39 This handsome example of an oval plaque commemorates Sir Henry Thompson, a former resident of Framlingham, Suffolk.

40 There are a myriad of options in terms of plaque design and material. This fine plaque, erected by the Warrington Society to commemorate the founding of the Warrington Academy, Cheshire, dates from 1902 and is made of Wedgwood Jasperware (stoneware).

5 DESIGN, MATERIAL AND POSITIONING

SECTION CONTENTS

Plaques will always have a significant impact on the historic environment, especially where a number are put up, as part of a scheme. Even those intended as temporary additions change the appearance (and often the character) of buildings. It is essential that this aspect of the process is approached with sensitivity, and that high standards of aesthetics are aimed for. Good design is always attainable, with thought and time, and helps ensure that a plaque is desirable to the property owner(s) concerned and an adornment to the building and the wider area.

The form a plaque should take will be one of the key considerations at the planning stage of the plaque process – whether this is managed on a one-off basis, or as part of a larger scheme (see p. 15 and p. 17). Selecting a general design and format at an early stage will, for instance, help to give a scheme a sense of distinctiveness and unity, and will help to ensure that the appropriate levels of funding are identified.

It is vital that adequate time is allowed for this issue to be fully explored. Of the various stages involved in a plaque initiative, the positioning and creation of the plaque itself – in concept, design and actuality – are among the most important, as they will be the means by which the general public experience the work that has been carried out. Where that work was unsympathetic or inappropriate, it can prove surprisingly detrimental, while even well designed plaques can – if their condition is not adequately monitored and maintained – degenerate over time, negatively affecting the appearance of a building and even a wider area. Furthermore, it is worth remembering that a group of plaques – no matter how valid they are individually – can have the unfortunate result of 'visual clutter' (see boxed text opposite). This should be considered and, wherever possible, avoided – through the use of selection criteria and the careful weighing up of plaque proposals.

Plaques can take a myriad of forms and colours, and may be made of a wide variety of different materials. For the purposes of this document, it is assumed that they are fixed to a structure, usually the building with which the subject was connected or that which occupies its site. Discursive boards, which are often free-standing, are understood as being interpretative signs rather than conventional plaques, and may well be approached in a slightly different way. Likewise with plaques set into the ground or pavement; these do not impact on buildings, but have their own issues – in particular, the problem of being kept clean and legible.

With the design of a plaque as a whole, it is a good idea to review practices on a regular basis and, if appropriate, to make changes. Although certain schemes may become closely identified with particular plaque designs – and this has a number of advantages – the chief obligation is to the needs of the historic environment. If something is not working, it is best to acknowledge that, adapt and move forward, even if that means taking time to create something new or reverting to a design which had been used and abandoned at a point in the past. Equally, if a design is found to work well, it is advisable to resist making changes just for the sake of it.

Where a successful plaque design is created – and where it has been tried and tested – it is worth considering whether or not it should be afforded copyright protection. This will not usually be possible for plaques based on the roundels devised and used under the London-wide scheme (see below). The fact that these have been so widely imitated reflects

the fact that no protection was afforded to the various incarnations of the design at the time of their creation. However, for plaques of a more unique or unusual design – which might have capacity for duplication – copyright protection can be a notable advantage. To find out more about this, legal advice should be sought, while general information is provided by groups such as the UK Copyright Service (see p. 158).

41 The blue roundel has been used widely throughout the UK; for example, by the Regency Society, which erected this plaque to the architect Thomas Cubitt (1788-1855) at 13 Lewes Crescent, Brighton.

USE OF THE BLUE ROUNDEL

The modern form of the blue roundel was created by the LCC at around the time of the Second World War, and has been used ever since under the London-wide scheme. However, it was only settled upon after many years of experience, development and experimentation. Although the first plaques put up by the (Royal) Society of Arts in 1867 were both blue in colour (see pp. 9-10), the design was initially not made standard. Instead, plaques erected in London between the 1860s and the 1930s varied enormously in material and format; most were made of encaustic ware or glazed ceramic, but others were of stone, bronze and lead and, in shape, were round, square, rectangular or took the form of medallions. In colour, blue was quickly replaced by brown, and after 1901 ceramic plaques could be either blue, brown, green, white or even grey. It was only in the 1920s that blue was adopted as the standard colour, though it (and the round shape) were not used consistently until the 1940s.

Notably, blue was chosen as it was found to stand out best against brickwork and stucco, which were (and remain) the most prominent features of London's architecture. In scale, the capital's round plaques generally have a finished diameter of 19½ inches (495 mm), a size which has always been considered appropriate to the city's generally expansive streets, enabling plaques to be erected, where necessary, at first- or second-floor level and yet remain legible from the pavement.

PLAQUE PROLIFERATION

In places that are rich in historical association, it is important to consider how to avoid a proliferation of plaques, which may have a detrimental effect on the architectural integrity and character of a particular street or area. When in 1949 the LCC sought to erect a plaque to the founder of *The Lancet*, Thomas Wakley (1795-1862), at 35 Bedford Square, Bloomsbury, it received objections from both the freeholder, the Bedford Estate, and the leaseholder, the Architectural Association. The Secretary of the latter argued that 'the erection of a plaque upon one building would destroy the Square's unity, and that, as a number of eminent persons have lived in various parts of the Square, it would appear invidious to single out No. 35 for commemoration'. Consent later proved forthcoming and the plaque to Wakley was put up in 1962 (see Fig. 97), but in 1984 the GLC revisited the issue of 'overloading' Bedford Square with plaques. In order to give some indication of the likely demand for plaques in the future, the Council carried out historical research into former residents of the square as a whole. A specific policy was agreed that permitted further plaques in the square on the grounds that only the most deserving suggestions would be considered and then only in cases where there was no alternative address in Greater London. Today, Bedford Square includes eight 'official' plaques, only one of which (that commemorating the mechanical engineer Sir Harry Ricardo) post-dates the mid-1980s.

Thus, the blue plaque as we know it today is very much a product of London; designed for the city, with the city's buildings in mind, and chosen after a period of experimentation. Although it has since been widely imitated, and has become the sign of a particular standard (reflecting the procedures of the London-wide scheme itself, and the status of its administrators), it should not be seen as appropriate for all buildings. There can be no doubt that blue plaques would appear inharmonious if affixed to the rich stonework of Bath, for instance, and it is notable that a scheme of beautiful bronze plaques was launched in the city in 1898 (Fig. 43); these add and accentuate, where blue roundels would have interrupted and taken away.

Instead, different options should always be explored. Plaques can be especially effective when they highlight and even help to define the distinctiveness of a particular area, and their form should reflect the needs and character of the relevant environment. All too often the use of blue roundels causes confusion; because of the link with the London-wide scheme, it is often assumed that they are the work of English Heritage, particularly where the term 'blue plaques scheme' is used. This often means that proper credit is not given to those responsible for a plaque, and that a distinct identity for a scheme is not created. It is important to be clear at the outset whether the advantages associated with use of the blue roundel outweigh such factors.

Plaque designs can either be produced on computer or by hand (Fig. 42 and Fig. 68). They are likely to be prepared by an artist, designer or graphics expert, and should be to scale. Once agreed, at least one full-scale copy of the design will be sent to the manufacturers, to be used as a template in the making of the plaque. Where ceramic plaques are concerned, it is important to remember that shrinkage will usually occur during the manufacturing process. The designer will therefore need to allow for this change, using a slightly larger template than will be represented by the finished plaque.

The selection of an appropriate manufacturer will depend on factors including the form of plaque selected and the area in which a scheme is based. Often, it will be desirable to employ local craftspeople, such as stonemasons, potters and artists; such individuals may be contacted through organisations such as the Art Workers Guild and the Crafts Council, while art colleges and departments may be able to make further suggestions. For bronze plaques, it will be worth contacting foundries and fine art establishments, while there are various options for metal plaques, the manufacturers of which may also produce street and other signs.

Both with manufacture and installation, tests should be carried out to ensure that the final result is satisfactory to all parties, including the property owner(s) and the local planning authority (see p. 78).

CHOOSING A DESIGNER AND MANUFACTURER

It is important to take special care in selecting the respective people and/or companies which will be responsible for a plaque's design, manufacture and installation, a subject which is further discussed – with specific regard to installation – on pages 109-110. Individuals and companies may well have to tender, and – once chosen – will be given a formal brief or specification of works, detailing the methods and parameters of the job and helping to ensure quality (see p. 111-112). English Heritage regional offices and local planning authorities may be able to provide further advice, as will chartered building surveyors, architects and EH's Blue Plaques Team.

42 Plaque designs can be produced on computer or by hand. English Heritage uses the former method, as shown in this design for the plaque to Henry Hall, erected in 2003 at 38 Harman Drive, Cricklewood, London.

SELECTING AN APPROPRIATE DESIGN, MATERIAL AND COLOUR FOR A PLAQUE

It is often the case that the form of a plaque is decided without due consideration of the environment in which it is to be placed. As has been noted elsewhere (see p. 36), plaques form half of a partnership, the other half being represented by the structure to which they are affixed. That this structure has been singled out for commemoration implies that it is significant, even if it is unlisted or has no architectural pretension. Its character should therefore be respected and its appearance closely considered in deciding the form, material, position and method of fixing that is appropriate for the plaque.

For a scheme, consistency of approach is likely to be important, and a plaque's form may be referred to in the selection criteria (see p. 38); for instance, those applied by Aberdeen City Council stipulate that a plaque 'will conform to the normal dimensions of other commemorative plaques within Aberdeen City'. However, in cases where the installation of a plaque forms part of a limited initiative, it will be possible to create a unique or more specific design (Fig. 52).

For plaque schemes, it is usually not possible or desirable to vary design and material for each individual case (largely because consistency is an objective, and/or because funds may be limited). Instead, these factors should be decided at a scheme's outset, following an investigation and assessment of the buildings of the geographical area in question. Factors to be borne in mind include:

- The general date and style of the buildings.
- The material of which they are built.
- Their scale (storey height, massing, and distance from the pavement or public right of way).

43 The beautiful bronze plaques of Bath, first put up in 1898 and designed by Samuel Sebastian Reay (d.1933), complement the city's rich stonework. This plaque commemorates Major André (1750-80) and marks 22 The Circus, a grade I listed building of 1755-67.

It is also worth considering other features which may contribute to the character of the historic environment, including street lamps, street signs, gates and railings.

Having assessed such factors, thought can be given to plaque material, shape, colour and method of fixing. This process is likely to involve consultation with experts and interested parties (in particular, the local planning authority, the local civic society and English Heritage), and the views of a wider group of the public may also be sought. As plaques will be experienced and (hopefully) enjoyed by a large number of people, it is important that different opinions are considered. It is likely to be at this point that an overall approach is agreed:

- Will the plaque aim to stand out and be a distinctive part of the streetscape, or is a more subtle effect desired?

In general, the former approach will be relevant for the busy streetscapes of large towns and cities, and the latter for smaller-scale areas, though exceptions will be made where need dictates. For instance, where a town is characterised by architecture of a particular period and type, it may well be inappropriate to detract from that by the placing of boldly designed plaques.

In considering physical context, the following questions may be posed by those involved with the plaque or plaques, and also by the local planning authority:

- How would a plaque's material, shape, size and colour relate to the materials of the buildings in the area, and other features of the existing streetscape?
- Would the plaque stand out or blend in?
- Would the plaque seriously affect the character of the building (and even the street and area)?
- How would a plaque of this size and material need to be installed?
- Could its installation damage the building in any way?
- How expensive is it to produce, and install, a plaque of this sort?
- Are there environmental factors which might affect the plaque? (e.g. pollution, sea air)
- How long is a plaque of this sort likely to last before its condition starts to deteriorate?
- Are there other plaques in the nearby area and, if so, what form do they take?
- What is the existing level of signage in the area?
- Overall, how many plaques are likely to be installed as part of the initiative?
- How could the design of the plaque be made to be unique or appropriate to the area concerned?

It may be at this point that 'tests' are carried out. One simple (and cheap) means of establishing aesthetic appropriateness would be to mock up plaques of different shape, colour and size in cardboard, and test them against a range of buildings, a procedure which is likely to involve a number of people, ideally including the local conservation officer and/or another representative of the local planning authority. A test could also be carried out indirectly, a dot or image of the plaque being placed on a photograph or drawing (see p. 95). A certain design may immediately stand out as the most successful, though adaptation to suit particular circumstances should always be possible.

44 Certain atmospheric conditions can be detrimental to plaques, especially those made of metal. This is well illustrated by the plaque erected at 132 Kings Road, on Brighton seafront, by Cinema 100, in association with the British Film Institute. It marks the site where, in 1896, films were first shown to the public outside of London.

MATERIAL AND METHODS OF FIXING

It is important to relate plaque material to the aims of the scheme overall and the selection criteria which have been chosen. Where longevity of reputation is required – as with the scheme operated in London by English Heritage – then permanence of plaque material may follow (and vice versa). It would be difficult, for instance, to justify the commemoration of someone still alive – and whose overall reputation and legacy was not yet settled or understood in a historical context – with a plaque made of ceramic or bronze, especially one inset into the face of a wall. There would always be the possibility that the plaque would outlive by many years the memory of the person concerned, and that it would consequently cease to have meaning for people.

On the other hand, it may be that a scheme overtly sets out to commemorate figures whose names have resonance today, but may not do so in the future. Such plaques can be hugely effective, but it is important to recognise their limitations and to avoid the creation of what turn out to be permanent additions to a building. Plaques should ideally be surface-mounted (see opposite), and while this is possible for ceramic, other more straightforward options should be explored, such as plaques made of enamelled steel, aluminium or wood.

All of these tend to have limited life spans, especially in certain atmospheric conditions. In particular, the sometimes harsh environment of the English seaside can have an adverse effect on plaques; this is illustrated by a metal plaque erected on Brighton seafront by Cinema 100, in association with the British Film Institute, to mark cinema's centenary (Fig. 44). Where impermanence is intentional, it is important to build in mechanisms for returning to – and, if appropriate, removing – a plaque at some point in the future (see pp. 125-127). Forgotten plaques, unmaintained, can very quickly cease to serve a purpose and may become eyesores.

There are two methods of installing commemorative plaques: they can be superficially affixed to a façade (**surface-mounted**) (Fig. 45) or they can be **inset** or embedded into the face of a wall (see Fig. 71). Both approaches require a high level of skill, and care should always be taken that an appropriate contractor is engaged (see pp. 109-110).

With regard to the former method, it is generally best, where possible, to fix the plaque into a building's mortar joints. The material and form of the screws – set into plastic plugs in the wall – should be appropriate to the plaque itself and the building on which it is placed. Usually, they will be made of stainless steel or brass; it should be noted that screws made of mild steel have not proved successful and should be avoided, as they tend to rust and cause rusty streaks. Where stainless steel or brass screws are used, it is desirable to use a plastic insulation washer, especially where the plaque is made of a form of metal; direct contact between metals is known to lead to corrosion. In other instances, glue has been used as a fixative, but this can have implications both for the security of the plaque (see below) and the structure of the building, which may be damaged if it is not easy to prise such a plaque away from the façade.

On the whole, however, an advantage of surface-mounting is that the process is easily reversible and that such plaques can be readily removed for cleaning or refurbishment, should this prove necessary. However, care will need to be taken that such plaques are appropriately and securely attached, especially where they are close to a pavement or pathway. Not only may they be hazardous to passers-by if not properly fixed, but surface-mounted plaques are more exposed to damage, vandalism or theft, emphasising the need for regular checks, something which should be considered when budgets are set.

45 The restored plaque to Mark Gertler being fixed to the wall (surface-mounted) at 1 Well Mount Studios, Hampstead, London, in 2007. The plaque forms part of the scheme run by the Heath and Hampstead Society.

© Polly Hancock/Ham & High

Where plaques are inset – an approach often adopted for ceramic and bronze plaques – installation will involve the careful removal of a piece of the building's fabric. Typically, the plaque will then be set flush with the face of the wall using a mortar mix, which may also be used to seal and waterproof the perimeter (see Fig. 71). Although such plaques can be removed, it is generally inadvisable to attempt this unless absolutely necessary; to do so could damage the structure into which they have been set, as well as the plaques themselves.

On account of this degree of permanence – and of the loss of a building's fabric necessitated by the installation of an inset plaque – it is important to give very careful consideration as to the appropriateness of this method of fixing, and – through careful historical research – to ensure

46 Glazed ceramic plaque, inset into the wall face, commemorating the founding of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood at 7 Gower Street, Bloomsbury, London. The plaque was put up in 1998.

that the inscription and the building chosen are correct. The positioning of the plaque (see pp. 91-95) will need to be considered especially carefully, as the structure of the building may rule out certain locations, though this is difficult to assess without seeking the opinion of a trained professional such as a chartered building surveyor or architect.

The kind of fabric issues which might be relevant, and on which these experts can offer advice, may include cavity-wall construction – a method used in building from as early as the mid-nineteenth century and increasingly common during the twentieth century. Such a form of construction would mean that cutting the surface for an inset plaque could potentially damage a building's structural integrity. Obviously, this should be avoided at all costs, and those intending to set a plaque into the face of a building are urged to seek professional advice. It is also advisable to seek such advice in the case of surface-mounted plaques; although these are less intrusive than inset tablets, they could still affect a building's structure if poorly located and fixed.

It should be noted that there may be occasions where neither approach is appropriate. For instance, where a building is constructed of a fragile material (for instance, timber-framing), or where a building's façade is unable to accommodate a plaque of the chosen sort, or of other variations. In such cases, consideration should be given to an alternative address or the plaque should not be erected at all.

The type of material (or materials) chosen for a plaque will depend on a number of factors, the most important of which are outlined above (see pp. 77-78). There are a huge variety of options, including:

- Ceramic
- Steel
- Aluminium
- Bronze
- Brass
- Cast iron
- Lead
- Plastic
- Fibreglass and epoxy resin
- Stone (marble, Hopton Wood stone, etc.)
- Slate
- Wood

As is stated in the Introduction (see p. 9), this document does not aim to give full information on such materials, largely because the experience of English Heritage is so focused upon ceramic, which is used for the manufacture of the vast majority of its plaques (enamelled steel also having been used, on rare occasions). Instead, those interested in knowing more about particular options are encouraged to contact schemes that include plaques of that type and/or relevant manufacturers and technical experts. The information that follows is intended only as a summary and an initial guide.

It is possible to manufacture **ceramic** plaques which can be surface-mounted. For instance, the Marchmont Association and Heritage Foundation plaque to the comic actor Kenneth Williams (1926-88), erected in 2009 in Marchmont Street, London, is of this type, as is the LCC plaque to William Wilberforce (1759-1833) in Broomwood Road, Battersea, which is made up of a series of individual tiles (see Fig. 50). However, it is usual to find that ceramic plaques need to be inset into the face of a wall, as with the

English Heritage scheme in London and the scheme run in Brighton & Hove. As has been discussed, such a method of fixing should only be adopted after investigation and consideration, and it should be ensured that ceramic plaques (which are both heavy and fragile) are securely fixed.

Nevertheless, despite the care with which it should be used, ceramic has undoubted advantages for plaques intended as permanent or semi-permanent additions. In selecting this material for the London-wide scheme, the (Royal) Society of Arts and, later, the LCC applauded its 'imperishability', durability, ease in cleaning, and ability to be 'impervious' (it was noted that it 'does not materially change in colour'). [6] Also, it ensured that inscriptions could be easily read. Some plaques erected by both the Society of Arts and the LCC have lasted, perfectly legible, for over 100 years. Vitreous (non-absorbent) ceramic is almost always used by English Heritage, the plaques it erects having a slightly domed design, allowing rain and dirt to wash off and meaning that they require virtually no maintenance (Fig. 46). Where positioned and installed correctly, ceramic is virtually damage proof, and – where such plaques have been set into the face of a wall – they are generally secure and protected from theft (see boxed text on p. 127). Also, as each ceramic plaque is hand-crafted, the medium provides a particularly attractive aesthetic – slight variations in colour and design adding to a plaque's overall effect – in contrast with that of mechanical production.

