

CHAPTER 3

CARING FOR LISTED BUILDINGS

CARING FOR LISTED BUILDINGS

- 3.1 Every owner of a historic building should strive to care for it as these buildings are a finite and irreplaceable resource. If a building is Listed this duty of care should reflect its special interest and national importance. Owners of Listed Buildings are in reality guardians of history, caring for and passing on a building over the years.
- 3.2 Many Listed Buildings have survived for hundreds of years, are still performing well and are structurally sound. A conservative approach to repairs and alterations to historic building fabric should be taken. Any proposals for alterations are considered on the merits of the individual scheme put forward.
- 3.3 South Cambridgeshire District Council receives guidance and advice from the Conservation and Design Service and English Heritage, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team. The Council shares this advice with owners, agents and building professionals.
- 3.4 Recent guidance from English Heritage, *Conservation Principles; Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, outlines key principles that should be considered when proposing works to a Listed Building.
- 3.5 It is the responsibility of the Council to promote the best solutions for the building to ensure its longevity and sustainability. The officers have a duty of care to every Listed Building and their job is to manage change over time.

MAINTAINING LISTED BUILDINGS

- 3.6 Every building requires routine maintenance, which often prevents more serious problems from occurring and reduces decay. It will help to retain the building's value, limit the need for extensive and expensive repairs, and safeguard the building's future. Regular maintenance also contributes to increasing the quality of life and enjoyment of a buildings occupant.
- 3.7 For further information and advice on maintenance, refer to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) website. The section, *Maintain your building*, provides valuable advice on the basics of maintenance and *Stitch in Time*, co-written with the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).

REPAIRING LISTED BUILDINGS

- 3.8 “Like-for-like” repairs match existing methods and materials. However, the concept of “like-for-like” repairs is only applicable if the existing materials are traditional and historic. Many buildings have had repairs or alterations carried out using modern materials and methods (often before the building was Listed and works were controlled), inappropriate to an historic structure and such “like-for-like” repairs would not be appropriate.
- 3.9 There is a fine line between the level of work considered to be a repair, which will not require formal Listed Building Consent and work that does. Only small areas of minor repairs can be carried out without the need for formal consent. However, contact the Council to discuss any works prior to carrying them out and whether or not formal consent might be required.
- 3.10 Another principle of repair is that it should be the minimum necessary and involve the least intervention and loss of or disruption to the historic fabric. Repair first and replace only if necessary (replacement will always require formal consent).