

## **9. THE ENGLISH HERITAGE REGISTER OF BUILDINGS AT RISK 2003**

**Report By: Head of Planning Services**

### **Wards Affected**

Whole County.

### **Purpose**

1. To advise members upon the content of English Heritage's Register of Buildings at Risk 2003 so far as it relates to Herefordshire and how assistance might be sought from English Heritage towards preserving the County's historic heritage.

### **Financial Implications**

2. None at this stage.

### **Background**

3. English Heritage published the sixth annual edition of its national Register of Buildings at Risk on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2003. The document provides information on all Grade I and II\* Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments considered by them to be 'at risk' through neglect and decay or vulnerable, or becoming so.
4. Inclusion on the list is not meant to imply any criticism of the owners of the buildings and monuments concerned. The document is produced in order to define the scale of the problem and establish the extent to which important buildings or artefacts are at risk. The information is also helpful to establish the level of resources necessary to bring the identified structures back into good repair.
5. Overall English Heritage advises that the total number of outstanding buildings at risk has decreased since 1999 by 7.2 per cent. Their report evaluates changes since that date in that the 1999 edition of the Register established "a refined baseline against which real change can be measured".
6. Herefordshire possesses an estimated 60 Grade I and 300 Grade II\* Listed Buildings out of a total of just over 5,800: the remainder being Grade II. There are currently just over 260 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the County.
7. Some 33 Grade I and II\* Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments are identified for Herefordshire on the 2003 English Heritage Register. This compares with 26 in 1999. Five properties have been completely deleted from the 1999 register, while 12 new ones have been added. Five of the new additions are churchyard crosses. This is because of the serious condition of their stonework and English Heritage hopes to promote a grant scheme for them. Appendix 1 comprises the 2003 extract from the Register for Herefordshire.

8. Section 11 of Hereford City Walls referred to in Appendix 1 is the only entry that is within the ownership of this Council. This Section of the wall incorporates the ramparts of the Saxon burgh that lies between Cantilupe Street and St Owen Street. The Council's Archaeological Service is presently preparing a report on the stabilisation, re-instatement of 1970's reconstruction, interpretation and management of this part of the wall for Property Services.

### **Officer Comment**

9. Reference has already been made to English Heritage's intentions for funding improvements to churchyard crosses. A significant number of the other structures on the 2003 Register for Herefordshire are castles. This is as a consequence of a large group of medieval Marcher castles which straddle the Welsh border. English Heritage recognise they represent an on-going maintenance problem in the region. Councillors may be aware that previously English Heritage expended a significant amount of money upon Wigmore Castle and has entered into a Guardianship Agreement with its owner. Presently their efforts are concentrated upon halting the deterioration of the structure at Wilton Castle, Ross-on-Wye. Nevertheless, there remains a significant amount of remedial work to be done in relation to a unique heritage resource which is important to the character and regeneration potential of the County.
10. In relation to actions that this Council might take towards improving the condition of its stock of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments, only limited funds are available. The Council's historic building grant fund is small amounting to £25,500 in this financial year. As a consequence we are unlikely to make any notable contribution to efforts by English Heritage to fund remedial or restoration works to the buildings listed in their Register and also to those other 'at risk' Listed Buildings not covered by their survey. In particular there are no Council resources directly available for a programme of pro-active works such as urgent works and repairs notices. English Heritage indicates it is prepared to invest financially in the establishment of specialist conservation posts in local authorities to help them tackle buildings at risk, as part of the management of their historic building stock as a whole and to support them in undertaking statutory action.
11. There remains an outstanding commitment by the Council to undertake a 'buildings at risk' survey for its area when funds become available. It is uncertain whether English Heritage's offer of financial assistance relates to support for such surveys. The introduction to their register indicates that "the Government looks to local authorities to adopt a positive approach to the management of the historic environment within their area, including monitoring of its condition." If this is the case then an approach at this time for funding may be opportune.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **THAT**

**the Regional Office of English Heritage be approached to discuss what assistance it might give this Council in order that it can monitor the condition of its historic buildings and increase its actions towards safeguarding the County's Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.**

**APPENDIX 1: ENGLISH HERITAGE REGISTER OF BUILDINGS AT RISK 2003 - HEREFORDSHIRE**

Dore Abbey (ruins only), Abbey Dore  
Remains of Wigmore Abbey, storage building and outbuilding, Grange, Adforton  
Churchyard Cross in St Mary's churchyard, Almeley (New)  
Ruined church of St Mary, Avenbury  
Barn 60 yards NW of Court Farmhouse, Aylton (New)  
Churchyard Cross at St John the Baptist & St Alkmunds churchyard, Aymestrey (New)  
Roman Catholic Church of St James, Bartestree (New)  
Wilton Castle, Wilton, Bridstow  
Clifford Castle, Clifford  
Craswall Priory Ruins, Craswall  
Bronsil Castle, Eastnor (New)  
Churchyard Cross in St Dubricius's churchyard, Hentland (New)  
Broomy Hill Pumping Station, Broomy Hill, Hereford  
Barn east of Precentors House, Cathedral Close, Hereford  
Hereford City Walls (Section 11), Hereford  
Richards Castle, The Green, Richard Castle  
Huntington Castle, Huntington  
Church of St John the Baptist, Llanwarne  
Lyonshall Castle, Lyonshall  
Outbuilding east of Marstow Court (formerly listed as the Granary at Marstow), Marstow  
Barn and attached cowhouse built onto Glibes Farmhouse, Michaelchurch Escley (New)  
Glibes Farmhouse, Michaelchurch Escley (New)  
Summerhouse, Homme House, Much Marcle  
Churchyard Cross in St John the Baptist's churchyard, Orcop (New)  
Churchyard Cross in St George's churchyard, Orleton (New)  
Snodhill Castle, Snodhill, Peterchurch  
Urishay Castle and Chapel, Peterchurch  
Court Cottage (formerly Court Farmhouse), Preston Wynne  
Penyard Castle, Ross Rural  
Garden Temple, Shobdon Park, Shobdon (New)  
Chapel at Pembridge Castle, Welsh Newton  
Palm House at Whitbourne Hall, Whitbourne (New)  
Remains of Limebrook Priory, Limebrook, Wigmore

**BUILDINGS NOW DELETED FROM 1999 REGISTER**

Gatehouse at Lower Brockhampton House, Brockhampton  
Black Hall, Kings Pyon  
The Mynde, Much Dewchurch  
Preaching Cross at St Bartholomew's Church, Much Marcle  
Stapleton Castle, Stapleton  
Also - Parts of Hereford City Walls (Sections 1 – 6 and 9)