

Report on the work of ICOMOS
UK for the 9th General Assembly of ICOMOS
Lausanne, October 1990

1. Past achievements and future prospects

Specialist sub-committees

ICOMOS UK was reformed in 1984, and since then, has set up a number of specialist sub-committees.

The Historic Gardens and Landscapes Committee — under the Chairmanship of Lord Rosse, this Committee compiled the first list of historic gardens in the UK. Although this has been superseded by a Register of Historic Gardens and Landscapes prepared by English Heritage and the Scottish Development Department, it represented an important landmark in the recognition and protection of historic gardens, and is still a useful document. The Committee more recently has concentrated on three main topics; the importance of education in historic garden and landscape conservation, the setting and codification of professional standards, and the consideration of further proposals for World Heritage sites.

Education — this report appears under Item 3 «Experience and Education».

Guide to Garden Conservation — Edward Fawcett of the Architectural Association and Peter Goodchild of the York Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens (University of York), are co-operating to produce a handbook on the professional conduct of garden and landscape conservation. The intention is to produce a standard book on the subject, which can be of use internationally.

World Heritage Sites — Blenheim (Oxfordshire) and Studley Royal with Fountains Abbey (North Yorkshire) have already been inscribed as World Heritage sites in the UK. The UK Gardens Committee has been asked by the ICOMOS International Gardens Committee to put forward a list of 16 sites for consideration at the meeting in November 1989. This list has now been completed.

Register of Historic Gardens — the UK Committee has also been concerned that there is no register of historic gardens in Wales. As a result of its encouragement, led by Mr Paul Walshe, CADW (Welsh

Historic Monuments) the government authority responsible for Wales, will shortly be starting a programme of research that will produce a register similar to those already existing in Scotland and England.

The UK Committee was responsible for the very successful International Conference at Oxford in 1987, with 140 delegates from 19 countries. The influence of the English Landscape Park overseas was discussed and a number of site visits were organised to outstanding English landscape parks.

Cultural Tourism Committee — following the ICOMOS Charter on Cultural Tourism of 1976, there has been worldwide concern over the impact of tourism on the heritage. At its worst, this has resulted in uncontrolled exploitation of some of the world's most outstanding monuments and natural sites, without adequate consideration of the damage that this was inflicting, and in many cases, without any compensation for the often irreversible damage tourists were causing. The tourist authorities promoting cultural tourism and the trade have profited by it, leaving the heritage and those who care for it, without adequate compensation or protection.

In order to reach some conclusions about how such damage could be contained and controlled, we have set up various surveys. The Building Research Establishment have inserted studs in specially selected stones in various cathedrals to monitor the rate of damage. A few National Trust and English Heritage properties, including the Tower of London, are being similarly monitored.

Jane Fawcett is carrying out, with a Research Grant from the Royal Institute of British Architects, a survey of damage to floors, including ledger stones and tiles, and monuments, in cathedrals and greater churches. The behaviour of mats, recently installed to protect, the medieval tiled floor in the Chapter House at Westminster Abbey, is also being scientifically monitored by English Heritage. English Heritage is also doing tests on types of surface treatment suitable for heavily eroded natural sites, including Stonehenge.

At a Seminar organised by ICOMOS UK in May 1989, papers on damage to cathedrals, castles, and open sites were given, and are available from this office.

At our European Conference in Canterbury in March 1990, we have been considering with representatives from the European Tourist authorities and the tourist trade, ways of co-operating in order to

protect the most heavily overused sites, to promote those less well known, and to relate the maintenance and repairs necessary if the heritage is to survive, to the profits made by those marketing it.

Research & Recording Committee — for some years architectural historians and archaeologists had been increasingly worried by the incomplete documentation available for even some of the most important historic buildings. Without a full understanding of the building history, it is impossible to reach a satisfactory decision over the conduct of alterations and repairs. Architects faced with a strictly limited time in which to carry out an architectural contract, are unable to conduct or commission the necessary research, before repairs which may destroy much of the character of the buildings, are begun. Furthermore, until recently, very few architects provided an adequate record of the state of the building before repair, or the details of work carried out. This was partly owing to lack of funds available for the necessary research and partly to lack of suitable expertise to carry it out. ICOMOS UK therefore set up, in 1987, a committee to investigate ways in which such research might be grant aided, before the architectural contract started, methods for carrying out and storing the resultant archives, and to consider training professionals to provide the necessary expertise.

