parish Councils and local amenity groups, press releases and a dedicated page on our website. Nominations can be made via printed forms or the Web.

The design awards are judged in the following categories:

- New residential developments including extensions to existing properties.
- The refurbishment and/or conversion of existing buildings.
- New commercial or community based developments.
- Landscaping
- Schemes which promote sustainable development.

Nominations are generally open for 3 months from the February through to May to give ample opportunity for buildings to be put forward. In 2009 a total of 58 buildings/developments were put forward, the majority in the first 3 categories of which approximately 70% were valid entries.



## Scoring

An initial phase of selection is undertaken at Senior Officer level. Each scheme is scored using a system adapted from the 20 questions posed by CABE's *Building for Life* programme. Points are awarded under criteria relating to character, design and construction, environment and community and streets, parking and pedestrians.

Scores are validated and a shortlist drawn up from those achieving the highest scoring.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of assessment is carried out by **judging panel**. Our judging panel consists of between 10-12 people made up Council Officers, Elected Members (Planning Committee Chair/vice Chair and Portfolio Holder), Sponsors, RTPI and RIBA representatives and Local amenity groups. A judging day is arranged in June/July when a visit is organised for the panel to all the shortlisted sites. Winners and in some cases commendations are agreed for each of the categories.

The category winners are ratified by Planning Committee before publicity is given to the winning schemes/architects etc. The award ceremony follows in late September or early October when the Council's Mayor gives out the plaques to the winners. I have found that by making the 'ceremony' more of an occasion and providing high quality plaques more owners and architects are nominating schemes than in the past.



## Costs and pitfalls

Organising an awards scheme can be an exciting, if not at times a bit of a *roller coaster* of an experience. The key is to ensure you grab the public's attention, because without nominations the awards would fail. Ensuring worthwhile schemes are put forward can be a time consuming necessity if the numbers are low.



Individual members of a judging panel can bring to the table mixed and varied views on design. Trying to manage the risks and manipulate the process can be counter-productive. I have found that regardless of the differing value and skill sets that the judges bring to the discussion, on the whole the most worthy buildings win the awards. It's better to allow the natural debate to occur between the judges than try and strangle the process with defined and inflexible scoring systems, which are more likely to throw up the occasional unusual winner.

Over the years the biggest issue has been the **funding** of the awards, especially as the cost of running the scheme has risen. In 2007 running the design awards, including staff time, cost approximately £6,000. In 2009 that figure rose to £8,800, although this included the design and production of the printed award booklet. Given the costs and the demands on reduced staffing levels if these sorts of schemes are to continue then I would suggest sponsorship is fundamental.

West Lancashire has been lucky to have the continual support of at least one sponsor for the last 10 years and the funding provided helps finance the awards themselves including the plaques, display material and presentation evening. The Council, at present, is still committed to make up any shortfall in funding because it recognises the value that encouraging good design brings. With the economic downturn set to continue, ensuring quality design is going to become more, rather than less, important for our towns and villages.

*Ian Bond is Heritage & Environment Manager for West Lancashire Borough Council*



## 30 years of Civic Design Awards in greater Chester

Since 1979 usually at 5 year intervals Chester City Council has held Civic Design Awards. The Awards were first presented as part of a programme of events to celebrate Chester's 1900<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The scheme was repeated in 1984 to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RIBA, and in 1987, the European Year of the Environment. That year saw the first separate category for new buildings in Conservation Areas. The Award partners are now Cheshire Society of Architects, Chester Civic Trust and new sponsors for the 8th Civic Awards, English Heritage. Cheshire West and Chester is to be applauded for continuing the scheme applying for the first time across the whole new Cheshire West area. By happy coincidence 2010 also marked the 50th anniversary of Chester Civic Trust so the latest Civic Awards formed a part of their diamond jubilee celebration.



C14 St. Mary's, Thornton-le-moors. Redundant since 2004; repairs by the CCT received an Award in the Community category.



Commended: contemporary extension to Listed Italianate villa at Trafford House

### Benefits of having a scheme

The new Council was keen to promote the many benefits of good architectural design: its ability to provide a sense of comfort, security and well being; contribute to the vibrancy of communities, and enrich local distinctiveness and the quality of life. The Council was also keen to demonstrate its commitment to the conservation of historic buildings which when taking into account the embodied energy of construction contribute positively to a low carbon future. By celebrating and rewarding good design the Award Scheme will stimulate interest in our built environment and develop an appreciation of both traditional craft skills and high quality contemporary construction. Chester's Lord Mayor Cllr Neil Ritchie, a retired architect, presented the Awards. He said, "looking after our heritage...is very important and there is no better way of doing this than having some fine examples of work to point to".

