

Heritage Policy

'The IWA considers that heritage is a vital aspect of the inland waterways and must be actively preserved for the enjoyment and understanding of present and future generations.' IWA believes that heritage contributes positively to many benefits of the inland waterways such as well-being, tourism and education, and should be seen as such rather than just requiring protection in its own right.

IWA takes a holistic view of heritage to include the buildings, engineering structures, , operations, artefact, boats, people and culture. This view looks beyond individual heritage assets; it embraces the total operating waterways system - the 'Museum without Walls' - with structures and artefacts in their correct location and where possible working as they were designed to do.

Waterways heritage is impacted by everything within a canal or river corridor which has an effect on its visual character. This may include buildings possibly some distance from the waterway and outside the control of the navigation authority.

Where possible IWA supports the principle of waterside buildings being used in a way that is compatible with their original function e.g. boatbuilding and boating services or waterway maintenance. It is recognised that this may not always be feasible, e.g., with large-scale industrial buildings and sympathetic restoration and conversion, e.g., into residential property, may be helpful or necessary to secure the future of these buildings.

IWA advocates the principle that owners of heritage buildings have a responsibility to retain and maintain them, and where appropriate to find a use appropriate to their heritage significance. Disposal of such buildings should only take place after careful consideration and provided that every effort has been made to retain them. In this case, the disposal must include adequate conditions to ensure that features of heritage interest are retained. If buildings are disposed of, every effort should be made to do this to another organisation with waterways or heritage affiliation which can assure a viable and appropriate future, wherever possible retaining it within the public realm. Demolition should only be considered as a last resort and when the building or structure is not a rare example of its type.

Demolition should only be considered as a last resort and when the building or structure is not a rare example of its type.

IWA supports the principle of minimum intervention when maintaining or altering heritage structures. Where alterations are essential, e.g., because of bridge widening or health & safety requirements, appropriate material and construction techniques should be used to achieve minimum impact to the heritage structure.

In the rare event that a heritage structure has to be demolished, IWA expects that a full heritage and photographic survey is performed and the results archived. Where

possible any artefacts associated with the demolition should be conserved in an appropriate location.

The IWA policy for protecting waterways heritage does not preclude the addition of new buildings and structures provided that they are well designed and of a scale and materials that relate to their surroundings and are not detrimental to adjacent heritage structures. Some will become the heritage of tomorrow.

IWA will encourage Local Planning Authorities to reject planning applications for new waterside developments which have a detrimental impact on the heritage or on its existing setting. Where possible new developments should include the sympathetic reuse and restoration of heritage assets.

IWA supports listing and local listing as the means of ensuring the retention of significant buildings and structures. However, listing protection only applies within a precisely defined boundary and may omit other features which impact on the total waterway context.

IWA recognises that listing places significant obligations on the building owner provided that these are enforced by the local authority. It may also restrict the development of options which would ensure the future viability of the asset.

The designation of Conservation Areas is supported by IWA as the preferred option for protecting everything within a wider waterways corridor. This is clearly covered by one of the designated categories of areas, which can be subject to conservation status -

Historic transport links and their environs, such as canals

IWA supports and will campaign for the designation of further waterways corridors as conservation areas.

IWA encourages Local Authorities to designate conservation areas covering the whole entity of related waterways assets, for example a lock flight or a complex of canal basins and warehouses or preferably the entire waterway within the LA area.

IWA is concerned at the current lack of monitoring and enforcement of development within conservation areas and will continue to bring these to the attention of Local Authorities.

IWA supports commercial carrying as an integral part of the heritage of the waterways. In order to allow commercial craft to continue operating, wharves and associated buildings and equipment should be retained wherever possible.

IWA recognises the importance of historic boats and the crafts associated with them as part of the holistic heritage of the inland waterways and in interpreting its commercial history. IWA will support the good maintenance and, where possible, the active navigation of historic boats, particularly when they are unique examples of their type.

IWA supports the continuation of heritage skills associated with the inland waterways and the need to maintain these through training schemes and the vitality of traditional boatyards and maintenance yards.

IWA recognises the need to protect heritage structures on waterways which are currently not navigable. Where the navigation is under restoration, IWA will encourage the organisation responsible to identify all its heritage assets at an early stage and seek to conserve them until full restoration takes place. Where significant waterways structures are not part of a restoration scheme, IWA will consider other means of protecting them.

Briefing Notes

IWA Policy

Building works on heritage structures are covered under IWA Policy:

‘Standards for Construction, Restoration and Maintenance of Inland Waterways’
copied here for convenience -

8. Heritage Structures Wherever practical heritage structures should be restored with similar materials and building methods as originally constructed, as long as it can meet the current needs for the use of the structure. Lock gates and lock gear should also be restored using designs that were contemporary with the waterway’s construction or were known to have been used at some time during the life of the waterway. However, the heritage value and appropriateness of restoring to the original design should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Listing

If a building is considered by the Secretary of State (for Culture, Media and Sport) to be of special architectural or historic interest it will be included in a list of such buildings.

The designation regime is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. For England, the list is maintained by Historic England (the regulatory body previously part of English Heritage) and is available online through the National Heritage List for England. Applications for new entries and to remove or amend an existing entry are made to Historic England. It will investigate the merits of the application and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (for Culture, Media and Sport) who will make the decision. A parallel system applies in Wales administered by Cadw on behalf of the Welsh Government and details of sites are available on the

Historic Wales Portal². A similar system applies in Scotland and site details are available through the Historic Environment Scotland Data Services³.

Criteria for the designation of different types of heritage assets - buildings, archaeological sites, designed landscapes, battlefields, and ships and boats - are included within separate pieces of legislation.

Slightly greater details on the criteria for listing buildings and scheduling archaeological sites are set out in:

Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings and Scheduled Monuments Policy Statement produced by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).

Categories of listed buildings:

- Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest, sometimes considered to be internationally important; only 2.5% of listed buildings are Grade I;
- Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest; 5.5% of listed buildings are Grade II*;
- Grade II buildings are nationally important and of special interest; 92% of all listed buildings are in this class and it is the most likely grade of listing for a waterway building, lock, bridge or other structure.

Listing for example of locks puts a considerable burden on navigation authorities in obtaining permission to carry out standard maintenance. Currently (December 2014)

The Canal & River Trust has agreed a methodology with Historic England for routine repair and maintenance work to listed waterway structures, and the Government has recently (May 2019) decided to implement a CRT listed building consent order as soon as parliamentary time allows.

Scheduled Monuments

Some waterways structures are scheduled monuments. Examples include Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Junction Bridge Great Haywood and Engine Arm Aqueduct, Smethwick.

A Schedule has been kept since 1913 of monuments considered to be of national importance by the government, although heritage protection of archaeological sites started as far back as 1882. The current legislation, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, supports a formal system of Scheduled Monument Consent for any work to a designated monument. The 1979 Act also applies in Wales and Scotland, where parallel systems are administered by Cadw and Historic Environment Scotland respectively.

Scheduling is the only legal protection specifically for archaeological sites.

Canals in Scotland are designated in their entirety as scheduled monuments although IWA does not support this as it may mitigate against essential repairs or enhancement to the waterway.

Conservation Areas

Most conservation areas are designated by the local planning authority . Historic England can designate conservation areas in London, in consultation with the relevant London Borough Council and consented to by the Secretary of State..

The number and size of Conservation Areas depends on the interest of individual local authorities and the extent of designations of Conservation Areas varies between waterways.

In some cases, several local authorities have co-operated to achieve designation of a complete waterway, as in the case of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation.

World Heritage Sites

World Heritage Sites are inscribed by UNESCO as some of the most important heritage sites in the world. The UK has one such site primarily designated for its canal features (Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal - inscribed in 2009) and two other sites where canals lie within the site boundary and are mentioned in the citation (Ironbridge Gorge and Saltaire). There are other WHS that include canals too...Bath, for example.

References

1. The National Heritage List for England is available at www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list
2. The Historic Wales Portal is available at www.historicwales.gov.uk
3. See <http://data.historic-scotland.gov.uk/pls/htmldb/f?p=2000:10:0:>
4. Note that in Scotland, listed buildings are categorised as Category A, Category B and Category C.

Heritage Ports

IWA supports the principle of identifying Heritage Ports which is being led by the Maritime Heritage Trust and the benefits that it can bring to locations so designated. This has to date applied primarily to coastal and estuary locations but suitable inland sites are being considered in conjunction with IWA; Chester has achieved designation as a Heritage Port and Shardlow, Stourport and others are being progressed.