



Scottish Civic Trust

Journal No 1: Country Houses at Risk



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Front cover illustration: Wardhouse, Kennethmont, Aberdeenshire, currently under restoration.

Note:

The information contained within the journal is the sole opinion of that of the Scottish Civic Trust.
Every effort has been taken to ensure that this information is accurate.

THE COUNTRY HOUSE COUNTRY HOUSES AT RISK AT RISK



SCOTTISH CIVIC TRUST

The Scottish Civic Trust was founded in 1967 to improve the quality of Scotland's built environment and to work with Scottish people and communities towards that goal. Simply stated, the Trust aims to involve people, promote respect and understanding and pursue technical excellence in all aspects of Scotland's built environment. The Trust achieves these aims by:

- Promoting initiatives which inform and educate people on environmental issues
- Contributing positively on planning matters
- Encouraging the highest quality in new architecture
- Supporting the conservation and reuse of historic buildings
- Working to improve Scotland's townscapes.

The Scottish Civic Trust is a registered charity. Much of its work is unique, and whilst it works closely with others, no other body lobbies so effectively over such a broad spectrum. It is our belief that old and new fit together, and need to be mutually respected and valued.

To find out more, please contact: sct@scottishcivictrust.org.uk
www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk

BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER

The Buildings at Risk Service has operated for 15 years. It was established and is maintained by the Trust on behalf of Historic Scotland who recognised a need to address the decline of many of our listed buildings across Scotland.

Resulting from this, a computerised database now contains illustrated details of over 1000 properties considered to be at risk throughout Scotland. The primary function of the Service is to raise awareness as to the existence of such buildings. However the Service also acts as a catalyst in marrying up potential restorers with suitable available properties.

For those wishing further details about the buildings at risk service or about a specific property our website provides a comprehensive and informative source of information.

This Journal, which examines some of the issues surrounding the country house at risk, is the first in a series of new buildings at risk publications focusing on more topic related issues.





THE POPULARITY & SURVIVAL OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE

COUNTRY HOUSES HAVE BEEN IN EXISTENCE SINCE AT LEAST THE 16TH CENTURY. IN SCOTLAND THERE ARE AROUND 1604 LISTED COUNTRY HOUSES SUCH AS HOPETOUN HOUSE, WHICH IS PRIVATELY OWNED OR CULZEAN CASTLE, WHICH IS OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND. MANY OF THESE FASCINATING BUILDINGS ILLUSTRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE AS A BAROMETER OF ARCHITECTURAL FASHION AND COUNTRY LIFE IN SCOTLAND

Most of Scotland's country houses have survived as they were originally intended i.e. as dwellings. In some instances, this has been simply due to the determination of owners to retain the country seat of their landed estate. Some smaller houses continue to be maintained by the wealth generated from the land itself. Others promote the tradition of the sporting estate and appeal to the overseas market attracted by the romance and image of tourist Scotland. Others have survived by being successfully converted to other uses.

Demand for traditional properties continues to be high, attracting high prices and a good resale value. Many newspaper property supplements feature a wide variety of country houses currently for sale commanding purchase figures - in some cases in excess of £500,000.

The properties available can range from a single country house to an entire country estate.

THE POPULARITY & SURVIVAL ADAPTATION TO OTHER USES OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE

DESPITE MOST OF SCOTLAND'S COUNTRY HOUSES REMAINING IN USE AS DWELLINGS, THE COUNTRY HOUSE ALSO ADAPTS WELL TO OTHER USES.

Large rooms on the main floor of a country house adapt well to hotel use and, in some cases, the gardens and ancillary buildings can likewise serve as part of a wider hotel development. The service areas can be used in much the way they were intended and large halls and dining areas make excellent reception rooms. Examples include Cornhill House by Coulter, Boath House in Auldearn and Sundrum Castle by Ayr.