However, not only may many find it inappropriate to use ceramic for plaques, they may find it beyond their means. The manufacture of each English Heritage ceramic plaque costs around £1,000 and takes about two months; this amount of time allows for failure in the kiln, which may occur, even for experienced craftspeople. The cost of installation – carried out by skilled contractors – is also high for EH's ceramic plaques, currently varying from about £1,500 to £3,000 depending on the nature of the building and the position in which the plaque is placed. In general, installation at higher floor levels is more costly, reflecting the necessary use of scaffolding or a mechanical boom lift (cherry picker). Another factor to be borne in mind is the comparative lack of flexibility of this plaque material; only certain colours can be effectively used (including green, brown, grey, burgundy, white and blue), and roundels and rectangles tend to be the principal options in terms of shape. The creation of new moulds, enabling a new form of ceramic plaque, can be an expensive process.

47 This elaborate bronze plaque honours Christina Rossetti at 30 Torrington Square, Bloomsbury. Erected by the Bedford Estate in *c.* 1913, it was incorporated into the London-wide scheme by the GLC in 1974.

Likewise, plaques made of **bronze** tend to be expensive and may take a while to produce. Nonetheless, as is exemplified by the bronze plaques erected in Bath from the 1890s (Fig. 43) and the plaques used by the Bedford Estate (Fig. 47), they are undoubtedly attractive and are often discreet; furthermore, they can usually be fixed to the face of a building, though – given the weight of such items – the screws and plugs may need to be stronger than usual, and removal may not be easy. A number of bronze plaques were put up by the LCC in the first two decades of the twentieth century. However, in a review of the advantages and disadvantages of different materials, carried out by the Council's Architect in 1921, it was noted that, 'Plain bronze tablets with raised or incised lettering are not very legible when fixed externally, unless the lettering is enamelled'

6 *Journal of the Society of Arts*, vol. XIV, 11 May 1866, p. 437; Report by the LCC's Architect, 'Memorial Tablets: As to Design generally', 28 January 1921 (presented to Committee 18 February): Local Government Committee Papers (April-June 1921), LMA

48 Slate is a popular and effective material for commemorative plaques. This example, placed at 17 Lewes Crescent, Brighton, commemorates Lord Elwyn-Jones (1909-89) and his wife, Polly Binder (1904-90).

(see Fig. 49). [7] In settings of a smaller scale, it will often be possible to read bronze plaques very easily, though they certainly benefit from regular maintenance; this can help to ensure legibility and avoid staining on the surrounding wall face, a particularly common problem with plaques of this material. An additional problem has been raised by the perceived scrap value of the metal; unless a bronze (or brass) plaque is carefully positioned and fixed, theft may be a real possibility.

Stone is another material which might be considered, and which has proven effective. Slate plaques, with the lettering picked out in coloured paint, can be especially handsome, are generally discreet, can be surface-mounted and are comparatively cheap (Fig. 48). Stone may also be long-lasting, though much will depend on the exact type of material. The LCC erected a series of tablets made of Hopton Wood stone in London in the early twentieth century (Fig. 49), but – barely 10 years after their installation – noted that there 'is a tendency for these to become illegible', and it was advised that 'this type should only be used in particular architectural circumstances'. [8] A similar problem was experienced with lead, although manufacture was found to be less costly (see Fig. 6).

In terms of plaques existing throughout the United Kingdom at the present time, the vast majority are undoubtedly of **metal** (notably, enamelled steel and cast aluminium) (see, for instance, Fig. 13). Such plaques are comparatively cheap and easy to produce, manufacture generally costing under £500 and taking no more than a few weeks. Most forms of the material have enormous flexibility, in that they can be used for plaques of almost any shape, colour and size. Also, they are lightweight and can be fixed to the surface of a building, requiring little intervention with the fabric. However, while ceramic and stone plaques will usually be hand-made, metal plaques are generally mechanically produced, and the resulting aesthetic may not always be appropriate or desirable.

There are numerous examples of metal plaques deteriorating comparatively quickly, although this will depend on the exact type of material and coating used, the type of paint system, and the location in which the plaque is placed (for instance, whether it is exposed to strong weathering or high levels of pollution). A GLC plaque of enamelled steel erected on a railway viaduct in Walthamstow Marshes in 1983 was in poor condition 20 years later (see Fig. 82), while in other cases significant deterioration may occur in a lesser period of time (see Fig. 44). A fading of the coloured background is a particularly common problem (regardless of the hue), while other widespread problems are rust, chipping, water penetration and crazing.

Where metal is selected as the plaque material, it will be important to take time and care in exploring the various options and related costs. For instance, a coating of vitreous enamel, whilst more expensive, is likely to be much more durable than a plaque which is painted; it will therefore be longer lasting, and money will be saved on future maintenance (see pp. 125-127). Where paint is used, the correct choice is of the utmost importance; two part epoxy systems have been found to be especially high quality and hard-wearing. Where such a finish is desired, it is worth noting that painted aluminium tends to out-last painted steel by about a decade (requiring refurbishment in about 30-35 years).

A plaque material of increasing popularity is **plastic** of various forms. In terms of schemes active today, the material is perhaps best exemplified by the plaques erected by the Ulster History Circle (see Fig. 59). These are made of perspex (also known as acrylic or plexiglas), which is coloured, engraved, and then infilled using engravers' paint. They are

7 'Memorial Tablets: As to Design generally', 28 January 1921, LMA

8 Ibid

49 One of a series of LCC plaques crafted in Hopton Wood stone, this tablet dates from 1920 and commemorates the statesman Joseph Chamberlain at his birthplace, 188 Camberwell Grove, Southwark, London. It was hoped that the inlaid lead lettering would enhance the plaque's visibility.

generally about the same price as metal plaques – manufacture and installation costs around £500 – and, as with metal, are lightweight, capable of surface-mounting, and can be made in any number of colours and shapes. In addition, perspex plaques are known to have good environmental stability. Those in use by the Ulster History Circle – fixed to the wall by bolts, and standing slightly proud of the façade – have been known to remain in good condition for over 20 years. However, it is important to place such plaques in elevated positions, out of harm's reach, as they can be comparatively easily broken and damaged, and the perspex used will need to be good quality, minimising any discolouration. It should also be noted that some plastics weather less well then perspex, becoming brittle over time.

Overall, a decision about material will be based on an assessment of the various advantages and disadvantages, and the needs of each instance (and each scheme) will be different. There is, however, one important generalisation: for inset plaques, the quality of the research and other work will need to be top-notch; for surface-mounted plaques of metal, stone and other such materials, ongoing maintenance will need to be taken seriously and, where necessary, plaques should be repaired or replaced.

SIZE AND SHAPE

As with plaque material, there are numerous options in terms of plaque size and shape, although the roundel has proved particularly popular and can be found on buildings of all types and dates. For instance, this form of plaque is standard under the schemes run by English Heritage, Liverpool City Council, the Oxfordshire Blue Plaques Board, the Ipswich Society and the Ulster History Circle. In the 1860s, in selecting this form for the plaque scheme in London, the (Royal) Society of Arts noted that it had no particular existing associations; it was felt important that the shape of a plaque 'should differ as far as is possible from monumental or funeral tablets, as the public would certainly not like or tolerate the chief thoroughfares being converted into streets of tombs of a cheap and modern style'. [9]

Its functions were thereby differentiated from gravestones and other such memorials, which is important to bear in mind when choosing a shape in association with the proposed purpose and inscription of a plaque. Those which are intended

50 The LCC signified the separate purpose of 'historic site' plaques by the use of a shape other than the standard roundel. The preferred form was a rectangle, as with the plaque erected in 1906 at 111 Broomwood Road, Battersea, London, marking the site of a former residence of William Wilberforce (1759-1833).

9 *Journal of the Society of Arts*, vol. XIV, 11 May 1866, p. 437

51 The 'medallion' form of plaque was especially popular in the early years of the twentieth century. This example, erected by the LCC in 1912, is made of bronze and commemorates Heinrich Heine's stay at 32 Craven Street, Charing Cross, London.

For instance, in the village of Nuncargate, Nottinghamshire, a plaque honours the cricketer Harold Larwood (1904-95); it marks the house where he grew up, and takes the form of a bowler's hand gripping a cricket ball. In terms of a scheme, there are the plaques put up under the initiative of Coventry City Council, which are each individually designed, combining information with art and craft. The results are eye-catching and attractive, and add to the interest of the structures on which they are placed. For instance, the plaque to the Calcott brothers, car manufacturers of the early twentieth century, is in the shape of an automobile fender, while that to the master glass painter John Thornton, active in the early fifteenth century, takes the form of his masterpiece – the east window of York Minster (Fig. 52). This example shows that, interestingly, plaques can give an overall sense of unity to a scheme by their very distinctiveness and individuality.

to be more like memorials – notably, those which mark the site of a building, rather than the structure itself – should perhaps be a shape other than round. Such a distinction was applied in the early twentieth century in the hands of the LCC. Plaques marking former residences and workplaces were generally round, while the separate purpose of 'historic site' plaques was emphasised by the use of a different shape. This was usually rectangular, as with the plaques commemorating the various associations of Bow Street, Covent Garden, and the site of the Battersea home of William Wilberforce (1759-1833) (Fig. 50).

A particularly attractive (if more expensive) form of plaque is the 'medallion', usually made of bronze. This was especially popular around the turn of the twentieth century, as is shown by plaques in Bath (designed by Samuel Sebastian Reay (d.1933)), and London (erected by both the LCC and the Bedford Estate) (Fig. 51, and see Figs 43 and 47). Other options are the hexagon (used, for instance, by the Royal Society of Chemistry; see Fig. 19), the oval (a form used by the Heath and Hampstead Society since the early 1980s; see Fig. 45) and the square or rectangle (well exemplified by the plaques of the City of London Corporation).

For plaques erected on a one-off basis, and even for some schemes (generally those which are comparatively well-funded), designs can be made relevant to the subject being commemorated.

52 Some choose to make the design of plaques suitable to the subjects being commemorated. For instance, this plaque to John Thornton (*fl.* 1405-33), the master glass painter, is based on his masterpiece – the east window of York Minster. It was erected in 2008 under the initiative of Coventry City Council, and marks the site of Thornton's house and workshop in the Burges.

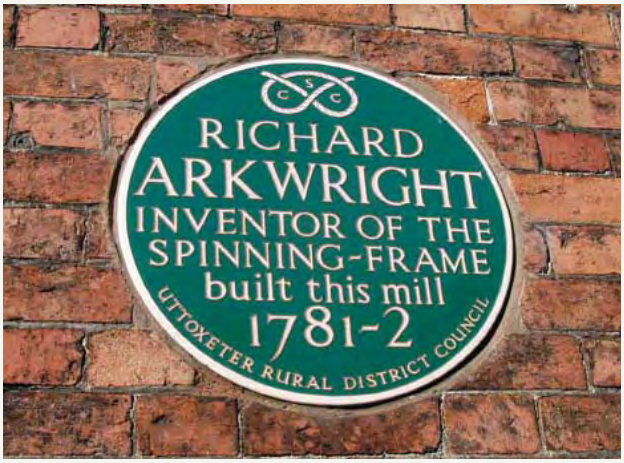
As with form and colour, the size of a plaque should be made appropriate to the architectural context in which it will be placed. Typically, towns and cities will call for plaques of a larger size, reflecting the scale of the buildings and streets and ensuring ease of visibility and legibility. The standard roundels erected under the London-wide scheme have, since the nineteenth century, been about 19½ inches (495 mm) in diameter. Others to have chosen a similar size for their standard plaques include the Leeds Civic Trust (18 inches/457 mm) and Aberdeen City Council (20 inches/508 mm). For rectangular plaques, the standard size used in London by the LCC was about 20 inches by 25 inches (508 mm by 635 mm).

However, variations should always be possible, bearing in mind the needs of the building concerned. Where appropriate, English Heritage makes use of a roundel measuring 16½ inches (419 mm) in diameter, while Norwich HEART prefers to use a model of 13.8 inches (350 mm) in diameter – 150 mm smaller than their standard roundel – when erecting plaques in streets of earlier buildings, where buildings are of smaller scale, or where space is tight.

COLOUR

Blue is just one of the many colours which may be appropriate for plaques. Its use in London reflects the materials of the city's buildings (notably brick and stucco), and the need for plaques to stand out in its busy and often expansive streets (see pp. 75-76). Even though blue has been used for numerous plaques outside of London since at least the 1950s, it still remains peculiarly associated with the capital, especially where plaques are round. Certainly, it should never be viewed as the only option. The final choice is, in particular, likely to reflect the materials of the building or area concerned, though other factors may be of influence; for instance, the colour of existing plaques or interpretative signs in an area.

As with other elements of a plaque's design, colour can be a powerful means of achieving distinctiveness, and may have particular meaning to the area in question. For instance, the City of Nottingham's plaques are a rich green in colour, referencing the Lincoln green clothes supposedly worn by Robin Hood and his Merry Men. Like shape, colour can also be used to differentiate between plaques of different sorts. In 1985, Manchester City Council introduced a scheme of colour-coded plaques; blue was used to signify individuals, red was for notable events and historical sites (Fig. 54), and black for buildings of special architectural or historic interest.



53 Inset ceramic plaque to Richard Arkwright (1732-92), erected by Uttoxeter Rural District Council at Tutbury Mill, Rocester, Staffordshire. It is notable for its simplicity of design and inscription, and bears the logo of Staffordshire County Council.

This raises an important point: plaques which are blue in colour tend to be associated with the commemoration of buildings which served as the residences or workplaces of notable people, no doubt reflecting the focus of the blue plaques of the London-wide scheme. For plaques which are to serve other purposes – for instance, those which explain the history of a particular building or are more like memorials (perhaps fixed to non-specific structures, such as stones or railings) – blue is unlikely to be the best option.

Colour may also be used to identify a particular theme or association. Over the years, there have been various suggestions with regard to a scheme of pink plaques honouring notable members of the gay community, while black coloured plaques can be associated with the darker areas of history, such as sorcery. The colour has also been associated with criminals; for instance, a black plaque was put up at 304 Holloway Road, Islington, London, to commemorate the record producer Joe Meek (1929-67), who murdered his landlady before killing himself.

In addition to the colour of the plaque's background, the colour of the lettering will need consideration; the creation of a marked contrast is important in ensuring that plaques are legible, and has a major part to play in terms of their overall design aesthetic. This is true even where a plaque is not coloured but is made, for instance, of bronze or stone; where the letters are not picked out in a colour (such as black or gold) the whole plaque can appear monotone, and the lettering is likely to become almost invisible. For plaques which have a coloured background, the lettering is typically white, but a different approach might be adopted; for instance, lettering can be black, or coloured against a white background. The plaques erected by the Hunstanton Civic Society in Norfolk have a green ground with gold lettering, based on the colour scheme of existing street furniture.

54 The Manchester plaque scheme has used colour to signify the different purposes of its plaques. For instance, red has been used for plaques commemorating notable events; this example, on the Town Hall, states that the city was the first in the world to be declared a nuclear free zone (in November 1980).

COMPONENTS OF PLAQUE DESIGN

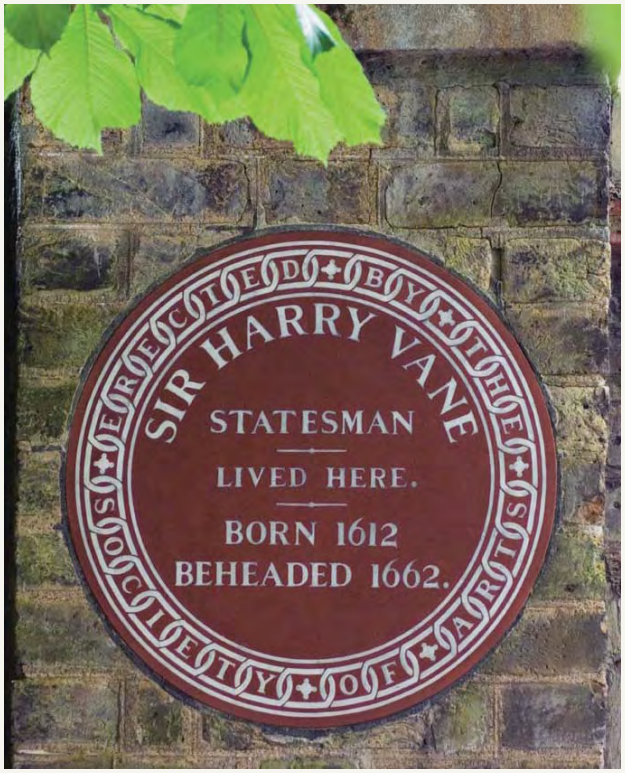
Whether plaques form part of a scheme or have been put up on a more limited basis, they will generally include – in addition to their core inscription (see pp. 88-90) – the name of the group or institution responsible for their installation. This serves as a record, aids individuality, and promotes the work of the group to all who read the plaque. It is often aligned with the circumference or outer edge of the plaque; in terms of the tablets put up by the (Royal) Society of Arts, which ran the scheme in London between 1866 and 1901, the principal of working the Society's name into the design at the edge of the circular plaques was that it 'should not be very conspicuous, but that it should be in evidence' (Fig. 55). [10]

In some cases, it may also be appropriate to include the year in which the plaque was erected; this has rarely been done under the London-wide scheme, but instances can be found elsewhere in the country, such as some of the plaques erected by Hull City Council and Hull Civic Society. This information can be helpful in informing future generations about the context in which a plaque was erected – for example, if it coincided with a particular anniversary – and conveys the historic importance of the artefact itself.

Where plaques are funded by specific bodies, companies or individuals, their names may also be included in the design (see Fig. 12). There are numerous instances of this, including the blue plaques erected by Wolverhampton Civic Society, which frequently bear the names of local businesses and banks, and some of the City of Nottingham's green plaques, which name their sponsor, the *Nottingham Evening Post.*

This inclusion in the plaque's design may have been a requirement of the provision of a grant or sponsorship, though its effect on the tablet's impact should be considered. Rather than being an objective signifier of historical association and information, such a plaque can take on some of the characteristics of an advertisement, and – depending on the case – this can provoke criticism. For this reason, some schemes have chosen to rule out entirely the practice of including such names in the design of their plaques. For example, the criteria of the scheme run by

10 Letter of 25 June 1902 from the Secretary of the Society of Arts to the Clerk of the LCC: Historical Records and Buildings Committee Papers (July-December 1902), LMA



55 Plaques will generally include the name of the group or institution responsible for their installation. The Society of Arts chose to include such information around the edge of its circular plaques, as can be seen with this plaque to Sir Harry Vane, installed in 1898 and now on a marooned gate pier in Rosslyn Hill, Hampstead, London.

Aberdeen City Council stipulate 'that no notice of sponsorship will occur on the plaque', though it will be mentioned in the Council's website and plaque leaflet (see Appendix 2).

In addition to the names of associated groups or individuals, a plaque's design may also include symbols or coats of arms, and these may help to make the plaque or scheme unique to a particular locality, intensifying a sense of place. The many towns, cities and areas which feature coats of arms on their plaques include the Exmouth Society in Devon and Manchester City Council (Fig. 56), while others incorporate relevant symbols; for instance, the black-coloured plaques erected by Liverpool City Council bear an image of the Liver bird (see endpapers) and the plaques of the Railway Heritage Trust sometimes bear the heraldic arms of railway companies.

It should be noted that the use of some symbols (such as the English Heritage logo) will require the formal consent of the organisation concerned and, where quotations from published works or songs are included in the plaque inscription, they may likewise require consent. This should always be sought (and, hopefully, gained) before a plaque is manufactured.

As a general rule, it is best to avoid including information which might become out-dated; for instance, telephone numbers and web addresses. This is also true of listing grades (as in 'this building is listed at grade II'). Such status can be subject to change; buildings can be upgraded or even downgraded over time.

