



The Society for the
Protection of Ancient
Buildings

Annual Review 2013



Annual Review

The SPAB is the country's oldest building conservation body. Ideas set out in our Manifesto of 1877 guide work to this day. The Society is an association of practical enthusiasts who care deeply about the integrity of old buildings and encourage a respectful approach to their care.

2013 was a year of significant growth for the SPAB. Eight new employees joined the Society to run our new Maintenance Cooperatives Project (MCP). MCP is Heritage Lottery Fund-backed and aims to encourage and support communities' care for their historic places of worship.

Education and training, technical advice, and casework remained core SPAB activities in 2013, but with innovations on all fronts. For the first time our annual Working Party project included children from local schools as well as adult volunteers. Our new Eco Courses proved immensely popular, bringing together knowledge gained from research into the energy efficiency of old buildings and information from the SPAB-backed *Old House Eco Handbook*.

The Society is principally concerned with the UK's historic buildings, but in 2013 there was also some involvement further afield. SPAB Chairman David Heath was invited to speak at the first International Congress of Restorers in Moscow, attended by delegates from all areas of Russia and beyond. Deputy Director Sara Crofts helped with conservation training in Jamaica and former Secretary Philip Venning represented us in Taiwan for a celebration of the life and work of founder William Morris. Our 2013 Scholars and Fellows spent time in the Irish Republic and also visited Romania to participate in a practical building conservation project.

The Society put its principles into practice through the repair and redecoration of its HQ at 37 Spital Square. The project was generously supported by the SPAB membership.

Courses: 432 delegates

Scholarship: 197 site visits in 6 countries

Technical Helpline: 814 calls received

Website: 161,441 hits

Cases logged and considered: 1799
(April 2013-April 2014)

- 1 Members visit Winchester Cathedral as part of the 2013 AGM (Andy Marshall).
- 2 Dan Cruickshank: 2013 AGM guest speaker (Andy Marshall).
- 3 Staircase at SPAB HQ: repaired and redecorated with support from members (SPAB).
- 4 SPAB Craft Fellow Emlyn Harris talks to Europa Nostra President Denis de Kergolay at Boxley Abbey (SPAB).
- 5 Architect Neil Birdsall accepts his 2013 Esher Award (Andy Marshall).
- 6 Work to SPAB HQ included analysis of its historic paint. (Patrick Baty).
- 7 The *Old House Eco Handbook* published in association with the SPAB.
- 8 The 2013 SPAB Scholars and Fellows (SPAB).
- 9 Former SPAB Secretary Philip Venning represents the Society in Taiwan (Philip Venning).

Front Cover: SPAB brick masterclass at Hampton Court Palace (SPAB)



Working Party

‘That was epic!’

School child who visited the 2013 SPAB Working Party site

In 2013, our annual summer working party helped a medieval barn at Croxley Green in Hertfordshire.

The working party generates its own special atmosphere. Leading building conservation professionals and craftspeople provide volunteers with an opportunity to learn conservation skills and to be part of a team effort, supported by the welcoming host community.

Under the watchful eye of experts including SPAB technical staff and Technical Panel members Stafford Holmes and Anthony Goode, as well as the 2013 SPAB Scholars and Fellows, volunteers got to grips with a range of tasks. These included pointing with lime mortar, lime plastering, plinth repair in flint and general maintenance duties around the barn.

We were also delighted to work with staff and pupils from neighbouring Rickmansworth’s St Joan of Arc School. Groups of pupils enjoyed building craft demonstrations at the site and were enthralled by SPAB Guardian Stephen Bull’s grisly accounts of life in and around the barn in earlier times. The wider community was warmly invited to come along and see what was happening at their barn too – and many attended an event at the end of the week.



School children visiting the SPAB working party at Croxley barn (SPAB).

The annual working party has become a great way to show case what the SPAB does and what we believe to the widest possible audience. The Society’s Technical Officer Jonathan Garlick said: “We were delighted by the number of people who joined the 2013 working party... Obviously, we took great care to ensure that everyone operated in a safe environment and the work we carried out was essential for the building. But the week really was great fun too for all concerned. It’s definitely something that we at the SPAB all look forward to each year – a fantastic chance to get out of the city and to put our knowledge into practice.”