Likewise, the country house lends itself well to being converted to commercial use, particularly when it is located near to an urban centre. Large reception rooms can become useful meeting rooms with ancillary accommodation such as kitchens again being used as they were originally intended. Ease of access and parking spaces can often be accommodated within the grounds. And, if appropriately adapted, the nursing home can also operate well within the restraints of the existing fabric. Cochno House in Duntocher is now used by Glasgow University as hospitality facilities. Strathleven House in Alexandria was turned in to a business incubation centre by a Building Preservation Trust. Inglewood House in Alloa operates as a business centre and Annfield House in Stirling is now a nursing home.

Best use

The best use of a redundant building is the use for which it was first built, for this reason alone, country houses have a head start over other buildings at risk.

There are many examples of redundant country houses which have been successfully redeveloped for domestic use.

Properties such as Craigrownie Castle by Cove and Limefield House in Polbeth have been restored as individual homes by private restorers. Likewise Netherkirkton House in Neilston has been recently refurbished as flats as part of a wider housing development.

Netherkirkton House, before refurbishment ▼



Netherkirkton House, after refurbishment ▼



THE COUNTRY HOUSE

THE COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK

AT RISK

THE SCOTTISH CIVIC TRUST OPERATES THE BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER FOR SCOTLAND. PRESENTLY THERE ARE 91* COUNTRY HOUSES AT RISK ACCOUNTING FOR 8.5% OF ALL BUILDINGS ON THE REGISTER AND THE SECOND LARGEST BUILDING TYPE AT RISK AFTER CHURCHES. 20% OF THOSE COUNTRY HOUSES AT RISK ARE A-LISTED WITH OVER HALF DESCRIBED AS BEING IN A RUINOUS OR POOR CONDITION. 65% OF THESE COUNTRY HOUSES ARE DEFINED AS BEING AT CRITICAL OR HIGH RISK STATUS.**

* This figure does not include any country houses which are Scheduled Ancient Monuments such as Mavisbank House, Lasswade

**Source: Buildings at Risk Register March 2005

Why at risk?

There are many factors, which have contributed over the last 100 years or so to the downfall of the country house. For example, over one third of all country houses on the Register have suffered from fire damage. Lessendrum House in Aberdeenshire has, over the years, become an ivy infested ruin since fire swept through it in 1919.

Economic & Social change

Whilst many country houses at risk have their own tragic tale to tell, the social and economic changes which took place through out the late 19th/20th Centuries played an important role in the change of the traditional country house.

The Great Wars too played their part. Some country houses were taken over by the government to serve as hospitals or prisoner of war camps. For example, Dunalistair House by Kinloch Rannoch was used as a school for Polish refugees and Buchanan Castle by Drymen as a hospital.



Detail, Buchanan Castle, by Drymen ▲



CASE STUDY - Buchanan Castle, by Drymen

Buchanan Castle is a B-listed baronial mansion, which was built by William Burn in 1854 as the former seat of the Dukes of Montrose. The building served as a hotel in the 1930s and was requisitioned during the war to become a hospital, where Rudolph Hess is alleged to have spent his first month in Scotland. After the war, the hospital was no longer needed and in the 1950's the roof of the Castle was removed. Over the years the Castle has become a reasonably well stabilised ruin. However, the building's original setting has diminished

being now surrounded by a golf course and a number of private dwellings. A recent planning application was submitted which sought to retain the façade of the castle with the development of 39 flats behind. A small number of new build houses would be built in the remainder of the grounds. Whilst the principle of re-use is accepted, this scheme would have seen the loss of much of the little remaining fabric of the original mansion.



THE COUNTRY HOUSE

THE COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK

AT RISK

AFTER THE WAR, THERE WAS A MAJOR SHIFT IN POLITICAL THINKING BEST PERSONIFIED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WELFARE STATE AND THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT.