### The process

The 2010 Awards attracted close to 80 nominations from all parts of Cheshire West and Cheshire, many



Refurbishment for mixed use of the C19 Gunnery family premises in Tarvin received a Residential Award

for new build projects outside conservation areas. Previous experience resulted in awards being made for either new build or mainly conservation projects, within four broad categories (residential, educational and community, commercial and the public realm). Council sponsored schemes were eligible for the first time in 2010. Highly Commended and Commended awards allow for recognition of worthy schemes and give the judging panel flexibility.

The scheme was publicised in the local media, professional and trade organisations and the Council website encouraging nominations from members of the public, owners, occupiers, developers, architects, contractors, community groups, elected members, and council staff.

A Judging panel was formed comprising the Council's Design Champion, representatives from the Civic Trust and Cheshire Society of Architects, and a member of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee as an arm's length Council rep.

### Scoring

Nominations were rigorously assessed against a number of pre-determined criteria including:

- the response to context and local character
- the opportunities for innovative or contemporary design solutions
- the application of best practice to conservation projects
- the clarification and improvement of public and private space
- sustainability credentials including energy efficiency and conservation of embodied energy
- accessibility and user needs
- the contribution to an enjoyable safe and secure environment.

The judging process was challenging involving 5 full days of site visits and meetings. The judges easily identified 6 outstanding schemes worthy of Awards. Lengthy debate led to Highly Commended awards for a further four schemes. Twelve other nominations were considered worthy of recognition and received Commendations.



Residential New Build Award for extension at 16 Lache Lane - wow factor achieved by careful detailing and consistent finish.



Award for Residential conversion & conservation of C17 brick barn at Leighton Hall, Neston

### Advice for others

Getting established depends on 'buy-in' by local amenity societies & professional bodies. This is vital for securing nominations, and contributions both in kind and financial. It also gives a pool from which to choose a well qualified and keen judging panel - the arm's length Council representation was important in deflecting potential criticisms of outcomes, particularly if council schemes are eligible. EH branding was a big boost and Karl Creaser [English Heritage NW's Policy Officer] gave a terrifically supportive speech.

Start the process early and be ready with publicity and a launch. Choose your presentation date early and make sure there are no clashes for senior management and exec members - it's an unrivalled opportunity to show that conservation staff exist and do good stuff.

Although resource hungry, a good event will help potential entrants feel it is worthwhile and assist the scheme to get established: the venue for the 2010 Awards Dinner

was the newly refurbished Assembly Rooms at Chester Town Hall. 240 diners heard speeches from The Lord Mayor, Heritage and Design Champions, the Civic Trust and English Heritage.



Chester Town Hall, Community Award for repairs in masonry, slating, plumbing and smithing.

Maintain a list of schemes that you would wish to see come forward as nominations - over a five year period you forget more than can be remembered!

Don't expect a rush of nominations and be prepared to phone, e-mail and post information out to potential nominees and keep up the pressure until a reasonable number of submissions has been made. Clearly define agreed roles and responsibilities.

Choose a neutral title which does not give any partner too much prominence; our title risks the awards being too readily identified solely with the Civic Trust!

*John Healey is Conservation & Design Officer for Cheshire West and Chester Unitary Authority*



Commended:  
Sir John Deane's College, Northwich

## Salford Good Design Awards

Salford's first ever Good Design Awards were held in 2010. The awards acknowledge the role of good design in place-making; they not only recognise the fantastic things that have already been achieved in Salford, but also promote best practice and high quality design for the significant developments which are coming through the development pipeline.

The awards were made in six categories with a winner and a commended scheme in each category. An overall winner was chosen from the six category winners.

Organisation of the awards has been made possible through sponsorship of individual awards by ASK Property Developments, Salford University, Countryside Properties, MediaCityUK, and Urban Vision. Salford City Council also sponsored the Joe Martin Conservation Award, to commemorate the late Conservation Officer.

A premium event attracting around 150 architects, developers and clients was organised at The Lowry Centre in Salford Quays and hosted by BBC presenter, Ranvir Singh.



Residential Commendation – Chimney Pot Park, ShedKM and Urban Splash



Best Building Residential Award Winner – New Broughton Village, Countryside Properties



(Left) Best Building Commercial Award Winner (& Best Public Realm Award Winner for Bain Wright Partnership) – MediaCityUK Studio Block (Bain Wright Partnership, Bovis Lend Lease, Fairhursts for Peel Media)

A Commendation in this category went to Adamson House (AFL Architects for Morson International)



Best Building Public Sector Award Winner – Willow Tree Primary School (Urban Vision for Salford City Council)

(Commendation – Eccles Gateway Centre, Urban Vision for Salford City Council)

A Commendation in the Best Public Realm category went to the Green & Walkable Streets Programme (Urban Vision, Central Salford URC).