SPAB Guardian Stephen Bull captivates his audience with a lively explanation of the barn’s history (SPAB).



Spital Square Project

37 Spital Square became the SPAB’s HQ in the early 1980s. Repairs and additions at the time were carefully managed by architect Julian Harrap, following SPAB principles. By 2013, the building was in need of redecoration and there was concern about some localised structural movement to the staircase and head of an opening between ground floor rooms.

The Society’s trustees had set aside some funds for the work, but it soon became apparent that there would be strategic and financial benefits in tackling both the building’s interior and exterior together. Consequently help was sought from SPAB members and generous donations flowed in. Building surveyor Alan Gardner was engaged to oversee the work, assisted by structural engineer Clive Dawson and, after a competitive tendering process, Lodge & Sons builders were appointed to carry out the work. The main elements of the project were internal and external redecoration, electrical upgrading and an improved lighting scheme, structural repairs to the ground floor and improved loft insulation.

SPAB work had to carry on throughout the project. The goodwill of staff and cooperation of Lodge & Sons made this possible, though we are grateful to Alan Baxter Associates for use of their meeting room. The project was largely completed by



Panelling repair at No 37, prior to redecoration (SPAB).

Christmas 2013, and was within budget. The work was used to help explain the Society’s principles of conservative repair. In September 2013, as part of London Open House weekend, members of the

public were able to join guided tours that considered not only the repair and redecoration, but also the building’s history and work of garden volunteer Dr Julie Charlesworth. Additionally, we asked consultant Patrick Baty to analyse historic paint samples during the project and this formed the basis for a Paint Analysis seminar held in early 2014.



1 Sign-written lettering is reinstated after the redecoration at No 37 (SPAB).

2 Garden volunteer Dr Julie Charlesworth explains plans for the rear courtyard (SPAB).

Technical Advice & Research

“No jargon, no strange new materials, just common sense”

Review of the *Old House Eco Handbook* (Suffolk Preservation Society)

Technical Enquiries

- **Technical Advice:** The technical advice line team was augmented to operate five mornings per week. We are grateful to English Heritage for help funding this frontline service.
- **Contacts Database:** This essential tool, containing names of specialists, is now maintained by volunteer Catherine Peacock, after many years of sterling work by Dr Jenny West.

Technical Events

- **Seminars:** a very well attended seminar on Energy Efficiency was run in York, in association with the Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance. Keynote speaker was Dr Hunter Danskin, Head of Technical Analysis at the Department of Energy and Climate Change. Technical Afternoons in 2013 were devoted to Innovations in Lime and Treating Dampness in Old Buildings.
- **External Events:** Our Technical staff also contributed to events organised by Ecobuild, the Natural Stone Show and National Home Improvement Show, and lectured to a wide range of audiences.

Technical Publications and Advice via Other Media

- **Magazines:** Technical Q&A topics covered in the SPAB Magazine were sash windows, rough-cast, vertically-hung tiling and timber panelling. Technical information was also supplied to *Period Living* and *The English Home*.
- **Radio and Television:** the Technical and Research Director appeared in programmes including BBC 1's Britain's Empty Homes which featured his grade I-listed medieval house in Essex.
- **Podcasts:** video interviews were recorded for Home Planning Help and HomeProtect.

Collaboration

- **External Committees:** We continue to be represented on the Technical Panels of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation and Property Care Association, the committee of the Traditional Paint Forum, Conservation of Historic Thatch Group, National Federation of Roofing Contractors' Lime Mortar Working Group and the Bells Committee of the Archbishops' Council.

Research

- **Energy Efficiency for old buildings:** A further interim report on our Building Performance Survey, undertaken for us by Archimetrics Ltd, was published in October and is available on the Society's website. SPAB research featured in the *Old House Eco Handbook*, published in association with the Society.
- **Paint:** Research by the SPAB and other partners into alternatives to lead-based paint for external timber continued at the Paint Research Association throughout 2013.



Technical Panel members join SPAB Scotland for a visit to Penicuik House and the Scottish Lime Centre (SPAB).