This has resulted in the preparation of a Code of Practice in Recording Before Repairs, published in 1990 and widely circulated both to professionals concerned with historic building conservation, to authorities responsible for their control, and to owners and builders. A draft Charter prepared by the Committee will be discussed at the General Assembly.

Wood Committee — The treatment of historic timber structures is a subject of great concern to us all. There are many different philosophies and techniques employed by professional architects and conservationists, some sensitive, some destructive. Our Committee has been concerned both with the technical problems of treating and protecting ancient timber buildings, and also with the broader issues of how repairs should be carried out, and the degree of archaeological and historic research necessary to a true understanding of timber buildings and the complex elements which go to make up the whole structure. The Seminars we arranged at West Dean College have considered a number of these issues in an international context, with contributions from experts from Norway (Hakon Christie), Finland (Panu Kaila), France (Jean-Louis Taupin), and East Germany (Dr Martin Muschter and Prof. Helmut Stelzer). A draft Charter for the

Conservation of Wooden Buildings has been prepared, and was considered by the Wood Committee at the General Assembly in Washington in 1987. Further Seminars, and an International Conference are under discussion.

Vernacular Buildings — the pressure exerted by ICOMOS UK with the Joint Committee of National Amenity Societies upon the government resulted in an increase of 13½ % in the grants provided for the 12 National Parks in England and Wales for 1987/1988, and a further increase for 1988/1989. Through the Countryside Commission, National Parks were encouraged to spend this extra money on the protection of historic buildings and sites under their care. As a result, most National Parks have made new appointments of Conservation Officers to their staff, and the grants available for the repair of historic buildings have risen, in some cases by as much as 100%.

Since then, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food have announced the introduction of Environmentally Sensitive Areas, to encourage a return to traditional farming methods in upland areas, many in National Parks. They have abandoned grant aid for the reclamation of marginal land, often carried out at the expense of archaeological sites, many of them unrecorded.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food also introduced, in 1989, grants for the repair of existing farm buildings, often made derelict by the building of new grant-aided farm buildings. The protection of historic landscapes, buildings, sites, and in particular, barns within National Parks, has thus been transformed.

World Heritage sites

Since the UK Government ratified the World Heritage Convention in May 1984, we have been busy advising them on suitable sites for nomination. There are now 14 UK sites inscribed, with a number more on the tentative list, including several historic gardens, mentioned elsewhere. Several more are deferred for further information or awaiting the World Heritage Committee's decision. Since their inscription, however, there have been serious threats to some of the inscribed sites, including St Kilda, Avebury, Durham and Ironbridge. At Avebury, we have had to prepare evidence for three separate Public Enquiries, supported by Professor Leon Pressouyre and Professor Roberto di Stefano. We are now setting up a specialist committee to advise the Department of the Environment on the final selection of sites for nomination. We are also putting pressure on them to introduce special legislation to protect World Heritage sites, and to

notify us of threats involving their character. We are also very concerned that many of the areas covered by the nominations are too narrow, and do not provide a buffer zone to protect both the character of the site itself and the surroundings which form an intrinsic part of its setting.

ICOMOS International Committees

Two ICOMOS International Committees are now based in the UK. The Earth Structures Committee, co-Chaired by John Warren with Dr Cevat Erder of ICOMOS Turkey, is about to initiate a survey of major earth structures in the world; their report is attached. The Economics of Conservation Committee, chaired by Professor Nathaniel Lichfield, was launched by Professor di Stefano; their report is also attached. We have sent experts to overseas meetings of International Committees; John Warren and Richard Hughes to Earth Structures, Daryl Fowler and David Warren to Historic Towns, Edward Fawcett and Anthony Mitchell to Historic Gardens, Dr Henry Cleere to Archaeological Heritage Management, Ross Dallas to Photogrammetry, Peter Smith to Vernacular Architecture, Freddie Charles to Wood, Sir Bernad Feilden and Colin McWilliam to Training meetings, and Jane Fawcett and Lester Borley to Cultural Tourism.