Political shift

Other changes brought a rise in tax and death duties. The country house was seen as a financial burden, resulting in country estates being consolidated or sold off and turned over to institutional life. Ballochmyle House, for example, was converted to hospital use and remained in operation until the late 1960s. Regrettably, some of the short term changes of use have had a long term effect as it has proven difficult in some instances to convert back to what was there before.

De-roofing

Perhaps one of the most well known factors leading to the demise of the country house was the de-roofing which took place in the 1950s. The exploitation of a legal loophole meant that many houses such as Carmichael House in Thankerton had their roofs removed so that owners could avoid paying rates.

The wider estate

And it is worth noting that it is often not just the country house which is at risk. Many ancillary estate buildings such as stable blocks, dairies, ice houses and lodges symbolic of the country house operation have too become at risk. Wider still, the decline of the designed landscape within which the buildings are set often presents a bigger challenge to resolve..



Detail, Carmichael House, Thankerton ▲

▼ Carmichael House, Thankerton



PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY HOUSE

MANY FACTORS CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEMISE OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE BUT OTHER SUBSEQUENT FACTORS HAVE CONTINUED ITS DOWNWARD SPIRAL.

country house whilst the west wing slowly succumbs to dry rot and pigeon infestation.

SADLY IN SOME CASES THE COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK IS QUITE SIMPLY FORGOTTEN FALLING VICTIM TO SYSTEMATIC LOOTING AND VANDALISM.

Property Maintenance

A lack of maintenance can be a major player in the slow decay of a property.

Ownership

It is often said that there is no such thing as a problem building only a problem owner. However this is an over simplification of the issue. A country house at risk (or indeed any other building at risk) can have many social, economic and/or technical problems, some of which can be nigh on impossible to resolve. However this does not exclude the fact that ownership can be problematic.

In terms of buildings at risk, there is no doubt that ownership can be a problem. The attitude of the owner can be ambivalent or unsympathetic to the property being repaired and equally hostile to the transfer of ownership to a restoring purchaser.

In many cases owners can appreciate the value of their asset but not have the resources to solve the problem. Perhaps the already decaying mansion has been inherited by a family member who declares their good intentions for the future restoration of their property but lacks present funds to achieve this aim. In other instances an owner may live comfortably in the east wing of the

In some cases the original policies or land associated with the house may have been previously sold off or leased. The amount of land now available with the house can be considerably reduced. Over time this can compromise the original access to the property or setting. In some cases the house may now be surrounded by a working farm or worse still the adjacent land previously sold has already been developed.

CASE STUDY - Ballochmyle House, by Mauchline

Ballochmyle House is a B-Listed mansion house which incorporates a portion of an earlier Palladian house by Robert (or John) Adam. In 1940 the house was converted in to an emergency hospital. By the 1970s the house had been vacated by the Health Board for portable accommodation on the front lawn of the house. An application for its demolition was also lodged. Over the next 20 years the house was left unoccupied whilst various feasibility studies and development briefs for the entire site were perused. At one stage press reports indicated that there had been 1000 expressions of interest by persons looking to take over the redevelopment of the house. The Health board were allegedly reluctant to dispose

of the house during this time for fear of compromising the development potential of the rest of the site. By the mid 1990s the house had fallen in to a severe state of disrepair with full restoration costs stated at over £1 million and consolidation costs at nearly £200,000. In October 2004 some 35 years since it was originally vacated by the Health Board listed building consent was granted for the redevelopment of the house in to 14 flats with over 100 houses being built in the grounds by a private development company. Incidentally in 1998 the Garden History Society completed a study of the grounds of the house concluding them to be of regional importance.



CASE STUDY - Glenlair House, by Castle Douglas

Glenlair House is a large 19th century B-listed mansion comprising of a small house built in 1830 by Walter Newall (now restored) with a prominent extension built by Peddie and Kinnear. It was the former home of Sir James Clerk Maxwell the famous scientist and has been a roofless ruin since it was all but destroyed by fire in 1928. Its present owner has established the Maxwell at Glenlair Trust

Even in its present state the owner is committed to seeing it stabilised as a roofless structure with a small portion of the house at the front being suitably restored as an information point dedicated to the work of Sir James Clerk Maxwell. The building is regularly visited by persons following up family connections with the house and its famous occupant.