Courses & Lectures

“Educational, informative and, most importantly, inspirational”

Delegate who attended SPAB Old House Eco course, 2013



SPAB's flagship Repair of Old Buildings Course, which provides a five-day intensive introduction to conservation and the SPAB approach, remained well-subscribed following refinements to the programme. The Old House Eco Course – a new weekend course primarily, but not exclusively, for homeowners, giving practical advice on achieving energy efficiency in traditional buildings – has proved popular, as has the accompanying *Old House Eco Handbook*.

Participants in our Masterclasses for small groups, run in partnership with Historic Royal Palaces, commented very favourably on the combination of expert lectures and hands-on experience. This year's classes included stonework at the Tower of London, with metalwork and brickwork at Hampton Court Palace. Thanks to grant support from English Heritage we continued to offer the popular Faith in Maintenance training by request to churches across England at a modest fee and more courses are planned for 2014.

A notable development this year was the rise in requests to SPAB to devise and deliver bespoke training in understanding old buildings, energy efficiency and maintenance to specific organisations or audiences. We anticipate this will be a significant area of activity in the future.

Lectures

Our sold-out autumn lecture series explored examples of Extreme Conservation with talks on protecting the military remains and natural habitat of Orford Ness, conserving base huts in Antarctica and the huge challenge of returning Hadlow Tower to habitable condition. Due to the lectures' popularity we have reintroduced a spring series for 2014 on the theme Landscape and Memory.



1 Brickwork masterclass held jointly with Historic Royal Palaces (SPAB).

2 Course delegates view chimneys at Hampton Court Palace (SPAB).

3 Stonework tuition during a course visit to the Tower of London (SPAB).

Fellowship & Scholarship

“It was a great experience and a humbling one too”

Scottish stone mason Johnnie Clark on working in Romania as part of his William Morris Craft Fellowship

William Morris Craft Fellowship

The SPAB's William Morris Craft Fellowship programme is aimed at experienced craftspeople. Fellows are given a broad overview of conservation ideas and practice that allows them to develop their career as leaders in conservation crafts. In 2013 we were grateful to English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Monument Trust, William Morris Society, Carrington (1953) Ltd, William Morris Craft Fellowship Trust, Drake Trust and Cathedral Architects Association for their financial support and to the many professionals, craftspeople and owners who hosted visits and assisted the Fellowship. The 2013

Fellows were Jamie Miles, a self-employed plasterer from Derbyshire; Johnnie Clark, a stone mason at Glasgow Cathedral and leadworker Tyrone Oakley of Laing Traditional Masonry.

The Fellows celebrated their achievements at a Presentation at Ironmongers' Hall in November with addresses by Lord Cormack and architect Martin Ashley. The event was also used to mark the anniversary of the Dance Scholarship Trust which helps support the SPAB Scholarship.

Lethaby Scholarship

The SPAB Scholarship has trained many of the country's leading conservation architects, surveyors and engineers. Successful applicants receive a bursary and undertake a 9 month structured programme, viewing historic sites and conservation work. In 2013 we were grateful to supporters including the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation and Cathedral Architects' Association and to those who met Scholars on site, as well as the owners who hosted visits. Special thanks go to Norman and Underwood for loan of a car.



Scholar Conor Meehan and Fellow Johnnie Clark in Romania (SPAB).

Scholars in 2013 were architects Hannah Reynolds, Richard Prest and Ross Perkin, and structural engineer Conor Meehan. They visited a wide range of sites around the UK and Ireland to enhance their knowledge and understanding of buildings, materials, techniques and approaches, and to try their hand at a variety of craft skills. In the final stage of each Scholar's year they focus on country houses, immersing themselves in a detailed study theme agreed with their SPAB tutor.

In 2013 we were saddened by the deaths of Dr Juliet Frankland a much valued Scholars' host and Lord Robin Plunket sponsor and supporter of the Scholarship.