UK Experts working overseas

Despite the withdrawal of the UK from UNESCO, which has seriously prejudiced the number of contracts given to UK experts, many of our members have carried out contracts for conservation work overseas.

Conference & Seminars

Conferences and Seminars on the following subjects have been organised: Farm Buildings and Rural Dereliction in 1984 at the Royal Society of Arts, London; Fire and Historic Buildings in 1985 at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, York; The English Landscape Park and its Influence Overseas at Oxford University in September, 1987; Training and the Interpretation of Historic Buildings at Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh in June 1988, and Heritage and Tourism Conference at the University of Kent in Canterbury, March 1990.

At West Dean College in Sussex we have held Seminars in the Conservation of Historic Timber Structures in 1986, 1987 (an international meeting) in 1988, and 1990 and probably an international conference in 1991. We held a Seminar at the headquarters of English

Heritage in May 1989 on Tourist Wear and Tear, which was a precursor for the Canterbury Conference next year. In 1985 we arranged a study trip to Norway to visit Stave churches and rural timber structures.

International Monuments Day

To celebrate International Monuments Day each year, we have held our Annual General Meeting in buildings which are being, or have recently been restored; in 1985 at Marble Hill House, Twickenham, 1986 at the Queen's House and Ranger's House, Greenwich, 1987 visiting some of the historic houses of St James's Square and the Royal Fine Art Commission, London, 1988 at St Paul's Cathedral and the Goldsmiths' Hall, and in 1989 at St George's Chapel and the Castle, Windsor.

Finance

For the past 4 years ICOMOS UK has received a small grant from the government, up to half our expenses, but it is possible that this will cease in 1990. We are trying to raise enough funds to continue with our present programme of work. We have 3 part-time staff and a tiny office, but costs continue to rise and our commitments are now considerable.

Lectures and Newsletters

We have arranged several series of lectures on varied subjects relating to conservation, and we issue a Newsletter to our members twice a year, detailing our activities and future plans.

North West Europe Group

We hosted, in 1987, the meeting of the North West Europe Group of ICOMOS, which discussed matters of mutual interest, and visited the historic area of Spitalfields in London, where Huguenot refugees continued their silk-weaving trade, and much restoration work has recently been undertaken. This group has also held meetings in Amsterdam in 1985, in Alden Biesen (Belgium) in 1986 and in Munich in 1988.

2. The Charter of Venice

The wording of Article 7 worries us, giving, as it does, an excuse for destroying the heritage for a government's political expediency.

Article 7 reads:

A monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs. The moving of all or part of a monument cannot be allowed except where the safeguarding of that monument demands it or where it is justified by national or international interests of paramount importance.

of experience and education

Exchange of students — We have with US ICOMOS, who have organised funding, arranged the exchange of architect, archaeologist and art historian students between the UK and the USA. For the past four years, this has proved a most valuable and formative exercise. The American students spend three months working here, with national conservation organisations, producing measured drawings, surveying, researching and recording structures or areas. The British students undertake survey work in the United States for the Historic American Buildings Survey, the Historic American Engineering Record and the National Parks Commission. Several other European countries are involved with this scheme.

For the past two years, we have been involved with the Indian National Trust for Art and the Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in selecting British post-graduate students to study at Indian universities. These scholarships are funded by the Charles Wallace Trust, and last up to two years. The subjects of study cover a wide range, and our first students have just returned after a worthwhile year in India.

Historic gardens — until recently, there has been an almost total absence of a course qualifying people to undertake professional conservation and restoration of historic landscapes and gardens. In October 1986 Edward Fawcett at the Architectural Association in London initiated a Diploma Course in the Conservation of Historic Landscape Parks and Gardens, intended for mid-career professionals. This day-release course has accepted some 15/20 students a year. Two intakes have now completed their courses and received their Diplomas.