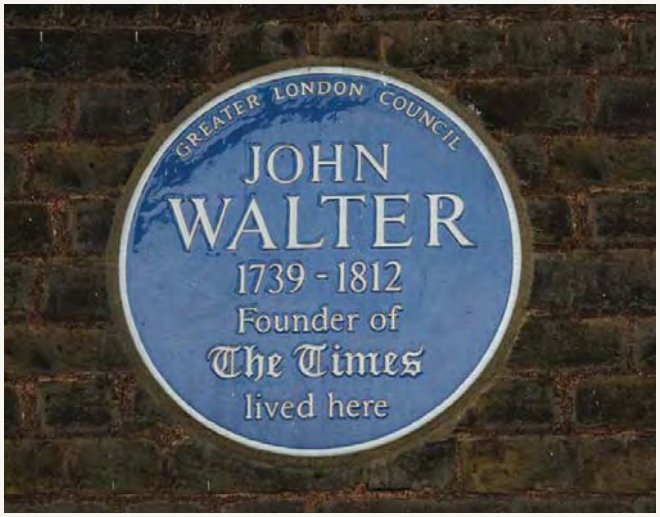
It may be relevant to personalise a plaque's design to the subject being commemorated; the earliest of all surviving blue plaques, that commemorating Napoleon III (1808-73) in St James's, London (put up in 1867), incorporates the imperial eagle. In cases where there is no obvious symbol or design with specific resonance, it can be a good idea to involve others in the process. When the LCC desired a new design of plaque in the 1930s, they staged a competition for students of London's Central School of Arts and Crafts; the form of today's blue plaque was the direct result. Other plaques have been designed with the input of school children; this was the case, for instance, with a plaque marking the Surrey home of the writer Lewis Carroll (1832-98) (see Fig. 93).

The font of a plaque may be varied where required, although – for a scheme – there is likely to be a standard form, increasing the impression of unity. A variation may be particularly

56 Many plaques include coats of arms, helping to make a plaque or scheme unique to a particular locality. This plaque, commemorating William Harrison Ainsworth, was erected in 1972 on the Nat West Bank in King Street, Manchester and bears the arms of the City Council.

appropriate in cases where plaques commemorate artists and designers, or others associated with publishing and lettering. Two examples from the London-wide scheme are the roundels commemorating John Walter (1739-1812), founder of *The Times* (Fig. 57), and Edward Johnston (1872-1944), master calligrapher. In the former case, the plaque's typeface is based on that used by *The Times* in the late eighteenth century, while the latter features the font known as Johnston sans serif, originally commissioned in 1913 for use on the London Underground. Furthermore, the size of a plaque's lettering can be varied to give particular emphasis to certain words or associations. This approach is well illustrated, for instance, by the plaque erected in 1902 by the Warrington Society, Cheshire, to commemorate the founding of the Warrington Academy (see Fig. 40).

Thought should always be given to the form and arrangement of lettering, and how that can best be read and understood. This will include the stacking of words or phrases, the use of punctuation, and the use of upper and lower case; for instance, the consistent use of capitalisation in inscriptions can make them difficult to make out. Rules which apply in print will not necessarily apply to plaques; for instance, the short inscriptions of English Heritage plaques never end in full-stops, while in other cases there may be a need for regular commas, to ensure the sense of the inscription is clear.



57 The font of a plaque may be varied where required. For instance, the GLC plaque to John Walter at 113 Clapham Common North Side, London, erected in 1977, features a typeface used by *The Times* in the late eighteenth century.

Accessibility should be a vital consideration of plaque design, as is the case with interpretative materials such as graphic panels and displays. Not only should information be brief (see below; pp. 89-90), it should be clearly communicated, ensuring the plaque reaches as wide an audience as possible. In the Heritage Lottery Fund's document 'Thinking about … Interpretation' (available on the HLF's website), a number of potential barriers to access and understanding are specified. These include intellectual barriers (imposed, for instance, where text is too long and uses technical language), sensory barriers (such as text being too small to be read), and physical barriers (including distance and height). All of these considerations are relevant to plaques, and should be viewed seriously.

PLAQUE INSCRIPTION

A plaque's inscription sets out its reason for being, and explains why it has been affixed to a particular building; for instance, that may have been where a notable person was born, or where a significant event took place. In all cases, the inscription tells you a little more about the importance and history of that site, and why it is worthy of recognition.

As a plaque may be fixed to a property for many years, and will affect the general public's view and experience of that building, it is important that the inscription is correct. Mistakes, if made, reflect badly on those responsible for the plaque or the scheme of which it is part and create 'false history', misleading the public about historic information and associations. Ensuring facts and spelling are accurate are a vital part of the process of carrying out historical research. It is often the person responsible for this work who composes the plaque's inscription, as in the English Heritage scheme in London. The research will also ensure that the correct location for the plaque has been selected, and that the assertion set out on the plaque can be made with absolute confidence (for instance, that a particular person 'lived and died here' or a particular group 'was founded here'). There is little room for error, and none at all in the case of plaques which are set into the face of a building (see pp. 79-80).

58 The length of a plaque's inscription should be considered very carefully, and will depend on its physical location. This plaque, in the Ornamental Gardens, Grange over Sands, Cumbria, contains over 100 words.

To ensure quality, to ensure the aims of the scheme are met, and to avoid unnecessary embarrassment (and expenditure), it is always better to get things right first time around. Where there is any doubt about information, it should, if possible, be omitted from the inscription, or the plaque should not be erected until full investigation has been carried out; inscriptions which contain phrases such as 'might have' or 'in this vicinity' are of questionable value, and do little to connect history and place. For this and other reasons, it is vital that due weight be placed on the provision of thorough historical research, and that plaque designs are carefully composed and checked against trustworthy historical information (such as that set out in the full historical report; see pp. 69-70).

The form, components and length of the inscription – discussed in brief above (see pp. 87-88) – are dependent upon certain factors: most importantly, the design and size of the plaque, its position on the building, and the distance of that building from the public right of way. In terms of content, a plaque is likely to include the name of the subject being commemorated (for example, a person, event or institution). For a person, it will usually also include life dates, a brief description of their profession, achievement and/or claim to recognition, and the dates with which they were associated with the building concerned. These dates may be omitted where research has been unable to identify them with precision, but should be included wherever possible; they provide a sense of context, placing the period within a person's life overall.

A similar approach will be followed for other subjects; a description will be given, together with some dates to place the subject within a chronological period, and the nature of the connection will be explained. Where a plaque marks a site – rather than the actual building associated with the plaque's subject – it will be important to make this clear in the inscription (for instance, such and such a person 'lived in a house on this site'). Not to do so would undermine the educational role that plaques can play, and could give rise to misconceptions – for instance, about the architecture prevalent at a particular time.

Plaques across the country reveal that the approach to inscription varies wildly. Some, despite their small size, include a large number of words (sometimes running to whole paragraphs), while others are succinct (Figs 58 and 59). Once a form of plaque has been chosen, the ideal length of inscription should be carefully considered, and a maximum number of words should be fixed. The larger the plaque, the more words it will be able to contain.

However, the importance of legibility and accessibility cannot be overstated; if a plaque exists, but its inscription cannot be read or

59 The inscriptions of plaques undoubtedly work best when they are clear and simple. This is well illustrated by the Ulster History Circle plaque (made of plastic) erected in 2007 to honour the former meeting place of the Society of United Irishmen: Kelly's Cellars, Bank Street, Belfast.

understood, then it has failed in its primary objective – to relay a piece of information to the passer-by. Plaques work best when they are intended to excite interest, conveying a single or limited number of facts, rather than attempting to provide exhaustive information (the 'book on the wall' approach). In this way, they encourage people to reach their own understanding about what a subject means to them and to find out more. If a longer account is desired, then alternative options should always be considered; for instance, the information may be better conveyed in published form (a book, leaflet or trail, perhaps downloadable from the internet), and/or on an interpretative panel, placed adjacent to or inside the building, rather than on its façade.

Obviously, there will always be some who find plaques harder to read than others, but it is important to bear their needs in mind and – in terms of ease of legibility, ready understanding and design overall – it is almost always best to include fewer words than more. In founding London's blue plaques scheme in the 1860s, the (Royal) Society of Arts found that inscriptions worked most effectively when they were 'as concise and distinct as possible, to enable all who run to read'. It was further suggested that 'all terms of praise, or otherwise, should be omitted, and merely the plain statement of facts given, consisting of names – for what celebrated – and dates of birth and death'. [11] As this shows, the Society was aware that pedestrians and passers-by in London were usually in a hurry, and needed to take in an inscription at a glance.

In the modern age, this is even more the case. Only a minority of people will have the time, patience or even the inclination to stop and read several sentences, set out in tiny letters on a plaque. Such cases also require that specific people take a particular interest, whereas shorter inscriptions may jump out at passers-by, forcing themselves on their attention and thereby reaching a wider audience. Naturally, the context of the plaque will be of relevance. If it is situated in a place where people have time to spare – perhaps in a railway station or park – then a lengthier inscription may be acceptable. In the busy streets of towns and cities, however, brevity will invariably be the best policy, and this will always be the case where plaques are to be set at first-floor level or higher or are otherwise removed from the public right of way. Such concise tablets are attractive in themselves and, in providing a trigger to further enquiry, are ideally suited to the internet age, in which a brief term is usually sufficient to locate full information.

For English Heritage roundels, the maximum number of words (including dates) is set at 19. This is based on long experience, and has been found to suit the scale of London's streets and buildings, allowing plaques to be easily read and their design overall to be clear and forceful. In addition to a person's names, dates and profession or achievement, one of a series of phrases is incorporated, as appropriate; for instance, 'was born here' or 'lived and died here'. Other schemes have found that a slightly higher word count is possible for roundels. However, it is suggested that, for towns and cities, 30 words should generally be considered the uppermost limit. For rectangular plaques, this limit might be raised to 40, though much will be dependent upon the physical context and the plaque's size, lettering and layout.

As might be expected, the briefer the inscription, the more thought has to be given as to what it might say. It is usually a challenge to describe a subject in such few words, but is always a useful exercise, directing attention to the principal reason for their commemoration. The results may be unexpectedly poetic. For instance, particularly well known among English Heritage plaques is that to Luke Howard (1772-1864), 'namer of clouds', erected in 2002 at 7 Bruce Grove, Tottenham, London. This concentrates on Howard's chief achievement and interest – in effect, the meaning he has to posterity – despite the fact that his contribution was made on an amateur basis, alongside a more successful career as a manufacturing chemist. Similarly, it states simply 'lived and died here', despite the fact that Howard's long and interesting family connection with Bruce Grove could have been explained. While it may seem a pity not to include fuller information, the needs of the plaque's audience – the general public – should be given priority, and legibility is the all-important consideration. Ironically, brief details on a plaque can often stimulate more interest than a more complete account, encouraging a passer-by to look further into the subject.

Whatever approach is adopted with regard to inscription, it generally pays to be consistent. The number of words on a plaque makes a marked contribution to the design overall, and plaques which look similar in design will be understood to belong to a single scheme. As with material, colour and other aspects of plaque design, this will help to work towards distinctiveness, giving prominence to the scheme concerned and helping it become widely known and respected.

11 *Journal of the Society of Arts*, vol. XIV, 11 May 1866, p. 437

POSITIONING A PLAQUE ON A BUILDING

It has already been stated that the needs of a particular building should, ideally, dictate plaque material, colour, size, and the length of the inscription. This is perhaps even more the case with plaque positioning. A poorly placed plaque can prove surprisingly detrimental to the appearance of a building – an effect out of all proportion to its size. On the other hand, a well-placed plaque can be an object of beauty, highlighting the strengths of a building's design or providing interest which was not there before.

With this is mind, it is important to avoid choosing a position simply because it is the easiest spot on which to install a plaque, or because it is next to a doorway. The design of the building as a whole – and how a plaque will affect that design – should always be assessed, and the longer-term appearance of the property should be taken into account. For instance, while a plaque may remain for many decades, a burglar alarm may be replaced in five to ten years, and so should not in itself govern the position chosen. In all instances – and especially where a plaque is to be inset into the face of the wall – a suitable position should be selected in consultation with the local conservation officer, a chartered building surveyor or an architect. Such experts can be identified through a number of means, and – as in choosing a contractor responsible for a plaque's installation (see pp.109-110) – it is important to ensure appropriate experience. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) are both able to provide details of members, and their websites enable users to find qualified experts in their local area.

It is a notable feature of all plaque schemes that they include and recognise buildings of many different dates, styles and types. All should be treated with care, though it goes without saying

60 Plaques should aim to be adornments to a building, rather than adding to visual clutter, and if there are existing signs, should work to be sensitive to them. An example of a plaque being overwhelmed by signs is this, erected by Selby Civic Society at The Quay, Selby, Yorkshire, to mark the birthplace of the surgeon and scientist Sir Jonathan Hutchinson (1828-1913). In this case, almost all of the signs were added following the plaque's installation.

61 Great care will always need to be taken when positioning a plaque on a building, especially where the structure is historic. This plaque commemorates the history of 6 High Street, Petersfield, Hampshire, which functioned as a boarding school for girls in the eighteenth century. It was erected in 2008 by Petersfield Heritage as one of 17 plaques that form a blue plaques trail in the town.

that buildings of notable architectural and historic interest – particularly those which are listed or scheduled – require even greater levels of sensitivity, and the appropriateness of placing a plaque at all should, in itself, be carefully assessed. This is not only good practice, but will help to ensure that consents from the local planning authority and the building owners are granted, and that the plaque process therefore runs as smoothly as possible.

It is important to visit a site in person, rather than to rely upon photographs, in order to decide where a plaque would best be situated and the form of plaque that is appropriate. Even where one particular plaque design is generally used under a scheme, differentiation should always be considered where required (such as a smaller roundel, or a plaque of a different material or colour).

When making such a visit, the following factors should be considered:

- Is there space for a plaque?
- Will a plaque in that position be legible from the public right of way?
- How tall is the building, and how far back does it stand from the pavement?
- What is the building made of, and when does it date from?
- Does the construction or material of the building require that a certain type of plaque is used? (for instance, a surface-mounted tablet rather than one that is inset into the wall)
- Is the building listed, and if so, at what grade?
- Is the building symmetrical, and how will a plaque affect that symmetry?
- Does the building have notable or prominent architectural features, such as quoins or pilasters?
- Are there other plaques on the same building or in the same street, and where are they positioned?
- Are there architectural features or trees, shrubs or climbing plants which might prove problematic and block the view of the plaque?
- Are there other features which need to be considered, such as fences, boundary walls, drainpipes, burglar alarms, wires or signs?
- What part of the building was the subject being commemorated associated with? (especially important if a person lived in a flat)
- How did the person enter the building, and would a position close to this entrance be suitable for a plaque?
- Are there parts of the building that have been added following the death or occurrence of the subject being commemorated?

The last-mentioned point is likely to be relevant for schemes which insist that their plaques mark authentic buildings, rather than structures which occupy their site. One of the considerations in such cases is the role plaques can play in educating the public about architecture and the historic environment, and so it will be important to locate the plaque on a part of the building which existed during the subject's time at the address, rather than a later extension. For instance, the LCC plaque to General James Wolfe (1727-59) is situated on the rear façade of Macartney House – overlooking

Greenwich Park in London – reflecting the fact that the front was extended in 1802-5 to designs by Sir John Soane.

It should be noted that, where there are one or more existing plaques on the building concerned, the installation of an additional plaque should be considered extremely carefully (Fig. 62). For aesthetic reasons, it is the view of English Heritage that one building should be marked by no more than two plaques (of whatever sort), even where the building in question is of a significant size. Where two plaques are erected, their relationship to each other should be just as carefully thought through as their relationship to the building overall. Repetition in the content of old and new plaques should also be carefully avoided. Commemoration of a particular association or point of interest is the aim of a plaque, and where that has already been adequately achieved, there will almost always be no justification for an additional tablet along the same lines. This will be especially the case where the existing plaque is historic and important in its own right. However, an exception may be made where the existing

62 Where there are one or more existing plaques on a building, the installation of additional plaques should be considered extremely carefully. The fact that multiple plaques can detract from a building's appearance is well illustrated by 22 Hyde Park Gate, London, which now bears – in addition to the LCC plaque to Sir Leslie Stephen (1832-1904) of 1960 – a further two privately erected plaques, commemorating Stephen's daughters Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf.

63 A positioning photograph produced by a chartered building surveyor to illustrate the chosen location for the English Heritage plaque to Sir Douglas Bader (1910-82) at 5 Petersham Mews, Kensington, London.

plaque is no longer fulfilling its function (perhaps because it has become illegible), but – before duplication – consideration should always be given to renovation or, if necessary, replacement.

In symmetrical buildings, or buildings of notable architectural integrity or importance, plaques should be placed so that they will interfere as little as possible with the overall design; instead, they should be sympathetic to the building's needs and effect (Fig. 64 and boxed text on p. 94). In particular, the placing of plaques on architectural features, such as pilasters and door surrounds, should be avoided (Fig. 65).

It should be added that, if such sensitivity is found to be impossible – perhaps because the architectural design is so much of a piece and a plaque (of any kind) would interrupt it wherever it was placed – consideration should be given to an alternative address or the plaque should not

RESPECTING ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The positioning and design of plaques should always be sensitive to a building's design and character, and this will be especially the case with structures of notable architectural integrity or importance. English Heritage was aware of such issues in dealing with a grade I listed property in Fitzroy Square, London, designed by the illustrious architect Robert Adam. Rather than placing a plaque – commemorating the artist and critic Roger Fry (1866-1934) – on the main façade, designed by Adam in 1790-94, the brick-faced side elevation was selected instead. It is probable that, had the side elevation not offered a suitable alternative, a plaque would simply not have been erected on the building, ensuring that the principal façade was left untouched. This emphasises the point that plaques are not always appropriate to particular buildings, and other options may need to be considered.

be erected at all. Plaques should never be forced into spaces where they will not fit, and will ideally be placed at least 6 inches (152 mm) from doorways and windows. If a plaque is to be inset into the face of a building, it is usually best, if possible, to choose an area which is painted or covered in stucco or render; that way, it should be more straightforward to remove a plaque and repair the walling, were that to be thought necessary in the future.

Legibility is another vital consideration; if a plaque cannot be read from the public right of way, it has failed in its purpose, and may provoke criticism from the public. For instance, in summer 2009 members of Nottingham Civic Society called on Nottingham City Council to take greater care in the positioning of its plaques. One, commemorating Hockley Methodist Chapel, was found to be 'about 20 to 25 ft up on the gable and you can't read it unless you have a pair of binoculars. It's pointless'. [12] Also, it is important to balance the need for sensitivity in approaching historic buildings with the need to ensure that plaques have a level of prominence. If they cannot be seen, let alone read, their function is very limited.

Throughout the country, the most common position for plaques is at ground-floor level. This aids visibility and legibility, and has the advantage of ensuring that the plaque is as easy and affordable as possible to install. However, following a consideration of the building in question, it may be found that a ground-floor position is impossible or inappropriate. A plaque may be set at first-floor level if there is no space for it lower down on the building's façade, if sight of the ground floor is obstructed by large trees or shrubs, or if the person honoured with the plaque resided at that level (i.e. in a flat). Indeed, if a person was associated only with the second floor, a plaque may be located there, though legibility will always need to be considered and the plaque's inscription may need to be made even more summary than usual, and the lettering larger; the erection of plaques at a level higher than the second storey is not recommended in any situation.

Potential damage to a plaque will also be a consideration; in places where a building fronts directly onto a public right of way, it is certainly wise to install a plaque beyond the reach of passers-by or passing vehicles. Areas of walling close to – or overlapping with – adjacent properties are also best avoided. Such a position can cause confusion about the identity of the building being commemorated.

12 'Civic Society in plaque plea', *Nottingham Evening Post*, 4 July 2009

64 In symmetrical buildings, plaques should be placed so that they will interfere as little as possible with the overall design, although this is not always easy. This plaque, erected by English Heritage in 2009, commemorates the residence of the composer Sir William Walton (1902-83) at 8 Lowndes Place, Belgravia, London, a detached house of *c.*1830.

In selecting a location, a mock-up of a plaque may prove useful, as has been mentioned with regard to plaque design (see p. 78). This will enable various options to be tried and will provide the opportunity to include the building owner(s) and other interested parties in the discussion. The position, once decided, should be recorded on a drawing or photographic image; this can be produced by hand or digitally using a computer (Fig. 63, and see Fig. 69). Under the scheme operated by English Heritage, this document – known as a 'positioning photograph' – is sent to the owners of the relevant building, along with the local planning authority (where relevant), inviting comment and/or approval. Later on, the agreed document can be passed to the contractor responsible for installing the plaque, so that it is erected in precisely the right position.

65 The placing of plaques across architectural features should be avoided. This plaque, commemorating the opening by John Wesley of Manchester's second Methodist preaching house, was erected in 1974 in a rather unfortunate position on the façade of the Central Hall, Oldham Street.

