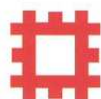
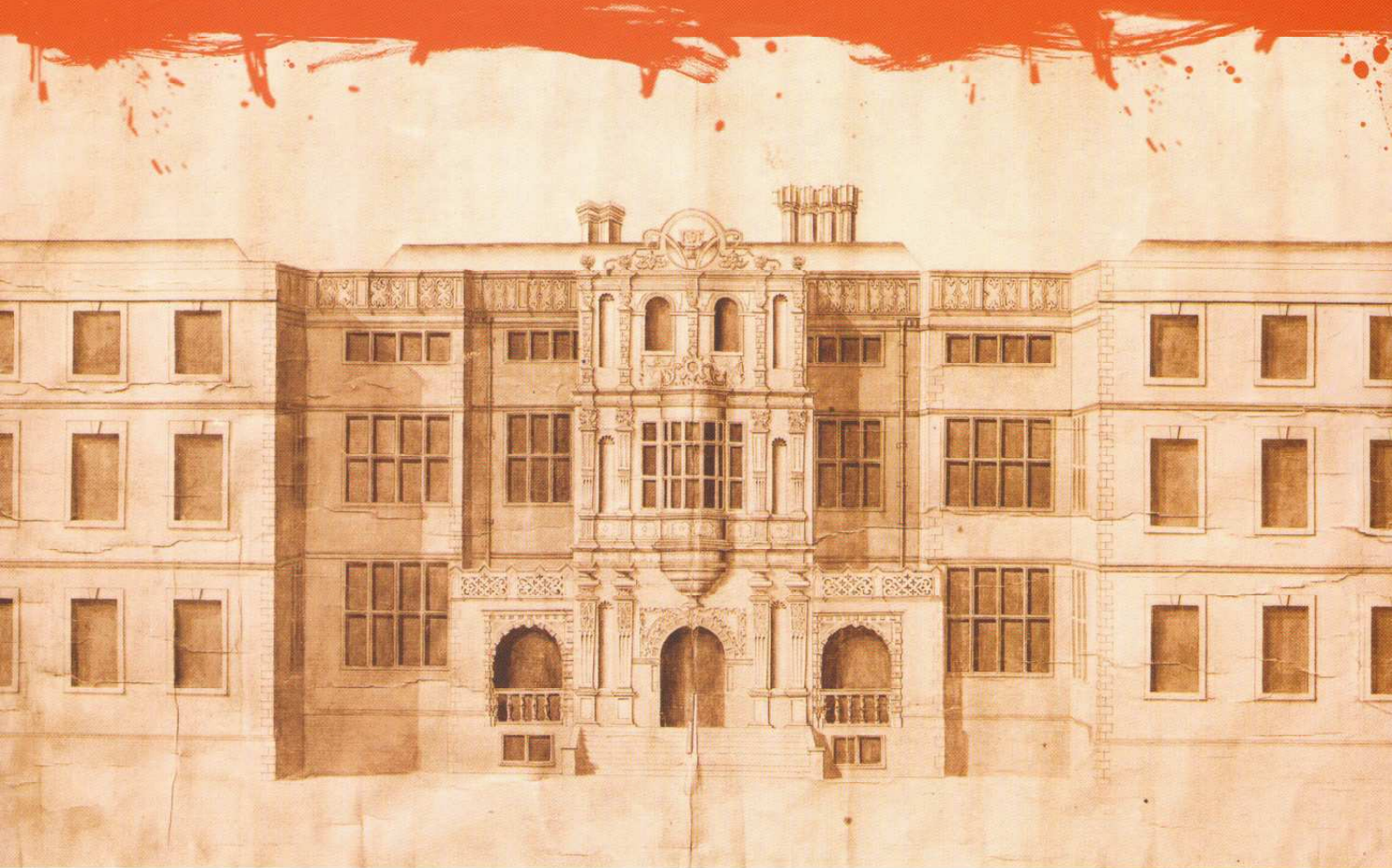


Government Historic Estates Unit Annual Seminar

BE PREPARED! EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS & COLLECTIONS

Centrex, Bramshill, Hampshire
Tuesday 3 October 2006



ENGLISH HERITAGE

RESUMÉ OF PRESENTATIONS

GHEU's tenth annual conservation seminar was held at Centrex, the police training college, at Bramshill, Hampshire on 3 October 2006. The theme was 'Be Prepared! Emergency planning for historic buildings and collections'. Over 80 delegates attended the one-day seminar, representing a wide range of government departments and agencies, plus a variety of other public bodies. The proceedings were introduced by **Philip Davies**, South Territory Director at English Heritage. Presentations followed on various aspects of emergency planning. In the afternoon, there were tours of the mansion and its walled gardens; delegates then divided into groups to attend one of four hour-long workshop sessions. The contents of the individual presentations and workshops are summarised below.