In York, the Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens (University of York) runs a full time post-graduate course with a Garden Conservation option linked to the post-graduate course given by the Institute for Advanced Architectural Studies in York University. The successful students are awarded a Master's Degree in Garden Conservation. The York Centre also promotes a series of short courses in Garden History and Conservation.

The Edward James Foundation at West Dean College near Chichester also runs an annual residential course on the Conservation of Historic Landscape Parks and Gardens for a week in July. It has been attended by students from Australia, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Holland, Sweden and the USA.

All these courses have been initiated by members of the ICOMOS UK Gardens Committee.

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Summary

1. Past Achievements and Future Prospects

Conferences & Seminars: The ICOMOS UK Executive was reformed in 1984, and since then we have held Conferences and Seminars on Farm Buildings and Rural Dereliction in 1984, Fire and Historic Buildings in 1985, The English Landscape Park and its Influence Overseas in 1987, the Interpretation of Historic Buildings in June 1988, and are planning the Heritage & Tourism Conference in Canterbury in March 1990.

World Heritage Sites: The protection of World Heritage sites is of great concern to us. We have 12 UK Cultural sites. The establishment of buffer zones surrounding the site, to protect the visual impact both of and from the site needs consideration, as does special planning legislation to protect them, over and above any existing national regulations.

Specialist sub-committees: Cultural Tourism hold the European Conference on Heritage and Tourism in March 1990, and organised a Seminar on Tourist Wear and Tear in May 1989. The Charter for Cultural Tourism will be reconsidered at Canterbury. The historic Gardens Committee is working on a handbook for the Conservation of Historic Gardens, and in getting the historic gardens of Wales listed, on the lines of the English and Scottish lists. It organised the international conference in Oxford in 1987. The Research & Recording Committee published early in 1990 the Code of Practice for Recording Before Repairs and has submitted a Draft Charter on this subject to this Assembly. The Wood Committee has also been considering a draft Charter, and is planning its international conference in 1991, and has held annual seminars at West Dean.

Student Exchanges: For the past 4 years we have arranged the exchange of students with the USA, funded by US ICOMOS. For 2 years we have been involved with the Indian National Trust in selecting British students to study in India.

2. The Charter of Venice

The wording of Article 7 worries us, giving, as it does, an escape clause for governments who wish to ignore the Charter:

Article 7 reads: «A monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs. The moving of all or part of a monument cannot be allowed except where the safeguarding of that monument demands it or where it is justified by national or international interests of paramount importance.»

Rapport sur le travail d'ICOMOS UK

Résumé

1. Réalisations passées et perspectives futures

Conférences et séminaires: L'organe exécutif d'ICOMOS UK a été réformé en 1984 et nous avons, depuis, tenu des Conférences et des Colloques sur les fermes et l'état d'abandon des propriétés rurales, en 1984, l'incendie et les bâtiments historiques, en 1985, le parc paysager anglais et son influence à l'étranger, en 1987 et l'interprétation des bâtiments historiques en juin 1988. Nous organiserons à Canterbury, en mars 1990, la Conférence patrimoine et tourisme.

Patrimoine mondial: La protection des sites qui font partie du patrimoine mondial est une de nos préoccupations majeures. Nous avons 12 sites culturels au Royaume-Uni. L'établissement de zones-tampons autour du site, pour en protéger l'impact visuel, tant de l'extérieur que depuis le site, doit être pris en considération de même que l'adoption, indépendamment de toutes réglementations nationales existantes, d'une législation spéciale en matière d'urbanisme pour les protéger.