66 Unveiling in 2009 of the London Borough of Bromley plaque to William Pitt (1708-78), 1st Earl of Chatham, and his son William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806). The plaque is positioned on a parade of shops which marks the edge of the Hayes Place estate, formerly the residence of the Pitts. Shown in the photograph is the Mayor, Councillor Douglas Auld, together with members of the Pitt family.

6 CONSENTS, INSTALLATION AND UNVEILING

SECTION CONTENTS

The last key stages of work on every plaque will comprise the seeking of formal consents, the organisation of installation and, where appropriate, the holding of an unveiling ceremony. Such activities represent the culmination of all the work that has gone before; during this process, if all goes well, the plaque will move from an idea into a reality. Thus, it is of vital importance, and – perhaps more than any other stage of work underpinning a plaque – will call for tact, diplomacy, attention to detail, and the maintaining of good working relationships.

This reflects the fact that proposals to install commemorative plaques almost always focus upon buildings owned by private individuals, companies and groups. That being the case, a proposal to change the appearance of the building concerned – and a plaque will always represent such a change – will naturally require some form of consent from its owner or owners. No plaque can be erected without the agreement of the owner(s) concerned, a fact which can come as a surprise to those unfamiliar with the process. In addition, certain cases – notably, those concerning listed buildings – will require the formal consent of the local planning authority.

67 Installation of the plaque to Madame Marie Tussaud (1761-1850) at 24 Wellington Road, St John's Wood, London, in 2001. The ceramic plaques erected by English Heritage are about 2 inches (51 mm) thick, and their backs are partially hollowed out to reduce weight.

Obtaining owner consents for the erection of a plaque can be a protracted process, taking anything from one month to two years, and sometimes even longer. There may, for example, be a delay in response, while in other instances the consent of an owner may be refused outright, meaning that plans to install a plaque have to be shelved indefinitely. In the majority of cases, however, consents will be gladly given. The award of a plaque is usually understood to be an honour, and – depending on the subject being commemorated and the form of the plaque – some have suggested that it has the ability to increase the value of the building concerned. Certainly, it will increase interest and awareness in the property (and even the street) and its connection with the person, event or group being honoured.

Once all the necessary consents have been obtained, it will be possible to arrange for the installation and unveiling of a plaque. Unveiling ceremonies, whilst not essential, are often held, and invariably prove to be meaningful and memorable events for people such as local residents and relatives and friends of the subject being commemorated. They present an excellent opportunity to highlight the history of an area, to foster local pride, and to promote the work of the individual or organisation responsible for the plaque (see p. 131).

CONSENTS

The process of requesting and gaining formal consents underpins the final, crucial part of the plaque process. As has been noted above, no plaque can be installed without the consent of the owner(s) of the building on which it is to be placed. Additionally, consent may be required from the local planning authority. These two vitally important forms of consent represent the focus of this section, though it should be noted that some schemes also ask for the consent of living relatives of a person being commemorated (see p. 44), while – in terms of plaque design and inscription – consent may be required for the use of certain logos, symbols and quotations (see p. 87).

As the gaining of owner consents can be the most protracted of the activities involved in plaque administration, it is particularly important to ensure that adequate records are kept, so that people involved in the work can see at a glance what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done (see pp. 120-121). Not to maintain such records could mean that tasks are repeated or overlooked, and this could have the unfortunate effect of antagonising a building owner, with whom, above all, a positive relationship should be maintained. It could even mean that a plaque is put up without the proper consents in place, and that its future is therefore jeopardised.

It is never wise to assume that owner consents will be readily given; a number of problems and obstacles may be encountered (discussed below, pp. 105-108) which mean that it proves impossible to install a plaque at a certain address. In such cases, managing the disappointment of those involved, including the proposer, is likely to be important (see p. 49). However, whilst the consents process for certain plaques can turn out to be problematic, there are many instances where consents are provided quickly and willingly; this is particularly true in cases where the house owners have been supportive of the plaque from the time of its initial suggestion (they may even have made the nomination themselves).

Some schemes will not proceed with a plaque nomination unless the proposer is able to provide evidence that the owner of the building concerned has granted outline consent to the erection of a plaque (see p. 45). However, it will always be necessary for such consent to be checked and confirmed at a later stage – usually by the administrators of the scheme, rather than the plaque proposer – and the owner will need to be consulted about details such as the plaque's design, material and positioning.

OWNER CONSENT

The gaining of owner consent is obligatory. Without written proof of such agreement, the possibility of legal action – and the removal of the plaque concerned – is left open. Naturally, owners (and occupiers) often have strong feelings about their property, and it will be important to be understanding and tactful in approaching and communicating with them. The desired objective – agreement that a plaque can be installed – may be attained only after considerable negotiation.

Although the final decision rests in the hands of the owner of the building concerned, their perspective on the proposal will be affected by the attitude and approach of the people acting on behalf of the plaque or plaque scheme. A positive outcome can, for instance, be encouraged by the ready provision of information, advice and reassurance. Even where an owner ultimately decides to refuse consent, they will usually appreciate such support, which ensures that an informed choice has been made.

It is vital that all owners are made to feel completely at ease in their decision making, and that they are not unduly pressurised (whether by the individual/group responsible for the plaque's installation, by another, such as a proposer, or even by the community as a whole). This is especially important as, in some instances (notably where plaques are inset into the face of a wall), it will be inappropriate or even impossible to remove a plaque at a later date without damaging the building concerned.

Whatever the form of plaque and method of fixing, the plaque will – once installed – become part of the property of the owner of the building, a point which remains true regardless of the status of the group responsible for the plaque's installation or the source of its funding. Although those responsible for its erection may wish to retrieve the plaque in cases of removal

or demolition and may also be involved in plaque maintenance (see pp. 125-127), they have no legal control over it following installation – unless, that is, a formal agreement, signed by the building owner, states otherwise. In such an instance, the agreement will only be valid while the property remains in the hands of the owner concerned. Whatever the case, the erection of a plaque should be viewed as something of a responsibility, and the owner should be encouraged to carefully consider the proposal before making a decision, which will affect themselves as well as subsequent owners, occupants and tenants of the property.

Most owners are responsible either for the freehold or the leasehold of a property (though some may own the lease and have a share in the freehold). For the installation of a plaque, the consent of the **freeholder** will always be essential; there is usually a single freeholder, but in certain instances (such as flats) the freehold of a property may be shared, in which case consent will need to be obtained from all freeholders, often via a management company. The need for **leaseholder** consent varies, according to the type of building and the nature and terms of the lease. It is good practice to always consult leaseholders, and to explain the proposed plaque, but it is usually the case that their formal consent is not required. In order to ascertain the situation relevant to the building concerned, it is recommended that legal advice is sought; it may well be that the terms of the lease need to be ascertained. There is no legal requirement for the provision of consent by **tenants** and other occupants, but – again – it is good practice to involve them at as early a stage as possible, and to keep them informed of progress. The consent of **previous owners** is not necessary, nor is that of surviving **family members** of a person being commemorated, though – in the latter case – informal consultation may well be appropriate.

The principal means of finding out details concerning land and building ownership is the **Land Registry**. This organisation – which dates back to 1862, and forms a land registration system for England and Wales – aims to hold accurate and up-to-date information (dating back, at least, to the most recent purchase of a property). As well as being able to provide records by post, the Land Registry provides an online search facility (see p. 157), enabling the user to download title deeds at a small cost. These deeds contain the names and addresses of owners – both freeholders and leaseholders.

68 Design for the LCC plaque to William Ewart Gladstone, installed in 1925 at 11 Carlton House Terrace, St James's, London.

Reproduced by permission of English Heritage

Whilst the service is quick and efficient for a single owner, it can be time-consuming and comparatively costly, where a block of flats or an office is concerned, to amass deeds for all the leaseholders. In such instances, it may prove more straightforward to write to the freeholder (once their initial consent to the installation of a plaque has been given), or the managing agent, in order to request the contact details of the leaseholders. In some circumstances, it may be found that a freeholder or managing agent is willing to administer the seeking of all leaseholder consents, if these are required.

Very occasionally, a search of the Land Registry may return no owner name. This usually occurs when the building in question has not changed hands for many years. An email or telephone call to the Land Registry requesting a closer examination of its records may assist. Failing this, the generic form of address 'To the occupier' might be used in correspondence, though such an approach does not always prove effective (see p. 107, point 7).

Given the costs involved in the design and manufacture of a plaque, it is wise to contact the owner(s) of a relevant building before commissioning the work. This will avoid unnecessary expenditure, and will ensure that the owner has the opportunity to comment on the design of the plaque and its proposed position upon their property. The method

of approach is important, and can help to ensure a successful outcome. A formal, personalised approach in writing is advised in preference to knocking at doors, which can catch people unawares and make them feel pressurised into making a decision; also, in many cases, those inhabiting a building may not be its actual owners. It might be that the owner concerned has already had some involvement with the plaque proposal, and that their consent has already been implied. Nevertheless, it remains essential to obtain proof of consent in writing (if possible by letter, though emails are likely to be acceptable).

The London-wide scheme has long operated a **two-stage process** with regard to the gaining of owner consents, and this is recommended as best practice. It has a number of advantages; for instance, it is both time- and cost-efficient, represents a diplomatic means of approaching owners, ensures all the pertinent points are considered at the appropriate time, and helps to ensure a positive result. If a plaque is to be erected on a one-off basis, or if there are time constraints, it may be possible to seek all consents in one go; this may be especially effective where there have been prior dealings with the owner concerned, or where the owner's support for the plaque is known. However, such an approach has an associated level of risk, in that it can jeopardise the installation of the plaque.

69 Photograph of 1960 showing the proposed positioning of the LCC plaque to the novelist and dramatist J. M. Barrie (1860-1937) at 100 Bayswater Road, London. The building was marked with a plaque the following year.

Under the English Heritage scheme, the first stage is the gaining of **consent in principle** from the freehold owner. This is requested immediately following the completion of historical research and the approval of the building selected for commemoration, although other schemes ask that evidence of such outline consent accompanies the plaque proposal (see p. 45). In all cases, such consent will precede the commissioning of the plaque design and, where relevant, the application for listed building consent (see pp. 103-104).

The approach generally takes the form of a letter, which introduces the proposed plaque to the freehold owner; this is usually accompanied by enclosures, relating to the subject of commemoration, their connection with the building, the proposed plaque design and inscription, and the method of installation. It invites the owner to give their initial (in principle) agreement to the notion of the plaque, conditional on their subsequent approval of its proposed design and placement. The letter makes clear that – should the owner not approve of the plaque design and positioning – they are entitled to request amendments or to refuse consent altogether. Consent in principle does not equate to full approval; no plaque should be erected without the latter in place. Once agreement in principle has been given by a freeholder, it will be possible – where appropriate – to contact a building's leaseholders.

Assuming that in principle consent is granted by a building's owner, the next stage will be the commissioning of a plaque **design**, along with a **positioning photograph or drawing** (Figs 68 and 69). The principles behind these documents are discussed on page 76 and page 95; it is particularly important to ensure that the needs of the building are considered, and to consult experts such as the local conservation officer, a chartered building surveyor or an architect. The completion of both drawings – which will need to be to scale – should be possible in less than a week if necessary. Once submitted, they should be carefully checked

against the information set out in the detailed historical report (see pp. 69-70) and any advice provided by other experts, ensuring that the spelling, wording and placing of the plaque are correct. This stage is crucial, helping to avoid future alteration or replacement of the plaque.

It will then be possible to move on to the next stage, **second or final consent**. Duplicates of the full-scale design and positioning photograph or drawing are sent to the building owner, with a letter inviting their approval or, where relevant, their suggestions for change. Should the freehold owner agree to the plaque's design and proposed position – and this usually proves to be the case – then they should give final consent in writing. On the other hand, if the owner wishes to suggest amendments, such as the removal of the plaque from first- to ground-floor level, then these can be negotiated.

It may be that an owner decides, on the basis of the design and positioning photograph, and in spite of negotiation, that they no longer approve of the plaque proposal. In this case, consent has been withheld, and this should ideally be set out in writing. Where appropriate, an alternative address for the plaque can be considered (based on historical research), or the case can be shelved until such time as the owner changes their mind or the property changes hands.

As with consent in principle, the final consent of the freeholder should be given before any similar approach is made to the leaseholders, who may or may not be required to provide formal consent to the installation of the plaque (see p. 100). Once all the necessary consents are in place, then it will be appropriate to inform (in writing) tenants or other occupants, either personally or via their respective landlords.

PLANNING CONTROLS

Alterations to some types of buildings need the approval of the local planning authority. It is their judgment as to whether or not the proposed plaque will require consent (planning permission or listed building consent). The authority will base its decision on the planning regulations and the nature of the proposal, and – having already been consulted about outline plans – should be informed of detailed proposals as early as possible, so that appropriate advice can be given. The opinion of the authority should be sought in writing and retained for future reference; this is particularly important in cases where staff advise that consent is not required. This approach to consent should be taken even where the local planning authority administers the plaque scheme concerned, ensuring that processes are followed in a correct and consistent manner.

In general, modest changes can be made to (unlisted) single family dwelling houses without the need to apply for planning permission; such changes are known as 'permitted development' and are defined in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order of 1995 (as amended). However, local planning authorities can remove permitted development rights from single family dwelling houses through the use of Article 4 Directions; these are most commonly used in conservation areas (see below, p. 104). Most other building types – such as flats, offices and shops – do not have permitted development rights and therefore planning permission will be required for most external alterations.

It is likely that the planning status of the building selected for commemoration will have been investigated earlier in the process, perhaps as part of the undertaking of historical research; this should, for instance, identify whether or not the building is listed or located within a conservation area. The name of the local planning authority relevant to the plaque proposal can be obtained by visiting the government's online 'Planning Portal' (see p. 157), where it is possible to submit searches according to building name and/or street name.

Applications for listed building consent and planning permission require the applicant to have given advance notification to building owners of proposals affecting their property. It is, therefore, logical to wait until the final consents of the owner(s) are in place – and the plaque design and positioning photograph (or drawing) have been completed and agreed – before making any formal application to the local planning authority.

It may be that a general understanding can be reached between the applicant and the local planning authority. Notably, where it is proposed to erect a series of plaques of identical material, size, colour and general design, the authority may be willing to agree to an overall approach, and expectations and parameters may be set out in a document such as a memorandum of understanding. It is likely that this would ease

70 The English Heritage plaque to Nancy Astor (1879-1964), the first woman to sit in Parliament, at 4 St James's Square, London. Built in 1726-28 for the 1st Duke of Kent, and now the Naval and Military Club, this terraced mansion is listed grade II*.

and clarify the process to be followed in gaining listed building consent and planning permission, and would prove useful both to the planning authority and the administrators of the scheme. Where the plaque's form and design are to be significantly varied, detailed advice could then be sought as appropriate.

In cases where formal consent from the local planning authority is not required, it remains best practice to advise the authority of the plaque proposal as early as possible after obtaining the owner's consent, although there is no legal requirement to do so. It is also advisable to ask the authority about any current planning applications or approvals which might affect the building proposed for a plaque; for instance, those that could result in its radical alteration or redevelopment. This will avoid 'worst case scenarios' such as the installation of a plaque on a building that is earmarked for demolition.

Statutory Listed Buildings

Listing is a statutory designation that marks and celebrates a building's architectural and historic significance. Advice on such significance is provided by English Heritage to the DCMS, which is responsible for taking the decision to add, remove or change entries for buildings on the list. Buildings are listed at one of three grades: grade I buildings are of outstanding importance; grade II* buildings are of more than special interest (Fig. 70); and grade II buildings – representing over 90% of the total of all listed buildings – are of special interest.

Anyone wishing to make an alteration to a listed building which would affect its special interest is legally required to obtain prior approval (known as listed building consent) from the local planning authority. There is a strong likelihood that such a form of protection is found to exist; just over half of the 850 or so plaques put up under the London-wide scheme mark listed buildings.

There are various means of discovering whether or not a building is listed. The best first port of call is always the local planning authority, although further information can be provided by English Heritage's National Monuments Record and by the online resources Heritage Gateway, Images of England and Listed Buildings Online (see pp. 157-158). If a building is listed, it will be vital to contact and consult the conservation officer of the local planning authority at an early stage, before making an application for listed building consent. When considering a listed building application, the local planning authority will formally consult English Heritage about proposals concerning buildings listed at grades I and II*, and will also need to seek EH's advice in cases where buildings are grade II but are council-owned. In London, proposed changes to other categories of buildings may also be referred to English Heritage, such as those concerning bridges, theatres and Underground stations.

The final judgment as to whether a proposed alteration is likely to affect the special interest of the listed building – and whether it would, therefore, require listed building consent –

rests with the relevant local planning authority. Key considerations will be a plaque's design, positioning and method of fixing. The authority's advice should be sought in writing, and correspondence should be carefully retained as part of the plaque archive (see pp. 120-121).

In administering the London-wide scheme, English Heritage always applies for listed building consent where relevant, recognising the fact that plaques invariably represent a change to a structure. Experience has shown that it is important to have such approval in place, where listed buildings are concerned. For instance, it means that cases can be dealt with in a consistent manner, that the owner(s) of the property concerned can feel confident that the plaque proposal has been fully scrutinised, and that those behind the plaque's installation can feel protected from censure at any future point. It should be noted that if consent is required, and is not obtained, any work carried out will be constituted a criminal offence. However, some local planning authorities may, after having considered a proposal, decide that listed building consent is not necessary.

Locally Listed Buildings

There is another form of designation – local listing – which is non-statutory, meaning that there are no additional planning controls applied on account of this local designation. However, the normal planning regulations apply, as may Article 4 Directions, and the local planning authority will seek to conserve the special interest of the building when it is considering applications. Where the property selected for commemoration is locally listed, it is essential to discuss the proposal with the local conservation officer, who will be able to provide further guidance.

Scheduled Monuments

Most 'above ground' scheduled monuments tend to be ruins or military structures. If it is proposed that such a building be marked with a plaque, scheduled monument consent will be required. Advice should be sought from the Ancient Monument Inspectors in the relevant English Heritage office, as it is EH – and not the local planning authority – that is responsible for considering applications.

Buildings in Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are generally designated by local planning authorities, and are considered to have special historical and/or architectural significance; there are now more than 8,000 such areas across England. When considering planning applications that relate to conservation areas, the objective is to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area in question. Where there are major development proposals in a conservation area, the local planning authority is required to notify and consult English Heritage.

In general, modest changes can be made to dwellings within conservation areas without the need to apply for planning permission, though such properties may be affected by Article 4 Directions. In some instances, it is possible that plaque proposals are deemed minor developments, and that they therefore require planning permission. It will be vital to contact the local planning authority to find out whether or not the relevant building forms part of a conservation area and, if so, what action is required.

Article 4 Directions

Local planning authorities can use an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights (see p. 102) from single family dwelling houses, in order to better control change. This means that certain changes and developments which would usually be exempt from planning permission become subject to the need for it. Article 4 Directions are most commonly used within conservation areas (see above). The Direction paperwork – held by the local planning authority – will specify what building works it controls.

MAKING FORMAL APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING CONSENT

In cases where the local planning authority advises that formal consent is required for a plaque, the next step will be to complete an application. The relevant forms, and guidance for their completion, can usually be downloaded from the website of the local planning authority. In terms of work on plaques, it is recommended that the following documents are included with the application:

- Map of the location of the building proposed for a plaque.
- Plaque design, with scale.
- Description of the plaque (to include size, shape, material, weight and method of fixing).
- Photograph (and/or drawing) showing the building as existing.
- Photograph (and/or drawing) showing the building with the plaque in the proposed position, with scale.
- Justification for the work.
- Specification of the method of installation (see pp. 111-112).
- Brief information about the subject of the plaque or the history of the site to be commemorated.
- Design and Access Statement (more information regarding the content of this document will be provided by the local planning authority).

Following submission, the processing of an application – including a statutory consultation period – should take around eight weeks. At that point the application will either be refused or approved. This process need not be a cause for concern; where a plaque has been sensitively designed and positioned on a property – taking into account the building's design, material, special interest and character – the application is most likely to be successful. Irrespective of the decision, a formal 'decision notice' will be issued by the local planning authority, and it is vital that this is carefully retained.