SPEAKERS

Will Holborow, Head of the Government Historic Estate Unit

Will began by outlining the main themes of the seminar: risk assessment and analysis, disaster preparedness and post-disaster salvage and recovery. He referred to the recommendations of the 1993 Bailey Report 'Fire protection measures for the Royal Palaces', which was commissioned in the wake of the disastrous fires at Hampton Court (1986), Uppark (1989) and Windsor Castle (1992). One of the outcomes of this has been the Historic Buildings Fire Research Co-ordinating Committee and the Fire Research Database (FReD).

The presentation referred to the wide range of risks that need to be anticipated, ranging from fire and floods to terrorist attacks and coastal erosion. In 2002, English Heritage commissioned a research report on climate change and the historic environment, carried out by the Centre for Sustainable Heritage at University College London. This has highlighted the increasing risks of severe winds and flooding and the vulnerability of some areas to coastal erosion. In the wake of the severe floods in England in 2000 and 2001, English Heritage has published a guidance note on flooding. The presentation concluded with a reference to the report 'Cataclysm and Challenge', assessing the cultural damage caused by the attack on the World Trade Centre on 11 September 2001.

Ian Wainwright, Group Chief Surveyor, Ecclesiastical Insurance
Analysis of risks affecting the historic environment

Ian Wainwright's presentation offered an analysis of risks affecting the historic environment, based on claims data from Anglican churches over a 10-year period. Arson was the greatest risk factor, accounting for just over half of the value and number of insurance claims. There were on average three fires per week, with an average loss of £27,590. Ian outlined a strategy and procedures for risk management, and offered an analysis of arson – the causes, risk factors, warning signs, and preventative measures. A copy of Ian's Powerpoint presentation is available on request.

Jane George, Site Performance Manager, Centrex Bramshill
Emergency planning at Bramshill

Jane George spoke about the challenges she faces in managing a modern police college, comprising 63 separate buildings and various different business units, within a historic setting. There are 320 people on site plus large numbers of visiting delegates. Bramshill has a business continuity plan. One of the risks is that the mansion and its contents are highly combustible and any fire could have devastating consequences. The lake is used as an emergency water reservoir. There are arrangements for stand-by generation of electricity and back-up water supply.

Sue Cole, Senior Policy Officer, English Heritage
Emergency planning

Sue Cole spoke about emergency planning, beginning with a definition of emergencies and explaining the legislative requirements under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. She then referred to the 1954 Hague Convention on Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The UK government is currently consulting on ratification of the convention. She described the context of emergency planning (museums, local authorities) and described the process of drawing up a plan in terms of five stages: anticipation & advocacy, preparedness, reaction, recovery and review. A copy of Sue's Powerpoint presentation is available on request.

Steve Emery, National Fire Safety Officer, English Heritage
Fire and the European COST Action 17 project

Steve Emery discussed this four-year programme which forms part of the European Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical research programme (COST). Initiated in 2002, COST Action 17 now has 24 signatory countries. Further information is available at www.heritagefire.org

Edward Farrell, Gilmore Hankey Kirke Limited, Architects
Introduction to Bramshill and its history, and recent projects

Ed Farrell's presentation provided a summary of the historical development of the mansion and its gardens, based on research and analysis undertaken for the recent Conservation Plan. The evolving plan form was illustrated by reference to estate maps and building plans of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During the afternoon, all delegates were led on a tour of the mansion to see the principal interiors. An illustrated brochure was provided, with floor plans, historical maps, views and photographs.

Bramshill Estate is the headquarters of Centrex, the Police Training Authority. It was purchased by the Home Office in 1953. Since then, extensive building work has been carried out to provide administrative offices, teaching accommodation, dormitory and housing blocks and sports facilities, with new roads and car parks.

The mansion provides accommodation for the chief executive, and his office, administration, finance department and support staff. The library occupies the Long Gallery and the original library. Former state rooms are used as meeting rooms. The former State Dining Room is now a coffee lounge. The house contains the 'College Trust' collection of furniture and paintings, together with the police collection of truncheons and tipstaves.

Bramshill House is listed grade I and is of national importance. Analysis and research during the preparation of the conservation plan has revealed that much of the fabric of the 1605 house dates from an earlier house. While Bramshill is recognised by historians such as Pevsner and Summerson as an important Jacobean prodigy house, the significance of the estate and house to the general public is less well known. A recent conservation plan by Hilary Taylor Landscape Associates has confirmed that the seventeenth-century landscape is of far greater importance than has generally been recognised.

The most important management issues for the house are its use and future use; its setting; planned maintenance of the fabric and the apportionment of costs for this; the renewal of services; safety and fire; access and circulation. A recent quadrennial inspection has led to a managed series of repairs to the Kitchen Garden walls, the Rose Garden walls and the Stable Block. Further works are underway to repair damaged ceilings and externally to the high level areas on the west elevation and in the courtyard.

WORKSHOPS

Emergency preparedness (blue group)

Fiona Macalister (Preventative Conservation Adviser, National Trust) and Victoria Richards (Preventative Conservator, Historic Royal Palaces) explained the different ways in which preventative conservation and salvage is managed in their respective organisations, emphasising the importance both give to regular training and practice. There is no point having a good emergency plan if people see it for the first time in the heat of the moment.

It was clear that the allocation of responsibility for strategic management will vary depending on the structure of the organisation, but that ownership of responsibility for the emergency plan for each building is crucial. Everyone also agreed that co-ordination within the organisation and with the fire authorities is vital.

The workshop included a game which emphasised how chance will play a role in any potential disaster, and the importance of being prepared for any eventuality – 'always expect the unexpected'.

Drawing up an emergency plan (green group)

This workshop was led by Sue Cole (Senior Policy Officer, English Heritage) and Claire Fry (Senior Collections Curator, English Heritage), assisted by Ian Wainwright of Ecclesiastical Insurance and John Scott of Historic Royal Palaces, both specialists in the field. The group was asked to design an Emergency Manual Plan from scratch, and then discussed such first steps as managing fire brigade access; the likely conflict between them, the operations and a 'business continuity manager'; what role if any to give to others on site, such as conference delegates or the press; 'emergency' questions such as whether to sacrifice an element of fabric to save more elsewhere (used in the Windsor fire, less successfully at Uppark). The

Emergency Plan must be a document common to all, and should be brief, and access should be available to documents off site, such as plans and lists of objects.

Bramshill House – building analysis and repair (orange group)

Matt O'Farrell, of architects Gilmore Hankey Kirke Ltd, led the group on a tour of Bramshill House to illustrate the practice's current involvement in producing a conservation plan and overseeing external and internal repairs.

Bramshill House and gardens contain a variety of brick types spanning a period of over 400 years. Matt stressed the importance of thoroughly understanding the various phases of development using a variety of historical sources, and the brick types associated with them, to ensure that appropriate bricks are sourced from specialist manufacturers, and the correct bond and lime mortars are used in repairs.

The failure of the early-seventeenth century plaster ceiling in the first floor Wrought Room was used as an internal case study. Analysis demonstrated the need to strengthen the structure above before implementing an unobtrusive repair by anchoring the ceiling back to the laths via steel pins fixed through the network of original ribs.

Risk assessment (yellow group)

Steve Emery and Simon Houghton (English Heritage) discussed preparing for disasters, and risk assessments. Steve illustrated the fire at Wardington Manor in Oxfordshire. Photographs showed the development of the fire from smoke emerging through an air brick, to an inferno that consumed most of the roof structure. The Fire Brigade controlled the emergency by dividing the incident into sectors so that the Incident Commander received reports from a maximum of five people. Fine weather meant that water damage to the exposed interior was limited to that used to suppress the fire, and enabled items to be stored in the gardens, in a methodical salvage operation involving a hundred local people. Coincidentally, Lord Wardington died soon afterwards and the collection was sold to pay death duties; the sale realised £6 million, which also covered the rebuilding work.

Simon reminded us of the need to carry out risk assessments as advised by the Health and Safety Regulations 1999. Fire is the most commonly experienced danger and it is necessary to plan the response to it. The main aim of related risk evaluation is to prioritise precautions: avoid risk where practicable; if risk cannot be avoided, manage it by following formal codified procedures, and then where risks remain, provide personal protective equipment. Simon emphasised that foreseeable risks are easily controlled if considered as part of the planning process.