Sous-comités spécialisés: Le tourisme culturel a organisé la Conférence européenne sur le patrimoine et le tourisme, en mars 1990, et a réuni en mai 1989 un Colloque sur la dégradation entraînée par le tourisme. La Charte du tourisme culturel sera remise à l'étude à Canterbury. Le Comité des jardins historiques s'attache actuellement à la rédaction d'un manuel pour la conservation des jardins historiques, et à la classification des jardins historiques du Pays de Galles, selon les mêmes principes que pour les jardins d'Angleterre et d'Ecosse. Il a organisé la Conférence internationale d'Oxford en 1987. Le Comité de recherche et d'enregistrement a publié au début de 1990 le Code de pratique concernant l'enregistrement de l'état des lieux avant les réparations, et a soumis un projet de Charte sur la question à cette assemblée. Le Comité du Bois envisage également un projet de Charte et organise sa conférence internationale qui se tiendra en 1991; il a tenu des colloques annuels à West Dean.

Echanges d'étudiants: Nous organisons depuis quatre ans des échanges d'étudiants avec les Etats-Unis, financés par US ICOMOS. Depuis deux ans, nous sommes également en rapport avec le Trust national

d'Inde en vue de la sélection d'étudiants britanniques destinés à étudier dans ce pays.

2. La Charte de Venise

L'énoncé de l'article 7 nous inquiète car il fournit une échappatoire aux gouvernements qui souhaitent ignorer la Charte:

Article 7: «Tout monument est inséparable de l'histoire dont il est le témoin et du cadre dans lequel il se situe. Le déplacement de tout ou partie d'un monument n'est donc autorisé que s'il y va de sa sauvegarde ou si des intérêts nationaux ou internationaux de la plus haute importance justifient ce déplacement.»

Resumen

1. Logros conseguidos y proyectos futuros

Conferencias y seminarios: El ejecutivo de ICOMOS en el Reino Unido fue reformado en 1984 y desde entonces hemos organizado conferencias y seminarios sobre casas y lugares rurales en abandono realizado en 1984, sobre incendios y edificios históricos en 1985, sobre el parque de paisajes ingleses y su influencia en el exterior en 1987, sobre la interpretación de los edificios históricos en junio de 1988 y actualmente se está preparando una conferencia sobre patrimonio y turismo a celebrar en Canterbury en marzo de 1990.

Lugares de patrimonio mundial: A todos nos preocupa la protección de los lugares de patrimonio mundial. En el Reino Unido tenemos 12 lugares culturales. La creación de zonas de tampón alrededor del lugar para proteger el impacto visual tanto desde fuera como desde dentro es de considerar, así que la introducción de una legislación especial, además de toda reglamentación nacional existente, para su protección.

Subcomités especiales: El Turismo Cultural celebró la Conferencia Europea sobre Patrimonio y Turismo a en marzo de 1990 y organizó un Seminario sobre el Desgaste Turístico en mayo de 1989. La Carta sobre el Turismo Cultural será reconsiderada en Canterbury. El Comité de Jardines Históricos está elaborando una guía para la conservación de los jardines históricos, así que una lista de los jardines históricos de Gales según los mismos principios que las listas de Inglaterra y Escocia. Dicho Comité fue el organizador de la conferencia internacional celebrada en Oxford en 1987. El Comité de Estudio y Archivo publicó al principio de 1990 el Código sobre la práctica de archivo antes de las alteraciones y ha sometido a dicha asamblea un borrador de Carta sobre este tema. El Comité de Bosques ha considerado al mismo tiempo la presentación de otro borrador y está planificando una conferencia internacional para 1991, habiendo ya celebrado seminarios anuales en West Dean.

Intercambio de estudiantes: Durante los pasados cuatro años y a través de la fundación ICOMOS en los Estados Unidos hemos organizado intercambios de estudiantes en USA. Durante dos años hemos traba-

jado conjuntamente con el Indian National Trust (Fundación Nacional de la India) seleccionando estudiantes británicos para estudiar en India.

2. La Carta de Venecia

La especificación del Artículo 7 de dicha Carta nos preocupa, puesto que deja una cláusula de escape para los gobiernos que quieren ignorar dicha Carta:

El Artículo 7 dice: «Un monumento es inseparable de los lugares históricos a donde pertenece y del entorno donde está. El traslado de todo o parte del mismo no debe ser permitido, excepto cuando la seguridad de dicho monumento lo requiera o cuando esté justificado por un interés nacional o internacional de una importancia extrema».