In the Best Masterplan category the Award Winner was Chapel Street regeneration (English Cities Fund), and the Irwell River Park was commended (Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company).



**Joe Martin Conservation Award Winner and overall 2010 Salford Good Design Awards Winner**, the Salford Cathedral Centre, (Bate and Taylor Architects for Salford R.C. Diocesan Trustees)



Commendation: Eccles Carnegie Library (Urban Vision for Salford City Council)

*Sarah Ashurst is Principal Officer (Business Management) in Salford City Council's Sustainable Regeneration Directorate.*

## Stockport Conservation & Design Awards

### Benefits of Design Awards

Stockport council first held conservation & design awards in 2007. Held approximately every 2 years, 2009 saw the most recent competition. The scheme provides recognition for some of the excellent new design and conservation work of the recent past in the Borough, and is a good source of exemplar schemes when negotiating with new applicants. It also serves as a shop window for conservation activities in the Borough and a reminder to members that Conservation is complementary to Design, and not about preventing change or confined to 'restoration'.



The Schaefer House, winner of a Design Award: carefully responding to its site, very energy efficient, accessible and finished to a very high standard.

### Process

Applications are positively sought from known good schemes, and also invited in an open process via publicity, mailshots and the website. Schemes have to have been completed to be eligible.

Fifteen schemes were short listed and visited by the judging panel,

which comprised representatives from Marple Civic Society and Stockport Heritage Trust, Places Matter! (the regional architecture and built environment centre), the Royal Town Planning Institute and Royal Institute of British Architects regional branches, as well as the Chair of the Planning & Highways Committee and the Head of Development Control from the Council. Scoring was by a matrix system, with the final decision agreed among the judges.

An award ceremony was held at the Town Hall with the Press in attendance, and specially designed plaques and certificates were presented to each of the Award winners and the Commended schemes by the Deputy Mayor of Stockport.



Stockport Academy, Avondale achieved a Design Award due to its inspiring internal spaces and high standard of finish, careful response to site (allowing the existing school to remain open during work), and energy saving measures.

### Hints & Tips

Resourcing the awards is a challenge. Costs were kept to a minimum (less than £3,000 cash) and met corporately; it was felt important to provide plaques as tangible

reminders of the award. We are currently seeking potential external funding due to reducing budgets.

Judges' and officers' time also has to be taken into consideration as these were not charged. Having a well resourced Conservation & Heritage team, as well as a Design Officer certainly made it easier - the Design Officer led the majority of the work, greatly assisted by a trainee working in Planning and Regeneration, chasing lots of potential entries.

Offering a good presentation event also helped to make the scheme a success, and the awards were well publicised locally.

Keeping a list of likely nominees is essential, as memory fails!



Rostron Brow, Stockport. A Conservation Award was made for the conversion of an C18 tobacco warehouse, and new build for shared ownership residential. Careful reinstatement of lost former historic buildings allowed this scheme to knit very well with the established street scape, while contemporary elements add vibrancy.



The final Conservation Award was given to the restoration of the Market Hall. Heritage Lottery funded, attention to detail was high. Trade continued during work, and new stalls and community facilities enhanced pure restoration work.



Successful enhancement of the Landmark House office building received a commendation. The new restaurant use animated a formerly dead frontage.

A commendation also went to restoration & conversion of this Grade II listed house at 27 Higher Hillgate, where careful research played an important part in achieving a successful outcome.



Also commended was this back garden yoga studio in Heaton Moor; reclaimed brick combined with strong design and a green roof ensured a comfortable fit with its context.

A final commendation to the Red Bull, Middle Hillgate, where expansion of the pub into the adjacent Listed cottage has created 4 bedrooms.

*Crispin Edwards is Conservation Officer for Stockport Council & GM rep*

Caption competition! - send suggestions for the photo below to [nweditor@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:nweditor@ihbc.org.uk)



Congratulations to Pete Hoey who won last issue's caption competition:



"Some b\*\*\*\*\*d's nicked the ball finial off the column"  
"Shhhh, it's hidden under my shirt"

## Branch Officers

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## 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

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### 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](http://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](http://www.ihbc.org.uk).



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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 26.

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*The Home of the conservation professional*

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