(www.maxwellatglengair.co.uk).



TACKLING THE PROBLEM OF A COMPREHENSIVE AUDIT THE COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK

A COMPREHENSIVE AUDIT OF OUR COUNTRY HOUSES AT RISK WOULD BE A USEFUL STARTING POINT IN COMPILING A STRATEGIC APPROACH AT LOOKING AT HOW WE TACKLE THE COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK.

The numbers of country houses at risk are such that stabilisation and or sympathetic repair must be a considered alternative to full restoration (particularly in the case of B and C(s) listed properties.) Full restoration whilst desirable is perhaps not realistically financially achievable for all country houses at risk. Stabilisation may offer a pragmatic temporary alternative which will in effect 'buy some time' until a future restoration project becomes viable.

A good example of this is Glenlair House near Castle Douglas where the owner would like to see the majority of the house stabilised with a small entrance vestibule to the front of the property developed as a visitors room (as opposed to centre) in recognition of the scientist Sir James Clerk Maxwell who lived there as a child.

The Buildings at Risk Register currently holds details of 91 country houses at risk. To stabilise our country houses at risk in Scotland (that we know about) assuming an average figure of about £20,000 per property may cost less than £2 million.

Sir James Clerk Maxwell

Sir James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879) is possibly one of Scotland's most famous scientists. Some of his notable achievements include the discovery and subsequent correctiveness of colour blindness and the existence of electro magnetic waves. It is reputed that Maxwell began his interest in science at Glenlair House by examining the workings of the kitchen bell system.



TACKLING THE PROBLEM OF LOCAL AUTHORITY ROLE & STATUTORY POWERS

THE COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK

PERHAPS THE GREATEST STEP FORWARD IN ASSISTING WITH THE PLIGHT OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK IS TO TACKLE OWNERSHIP.

Statutory powers

It is here that the local authority has a vital role to play. There are a number of powers available under different acts of parliament such as the Town and Country Planning Act and various Housing Acts, which give powers to local authorities and Scottish Ministers to require repairs to be made to any buildings at risk including country houses.

Local authorities can also compulsory purchase (CPO) a property. Likewise Historic Scotland has the power under Compulsory Acquisition to acquire a listed property.

Local authority role

Many local authorities appear reluctant to use these powers at their disposal. (Although presently three local authorities are proceeding to CPO notable country houses at risk where there is a restoring purchaser waiting in the wings to 'buy' the property from the local authority).

This reluctance may simply be due to a lack of resource, a lack of appropriate restoring purchasers or perhaps a lack of ambition. Cumulatively these have perhaps forced local planning authorities to deal with immediate issues rather than dedicate resources to wider issues such as buildings at risk.

Presently some local authorities tend to only react when the country house becomes a danger. For example the owner of a country house at risk approaches the local authority about his concerns over children playing in the ruin and very quickly the property becomes a matter of public safety.



Cambusnethan Priory, Wishaw ▲



Dunalistair House, Kinloch Rannoch ▲

▼ Newton House, by Elgin



THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE INTERESTED IN TACKLING A COUNTRY HOUSE AT RISK. RECENT TELEVISION PROGRAMMES SUCH AS RESTORATION AND GRAND DESIGNS HAVE STIMULATED THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST IN BUILDINGS AT RISK.



Gartur House by Stirling ▲

Ideas v Reality of Restoration

However a significant problem with this interest can be the potential for a lack of understanding for the scale and in some instances the complexity of a restoration project including issues involved in securing the necessary building permissions such as listed building consent, planning consent and a building warrant. It is not uncommon to hear, from a person taking on a project: 'I'm doing a good thing here, why am I being stopped from doing x and y?'