A highlight for both Scholars and Fellows was a week on site in Romania gaining insight into different conservation challenges and approaches. The participants shared their experiences through the year via their regularly-updated blog at: <http://spabscholarsandfellows.wordpress.com/>

Casework

Despite the challenging economic situation, the volume of casework consultations sent to the SPAB did not diminish in 2013. Our database records that around 1,800 cases were assessed by the Casework Team and detailed comments were submitted in response to approximately 25% of those cases. Encouragingly, the range of buildings and issues considered by the Team shows that the SPAB has an impact on the historic built environment at a number of levels. We have tackled everything from barns and bridges, through domestic properties of all scales to castles, churches, chapels and cathedrals. Whilst most of our work relates to alterations or extensions to existing buildings we have also commented on tidal defences, the proposed southern bypass for Ely and the planned Restoration of the Stow-on-the-Wold stocks.

'Buildings at risk' continue to be a recurring theme and we have devoted special efforts to assisting owners to find sensible long term solutions for their problem properties or lobbying local authorities to take action to tackle neglect. On a number of occasions this direct action has had the added benefit of helping to strengthen our relationships with local conservation officers and other interested local heritage organisations. Given the scarcity of resources in the heritage sector at the moment we see this as a key activity that will help us spread the SPAB's message of conservative repair to a wider audience.



Barn, Plymstock, Devon

This redundant Grade II listed barn had been unused for some time when we were approached for advice regarding an application to convert the space into a shop and café. One of our casework volunteers visited the site with the Conservation Officer and the Architect and was able to suggest a range of measures to ensure that the fabric of the barn would be carefully repaired and upgraded without damage to the character of the building. The amended scheme has since been granted permission and it now seems that this neglected and 'at risk' structure might have a sustainable future.



SPAB members view Boxley Abbey hospitium after it had benefited from a SPAB Baber Fund grant (SPAB).

Outreach

“Don’t put it off!”

Television presenter Jules Hudson’s message as the figurehead of SPAB National Maintenance Week 2013

The SPAB Magazine

We view our members’ magazine as one of the most important ways through which we explain what we do and why. One of the main aims of recent changes has been to include more information about the work, achievements and projects of the SPAB alongside a wide range of features, regular items, news and reports from the built heritage world. *The SPAB Magazine* is intended to have broad appeal to building professionals and heritage enthusiasts. It continues to attract high quality advertising.

Social Media

The use of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other new media platforms are now an integral part of our communications work. Importantly, social media enables the SPAB to reach younger audiences and those who might not normally be aware of us. The Scholars & Fellows’ blog charting the progress

of our trainees worked well and developed in 2013. On Twitter, @SPAB1877 (an affectionate acknowledgement of the year the Society was born) is followed by nearly 7000 people, and that numbers grows every week.

National Maintenance Week

This has become an annual fixture in the SPAB’s calendar, enabling us to take William Morris’s exhortation to ‘stave off decay by daily care’ to a receptive consumer audience. As well as mentions on national radio and in newspapers, the campaign has found a natural home in the property sections of regional print press where our advice and handy ‘top tips’ promote both good maintenance practice and the principles of the SPAB. Our 2013 campaign was spearheaded by TV presenter and heritage enthusiast Jules Hudson, of BBC’s Countryfile and Escape to the Country.

www.twitter.com search for @SPAB1877
www.youtube.com/user/SPAB1877
www.spab.org.uk/videos-podcasts/audio-slideshows/

Television presenter Jules Hudson: figurehead of National Maintenance Week 2013 (John Teale).



Mills, SPAB Scotland & Wales

Mills

In 2013 the Mills Section ran a full programme of courses and events. It also continued its financial consolidation and re-organisation and began developing new internal systems to enable it to better meet the needs of members and other stakeholders. An example of one of the systems that has been reviewed is the Millwrights List, a service used by both private individuals and public organisations from which to select millwrights. This was updated to enable users of the list to provide feedback more easily. The changes have been well received by both members and millwrights alike.

2013 was also an important year in developing partnership opportunities. The Mills Section Tour to Sussex was organised in partnership with the Sussex Mills Group and for the Autumn Meeting, the Section joined with The East Anglian Mills Society (TEAMS). Both events were highly successful and demonstrated the importance of collaborative working.

The Section was the beneficiary of a significant bequest from the late Lyn Owen and following discussions with the family, it was agreed to donate the sum to Great Chishill Windmill, Cambridgeshire with the Section providing guidance to ensure the money is put to good use.

Grants from the Mill Repair Fund were offered to mills including Bardwell Windmill, Framsdon Mill and Dereham Windmill.