OUTCOMES

It goes without saying that, in requesting consents, the most desirable outcome would be full and final agreement to a plaque from all the parties concerned – both the building owner(s) and, where relevant, the local planning authority. Once these consents are in place, the manufacture of a plaque can be commissioned, and arrangements for its installation and (possibly) unveiling can begin.

On the other hand, it might be that the building owner refuses their consent for a plaque, an outcome which is unexpectedly common. Owners may, for instance, express concerns about the subject being commemorated, or worry that having the plaque may encourage intrusion upon their privacy. In this situation there are two options: firstly, consent might be sought for an alternative address identified through historical research; secondly, a case might be shelved until such time as an owner has a change of heart or until a property changes hands. With regard to the latter, intermittent checks using the Land Registry (see p. 100) are advised, say every five years, or – after a similar period – the owner could be asked to reconsider.

It is also possible that consent is refused by the local authority, where planning controls apply. In such an instance, there should be a clear reason why the application was unsuccessful, and staff at the local planning authority are likely to be happy to provide advice which will result in necessary amendments being made to the proposal or the application.

Other cases may be more frustrating, in that it may prove time-consuming or even impossible to elicit a response of any kind from the building's owner. It is worth considering a range of potential solutions to this problem, with the aim of obtaining a decision of some sort. In general, it is usually best to send at least three letters, at regular intervals (say of about six weeks), before concluding that the owner is not intending to reply. Where – despite best efforts – a response is still not forthcoming, a final letter can be sent to the owner concerned, explaining that the lack of response has been taken as a refusal and that the case has been shelved. It may be that, realising this, the owner will respond. It is most likely, however, that such a letter will represent an end to the matter, and will allow the plaque proposal to be pursued at an alternative address or placed into abeyance, to be reviewed intermittently.

COMMON PROBLEMS AND OBSTACLES TO GAINING CONSENTS

The list below represents various concerns frequently voiced by building owners (given in no particular order), together with common circumstances associated with a lack of response,

and means by which they might be handled. It should be noted that these and other related issues are estimated to have affected around 60% of plaque cases dealt with by English Heritage in recent years.

1 **The owner is not content with the design or the proposed position of the plaque on their property.**
It is vital that the views of the owner regarding the design and placing of a plaque are taken into account. It will usually be possible to resolve concerns that have been raised, and a site meeting can be of great use. Where it is suggested that a plaque is moved, or that its inscription is altered, it will be important to seek the advice of a chartered building surveyor (or architect) and/or the person responsible for the historical research, to ensure that the new position is both appropriate and historically accurate. Occasionally, negotiations will result in an impasse, as it may be that the aims, criteria and practices of the scheme make it impossible to agree to the owner's wishes; for instance, the owner may insist that a plaque is placed on a part of the building not visible to the public, and public visibility may be a key consideration for the scheme. In such cases, it may be concluded that a plaque is no longer worth pursuing – it is better, after all, to install no plaque at all than to erect one that does not reflect the needs of the building on which it is placed or the standards of the scheme.

2 **The owner does not agree that the subject is deserving of a plaque.**
It will be useful to identify the grounds on which the owner believes that the proposed plaque recipient is not deserving. This will allow the tactful explanation of a case by a suitable individual (perhaps the plaque's researcher); it may, in particular, be useful to provide fuller biographical/historical information and a short bibliography. On the other hand, it may be that the owner raises points which have not been considered before, and that the proposal itself needs to be rethought. Ultimately, however, if an owner remains unconvinced, their decision must be accepted.

3 **The owner is concerned about the method by which the plaque will be fixed and/or the structural impact it will have on the building.**
The appropriateness and sensitivity of a plaque's material, and its method of fixing, should have been considered at an early stage in the process, and will have been revisited following assessment of the building in question. The local conservation officer and a chartered building surveyor or architect should have been involved in such consideration, especially where the plaque is to be inset into the wall face. It should, therefore, be possible to quickly reassure the owner that a plaque will not compromise the structure of the building. It might be worth showing the owner the contractor's installation specification (see pp. 111-112), and providing proof that a building surveyor or other expert has been involved in selecting the plaque's position and method of installation.

4 **The owner is worried that the plaque will cause intrusion into their life and/or premises.**
In general, an infringement of privacy is only likely to occur where a plaque commemorates a subject of significant fame, interest or notoriety, and/or where the building concerned is in an accessible and busy location. Furthermore, a plaque which cannot be easily seen or read from a public thoroughfare may encourage trespassers or intrusion, emphasising the importance of suitable positioning and a brief inscription. The vast majority of plaques cause no intrusion at all; they will inevitably encourage more interest in a building, but very rarely will members of the public attempt to gain entry or make contact with the owners or residents. Nor does a plaque place an owner under any obligation to open their property to the public. It will be worth explaining all this to the owner concerned, and leaving them to draw their own conclusions; the most important consideration is that they feel reassured and content about having the plaque.

5 **The owner believes that the plaque affords the building statutory protection and will prevent them from making alterations in the future.**
This is a surprisingly common misunderstanding, and can be easily resolved by pointing out that plaques in themselves do not afford any building a form of statutory protection. For example, they have no connection with listing, although some plaques – commemorating highly significant subjects – have been known to encourage listing by drawing attention to a building's historical associations (see p. 36).

6 **The owner no longer lives at the address registered with the Land Registry.**
The information held by the Land Registry is correct at the time of the most recent purchase of a property. Occasionally, therefore, details concerning the owner's address may be out of date. It might be possible – using the owner name provided by the Land Registry (see p. 100) – to confirm or find alternative contact details by using directory enquiries, the phone book or the internet. Finally, it might be worth making contact with neighbours, asking if they know the status of the building and its owner.

7 **The letter requesting consent has been discarded as junk mail**.
Envelopes with unfamiliar postmarks, or bearing the generic 'To the occupier' form of address, are often discarded as junk mail. The advantage of having researched the details of the owner via the Land Registry (see p. 100) is that (in most cases) it provides a specific name, and thereby enables a more personal approach. Hand-writing envelopes can help allay concerns about unusual postmarks, and a return address on the envelope may provide assurance that the letter is not junk mail.

8 **The letter requesting consent has not engaged the owner and has failed to elicit a response.**
It is possible that the tone and language of the letter is inappropriate; for instance, it may be too formal, unclear, or have failed to rouse any interest. Simple measures such as re-sending a rephrased version of the letter or increasing the text size may render it more accessible and readily understandable. It may be worth including a less detailed biography/history of the subject of the plaque, perhaps highlighting achievements which are of the broadest appeal. This can encourage an owner to be more enthusiastic and to make a response. Where such attempts have been made and have failed, it might – as a last resort – be worth enclosing a typed letter or form with a tick box, which the owner need only mark and sign to give their consent or to withhold it. This form – the wording of which will need to be carefully phrased, perhaps after obtaining legal advice – may prove of particular use where the owner is not happy or even unable to write a letter themselves. It is suggested that calling at the property is usually not a good idea, unless such a meeting has been pre-arranged or there is a personal connection with the person concerned. As has been stated elsewhere (see p. 99), an owner must feel free to make their own decision about a plaque, and not feel pressurised in any way.

9 **The freeholder of the building has given consent in principle, but there have been mixed responses from the leaseholders.**
Dealing with both freeholders and leaseholders can be extremely time-consuming, especially where the plaque proposal concerns a large block of flats or an office building. On occasion, the leaseholders can number more than a hundred. It is unlikely that all these leaseholders will reply regarding the plaque proposal – or, where they do so, that they will all agree. Sometimes, the freeholder, the managing agent or a residents' association will be willing to represent the views of the various leaseholders or to help reach a consensus. In other instances, it may be that the majority view of the leaseholders that respond can be taken as final – whether it be to allow or to refuse the plaque. There are no hard-and-fast rules about dealing with such situations, though the wording of the leases may help, and specific legal advice should be sought. In many cases, it may be that only the freeholder's consent is required (see p. 100), though leaseholders should always be informed about proposals and serious concerns should be carefully considered.

10 **The Land Registry shows that the owner lives at the building selected for commemoration, but the property appears to be uninhabited.**
Although a property may appear to be uninhabited, there may nonetheless be people living there. On the other hand, it may be a second home, and the owners not very often in residence. Perhaps the property is an investment, and the address given by the Land Registry is not the correct one for the investment holder. As with point 6, it might be possible to locate the owner by using directory enquiries, the phone book or the internet. Finally, it might be worth making contact with neighbours, asking if they know the status of the building and its owner.

11 **The address given by the Land Registry is that of a company, organisation or managing agent.**
Many properties, especially those in metropolitan areas, are owned by companies or organisations, often as investments and sometimes as premises. Many owners require that contact be made via a managing agent. In such cases, it may be difficult to identify the individual or team responsible for decision-making regarding the property; the titles given to departments dealing with estates can vary widely and therefore inhibit the process still further. Approaches by telephone can significantly assist. It is relatively likely – in the case of owners which are companies or organisations, rather than in the case of managing agents – that the responsibility for decision-making rests with the director(s), so it may be useful to attempt to find out their individual details. A general internet search can yield this information, as (in the UK) can research via Companies House (see p. 157), which provides an online search facility at a small cost. As a last resort, in the case of business premises, as opposed to private dwellings, a personal visit might help to clarify matters.

12 **The address held by the Land Registry is that of a company which acted on behalf of the owner at the time of purchase, but which no longer does so.**
Since the company no longer has an association with the owner, it is likely that they are under no obligation to act upon the owner's behalf. However, it is possible that the company still holds information regarding the owner, and thus it may be worth making direct contact by telephone, explaining the situation.

13 **The property is owned by a person or company registered overseas.**
Properties that are owned by companies registered overseas can be dealt with in much the same way as those based in the United Kingdom (see above; point 11), although not all countries have an equivalent of Companies House. However, requests for consents from overseas persons or companies are subject to additional difficulties, often owing simply to the distances involved and a language barrier. Such distance may inhibit the owner's enthusiasm for a plaque, as well as making them difficult to contact. Furthermore, companies registered overseas frequently regard their property simply in investment terms, which can prove either a help or a hindrance in attempting to obtain consent (and, subsequently, when arranging installation). Ensuring that the owner is sent engaging information on the plaque proposal may help, but persistence can be the key.

14 **The owner of the property insists that certain formal stipulations are met – and/or that a legal document is signed – before their consent is granted.**
Some owners, especially where they are companies or organisations, may agree to a plaque in principle, but make final consent dependent upon certain stipulations. They may ask, for example, that the individual or group responsible for putting up the plaque takes full responsibility for its upkeep, or that they undertake to cover any costs for structural works which may later become necessary in relation to the plaque's installation. With regard to the latter, an owner should be assured that careful thought has been given to a plaque's design, material and positioning, and that a chartered building surveyor or other qualified expert has been consulted in order to avoid any potential damage to the building. However, it is important to explain to the owner that – once a plaque has been erected – it becomes primarily his or her responsibility, though maintenance may be carried out at the expense of the individual or group responsible for its installation (see pp. 99-100). If the owner remains concerned, it may be that a formal agreement can be appropriately phrased and will ease the situation, but it should only be approved and signed after taking legal advice.

71 An English Heritage contractor installs the plaque to Herbert Chapman at 6 Haslemere Avenue, Hendon, London, in 2005. The installation of all plaques is a skilled job, especially those which need to be inset into the face of a wall.

INSTALLATION

The installation of a plaque represents the climax of a long process of work. It is the moment at which the plaque and the building being commemorated are finally united, and when the historic association reaches the consciousness of the public at large. Naturally, extreme care will need to be taken – and skill applied – in installing a plaque, with regard both to the plaque itself and the building to which it is affixed. A decision regarding plaque material and the method of installation will have been made earlier, considering the needs of the building concerned. As has been discussed (see p. 79), there are two means by which plaques can be fixed: they may be attached to the face of a building (surface-mounted) or they may be inset into the face of the wall, to a depth of no more than 2 inches (51 mm).

This section deals with the practical management of plaque installation, which follows on from the commissioning of plaque manufacture (in itself enabled by the provision of second or final consents from the building owner. Although it will be possible (even desirable) to select and commission a contractor while the plaque is being made, it makes sense to wait until the plaque has been delivered and approved before finalising plans for installation.

CHOOSING AND COMMISSIONING A CONTRACTOR TO UNDERTAKE INSTALLATION

The selection of an appropriately experienced and skilled contractor is a vital component of this stage of work. As plaques are intended to remain on a structure for many years, they will always need to be carefully fixed. Sub-standard fixing of plaques can damage a building, and it is therefore imperative that the chosen contractor has a good level of experience in carrying out the type of work necessary. Quality of work

has a number of other important benefits; for instance, it satisfies and reassures the owner(s) of the building concerned, helps to reduce the need for any future maintenance, and reflects the quality of a scheme as a whole or the person or group responsible for erecting the plaque.

The type of contractor selected will, to a certain extent, depend upon the type of work required. The installation of any plaque is a delicate and skilled job, but this is especially the case with those that are set into the face of a wall and/or where the building concerned is historic or of sensitive construction and material. For instance, a grade I listed building will need to be handled with extreme care, whatever the form of plaque.

With this in mind, it will almost always be necessary to treat installation as a capital cost, and to identify appropriate funds, rather than to entrust the job to volunteers or the owner of the building concerned. Where the plaque (and/or the unveiling equipment) is put up by a building owner, there is no guarantee (unless the owner happens to be a qualified professional) that the job will be correctly and appropriately undertaken. Where the work proves to be negligent – for instance, were a plaque to fall off a wall and cause damage or injure someone (either in the grounds of the property or on a public highway/public place) – it will be the building owner that is liable. Where the work is carried out by a person such as a tenant, volunteer or local resident, and subsequently proves to have been negligent, it is again the owner that is initially liable, even if they had given permission for the work. This is because the law places the responsibility on the building owner to ensure that the person carrying out the work has the appropriate skills and is reasonably supervised whilst it is underway.

This position will need to be carefully explained, and, where relevant, legal advice sought, before the owner, volunteer or another agrees to take the work on. Regardless of who undertakes the plaque installation, a specification of works should be prepared and health and safety procedures should be in place (see pp.111-113). Furthermore, even in instances where the commissioning individual or organisation has nothing at all to do with a plaque's fixing, it will be important to give due attention to these issues; as the plaque is likely to bear the name of the organisation concerned, poor standards of installation will be reflective of the scheme and organisation overall.

Such a situation is avoided by using a skilled and experienced contractor, who should have special knowledge of buildings in the relevant area and, if appropriately selected, will be able to provide a good quality, long-lasting and sensitive plaque installation. There are a number of means of identifying such contractors (who will generally be trained builders), and it is always best to avoid reliance upon local directories, which are no guarantee of quality. Word of mouth is, of course, extremely useful, and advice and recommendations may be provided by some or all of the following: the local planning authority, the local Trading Standards office, plaque manufacturers, and an organisation or scheme which already has experience of erecting plaques locally.

In particular, the following should be looked for:

- A significant level and time-span of experience.
- Fully guaranteed and insured work.
- The provision of free initial advice and estimates.
- A commitment to health and safety (see below, p.113).
- A willingness to provide references and examples of work, where requested.

As the contractor will almost always be dealing directly with the owner and occupiers of the building to be commemorated – as the trusted representative of the person or group responsible for the plaque – a high standard of professional conduct will also be required.

It is important that, wherever possible, contractors are suitably qualified and recognised. They may be registered members of a variety of trade associations and organisations, such as the Federation of Master Builders (incorporating the Register of Masterbond Warranted Builders), the National Federation of Builders, the Chartered Institute of Building, the Guild of Master Craftsmen, and the League of Professional Craftsmen (see pp.111-113). In order to become members of such bodies, contractors will need to satisfy strict criteria and are bound by a code of conduct requiring high standards of work and business practice. Such affiliations – which can be checked on the websites of the organisations concerned – undoubtedly help the choice of contractor to be made with greater confidence. Also relevant is TrustMark, a joint industry, government and consumer initiative intended to help members of the public find reputable tradesmen.

SPECIFICATION OF WORKS AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS

In order to gain best value for money, it will be necessary to seek a series of quotations from different contractors. Before doing so, it is worth discussing the required work in full with them, in order that the various contractors understand what is involved and are confident it is something they can undertake; it is likely that examples of relevant completed work will also be considered.

It is sensible, when seeking quotations, to provide the various contractors with a written specification of works, which should be as detailed as possible. Upon quotation, each contractor will need to provide a risk assessment and safe work method statement, together with proof that any work carried out will be fully insured and guaranteed. The individual or organisation responsible for the plaque will need to be assured of high standards of work, and – with this in mind – it may be that the successful quotation is not necessarily the cheapest.

The specification of works should be produced after consultation with appropriate professionals, including chartered building surveyors; it should also be based on legal advice. It may be that the specification is later amended, taking in the views of contractors or following the completion of an initial phase of work. Where a number of similar plaques are to be erected – for instance, as part of an ongoing scheme – it may be that the specification is generic. On the other hand, if plaques are each unique, or where the initiative is more limited, the document may need to be tailored to the case in hand.

Generally speaking, a specification should include the following information:

- **A description of the plaque**
  This will include details concerning the material of the plaque, its method of manufacture, its shape, size, weight and durability.

- **How the plaque should best be handled**
  If the plaque is heavy, cumbersome, easily scratched and/or fragile, it is wise to ensure that the contractors are aware of the best means of lifting and carrying it. Care is advised in all cases, but it should be noted that ceramic and stone plaques are particularly fragile, and will require appropriate handling and protection during carriage.

- **Preparation and Preliminaries**
  The contractor will need to be made aware of the preparations required in advance of the plaque's installation. In addition to a site inspection, these might include:
  - The production or amendment of a risk assessment.
  - Arrangement with the building owner/ occupier for access to the property and the provision of a power/water supply.
  - The arrangement of the supply of equipment to ensure the safe completion of the work and the safety of the building's occupants and passers-by (such as scaffolding or a mechanical boom lift).
  - Details of measures required to protect aspects of the property (such as ensuring fixtures and fittings are shielded from potential damage and covering trees and shrubs adjacent to the plaque installation).
  - Confirmation of the hours during which the work should be carried out.
  - The collection of the plaque from the commissioning individual or organisation.

- **Schedule of Work**
  This section will give details of the key work required of the contractor in installing the plaque. It might include confirmation that a date and time for installation is convenient with the owner/occupier, and the removal of items from the façade of the building or the front garden in order to allow the safe installation of the plaque. It will then go on to provide precise details as to how the plaque should be installed, including the preparation of the wall face and the materials required for its fixing. Once the installation has been carried out, the contractor should also be required to ensure that the work area is left clean and tidy, and it may be desirable to ask that a photograph of the plaque *in situ* on the building is taken and submitted. Should any problems arise, there should always be a commitment for the contractor to inform the individual or organisation responsible for the plaque as soon as possible.

72 A photograph showing that disasters can occur with plaque manufacture and installation. This English Heritage plaque, commemorating R. J. Mitchell (1895-1937), designer of the Supermarine Spitfire, at 2 Russell Place, Portswood, Southampton, was made of enamelled steel. It had to be replaced after becoming partly detached from the wall three months after its unveiling in 2005.

- **Responsibilities of the contractor on the day of an unveiling, if one is planned**. This section might include: the installation (and later removal) of unveiling equipment; the provision that the equipment works fully and easily (e.g. that the cord by which the curtains are drawn is accessible to those carrying out the unveiling); making good after the unveiling equipment has been removed, and clearing and tidying the general area; and the provision of details as to site attendance on the day of the unveiling, as well as contact information.

As has been noted above, a specification of works might be a fluid document, amended in the light of experience gained. This will be especially the case where it is drafted in advance of the first plaque erected under a scheme. Whether a plaque is to be one of a number, or whether it is being erected on a one-off basis, it will be useful to attend the first installation carried out by a contractor, and perhaps (where relevant) the few that follow.

This will ensure that all learn from the experiences gained, that the specification of works is amended if necessary, and that quality is upheld. In general, it is always worth visiting a site as soon as possible after installation to check that the work has been completed correctly and to high standards.