It is important that clients and building professionals alike have a clear understanding of the importance of a building and its cultural significance before embarking on any work. There can sometimes be an uneasy jump between the country house at risk and the glossy magazine end product without much thought of what happens in between. It is important to value what one has and to identify what has to be done to achieve the end product.

Conservation Plan

A good starting point for the repair of any country house at risk could be the preparation of a conservation plan. This should alert the restoring purchaser to what is important about the house and thus allow those concerned to move forward with a degree of understanding and, perhaps where appropriate, compromise in achieving a pragmatic solution to a difficult problem.

Some useful guidance on the preparation of such plans can be found in the Scottish Civic Trust's publication 'Sources of Financial Help for Scotland's Historic Buildings' and Historic Scotland's 'Guide to Conservation Plans'

Talking to the professionals

It is worth remembering that when a property is listed, as many country houses are, it is not just the owner who should be concerned about the property. Local planning authorities, Historic Scotland and national and local amenity bodies may all have an interest. Early dialogue with professionals is therefore essential.

Ecclesgreig Castle, St Cyrus, Aberdeenshire ▼



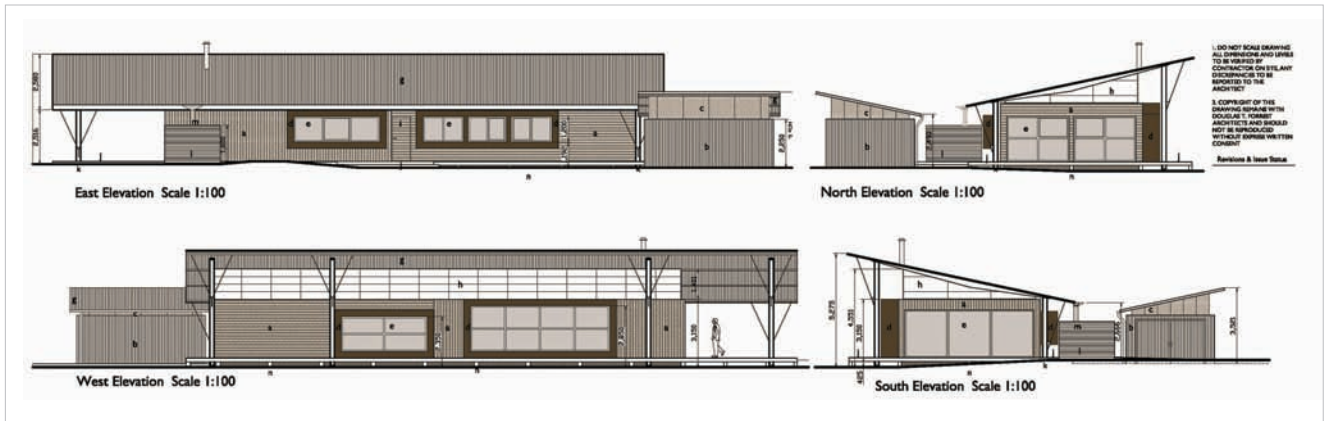
THE TOP 7 LEADING ARCHITECTS OF OUR COUNTRY HOUSES AT RISK.

Total No. of Country Houses currently at risk which were designed by the following leading architects of their time:

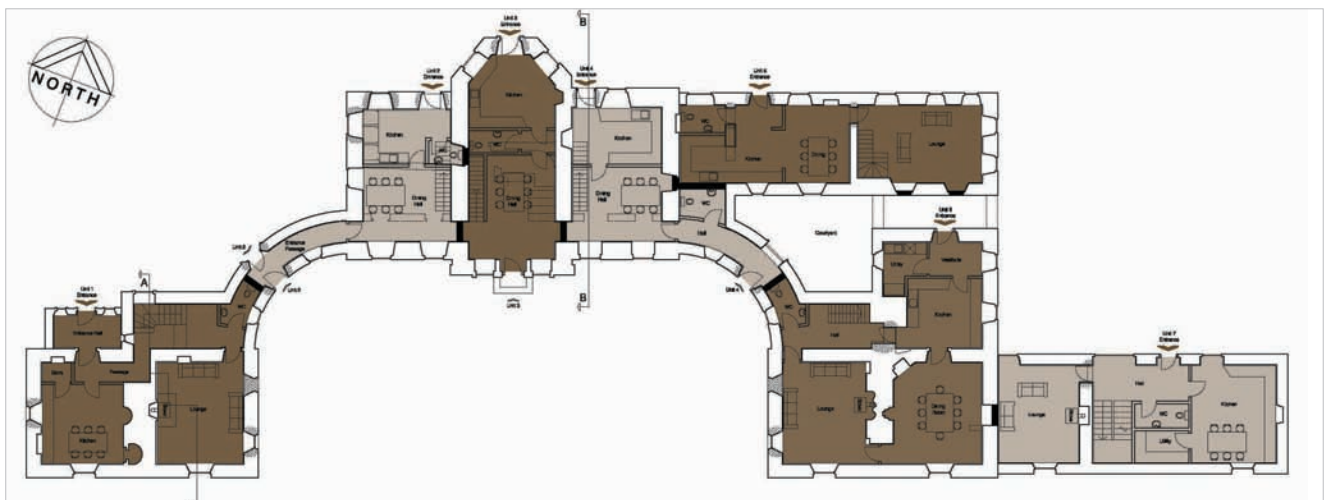
David Bryce	5
William Burn	4
Archibald Simpson	3
James Gillespie Graham	3
Robert Adam	2
William Adam	2
William Leiper	1

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE RESTORATION OF WARDHOUSE, KENNETHMONT THE COUNTRY HOUSE

Proposed new housing in the grounds



Proposed plan of Warehouse



Copyright: Acanthus Architects (Douglas Forrest)



CASE STUDY - Warehouse, Kennethmont

Warehouse is an A-listed Palladian mansion reputedly designed by John Adam for the Gordon Family in a spectacular hill top location at the heart of Aberdeenshire. It has been a gutted roofless ruin for many years. At one time there was little hope for a sustainable future for Warehouse. However, an excellent rescue package is now in place. Acanthus Architects Douglas Forrest have recently achieved planning consent for their proposals to restore the house as 7 dwellings

and also for the creation of a further 4 dwellings in other existing buildings on the site. Five contemporary new buildings will also be built in woodland surrounding the house. This illustrates that large scale, inappropriately designed/urbanised enabling developments are not always necessary to finance the restoration of the house. Furthermore economically sustainable solutions can be found even for those houses hitherto regarded as 'no hopers'.



THE BIGGEST SINGLE SEARCH OF THE REGISTER IS BY PERSONS LOOKING FOR A PROPERTY TO REDEVELOP FOR RESIDENTIAL USE. SOME ARE INDIVIDUALS LOOKING FOR A FAMILY HOME OTHERS ARE LOOKING TO A MORE COMMERCIAL VENTURE.

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE FOR RESIDENTIAL USE.

There are many good examples of country houses which have been successfully restored as family homes such as Candie House by Falkirk.

Enabling development

As far as a commercial development of the country house at risk to residential use is concerned, this is usually carried out by some form of enabling development, which if appropriately managed, can be an important tool in the successful rescue of a country house. Some country houses can be converted into a reasonable number of dwellings respecting the existing building fabric of the house. A modest number of new build houses within the grounds can bring about an appropriate residential development which assists with the funding of the restoration of the main house.