SPAB Scotland

2013 events in Scotland included the inaugural working party at Hobkirk church, Borders. The aim is to grow this into an annual event and draw-in many younger people, students and new members. In November 2013 there was a joint initiative with Aberdeen City Council and Construction Skills Scotland for National Maintenance Week. New Scotland Officer Zoe Herbert focussed on raising the profile of the SPAB as well as collaborating with other amenity societies in Scotland. A further priority is to gain a better understanding of Scottish members and to involve more of them in events and promotion.



Great Chishill Windmill received a Mills Section grant (Mildred Cookson).

Wales

SPAB responded to the consultation on The Future of our Past in preparation for a Heritage Bill for Wales, and contributed to the Cadw-convened workshop on the role of the Third Sector in the care of Welsh historic buildings. The Society continued to campaign for an improvement in the standard of faculty applications from churches in Wales, and the adoption of ‘Statements of Significance and Need’, and we were pleased when this was accepted in principle. As well as continuing to attend the Cadw-convened Built Heritage Forum for Conservation Officers and the South Wales Conservation Officers Group, we have reached agreement with the Civic Trust for Wales to put meetings on a more formal and regular footing. This should improve communications and enhance the role of amenity societies as part of the network of conservation professionals in Wales.

Members & Patrons

Membership

Membership numbers took a slight dip in 2013 due to the subscription increase that was introduced in January, but new members continued to join throughout the year. On average the membership gained 45 new members each month, the vast majority signing up via the website.

We would like to thank all our members for their continued support of the Society's work.

Regional Groups

The regional groups continued to flourish in 2013 with another year of fascinating events and lectures across England and Wales. Highlights included a thatching day in Diss; visits to Foulness Island and the National Trust's Orford Ness; an industrial heritage tour of Shrewsbury; a look behind the scenes at the West Wycombe Village Project; an architect-led tour of the School of Pythagoras in Cambridge; and a visit to William Morris' former home, Kelmscott Manor.

In April, 22 regional group organisers, including representatives from SPAB Scotland, met for a Working Lunch at Spital Square to discuss present and future plans.

We are immensely grateful to the organisers and committee members of all the regional groups for their commitment to the local membership and for promoting the SPAB's aims in their regions.



Members visit Rochdale Town Hall (Nick Doyle).

AGM

Our well-attended AGM was held in the beautiful setting of St Cross, Winchester in July. Members enjoyed a stonework display by 2012 Fellow Sam Peacock and a fascinating and wide-ranging talk by writer and presenter Dan Cruickshank. Visits over the weekend included Winchester Cathedral with architect Nick Cox and a walking tour looking at past conservation battles in Winchester, drawing on material from SPAB's Archive. The 2013 Esher Award for an outstanding contribution to conservation and the work of SPAB was presented to architect Neil Birdsall at the AGM.

Patron scheme

At the end of 2013 a new Patrons' scheme was launched with the aim of generating income to help the Society's long-term sustainability in a changed financial environment. The donation level for the scheme is £1,000 per year, with Patrons having the opportunity to attend special events and engage with leading historic building specialists.

The Yorkshire Group visits Martholme, Great Harwood (Gisela Moritz).



Financial Review & Grants Awarded

It was a strong year financially for the Society. Subscription and course income rose and income from donations, trusts and bequests recovered to almost £498,000 after the previous year's relatively low figure. The launch of the appeal for funds to help with the refurbishment of our Spital Square offices met with an exceptionally enthusiastic response from members, raising £36,813 in total. Overall income received increased by 33% year-on-year to £1.36m. On the expenditure side, costs rose 18% to £1.58m. These included the costs for the refurbishment of our Spital Square offices, plus the cost of eight new employees to run the Maintenance Cooperatives project (MCP), which is partly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Another good year for investment returns, resulting in unrealized investment gains of £331,000, meant that overall the Society recorded a positive increase in funds of £215,436 compared with a deficit of £62,000 the previous year. The impact on the Society's total balances was to increase them from £3.9m to £4.1m. It is remarkable how relatively stable the Society's finances have been over the last decade in which we have seen economic recession and stockmarket volatility alongside steady growth in the scope and range of the Society's activities.