It may be that the work proves unsatisfactory – whether for the contractor, the property owner, or the person or group responsible for the plaque – and needs to be redone. In such instances, it is important to ascertain the reasons for the problem, and to use these to inform the commissioning of similar work in the future. If, on the other hand, the process and contractor prove satisfactory, then it is worth considering whether they can be engaged for any plaque installations planned in the foreseeable future. It follows that the more work a contractor carries out, the more experience they gain and the higher the standards become.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is vital that the chosen contractor has a commitment to health and safety practices. This ensures that work can be carried out with peace of mind – both on the part of the tradesmen and the others involved – and means that liability is avoided by the commissioning individual or organisation, should an accident occur during a plaque's installation. As has been noted above (see p. 111), the selected contractor should, when submitting a quotation, provide a risk assessment and safe work method statement, as well as proof of full insurance.

For plaques, the Work at Height Regulations of 2005 and the Work at Height (Amendment) Regulations of 2007 are especially relevant; these stipulate that an employer (i.e. the contractor) must do all that is reasonable and practical to prevent a fall. 'Work at height' is defined as taking place at any level from which a person could be injured in a fall, and may therefore relate to plaques at ground-floor level, as well as those at higher storeys. Where such 'work at height' cannot be avoided, employers must ensure that equipment and other measures are taken in order that a fall is prevented or, where one takes place, that injury is minimised. With this in mind, it is usual to find that the installation of a plaque – especially one positioned above the ground floor – will require scaffolding or a mechanical boom lift (cherry picker), which will be arranged, as appropriate, by the contractor concerned (Fig. 73). This is likely to be left in place for the unveiling (where one is held) ensuring that the unveiling equipment can also be installed and later removed in a safe manner.

If the building on which a plaque is to be placed faces immediately onto a pavement, the contractor – and the commissioning individual or organisation – will need to consider whether the plaque's installation is likely to compromise the amount of pavement space available to pedestrians. Where this is found to be a factor, it may be that special measures are required to ensure that passers-by are not forced out into the road. The local authority will be able to offer guidance as to how such situations are best handled.

VARIABLES

Each individual plaque will have its own specific variables. Most obviously, the position in which a plaque is placed on a structure will almost always vary from case to case. With this in mind, it is important that each plaque installation is dealt with uniquely, and that, where relevant, the contractor is fully informed about a case's history. Although the specification of works may be generic, and will cover the general practices to be followed, the contractor and the commissioning individual or group will need to think about the needs of the case in hand, including any particular issues that might affect the plaque's installation and what actions may be appropriate.

The usual means by which a contractor is guided as to the proposed placing of a plaque will be a positioning photograph or drawing (see p. 95). This – prepared at an earlier stage in the process, along with the plaque's design – should reflect the advice of the person responsible for the historical research as well as a chartered building surveyor or other qualified expert, and may incorporate suggestions made by the building owner(s) and the local planning authority.

Where a contractor foresees problems with a proposed position, these must be raised as soon as possible and resolved in advance of the date selected for the plaque's installation. Where appropriate, it may be that a new positioning photograph or drawing is prepared, following consultation (once again) with the researcher, surveyor, building owner and local planning authority. Where a contractor suggests a position that is quite different from that originally chosen, then it may be, in relevant cases, that a new (or amended) application has to be made for listed building consent (see pp. 103-104). Naturally, this situation can cause significant delay and is easily avoided; it should not occur where potential problems have been adequately thought through and foreseen and, in particular, where a chartered building surveyor or architect has been involved at an earlier stage.

Examples of other possible considerations include:

- Pedestrian health and safety (see above).
- The need to arrange a sub-contractor to erect a scaffold or to provide a mechanical boom lift (cherry picker).

- The need to arrange for parking permits for contractor vehicles.
- The need to organise parking bay suspensions if utilising a boom lift.
- The date of any unveiling. If one is planned, the contractor will need to be made aware of the date scheduled, in order to be sure that the plaque's installation can be timed according to the event (see below).

73 The English Heritage plaque to Jomo Kenyatta following its unveiling at 95 Cambridge Street, Pimlico, London, in 2005. Shown from right to left are: Mr Najib Balala, Kenya's Minister of State for National Heritage, Mr Uhuru Kenyatta, Leader of the Official Opposition and the grandson of Jomo Kenyatta, and Mr Joseph Muchemi, Kenya High Commissioner. On account of the position of the plaque – at first-floor level – scaffolding was required both for its installation and the unveiling.

INSTALLATION SCHEDULE

The date and time at which a plaque is installed will depend greatly upon the availability of the owner(s) and, where relevant, the occupants of the property. The organisation of this installation – and, where appropriate, of an unveiling ceremony – is significantly aided where there is a good working relationship with the owner concerned; all being well, this will have developed during and after the process of gaining formal consents.

The process of installation will always rely on the goodwill of the building's owner and perhaps of the occupants also; for instance, the contractor may require access to water and power points and may have questions they need to ask, perhaps about fixtures on the façade or the provision of parking permits. Many of these matters should have been resolved in advance – the contractor should always prepare for a case (and decide upon their specific quotation) by making an initial site visit and getting in touch with the owner, usually about two to three weeks before the date fixed for the installation. However, unforeseen issues can always arise.

In terms of the amount of time it takes to install a plaque, this varies, depending on factors such as: the material of the plaque; the position in which it is to be affixed; the experience of the contractors; the equipment required for its installation; the weather; and the nature and material of the building. The erection of a surface-mounted plaque may take only a few hours, while the installation of an inset ceramic plaque will usually take the greater part of a day, including time for preparation and clearing up. Where scaffolding is required, it is likely to take even longer.

The timing of an installation often depends on whether or not a plaque is to be formally unveiled. If such a ceremony is intended, it is important that the plaque is in place some time before the event; time should be allowed not only for the plaque's installation (including, where relevant, the provision of scaffolding), but leeway should be provided, in case any problems arise (see boxed text on p. 117). The more high-profile the unveiling, the greater the leeway should be, and – regardless of the scale of the event – it is never recommended that a plaque is erected on the same day as an unveiling. In general, it is best to erect a plaque two to three days before an unveiling – that is, with enough time to deal with any difficulties and yet close enough to the event to ensure that the plaque has not already been widely noticed. On occasion, unveilings may be held many months after the time of a plaque's installation; although any element of surprise is significantly lessened, this can still prove effective where the ceremony is a desired objective in itself.

Even in instances where a plaque is not to be unveiled, it is worth giving careful thought to the timing of its installation. It may, for instance, be possible to encourage press interest by tying it in with specific events or celebrations, including anniversaries (see below and pp. 136-137). Usually, however, the scheduling of a plaque's installation will be dictated by the availability of a building's owner and of funds at a particular time; it may be, for instance, that restrictions are imposed by a sponsor or as a condition of the award of funding, or that a budget has to be followed. In all cases,

delays should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Once the consent of an owner has been gained, it is polite to proceed as quickly as possible, and also logical, ensuring that circumstances do not change which might have a negative bearing on the proposed plaque.

UNVEILING

Usually, the primary aim is to install a plaque, and thereby to commemorate and draw attention to a particular historical association. The holding of an unveiling ceremony – which can prove both time-consuming and costly – may thus be considered desirable rather than essential, as is the case with the London-wide scheme run by English Heritage. For others, however, this significant opportunity for promotion, publicity and outreach may be considered an end in itself, and worthy of the work and outlay.

There is no doubt that unveiling ceremonies have considerable meaning for those associated with the subject being commemorated (such as friends and relatives), and have many benefits. For instance, they help to generate interest in a particular subject, building and area, can encourage local pride, draw the plaque before a wider group of the public, and highlight the work of the individual or organisation responsible for its installation. In some instances, unveiling ceremonies may be timed to coincide with a specific event; for instance, the anniversary of a person's birth or death, or celebrations surrounding the history and achievements of an individual, event, organisation, or even country or culture (see pp. 136-137).

Regardless of the scale of the event, it will be essential to ask the property owner(s) whether or not they are content for an unveiling ceremony to take place. Although the organisation and holding of the event may only involve them to a minor extent, they (and the occupants of the property) will undoubtedly be affected by it, and always have the right to refuse, regardless of their enthusiasm

74 The Ricardo family gather at the unveiling of the English Heritage plaque to the mechanical engineer Sir Harry Ricardo (1885-1974), which took place in 2005. The plaque marks his birthplace, 13 Bedford Square, Bloomsbury, London.

for the plaque itself. Where consent for an unveiling ceremony is given – which is usually the case – it is advisable to have this in writing, and it will be imperative to liaise with the owner about a suitable date and time.

ORGANISING AN UNVEILING CEREMONY

The organisation of an unveiling ceremony, as with other such events, almost always involves a significant amount of work and preparation. Tasks to be considered and dealt with include some or all of the following, which are likely to be undertaken alongside the organisation of plaque installation:

- Arranging a date and time (in conjunction with others, including the owner of the property concerned, the plaque proposer and the contractor).
- Deciding on the scale, format and content of the unveiling.
- Identifying and inviting speakers and a person to perform the unveiling.
- Compiling an invitation list (in collaboration with others, if necessary).
- Promotion (including the production and sending out of invitations).
- Preparing and circulating a press release, and liaising with interested parties and media.
- Organising the provision and installation of unveiling equipment.
- Obtaining a public address (PA) system.
- Organising photography (to provide images for others and for your own archive).
- For events which are large-scale and/or will affect the public right of way, alerting the police and the local authority (applying for temporary closures, if necessary), and providing crowd control. It should be noted that some local authorities require notification of all plaque unveiling ceremonies taking place within their area.
- Organising refreshments, either at the property bearing the plaque or at another venue.

The undertaking of such activities – further discussed below – can involve considerable time, depending on the scale of the proposed event; on average, organisation takes between six weeks and six months.

The various tasks may be undertaken by one individual, group or organisation – not necessarily that responsible for the installation of the plaque – or may be a collaborative effort. The latter can be especially effective, and is the approach that has been taken for many decades under the London-wide scheme. English Heritage has enjoyed a number of successful working partnerships; for instance, with family members, specialist societies and organisations, and foreign embassies and consulates. Such a collaboration helps to spread the outlay of both time and cost, and can ensure that efficiency is maximised. It should also minimise the risk of any important elements being overlooked.

For English Heritage, the general approach is as follows: EH liaises with the building owner (and, where necessary, occupiers), commissions and pays the contractor to put up the plaque and the unveiling equipment, writes and issues a press release to promote the event, contacts (where necessary) the local authority and the police, and provides simple PA equipment and crowd control; the partnership person or organisation handles (and pays for) other aspects of the work, including the compilation of a guest list, the sending out of invitations, and the organisation of a reception and refreshments. Where such an approach is desired, it is always worth considering as early as possible who a suitable partner might be, and – when a collaboration is formalised – setting down clear areas of responsibility, ideally in writing.

Although initial plans for an unveiling may be laid following the granting of relevant consents – and a potential partner is likely to be contacted at this stage – it is usually advisable to wait until a plaque has been made before firming up details and notifying others. This means that, should there be any problems with the manufacture or delivery of the plaque, the event will not have to be postponed. Such problems cannot be discounted, whatever the form of plaque or however familiar the work may be (see boxed text opposite).

In order to justify the work involved in organising an unveiling ceremony, promotion, publicity and outreach is an important activity. The compilation of an invitation list can, in itself, involve consideration of these issues, as it may include representatives from the press and children from a local school. It will always be a good idea to write and issue a press release, circulating it (as relevant) to local, national and specialist media. This can be based on the historical report produced earlier in the process

ALLOWING FOR UNFORESEEN PROBLEMS

The London-wide scheme provides numerous examples of the need for care in timing plaque unveilings. These serve to emphasise the fact that it is wise to have the finished (and approved) plaque in hand before setting dates and publicising unveiling ceremonies. Such an approach helps to avoid disasters like that which occurred with the English Heritage plaque to the poet John Betjeman (1906-84). Scheduled to be unveiled as part of centenary celebrations in 2006, this was broken en route to the offices of English Heritage. As there was insufficient time for a new ceramic plaque to be made before the unveiling ceremony was due to take place, and as invitations had already been sent out, a temporary metal plaque was unveiled instead and was later replaced with a ceramic tablet.

(see pp. 69-70), and may also include quotations from relevant people, such as experts, friends, relatives and admirers of the subject being commemorated. In some instances, it may be that the unveiling attracts national attention; for instance, where the subject of the plaque is widely known, controversial or notorious, where the person due to unveil the plaque is a celebrity, or where the unveiling is timed to coincide with one or more special events.

It is always worth giving the press as much notice as possible, and – where interest is shown – offering opportunities for interviews. It can also be useful to identify photo opportunities in advance, and to gain the consent of the property owners and occupiers where access is required to internal areas of the building, such as the room nearest the plaque. Often, such positions offer the best possibilities for photographs – the unveiler and perhaps another leaning from a window close to the plaque.

THE UNVEILING CEREMONY ITSELF

Most unveiling ceremonies are attended by about 20 to 30 people; some low-key events may be attended by fewer than 10 guests, while high-profile ceremonies may draw a significant crowd, perhaps numbering well over 100.

Such scale is reflective of a number of factors, including the level of interest in the subject being commemorated and/or the person performing the unveiling, the timing and location of the ceremony, and the nature and influence of the person or group responsible for the event's organisation.

All unveilings, no matter how large or small a crowd they are likely to draw, could be subject to the need for crowd control. If the pavement outside a building will not accommodate the quantity of people expected to attend, a temporary road closure may be necessary, and qualified wardens may need to be present. In order to arrange this, or if there is any uncertainty as to what will be required, the special events department of the relevant local authority should be consulted.

The **structure and content** of an unveiling ceremony can be adjusted to suit each specific occasion. In organising such celebratory events, the imagination of the organiser may run free, taking inspiration from the subject of the plaque in question. Most, however, follow a standard format, featuring a few short speeches and ending with the plaque being revealed, usually from behind a pair of curtains (although flags have also been used). Although it will usually be in position on the building, this need not be the case; an alternative, suitable in certain circumstances,

would be to attach a plaque to a stand and unveil it prior to installation, although this removes focus from the property being commemorated.

Typically, there are no more than four speeches; in order to ensure people's enjoyment and comfort, these tend to last, in all, no more than half an hour. **Speakers** might include experts on the subject of the plaque, friends, relatives or admirers of a person being commemorated, and local politicians and dignitaries. It is usual for proceedings to be opened by someone representing the individual or organisation responsible for the installation of the plaque, who can provide context relating to the plaque itself and/or the scheme of which it is part and thank those that have been involved (most importantly, the building owner). The next speaker often provides an account of the achievements and/or history of the subject being commemorated.

The climax of the event will be the **unveiling** of the plaque itself. The person responsible for this honour may or may not be one of the speakers; they are usually a notable personality or authority, and have some connection to the subject being commemorated. There might be **additional attractions**; unveiling ceremonies have been known to include, for instance, performances by choirs, poetry readings, fly-pasts, and vintage car exhibitions and processions. These, together with the person carrying out the unveiling, may be the chief means of attracting the interest of the media, and so should be the subject of careful consideration.

Depending on the location of the building being commemorated, it will be worth considering the need for an **amplification system**. This will be especially relevant in busy thoroughfares and cities. Such equipment may be hired or borrowed; if the plaque forms part of a series or scheme, it may prove more cost-effective to purchase a small public address (PA) system for use at all unveilings. Where a power supply is needed, this should be discussed with the owner of the property concerned, who will usually prove happy to help.

Unveiling equipment will also be required. This usually comprises a pelmet and a pair of curtains, which are opened with the aid of a cord. For a scheme, it will almost certainly be necessary to have these

75 A crowd and a rather precariously balanced cameraman watch the unveiling of the LCC plaque at 22 Frith Street, Soho, London, in 1951. It was here, in 1926, that John Logie Baird (1888-1946) first demonstrated television.

76 The unveiling in 2008 of the Ulster History Circle plaque to Luke Livingstone Macassey (1843-1908), civil engineer and barrister, at 7 Chichester Street, Belfast. Pictured from left to right are: Sean Nolan (Ulster History Circle), Mark Lowry (Chairman of the NI Region of the Institution of Civil Engineers), Lord Mayor Jim Rodgers, and Macassey's biographer Philip Donald.

items made to individual specifications, as they are not widely available ready-made. In this case, an opportunity may be taken to make the design relevant both to the form of the plaques and to the organisation responsible for their installation; for instance, a logo may be featured on the pelmet, as is the case with the unveiling equipment used by English Heritage. For the curtains, an appropriate colour may be selected – English Heritage's are red, to match its logo – while the material should be weighted, ensuring that they are not blown aside at unveilings, revealing the plaque prematurely. The whole ensemble should be robust but lightweight, and it should be possible to affix the equipment without causing any undue damage to the building; often, it will simply require screws and small holes in the façade, which can be made good after the ceremony.

It is important to consider that the design and placing of the unveiling equipment will be reflective of the plaque, the person or group responsible for its installation and, where appropriate, the scheme overall. It should be handled with as much care as the plaque itself; although its presence will be temporary in nature, it will nonetheless be seen by a wide audience, especially where an unveiling is high-profile. It is best to employ a skilled person to be responsible for its erection and removal – ideally, the same contractor responsible for the installation of the plaque. They will be able to follow relevant health and safety practices (see p. 113), and will understand the nature of the surface to which the plaque has been affixed.

It is particularly important to ensure that the equipment in no way impedes the view of the plaque, once unveiled. Furthermore, the equipment should be evenly aligned, in a position that is sensitive to the building's design. This will maximise the effect produced by the plaque when unveiled – perhaps the most important moment in its 'life' – and will ensure that an impression of professionalism and quality is given in photographs, which might appear in the press. In order to achieve this effect, it may well be that the contractor responsible for erecting the unveiling equipment has to visit the site in advance to ascertain the best location. If there are specific obstructions to the installation of the equipment (for instance, in the form of architectural features) then it is always best to come up with a one-off solution – or indeed to borrow, hire or

77 Where it is difficult to install standard unveiling equipment, it is worth considering the use of velcro to fix the curtains, which can be pulled off with the help of a cord. This approach was followed by the Greenwich Society in unveiling the plaque to Dick Moy, who was based at the Spread Eagle, on the corner of Nevada Street and Stockwell Street, London.

© Warren King

commission an alternative set of equipment – than to compromise the presentation of the plaque at the point of unveiling. With locations which are hard to reach, it can, in particular, be worth considering the use of curtains attached with velcro, which can be pulled off with the help of a cord (Fig. 77).

The unveiling of the plaque need not represent the end of the event. Often, the ceremony will be followed by a **reception**, such as a lunch or drinks party. This allows the attendees to circulate, talk and celebrate the plaque, and can be a promotional activity in its own right, allowing the individual or group behind the plaque to explain more about their work and aims and perhaps to sell items such as booklets. Where it is inappropriate for a number of speeches to take place outside the building where the plaque has been placed – perhaps on account of a lack of space or inclement weather – it may be that they are held at this reception.

The choice of venue will vary; generally, physical proximity to the plaque location is the most important factor, though there may be other possibilities (such as a favourite haunt of the subject being commemorated). In many ways, the ideal venue is, of course, the building marked by the plaque, but this may not always prove appropriate, especially where the owner is keen to keep fuss and intrusion to a minimum. The nature of the reception will also vary; some prefer private receptions, just for the friends and family of the subject being commemorated, while others are larger in scale and may continue with other activities, such as a film showing.

Naturally, one or more people will need to be responsible for the **management and direction** of the unveiling proceedings. Such people will need to arrive at the site some time before the unveiling is due to take place, in order to check that both the plaque and the unveiling equipment have been installed correctly and – greeting and liaising with the contractors and the building's owners/occupiers – that there are no problems. Where a PA system is being used, that will usually be set up at this point.

In many cases, and especially for larger-scale events, someone will need to be specifically responsible for welcoming and handling representatives of the press – handing out press releases, introducing people and, where required, setting up interviews and photographs. Where a specific photographer has been commissioned to record the event – something which can prove very useful for promotional materials and events – they will need to be greeted and briefed. Also, where relevant, at least one person will need to arrive in advance at the venue being used for the refreshments, in order to be sure that the reception will run smoothly. As with all event organisation, a thorough and well-ordered approach is required to ensure an enjoyable, problem- and stress-free occasion; although this is invariably time-consuming, the end result will almost always justify the effort.