Whilst there are some good examples of enabling development schemes such as the proposed refurbishment of Wardhouse in Kennethmont, regrettably this is not always the case. There is not the scope within this publication to discuss the many issues associated with enabling development, however, generally speaking, there is a tendency to squeeze too many apartments out of the existing footprint both horizontally and vertically or conversely in some cases a lot of hard work goes in to the restoration of the existing building, which is commendable only to be spoilt when surrounded by a rash of urban villas.

The key point to a successful enabling development is allowing only the minimum number of new build houses necessary to unlock the development potential of the existing building at risk to enable their restoration. The new build element of the development should also be located and designed to have minimum impact upon the architectural and historical interest, character and setting of the historic environment.

Role of the local authority

Once again local authorities have an important role to play here. The local authority must ensure that developers justify the level of development in cost terms and how this will be used to restore a historic building as well as sending out stronger signals to owners not prepared to sell to a one-off restoring purchaser but who are holding off for the big developer and big enabling development scheme in the hope of being able to sell off their land at a higher premium. Particularly so if an enabling development scheme would be contrary to local plan policy.

Wardhouse, Kennethmont ▼



THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS THE COUNTRY HOUSE

AS WITH ANY BUILDING AT RISK, ASSESSING THE COST OF THE REDEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTRY HOUSE CAN BE DIFFICULT.

For example Craigmornie Castle in Cove had been in a serious state of dilapidation for many years. Its restoring owner successfully restored it for around £600K (approx. £600 per sq.ft.) Previous feasibility studies had estimated the cost of refurbishment at £1.5m i.e. 3x the actual cost which may have appeared intimidating to previous prospective purchasers. It is not that figures are deliberately exaggerated, but clearly there are considerable differences in the perceptions and indeed realities of restoration costs.

A crucial question in the financial equation is the sum paid for the house. Where a house is in a very poor state the purchase price should reflect this and the need for considerable repair. If an owner holds out for an unrealistic purchase price this then may push the repair price up to an unviable amount.

Likewise, aspiration has an important role to play. If you acquire a ruin and want to be living in the refurbished property in 6 months then be prepared to hand out lots of money! If you are prepared to perhaps self manage the refurbishment, as can be seen in the works to Rannoch Lodge, Kinloch Rannoch, and can tackle the project over a longer period of time the financial outlay may not be as great.

Sources of financial help

Whilst the Trust is not a grant aiding body, it does produce a helpful guide 'Sources of Financial Help for Scotland's Historic Buildings' which can be downloaded from the website.



Rannoch Lodge, before refurbishment ▲



Rannoch Lodge, during refurbishment ▼



CASE STUDY - Rannoch Lodge, Kinloch Rannoch

Rannoch Lodge was built in the mid 18th century and altered to a shooting lodge for Sir Robert Menzies between 1798 and 1803. The lodge served as a school during the war and was gutted by fire in 1985. At that time, an application for its demolition was sought. However, it was subsequently purchased at auction by its present owners who have been involved in its restoration for the last 10 years. The owners, who presently reside down south but who plan to move to the property on its completion in the next 2 years, have project

managed themselves with the help of a qualified surveyor and a full time craftsman on the job. Specialist trades such as slaters have been brought in when required. The building was a gutted shell when acquired following the fire but has been painstakingly restored as a part dwelling and part guest house, which is part of a number of other holiday cottages on the estate. The owners can't comment at present on how much they have spent in the restoration of the lodge but do say that it is worth it!



IT IS WORTH RE-STATING THAT THE **MAJORITY** OF OUR COUNTRY HOUSES ARE ACTUALLY IN GOOD CONDITION. THE HISTORIC HOUSES ASSOCIATION (HHA), AN ASSOCIATION THROUGHOUT THE UK WHICH REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF BRITAIN'S **HISTORIC HOUSES AND CASTLES** HAS AROUND 250 MEMBERS IN SCOTLAND.

SCOTLAND'S COUNTRY HOUSES PROVIDE US WITH A RICH CULTURAL AND **ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE** GIVING US AN INSIGHT INTO THE LIFESTYLES OF THEIR OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS. IT IS VITAL THAT WE DO NOT LOSE THOSE AT RISK **WITHOUT A FIGHT**.