SPAB Grants

In 2013, a grant from the Miss Truman Fund helped repair leadwork at Holy Trinity Church, Ratcliffe on Soar, Nottinghamshire which had been damaged by metal theft. From the Misses Newcombe Bequest for almshouses we helped the conservation of a memorial plaque at the Francis Geering Almshouses, Harwell, Oxfordshire. The Thomas Hardy fund was able to assist repairs to the Wolfeton Riding House in Dorset, and an offer was made towards conservation of the medieval chapel at Manor Farm, Stourton Caundle, Dorset. Three further grants were made by the Mills Section.

Grants to SPAB from Public Bodies

English Heritage continued to grant aid our statutory casework and technical advice helpline. They also assisted the William Craft Fellowship, contributed to

our energy efficiency research work and supported the continuation of the Faith in Maintenance project. Cadw assisted with our work in Wales. Historic Scotland helped the William Morris Craft Fellowship and energy efficiency research. The Heritage Lottery Fund provided a major grant towards our Maintenance Cooperatives Movement project.

Legacies

Generous bequests from Cecily Greenhill, Helen Major, Thomas Barron, Professor FM Haines/Pamela Hughes Trust and Lyn Owen as well as continued support from the John Mason Trust were among hugely-appreciated legacies received during the year. We remain enormously grateful to all those members and non-members who choose to remember us in their wills.

Major donations (over £1000)

Ancaster Trust, Anon re Webb Award, Dr H Bosanquet, Chalcroft Charitable Trust, R Deeble, H Guile, E Molloy, JCP Dalton, William Morris Society

Fellowship Support (from trusts)

The Monument Trust, William Morris Society, William Morris Craft Fellowship Trust, Drake Trust, Carrington (1953) Ltd, Cathedral Architects

Scholarship Support (from trusts)

The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation, Dance Scholarship Trust, Drake Trust, Cathedral Architects Association

Maintenance Co-operatives project from trusts

The Leche Trust; The Radcliffe Trust
J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust
The Garfield Weston Foundation
Stephen Clark 1957 Charitable Trust)

Audited Accounts

The Society's legal annual report and full accounts can be obtained on request from 37 Spital Square.

Committees

Executive (trustees)

David Heath (Chairman)
Nicholas Cox (Vice Chairman)
Dr Mark Archer (Hon Treasurer)
David Alexander
Iain Boyd
Mildred Cookson
Gillian Darley*
Martin Drury
Brian Foxley
David Lodge*
John Sell
Ray Wilson

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Nick Cox (Vice Chairman)
Dr Mark Archer (Hon Treasurer)
Malcolm Adkins
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Professor Peter Burman
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Ian Harper
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Ellen Leslie*
David Lodge*
Roger Mears
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Sandra Purves
Peter Rumley
Stephen Scammell
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Jessica Sutcliffe
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Paul Bedford
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Catharine Bull
Stephen Bull (Vice Chairman)*
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Carsten Hermann*
Stafford Holmes
Bruce Induni*
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Torquil McNeilage*
Maya Polenz
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Jessica Snow (Vice-Convenor/Chair)*
Steve Wood (Treasurer/Chair)*
Martin Hadlington
Steven Laing
Sandra Purves
Bill Revie
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Sarah Freeman
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Katie White
Andrew Ziminski

Director Matthew Slocombe
Deputy Director Sara Crofts
Company Secretary Douglas Kent

** For part of 2013*

The SPAB continues to grow in strength as a powerful voice for historic buildings and an effective link with people and communities. We remain unequalled in the role we play in educating and training present and future generations in the proper care of our unique architectural inheritance. This Annual Review shows just some of the many ways the SPAB is working to prevent needless damage and destruction.



We can only do this with your support. Please join the Society if you are not already a member. Donations and legacies of any size are vital if we are to continue to fight the threats which come in so many guises. For more information about how you can help the SPAB please consult our website or contact the SPAB office.



The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

Founded in 1877.
A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales.
Company No 5743962 Charity No 111 3753
Scottish Charity No SC 039244

37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY
020 7377 1644
www.spab.org.uk
info@spab.org.uk



www.spab.org.uk

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