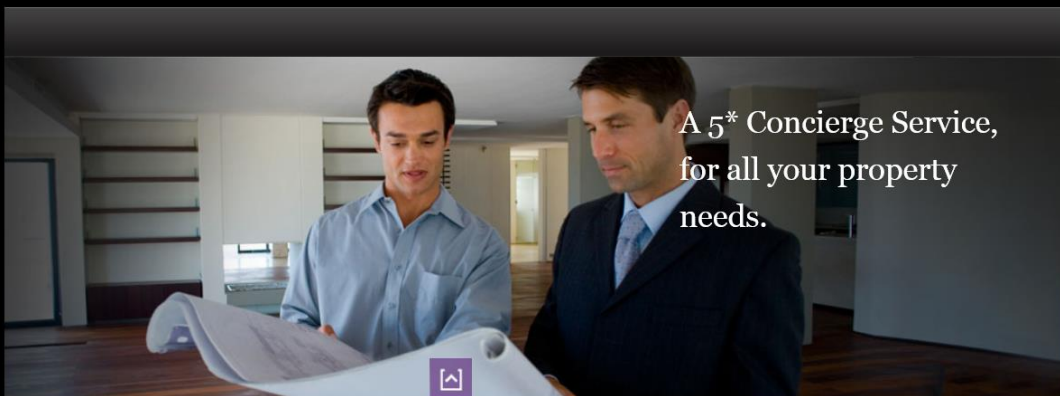


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Historic Buildings Improvements



As At
09 December 2012

Author
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IMPROVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

ENGLAND

1. **Historic Buildings – England.** **English Heritage**¹ champions and oversees Historic Buildings within England. It also advises the government and others, in achieving the best for these buildings, to allow on-going generational enjoyment to all. Year on year, they invest £24M Sterling, gained primarily from the **Department Of Culture, Media & Sport**², through grants to Private, Public and Organisational owners of Historic Buildings and advise on c17,000 Planning Applications. This however is overarched by legislation and whilst this government strives to reduce GHG as its enduring commitment to the Kyoto Protocol, through the Department Of Energy & Climate Change³ and thus champion ‘Sustainability of our Built Heritage’, it is constrained by English planning laws in the guise of; **The Town & Country’s Planning Act 1990**⁴ and the **National Planning Policy Framework**.⁵

2. **Value & Benefits of Historic Buildings.** Historic buildings benefit the public through; education, economic development, sustainable growth, urban and rural regeneration, repopulation of inner-city areas, improved competitiveness, cultural development, and providing facilities for local communities as per the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and its report ‘*Valuing Historic Places*’⁶. thus highlighting the **Social, Economic and Environmental value** which are inherent to these buildings. In addition, this report emphasises the **Public Value**, that of; Intrinsic Value, Public Support, Local Distinctiveness, Local Empowerment and Urban Design, Quality, Variety. Further it gives value to; **Cultural, Learning and Skills Value**, which includes; Education, Culture, Skills and Creative New Design. Thus, it is imperative that Historic Buildings within England and the UK are properly protected, preserved and more importantly managed in such a way to facilitate maintenance, repair and more importantly adaption, for the continuation of these values and benefits to be realised.

3. **Footfall Per Historic Site**⁷. It is not surprising that with over 15,216,000 visitors to historic London, the top three visited historic buildings are contained within the capitol city and are;

- a. Tower of London – 2, 389, 548 visitors.
- b. St Pauls Cathedral – 1, 821, 321 visitors.
- c. Westminster Abbey – 1, 449, 593 visitors.

Many other historic buildings are located within the city of London, a full list of which can be found at the governments ‘City of London’ website⁸.

4. **City of Westminster.** Therefore, if we hone in on one important borough, which holds the seat of democracy and ‘Parliament itself, that of Westminster, whilst its Historic Buildings Portfolio is extensive (3/4 of housing stock built before 1915, with half pre 1870)⁹, one can find limited policy on ‘Retrofitting’ these buildings, or indeed its commitment to enduring sustainability of said buildings. A **Retrofitting Historic Buildings For Sustainability 2012**⁹ and a **Consultation Draft Policy 2011**¹⁰ exists and provides some information on Case Studies, tables of Measure and onward Signposting, choosing to focus more on Low Cost measures that are a quick fix to planning laws, with an overall concern of ‘Budget’. Their Low Cost Measures include;

- Replace conventional light bulbs with low energy Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) bulbs and halogen spotlights with lower energy alternatives.
- Insulate hot water tanks and pipes. A British Standard cylinder jacket of 75mm will cost around £12 and save you £35 a year in energy bills.
- Draught proof doors and windows. If existing windows are in good repair then draught sealing can be effective in reducing heat loss, and fuel bills by up to £25 per year.
- Repair and use original internal shutters where possible. Although not as effective as secondary or double glazing, they will reduce heat loss to some extent, as will closing the curtains.
- Use a removable chimney balloon or open/close chimney damper plates to minimise draughts

- Select energy and water efficient appliances.
- Use a real time energy display, in a prominent location to give an overview of energy consumption and to help manage energy use.

The City of Westminster caveat this with the fact that any change should not alter or have limited impact on the historic fabric of the building. It goes further to tubulise Planning requirements for both listed and unlisted properties, stating that listed properties can benefit from a 64% savings in sustainable emissions by;

- Internal solid wall insulation 50mm to front and rear
- Roof insulation 200mm
- Secondary glazing
- Draught-proofing and sealing
- Upgrade boiler.

A further 5% cut can be achieved by installing;

- 5.2m² PV cells
- 5.2m² Solar hot water plus a 250 litre store.

Again, under the caveat of planning and limited alterations to the fabric of the historic building.

In addition it quantifies installation of; Roof, Floor & Wall Insulation, External & Internal Insulation, Windows, Chimney Damper or Balloon, Heat Pumps, Solar Panels, Thermal Panels, Micro CHP, Water Efficiency and Bird / Bat boxes. These factors however, will be overarched by the Conservation Planning Officer.

5. Conclusion. The 'sustainability' of Historic Buildings, through retrofitting is an enduring commitment in England, via Government and its Legislation and actioned by English Heritage. This sees capital investment of c£24M sterling, year on year and knowledge based investment through planning advice (17, 000 Applications). This is not only as a direct consequence of the government's commitment to reducing GHG's through the Department Of Energy & Climate Change, but has its roots based in the 'Value' and 'Benefits' that Historic Buildings forward the population via Social, Economic and Environmental value, Public Value and Cultural, Learning and Skills Value. Whilst local councils emplace Historic Buildings Sustainability / Retrofit Policy, it can be hampered by legislation such as The Town & Country's Planning Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

[E Signed]

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