WITH THIS IN MIND THE TRUST WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE FOLLOWING **THREE MAIN ISSUES** TACKLED:

A WAY FORWARD?

1 Asset management

AUDIT.

A comprehensive audit of country houses at risk on a local authority basis to national standards would be a valuable exercise in compiling a strategic approach to their rescue.

2 Education

BETTER AND MORE TIMELY USE OF STATUTORY POWERS.

Enforcement should not be used as a last resort but more frequently and swiftly to prevent expensive and irreversible damage.

ENCOURAGE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTIES.

In some cases the idea of a basic maintenance regime has perhaps come too late. However for those remaining country houses many would benefit from a coordinated maintenance and repair regime.

Likewise tax incentives and some expert professional guidance could be useful in promoting maintenance and repair even as an option for buying some time.

APPRECIATION.

Work with owners and professionals alike to appreciate the value and significance of the asset.

3 Finance

REDUCTION OF VAT.

SCT supports the Joint Committee of the National Amenities Societies (1999) call for a reduction of VAT to 5% for the repair of listed buildings. (Incidentally this report

highlighted that the VAT burden fell most heavily on the owners of small privately owned historic houses)

ASSESSMENT OF COUNCIL TAX ON VACANT COUNTRY HOUSES.

It would appear that the Assessor can raise properties (however ruinous) on to the council tax listing if the last use however long ago was residential. The amount of council tax levied is based on a scale taking no account of the condition of a property or its listing. If owners of country houses at risk proved that they were at the very least carrying out a basic maintenance of the house and actively seeking a resolution to the house perhaps the council tax burden could be lifted in these cases only.

ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.

All stakeholders in the built heritage must continue to showcase the benefits in terms of good quality housing and tourism which the restored country house can bring to encourage more monies to be redirected in to the regeneration of such properties.



THE COUNTRY HOUSE

COUNTRY HOUSES AT RISK

AT RISK



Eastend House, Thankerton



Mavisbank House, Polton



Woodbank House, Balloch



Gartur House, Stirling



Balthayock House, Kinfauns, (now demolished)



Luscar House, Gowkhal, (now demolished)



Glasshaugh House, Portsoy



The Elms, Arbroath



Total nos. of Buildings at Risk

1065

Total nos. of A-listed	113	10.6%
Total nos. of B-listed	556	52%
Total nos. of C (S) listed	199	18.6%
Total unlisted	193*	18.1%
Total C (non stat)		

Total nos. of country houses at risk

% of country houses at risk to overall total no. of buildings at risk = 8.5%

Total nos. of A-listed	19	20.6%
Total nos. of B-listed	51	56%
Total nos. of C (S) listed	10	11%
Total unlisted	11	12%
Total C (non stat)		

Classification of Condition

Ruinous	38	
Very poor	3	
Poor		32
Fair		15
Good		3

Category of Risk

Critical		7
High		52
Moderate	1	
Low		30
Minimal		1

Location

Remote		1
Rural		78
Semi-rural		4
Urban		8

Current Availability

For Sale	11	
Under offer		2
Owner anti-selling	13	
Not available		28
Unknown	37	

Type of Ownership

Private		44
Charity/Trust		7
Local Authority		4
Company	28	
Crown		1
Unknown	7	

Saved/Demolished

Total no. of buildings saved since 1990	828
Total no. of at risk country houses saved	25
Total no. of buildings saved since 1990	828
Total no. of at risk country houses demolished	9
Total no. of houses where restoration is currently in progress	11

Note: These figures only relate to buildings on the Register. Many more country houses have found new uses and their details are not entered on the database. Likewise we are often not aware of the demolition of a country house before it can be added to the Register.



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Working to Improve and Promote Scotland's Built Environment

www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk