

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings
Questionnaire for Parish Councils - Summary

- 1) **Is your Council aware of the boundaries of any conservation area(s) that exist in the Parish?**

Yes – 83%

No – 17%

St Neots Town Council would find a refresher plan useful.

- 2) **Is your Council aware of a Conservation Area Character Statement that the District Council has published for any conservation area(s) that exist in your Parish?**

Yes – 61%

No – 39%

St Neots Town Council have requested the latest updates.

A Conservation Area Character Statement has not been written for Hartford.

- 3) **If the answer to question 2 is yes, how useful do you find the Conservation Area Character Statement?**

Have not used it – 18%

Not very useful – 18%

Fairly useful – 36%

Very useful – 27%

- 4) **Does your Council know which buildings in your Parish have been listed as being of special architectural or historic value?**

Yes – 83%

No – 17%

- 5) **Is your Parish Council aware that the District Council has produced a 'Buildings at Risk' register that contains information on the buildings that are considered to be most at risk?**

Yes – 56%

No – 44%

- 6) **Does your Council think that there are listed buildings that are at risk (of neglect, vandalism etc) in your Parish?**

Yes – 59%

No – 41%

- 7) **If the answer to question 6 is yes, please list the buildings below that you think are at risk in your Parish**

Barn at Westward Farm, Winwick

Crown and Cushion Public House, Great Gransden

91 High Street, Earith
West Lodge, Little Paxton Lane, Little Paxton
Lock Up, Holywell-cum-Needingworth
Ferryboat Inn, Holywell-cum-Needingworth
Totus Building, St. Ives
The Gables, High Street, Ramsey
As the Huntingdonshire District Council schedule (St. Ives Town Council)
Cottage on Illings Lane, Broughton
Grafham Church

- 8) **Is your Council aware of the grants that are available to assist the owners of listed buildings on the 'Buildings at Risk' register to help with the cost of repairs?**

Yes – 61%
No – 39%

- 9) **Do you think that the Heritage and Conservation Team do enough to protect the buildings at risk (if any) in your parish?**

Yes – 29%
No – 71%

- 10) **Please give the reason for your answer to question 9**

The parish doesn't have any disfigured buildings so one can only assume that buildings are being checked and monitored.

Westward Farm (Winwick) has fallen down and lies in ruins.

Failure to recognise state of Crown and Cushion Public House (Great Gransden) as at risk.

St Neots Town Council is not advised of buildings at risk.

When we requested that parts of the High Street in Earith should not be included in the conservation area, they still included most of the area, but left out the more modern houses.

The parish (Kings Ripton) has had help through grants in the past under this scheme.

Pike and Eel Pub (Holywell-cum-Needingworth) – this was de-listed on agreement by Huntingdonshire District Council without consulting the parish and against its wishes. Because it had been allowed to develop in a way that did not complement the original building this was successful.

Regular meetings between the Team and local civic societies could prove a very positive move to share information and understand decisions.

The parish council receives a copy of the 'buildings at risk register' very intermittently and no other information so it is hard to judge whether or not the Team are doing enough to protect buildings at risk or any other building of historic interest.

As far as is known the Heritage and Conservation Team has not identified any to Ramsey Town Council.

There are several recent examples of buildings within St. Ives where the work of the team has been effective.

This building has been in poor condition for some time but does not appear on your register – Broughton.

Don't grant money to churches.

Because we've had no contact from them in the last 10 years.

- 11) **How important do you think it is to safeguard the condition of listed buildings and other buildings within a conservation area?**

Unimportant
Fairly unimportant
Fairly important – 6%
Very important – 94%

- 12) **Is there a local conservation group or civic society in your Parish that is involved in maintaining the local heritage of the Parish?**

Yes – 18%
No – 82%

- 13) **If the answer to question 12 is yes, how effective do you think the group/society is in terms of maintaining the heritage of the buildings in your Parish?**

Ineffective
Fairly ineffective
Fairly effective – 33%
Very effective – 67%

Hartford Conservation Group – A regular watch is kept on the state of the buildings. A focus on each listed building has been included in the recent newsletters highlighting these buildings to all the members of the Conservation Group. The Conservation Officer spoke at the AGM on the listed buildings of Hartford. These examples demonstrate the effectiveness of the Conservation Group.

Somersham's History Society does not seek to be involved with local conservation matters and therefore has no input in these matters.

- 14) **How useful do you find the Council's website in terms of the information that it contains about heritage and conservation?**

Have not used it – 59%
Not very useful – 12%
Fairly useful – 18%
Very useful – 12%

- 15) **Do you think that the District Council offers sufficient training to town and parish councils and parish meetings on heritage and conservation issues?**

Yes – 22%
No – 78%

- 16) **If you think that more training is required, what subjects would you prefer to be offered?**
(please list)

How to assess extensions to listed building applications.
Regulations.
Heritage listing and buildings at risk.

Conservation Team presentation on conservation area.
 Categorising of listed buildings.
 How to maintain the areas.
 General heritage and conservation.
 To be informed what training is available.
 What is our role as a parish council?
 An understanding of all 4 dimensions associated with historic buildings and planning.
 Further understanding of the District Council's role on heritage and conservation and the real action the authority undertakes or considers for buildings which are believed to be at risk, alterations to listed buildings or demolition, plus new build and alterations to buildings which effect the conservation area or the setting of a listed building and whether English Heritage and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings are properly contacted as consultees for all relevant planning applications.
 A general introduction to the heritage and conservation issues with examples of what can be done to existing buildings and what is likely to be considered unacceptable.
 Introduction to heritage and conservation issues. (I'm not aware that any training is available).
 Planning laws on conservation issues.
 Grant funding.
 Categorising of listed buildings.
 Planning law on listed buildings.
 Planning applications.
 Help in support of local churches particularly maintenance.

17) Do you think that a visit from an officer from the Heritage and Conservation Team would be of value to your town/parish council or council meeting?

Yes – 72%
 No – 28%

18) How many times has your council had contact with officers of the Heritage and Conservation Team in the last 12 months?

None – 56%
 Once – 22%
 Two to five – 11%
 More than five – 11%

19) If you have any contact with the Heritage and Conservation team, how would you rate this experience?

Not very useful – 20%
 Fairly useful – 70%
 Very useful – 10%

20) Please give reasons for your response to question 19.

Barn (Westward Farm, Winwick) has fallen down.
 Refused to acknowledge status of the Crown and Cushion Public House (Great Gransden) as at risk.
 Received guidance.
 They informed us of what it means to the village (Earith).

They have not kept us informed what was going on without us having to constantly chase up (Brington & Molesworth).

The Chairman of Hartford Conservation Group was in correspondence, written and verbal, with the Team and a member of the Team was the keynote speaker on the listed buildings of Hartford and Huntingdon Town Hall at the 2009 AGM of the Conservation Group.

St Ives Civic Society – It is difficult to work out how the Team relate to Planning Officers and how they could allow the proposed “improvements” to St. Ives town centre pass into the public arena.

Past experience has shown that there have been occasions where it has been difficult to extract useful information and advice from the Team where their help is vital. There have also been a couple of occasions in recent years where the conservation area or setting of a listed building has been overlooked or seemingly ignored when a decision has been reached or approving planning applications.

Somersham Parish Council also specifically requested to be included in the 2007 revised character statement in lieu of producing a design statement, this was agreed by Huntingdonshire District Council but again we were excluded from the process and only given a copy of the final draft for comment.

The Team consists of staff who work part time and who are therefore difficult at times to arrange meetings with.

Please add any further comments about the heritage and conservation service provided by the District Council.

It would be very helpful if there could be regular meetings of the Heritage and Conservation Team and Officers of the Civic Societies of Huntingdonshire.

Once again regular contact amongst Civic Societies and Huntingdonshire District Council’s heritage and conservation officers would be of great benefit.

Involvement of Civic Societies in the early stages of proposals to alter the nature of conservation areas would prevent acrimony when the plans are eventually and unilaterally published by Huntingdonshire District Council.