MAINTAINING A PLAQUES ARCHIVE

Once a plaque installation (and, where relevant, an unveiling) has taken place, the primary objective will have been met. Although work on a plaque may well continue, in the form of maintenance, promotion and outreach, this represents an appropriate moment at which to review and archive records which have been amassed over the course of the project. All of the stages relating to plaque work – such as nomination, historical research, the gaining of consents and the organisation of an unveiling ceremony – will generate associated documents and images, usually both in digital format and in hard

copy. Some of these documents will be significant; for instance, the historical report, plaque design and positioning, and letters of consent from the building owner(s) and, where relevant, the local planning authority.

As a plaque may last for many years, and is the result of a process of concerted effort, it is important that this information is retained. As a record about the background to the plaque (including its proposer, unveiler, date of installation, and the reasons for its design and location), it has a number of uses. For instance, it could be used to inform promotional materials and events, such as booklets, guides and websites (see pp. 130-139). This has proved true for English Heritage, which is responsible for maintaining the historic archive relating to plaques erected under the London-wide scheme and the EH pilot national scheme (see pp. 9-10); this archive dates back to 1901, and formed the basis for the book *Lived in London: Blue Plaques and the Stories Behind Them* (New Haven and London, 2009).

Records relating to plaques also enable the provision of further information – because of their nature, plaques themselves can only provide limited details – and can prove especially valuable should a legal issue arise or should the plaque and the building on which it is placed become subject to damage or change at any point in the future. For instance, in repairing or moving a plaque, it can greatly help – and can avoid damage to a building – to know more about its material and the method by which it was fixed. In this sense, the documents are far from being 'dead' or 'closed'. As is discussed elsewhere (see p. 125), plaques are – like the buildings to which they are attached – living objects, directly affected by architectural alterations that may be carried out. Furthermore, given their visible locations, they continue to stimulate the interest of future generations, and information related to them may continue to be of use and relevance for many, many years. The plaques files maintained by English Heritage are used in this way on a daily basis, helping to provide information to the 500-600 people who make enquiries about blue plaques each year.

Given this situation, it is vital that the records associated with plaques are treated with due significance. At the most basic level, a record should be kept as to the plaque's key information: its proposer, location, design and material, the date on which it was erected, and, where appropriate, when and by whom it was unveiled. Also, there should be at least one photograph of every plaque and ideally two: one of the plaque itself and the other showing the whole of the building on which the plaque is placed.

In terms of the provision of information – and to inform promotional material – paperwork relating to the selection process and historical research is most useful; this should include the original nomination, the researcher's notes, copies of relevant reports, and, where relevant, minutes of the group that considered the suggestion. Furthermore, certain items should be kept for legal reasons: notably, letters of consent (or the refusal of consent) from the building owners, any correspondence with the local planning authority, the specification of works, and paperwork that relates to the provision of funding or sponsorship. Where plaques have been paid for out of the public purse (for instance, by local authorities or English Heritage), then the maintenance of records is particularly important, and these may be requested by any member of the public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI).

Such records need not be unduly bulky or numerous, and – following the installation or unveiling of a plaque – it is advisable, before replacing a file on a shelf, to check through it and to remove documents which are no longer relevant. As to suitable repositories, this will depend on the nature of the person or body responsible for the installation of the plaques. Accessibility is, however, always important, as is dissemination; it may, for instance, be appropriate to place some documents on the internet. In addition, the conservation of certain documents may be relevant, especially where they comprise sensitive material such as historic photographs and drawings. With this in mind, consideration should always be given to depositing records in the relevant local archive centre. Another option may be the local authority or the local and national Historic Environment Records (HERs) or Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs); more information on these resources is available via the Heritage Gateway website (see p. 157).

78 All plaques require ongoing monitoring and maintenance. This plaque to Ellen Terry (1847-1928) – placed on her long-term home at 215 King's Road, Chelsea, London – illuastrates what can happen to metal plaques over time.

7

MAINTENANCE, PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

SECTION CONTENTS

The goal of a plaque initiative is, naturally, the installation and perhaps unveiling of the plaque itself. However, work will not necessarily end there. The person, organisation or group responsible for a plaque's installation will usually be involved in its ongoing maintenance – monitoring condition and any changes which might take place to the structure to which it is affixed. Furthermore, although each plaque is its own best advertisement, it will often be appropriate to actively promote the plaque and the scheme of which it may form a part. This work can take many forms and include a range of activities, such as publications, lectures, guided walks and trails. Such promotion, and further outreach and educational work, may be targeted where appropriate at specific audiences; for instance, school children, those living with disabilities, and people from black and minority ethnic groups.

All such activities are extremely important, serving to ensure that plaques fulfil their role, continue to be enjoyed, and reach as wide a proportion of the public as possible. Ideally, the nature of this maintenance and promotional work, and the time it might take, should be considered at an early stage in the plaques process and factored into budget-setting. Whereas promotion is generally a desirable activity, maintenance and monitoring of plaque condition and status should be considered as a responsibility; it can either be borne by the individual or organisation who installed the plaque or plaques, or delegated to others, but cannot be ignored.

The question of who takes responsibility for plaque maintenance – and, where relevant, replacement or removal – is not always clear. As a plaque, once installed, becomes part of the property to which it is affixed (see pp. 99-100), it may be assumed that a building owner becomes responsible for it. However, it is more common to find that an individual or group responsible for a plaque's installation takes responsibility for its maintenance and upkeep, and – as a plaque will often name such a group – it is usually in their interest to do so. The situation is generally most straightforward where plaques form part of a larger scheme, run (for example) by a local authority or civic society. In such cases, it may be assumed that the relevant group will have an indefinite life-span, and that it can therefore have an ongoing responsibility for plaques erected at an earlier date. For plaques put up on a one-off basis, the question of responsibility may be less clear, especially where the party who arranged installation is an individual (say a family member). Either way, it is good practice to resolve the issue of future responsibility at the time of installation, in order to safeguard the plaque's long-term existence (assuming, of course, that this is an objective).

79 Wherever possible, plaques should be protected while building and decorative works are carried out. Shown here is the English Heritage plaque to Charles X (1757-1836), last Bourbon King of France, at 72 South Audley Street, Mayfair, London.

MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING

Buildings do, of course, rarely stay the same; they are continually changing, reflecting the needs of their owners and occupants, and the wider environment of which they are part. Plaques are likewise subject to change, and their condition (and consequently their effectiveness) may be affected by one or more of the following factors:

- Minor building and decorative works (Fig. 79).
- Accidental damage.
- Radical alteration and demolition (see pp. 128-129).
- Weathering, especially if the plaque is in an exposed location or if there is a harsh environmental context (sea air, pollution, etc) (Fig. 82, and see Fig. 44).
- Growth of trees, shrubs and plants, which might obscure or hide a plaque from view (Fig. 80).
- Vandalism and graffiti (which may be especially relevant if the subject commemorated is deemed controversial in any way or if the plaque is in a highly accessible location).
- Theft, especially if the plaque is particularly handsome, made of a material with a perceived scrap value (such as bronze), commemorates an iconic figure or event, or is in a position which is within easy reach (for instance, on a gate pier).

It is always advisable to bear in mind the risk of a plaque being stolen when selecting a building for commemoration and deciding the position and method of fixing. A regrettable example of a plaque theft took place in Totnes, Devon, where one of four slate plaques erected by the Totnes and District Society in 2009 was stolen within a fortnight of its installation.

The greater the number of plaques that have been erected under a scheme, the greater will be the level of responsibility and the associated time involved in maintenance and monitoring. For instance, where only a few plaques have been erected in a small village, it will usually be easy to keep a check on their condition and status. However, in a large city, which includes a number of plaques of different dates, more work is likely to be required.

80 The growth of climbing plants, trees and shrubs can damage a plaque, and can inhibit visibility. Here, wisteria has begun to cover the plaque to Dame Henrietta Barnett (1851-1936) at 1 South Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London.

© Gerry Lambert

Monitoring can be carried out in two ways, which are not mutually exclusive: the individuals, organisations or groups responsible for the plaques can wait to be alerted about changes which affect the plaques concerned, or they can take a more proactive role, carrying out regular checks. The former approach presumes that those aware of the changes – perhaps the building's owner, or the local conservation officer – know who to contact, information usually conveyed by the plaque itself or known through experience. This emphasises the need to incorporate such details in the design of a plaque wherever possible (see pp. 86-87). Members of the public may also function as informants in this way, letting the individual, organisation or group know about architectural changes which are planned or are taking place. It is usually by this means that English Heritage learns about changes affecting the plaques of the London-wide scheme, and is then able to take appropriate action.

In terms of local planning authorities across the country, there seems to be no standard policy of informing plaque installers and administrators about proposed changes to buildings marked with plaques. This is because, unless a plaque is attached to a listed building or a scheduled monument, it is afforded no statutory protection,

and issues concerning plaques are usually handled differently by separate planning authorities. Similarly, a building owner may not give notice of works affecting a plaque, placing the onus on interested parties, residents of the street or area, or members of the general public.

As the receipt of such information is not guaranteed, it can be useful to be more proactive (see boxed text opposite). Surveys of the condition of plaques may be carried out at regular intervals. For instance, in 2002-3 English Heritage carried out a condition survey of plaques erected under the London-wide scheme. A check-list was compiled and, following a site visit, a document was completed for each plaque. Alongside photographs of the plaque (a close up, and a photograph of the whole building), the following information was included:

- The subject commemorated by the plaque.
- The current use of the building.
- The date the plaque was installed.
- The body responsible for its installation.
- The plaque's position on the building, and the visibility of that position.
- The plaque's dimensions, shape and colour.
- The plaque's material and method of fixing.
- The plaque's condition overall (good, fair or poor), with more detailed comments on three points: material, colour and glaze; surround, substrate and fixing; and inscription.
- Any further comments, information and recommendations (including, where relevant, the reasons for the plaque's poor condition).

Such a survey may find a plaque's condition to be good, with further comments including 'render seems sound' and the inscription is 'clear and legible'. In such cases, re-inspection may be recommended in a given period – say in 10 years' time. On the other hand, the condition of the plaque may be found to be poor; the surface may have deteriorated, the plaque may have been vandalised, and/or the area of walling around it may be weak. Additional findings or comments may be that a plaque's inscription has proved hard to read (perhaps because the lettering is too small, or the enamel or paint has worn away), and that a plaque has been found to be placed too far away from a public thoroughfare. Bearing these factors in mind, the recommendation may be that a plaque is repaired, replaced or removed altogether.

81 Where maintenance is not carried out, plaques can become eyesores, a point well illustrated by this grubby plaque to the Duke of Wellington (1769-1852), sited at 54 High Street, Hastings.

In many instances, it may become obvious that a plaque requires simple **cleaning**, a job which – depending on the material of the plaque – could be easily carried out *in situ*. This measure is especially relevant for ceramic plaques, the appearance of which can generally be restored with warm water, ph-neutral soap and a sponge. In other circumstances, and for plaques of other materials (such as bronze or stone), it may be necessary to employ a specialist, especially when removing grease or paint, rather than just dirt and pollution, from the surface. In such instances, it may be worth consulting the helpsheets produced by the War Memorials Trust, which offer advice about the conservation of bronze, stone and concrete war memorials, much of which may be relevant to commemorative plaques.

Where the condition of a plaque has deteriorated more seriously, it will usually be necessary to consider **refurbishment or repair**. Ideally, repair will be carried out *in situ*, and this will generally be the only option for plaques which are inset into the face of a wall. As surface-mounted plaques can be much more easily removed, refurbishment will generally be carried out elsewhere, perhaps at a foundry or conservators' studio. It is vital to contact the owner(s) of the building concerned to obtain their consent before carrying out the work (whether it be simple cleaning or wholesale refurbishment), and a plaque's removal should be undertaken by a skilled contractor (see pp. 109-110), in order to avoid any damage to the building or the plaque itself.

Furthermore, where a building is listed or falls within a conservation area, the consent of the local planning authority may be required before the plaque is taken down.

The job of repair or refurbishment should ideally be given to the individual or company responsible for the plaque's original manufacture, or to a firm specialising in conservation of such objects. Useful sources for locating such experts are the Conservation Register and the Building Conservation Directory (both available online; see pp. 156-157). Whatever the type of plaque – and especially where a plaque is historic (say, pre-dating the 1970s) or made of a fragile material – it will be important to deal sensitively with the tablet. For instance, harsh chemicals are almost always best avoided, and care should be taken that the surface of the plaque is not scratched.

82 This GLC plaque of enamelled steel was erected on a railway viaduct in Walthamstow Marshes, London, commemorating a site associated with the aircraft designer and manufacturer A.V. Roe (1877-1958). Put up in 1983, it was in poor condition 20 years later, reflecting both exposure to the elements and vandalism.

SURVEYING PLAQUE CONDITION

Some groups choose to carry out routine checks on the condition of plaques; for instance, Leeds Civic Trust makes an annual survey, and uses the money saved from manufacturing plaques of cast aluminium rather than a material such as ceramic to fund an ongoing programme of maintenance. In other cases, such a survey may be carried out on a less regular basis. For instance, after the Manchester scheme had lain dormant for a number of years, it became desirable to check the condition of the plaques that had been erected. Manchester City Council entrusted this work to the Architectural History Practice, which carried out an audit and condition survey of the city's plaques in 2009. Of the original 108 plaques that had been installed since 1960, 23 were found to be missing. A further 10% proved to be in poor condition; almost all of these were cast aluminium plaques which had been erected in the 1980s. Problems included fading of the background colour and flaking or blistering of the paint, especially on the lettering and around the rim. By contrast, the ceramic plaques installed in the early years of the scheme were found to be in good condition. Most required only surface cleaning, though one had suffered more serious damage as a result of having been scraped by passing vehicles; this occurred on account of its relatively low position on the building's façade, and because it stood proud of the wall face. The results of the audit have been carefully considered, and will inform recommendations about the design and material of any new or replacement plaques commissioned by Manchester City Council.

If the plaque is found to be damaged beyond repair, it may be that **replacement** is appropriate. This may prove the most cost-effective solution in the longer term, and presents an opportunity for correcting or improving a design and an inscription. In particular, consideration should be given to the material of the plaque and the reasons for the damage; if there is a strong chance that the same kind of deterioration will occur in the future, it may be that a different form of plaque is required. Where a new plaque is desired, issues discussed earlier in this document – especially those relating to design, positioning and installation – will need to be addressed, and appropriate people consulted (including the local conservation officer and a chartered building surveyor). In particular, care should be taken that a plaque's inscription and position remain historically accurate, and that a plaque is sensitively and appropriately installed.

As a plaque, once erected, becomes a part of the property of the building owner (see pp. 99-100), that person will generally be prepared to make a contribution towards the work involved in repair, refurbishment or replacement, especially where they have asked that this work be carried out. However, this will vary with each particular case, and at least some of the costs are likely to be borne by the person, organisation or group that was responsible for the plaque's installation. It is vital, therefore, that such expenditure is factored into a budget at an early stage.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IN THE EVENT OF RADICAL ALTERATION OR DEMOLITION

In certain instances, it may be that the structure bearing a plaque is the subject of a radical programme of alteration, or is to be demolished altogether. Although plaques signify historic interest, they can do nothing to ensure protection. Where buildings are listed or form part of conservation areas, consent for such work would always have to be sought from the local planning authority; where appropriate, there would be consultation with English Heritage. However, whilst it is hoped that local planning authorities would give due consideration to the associations commemorated by the plaque, the consequent significance of the building and, in some cases, the intrinsic interest of the plaque itself, the proposed changes or demolition may be approved.

Of the plaques erected as part of the London-wide scheme, about 100 have been lost through demolition of their associated buildings (Figs 83 and 84), while numerous others have been re-erected following alteration. In particular, plaques on gateposts and boundary walls can be affected, for such structures may be regularly rebuilt.

83 In 2009 the English Heritage plaque to Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding (1882-1970) at 3 St Mary's Road, Wimbledon, London, was removed on account of demolition. This photograph records the building shortly after the plaque's installation in 2000.

84 About 100 plaques erected as part of the London-wide scheme have been removed on account of demolition. Losses of the early twentieth century include 144 Kensington High Street, the former home of the artist David Wilkie (1785-1841); it was marked with an LCC plaque in 1907 and demolished in 1931.

Also, the practice of placing plaques on sites rather than authentic structures opens up the potential need for re-installation or replacement, sometimes on numerous occasions, there being no specific association with one particular building. These factors should be borne in mind when formalising selection criteria (see pp. 37-44).

The selection criteria may also dictate the means of approaching these situations. For instance, the scheme may require a building to be authentic (rather than a site), and the practice may be to erect plaques only on fabric pre-dating or contemporary with the subject being commemorated (as with the English Heritage scheme) (see pp. 92-93). Thus, where that fabric is altered, the plaque will need to be moved, where possible, to a part of the building which remains intact. In such instances, all considerations relating to plaque design and positioning will become relevant the same care should be taken with plaque re-erection or replacement as with original installation. With this in mind, the work is likely to

be taken on by the individual, organisation or group responsible for the original plaque, allowing them to employ their chosen contractor and to maintain control over the method and quality of fixing and positioning.

If there is no appropriate alternative position, or if the building is to be demolished, then the plaque will need to be removed. It may be, at this point, that historical research is carried out into alternative buildings for commemoration – for instance, the houses a person lived at earlier or later in their life – and it may be possible to re-use the salvaged plaque, so long as the inscription remains accurate in the plaque's new location.

The policies of other schemes may be more lenient; a plaque may be re-erected in its old position, despite changes to the structure, and – in cases of demolition – may even be put up on the new structure erected on the building's site. In the latter instance, additional information may need to be provided; the simple re-erection of a plaque would be misleading, as it is unlikely that its original inscription (for example, such and such a person 'lived here') would continue to be accurate. For the short time that this practice was followed under the London-wide scheme, old plaques were re-erected along with supplementary tablets (Fig. 85). Rectangular in shape, these were placed beneath the earlier roundels, and recorded the year in which the original plaque had been fixed and the year that it was refixed, following rebuilding. In other cases, a wholly new plaque may have to be erected on the new building, its inscription making clear that it marks a building's site. Either way, the design and positioning of the plaque will need to be carefully considered, on the new building as on the old. The building's owners will need to be closely involved in this process, as will the local planning authority, while plaque replacement or removal is also likely to involve discussions with builders and contractors.

In cases where plaques need to be removed altogether, it is important to consider the question of ownership. This is awkward, reflecting the fact that plaques almost always mark buildings, and that those buildings are usually in private hands. Once installed, a plaque becomes an integral part of the structure to which it is attached, especially where it is embedded into the wall face (see pp. 79-80). With this in mind, the plaque will generally be considered the property of the building owner, though – if removed through demolition

85 Where a plaque marks the site of a building, or is re-erected on such a site, it will be important to make this fact clear. For the short time that this practice was followed under the London-wide scheme, old plaques were re-erected along with supplementary tablets; an instance is this plaque commemorating Sir Isaac Newton's residence in Jermyn Street, St James's.

or for any other reason – the person or group responsible for the plaque's installation will almost always seek to retrieve it. Such an arrangement may well have been formalised as part of the granting of full consent by the property owner.

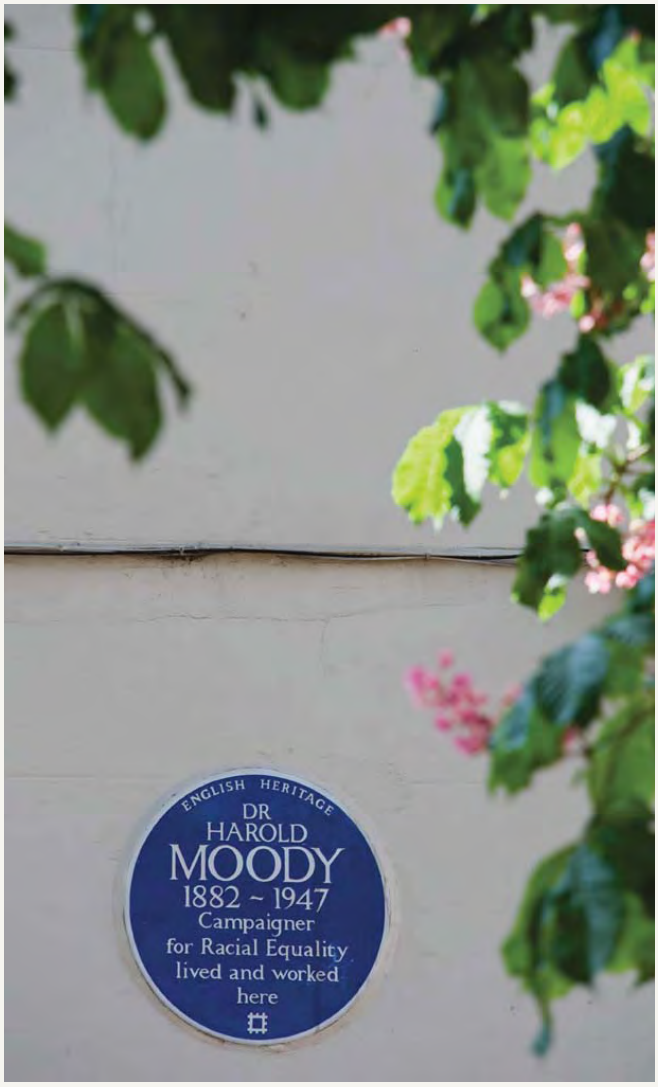
Thus, English Heritage seeks to retrieve all plaques put up under the London-wide scheme which are removed on account of alteration or demolition. These removed plaques can have a number of different homes or uses. For instance, they can be donated to relevant groups (such as specialist societies, institutes or museums) can form part of an exhibition, or can be added to a larger collection. English Heritage maintains such a collection, including plaques dating back to the nineteenth century. They can be useful for analytical purposes – informing, for instance, types of design and methods of fixing adopted in the future.

PROMOTION

Given the outlay – in time and money – involved in the installation of a plaque, it will almost always be thought appropriate to promote it. This will be especially the case for a scheme, and where a plaque has potential in terms of educating or including a specific group of people. Promotion serves to increase the profile of the individual, organisation or group responsible for a plaque's installation, as well as the subject it commemorates. Furthermore, popular awareness of a single plaque can help to ensure the long-term viability of a larger scheme, encouraging nominations and interest.

Plaques are a very accessible way of highlighting aspects of history, heritage and the environment, and any promotional activity can help communicate this knowledge to a wider audience. Many funding bodies will expect there to be a legacy element to a plaque project, so that the plaque or plaques continue to be fully appreciated by residents and visitors alike. Organisers of plaque schemes will therefore need to consider at an early stage the best methods of promoting their plaques to the public at large and to allocate sufficient funds to cover the costs of producing promotional materials or organising events. If the plaques are being administered by a local authority or public body, the public relations team of that organisation will probably take responsibility for promoting them. If the plaques are administered by a voluntary organisation, it is important to set aside volunteer time to deal with promotional and outreach activities.

There are a number of means of promoting plaques. Most involve time and dedication, at least for a specific period, though not all involve substantial costs. Promotion is an excellent way of disseminating the historical research carried out into every plaque suggestion, and of telling the full story of the subject and building commemorated, especially as the inscription on the plaque must necessarily be brief. Many plaque initiatives combine a number of the different forms of promotion that are discussed below, so that the widest possible audience can learn about the plaques that have been erected. Often, it will be possible to group promotion of plaques into a wider initiative – for instance, one which focuses on the history and heritage of a certain town or area (see boxed text on p. 136).



86 The promotion of plaques and plaque schemes is greatly enabled by attractive photographs such as this, illustrating the English Heritage plaque to Dr Harold Moody at 164 Queen's Road, Peckham, London.

Almost all forms of promotion have very real benefits, and some may also provide a welcome means of fundraising, which may in turn enable the installation of further plaques. Given these potential gains, it is important to aim for the highest quality – for instance, in design, layout, research and writing. Also, as plaques are such visual objects, it is worth taking time to ensure that promotional materials are visually arresting, using foresight by taking and commissioning new photographs whenever possible; these can show plaques being installed and unveiled, as well as *in situ* on a building (Fig. 86). Such high standards will reflect positively on the scheme as a whole.

UNVEILINGS

It is important to remember that the unveiling of a commemorative plaque (see pp. 115-120) is in itself a form of promotion. Such an occasion provides the ideal opportunity to generate interest in the individual building and subject being honoured and, if the plaque forms part of a wider initiative, the scheme as a whole. Even if a plaque is installed without a formal ceremony, it is always worth publicising the event by issuing a press release to local, national and specialist media. To guarantee press coverage, it is important to give advance notice of the plaque's installation, to prepare and circulate a full press release and to be proactive in talking to the media, offering interviews where necessary.

As has been discussed elsewhere in this document, unveilings often attract large numbers of people and are usually regarded as a 'good news story' and a welcome photo opportunity by the media. Inviting a well-known personality to unveil the plaque – especially someone closely connected to the subject commemorated – is a popular way of maximising publicity, and can help the plaque to reach different audiences. For example, the English Heritage plaque to the RAF fighter pilot Sir Douglas Bader (1910-82) (see Fig. 3) – erected in 2009 at his former home in South Kensington – gained coverage on the national television news, partly on account of the fact that it was unveiled by Sir Richard Branson, a close friend of the Bader family.

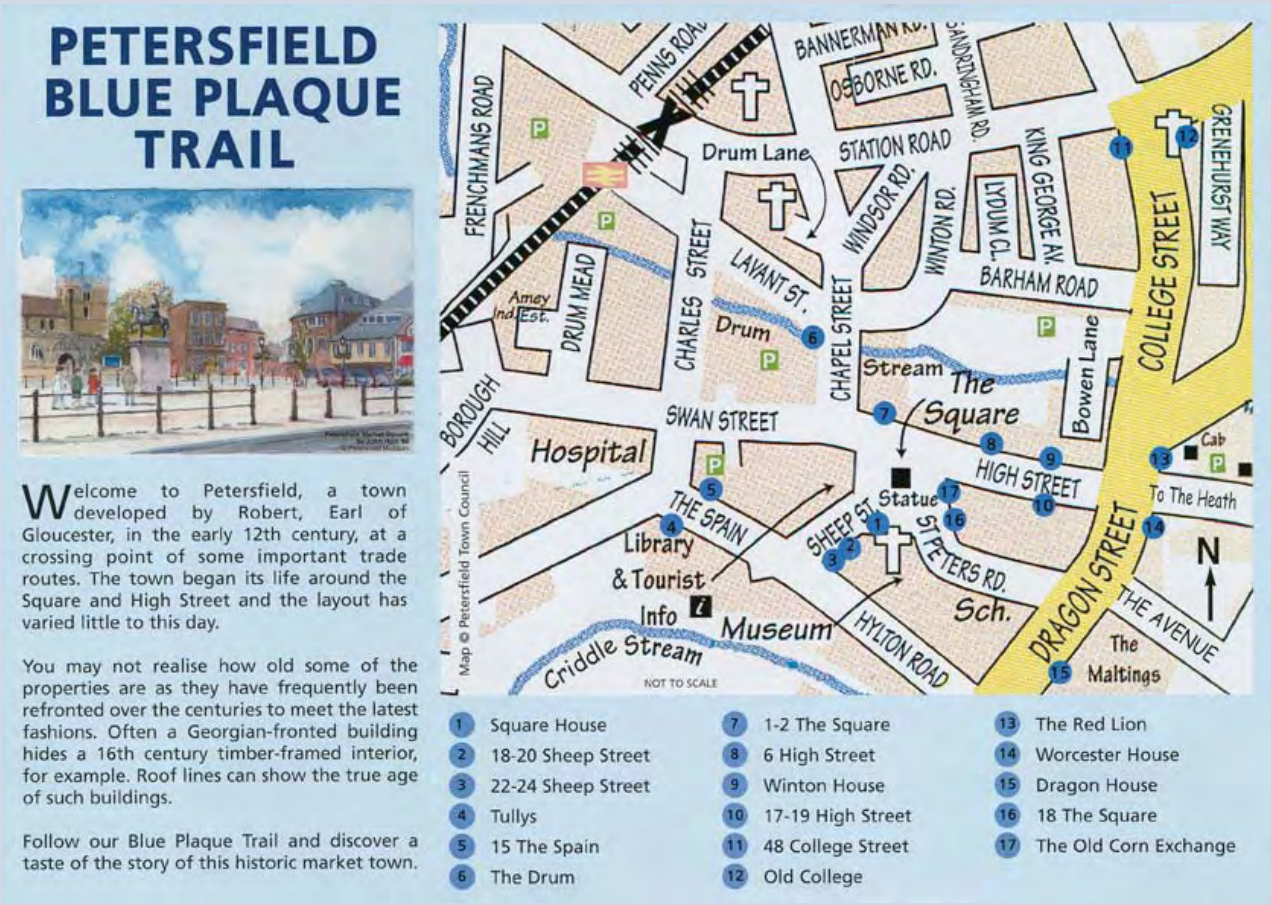
Such events are particularly effective in bringing the importance of the commemorated subject before a wide and perhaps influential audience. Various dignitaries, including ambassadors and politicians, have attended plaque unveilings in London throughout the years. For instance, the English Heritage plaque to the South African freedom fighters Ruth First (1925-82) and Joe Slovo (1926-95) was unveiled in 2003 by Nelson Mandela, the couple's close friend and comrade. Four years later, the unveiling of the plaque to Mary Seacole (1805-81), Jamaican nurse and heroine of the Crimean War, was attended by the Minister for Culture, Margaret Hodge, as well as others including Professor Elizabeth Anionwu, Vice-Chair of the Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal, and Ziggi Alexander, co-editor of Seacole's autobiography (Fig. 87).

87 The unveiling of the plaque to Mary Seacole (1805-81), which – originally installed by the GLC – was re-erected by English Heritage at another address, 14 Soho Square, London, in 2007. Shown from left to right are: Frances Blois (locum tenens for the Mayor of Westminster), Ziggi Alexander, Professor Elizabeth Anionwu, Margaret Hodge (Minister for Culture), the politician Baroness Valerie Amos, and Burchell Whiteman (Jamaican High Commissioner).

Among the large crowd of onlookers were pupils from Wyvil Primary School, Vauxhall, who had recently completed a project about Seacole in collaboration with the Black Cultural Archives in Lambeth.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications – whether in the form of leaflets, booklets, books or online guides – are perhaps the most common method of promoting commemorative plaques. These can range from a one-page leaflet to a large book, and it is



It may be possible for even relatively limited plaque initiatives to generate income by producing a leaflet or pamphlet which provides further information about the plaques in the area. Petersfield Heritage – which oversaw the erection of 17 plaques in the Hampshire town of Petersfield during 2008 – published a 12-page illustrated colour leaflet, containing a map and a trail around the town's plaques, which sells for £1. The cost of printing 1,000 copies was under £400, and this initial outlay will be recouped once about 400 leaflets have been sold. The income from any further sales of the leaflet will be added to a contingency fund, which may be used for maintenance and repair of existing plaques or to fund new plaques in the town.

important to judge what is most appropriate for the plaques in question. Likewise, the cost of producing a guide needs to be weighed against the likely lifespan of the publication, its audience and demand, and its potential to generate income. Where the guide is produced by a volunteer with experience of research and writing – or where it is based on earlier historical research undertaken to inform one or more plaques – costs may be comparatively low, comprising design and printing, together with any copyright fees which might be applicable for the use of images. Where an appropriate selling price is fixed, it may be that the publication is able to recover its costs or even generate a profit (see boxed text).

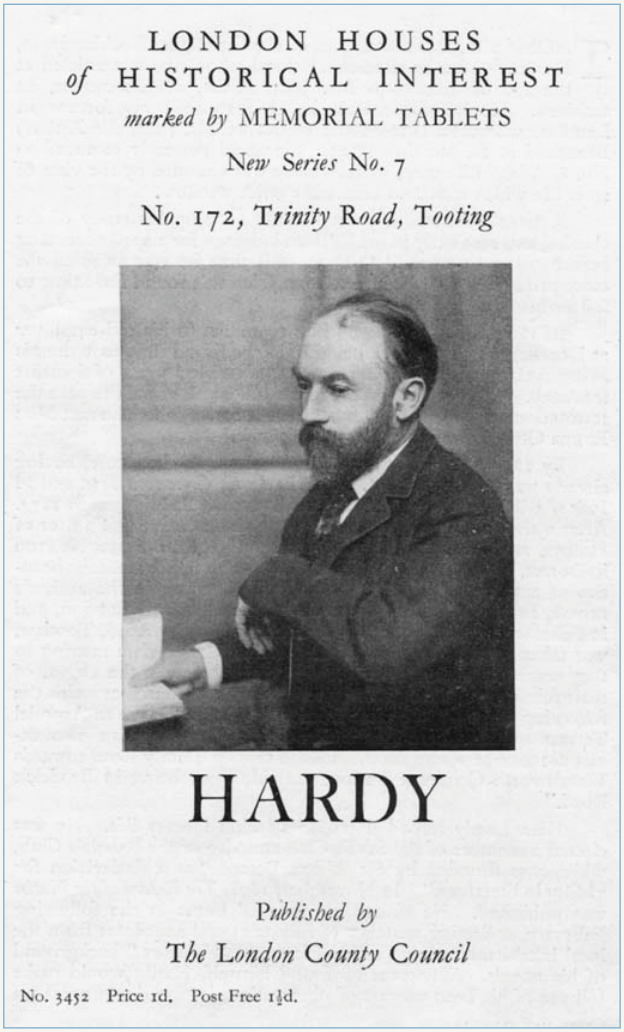
Plaque schemes are well suited to a published guide, which could be arranged alphabetically (by plaque subject), thematically, or geographically (by address), perhaps informing or linking in with a walk or trail (see below, pp. 135-136). Such guides are especially effective where the plaques have been installed in a burst of activity, as the publication can describe each plaque under the scheme and can remain current until the next bout of activity. Information given can include not only details regarding the subject commemorated, but the building marked, the nature of the connection between the two, and any interesting facts about the plaque itself (such as its proposer, unveiler, design and inscription).

Ongoing schemes will need to consider how to manage and fund the updating of any published guide, in order to take account of new plaques; this may involve regular editing and reprinting. A simple and cost-effective way of avoiding such problems is to produce an online guide that can be downloaded and printed by interested parties, and that can be updated as soon as a new plaque has been erected (see boxed text and Fig. 90).

Published guides to plaque schemes are particularly welcome where there have been several different phases of plaque installation in a particular locality. This is certainly true of London, where four successive organisations have been responsible for the city-wide scheme, erecting plaques of different colours, materials and designs over the course of the last 145 years. When English Heritage came to publish a guide to this scheme, it resulted in an ambitious and comprehensive account of its evolution and history; entitled *Lived in London: Blue Plaques and the Stories Behind Them* (New Haven and London, 2009), this fully illustrated book provides a detailed account of 800 of the capital's plaques and runs to over 600 pages. In addition, London is fortunate in having several guidebooks that list not only plaques erected under the city-wide scheme but those put up under other schemes and by private individuals. These include Nick Rennison's *The London Blue Plaque Guide* (3rd edn, Stroud, 2009), and Derek Sumeray's *Track the Plaque* (Derby, 2003) and *London Plaques* (Oxford, 2010), co-authored with John Sheppard.

There are a number of published guides covering plaque schemes elsewhere in the country, such as *The Blue Plaques of Leeds* (Leeds, 2001) by Peter Dyson and Dr Kevin Grady, *Historic Sidmouth: Life and Times in Sidmouth: A Guide to Blue Plaques* (Sidmouth, 1992) by Julia Creeke, and *Commemorative Plaques of Cheltenham* (Cheltenham, 2008) by Peter Smith and Sue Rowbotham. The latter book covers the plaques installed by the Cheltenham Civic Society since 1982 as well as a number of earlier plaques in the town.

An alternative approach is to publish a separate leaflet about every plaque, timed to coincide with its installation or unveiling. This was how the LCC promoted its plaques between 1901 and the time of the Second World War (Fig. 88).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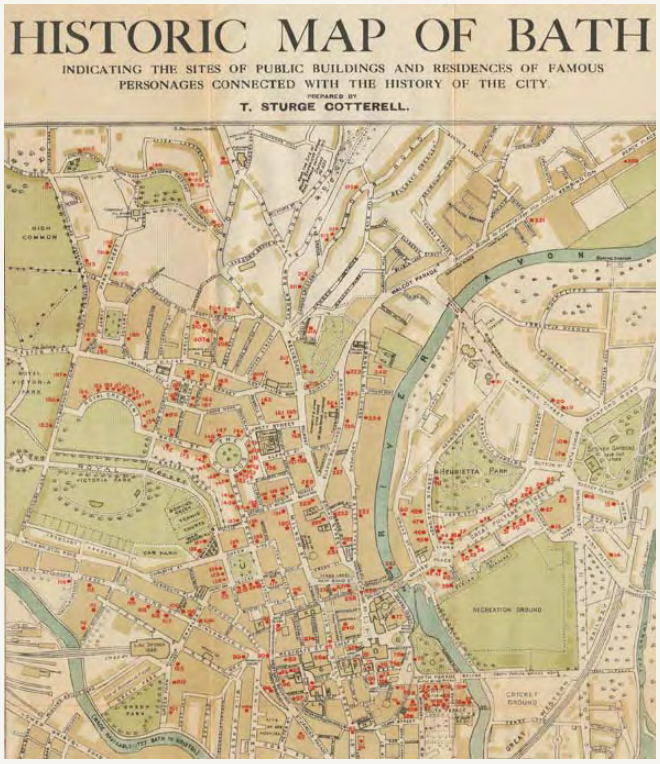
88 Between 1901 and the time of the Second World War, the LCC promoted each of its plaques by the production of a leaflet. The example shown here was timed to coincide with the installation of the plaque to the writer Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) in 1940.

The Council's staff produced a leaflet outlining the significance of the subject being commemorated, the association with the building, and the basic history of the plaque case (its proposal, and so forth); the leaflets also included an image of the plaque itself, and often a historic photograph of the person honoured. Many of these leaflets were gathered together and printed in six volumes, entitled *Indication of Houses of Historical Interest in London* (London, 1907-38). This approach has more recently been adopted by the Torbay Civic Society, which has produced collectors' pamphlets about each of the 30 blue plaques under its scheme, priced at 50p each. Such inexpensive



89 In producing publications which provide information about plaques, it is always sensible to include a map showing their various locations. This map forms part of a booklet recording the plaques of Bath; it was produced in various editions, the excerpt here deriving from the version of 1939.

leaflets are a perfect method of conveying both the historical research and the reasons for commemoration and, although they involve an initial outlay, some or all of these costs may be recovered through the profits of sale.

Whatever the format and scale of the publication planned, it is always sensible to include maps showing the locations of the plaques (see boxed text on p. 132 and Fig. 89). Maps are of course essential if the publication is intended to form the basis of a walking tour around the plaques in a given location (see pp. 135-136). This is the case with a guide produced by the Ipswich Society, *Ipswich's Blue Plaques* (2007) (Fig. 90); the work includes a clearly drawn map and a succinct description of 14 different plaques in the town, and takes the form of a two-sided A4 leaflet that can be downloaded from the Society's website. It is interesting that the Ipswich Society deliberately limited its plaque scheme to buildings in the town centre, in order to make it possible to follow a trail of all the plaques.

EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS

Creating an exhibition or display can be an excellent way of drawing attention to particular buildings, people or events commemorated by plaques, either in a specific geographical area or belonging to a particular scheme. The timing of any exhibition needs to be considered carefully; ideally, it should be held at the same time as a significant initiative, such as the publication of a guide or book about the plaques, in order to catch the public's attention and generate greater awareness regarding the plaques in the area. Local museums and galleries are often ideal partners for such events, and can also host related talks on plaques and the historic environment. For example, in May 2008 the Haslemere Civic Society joined forces with the Haslemere Educational Museum in Surrey to mount an exhibition, 'People and Places – Haslemere's famous residents and their houses', to coincide with the development of a blue plaques scheme in the town.

Exhibitions can sometimes serve as launch events, as was the case with the blue plaque heritage trail in Rhondda Cynon Taf, Wales, which held an exhibition at the Rhondda Heritage Park, Trehafod, in 2008. This featured information about the 30 sites that were to be commemorated under the scheme, together with the plaques themselves before they were installed. Organisers of ongoing plaque schemes may wish to consider staging a more permanent exhibition, such as that charting the history of the London-wide blue plaques scheme; this has been on display at the Wellington Arch in London – an English Heritage property – since 2003.

As well as promoting the subjects and buildings commemorated, such events allow an organisation to continue canvassing nominations for commemorative plaques and may help keep the plaque scheme in the public eye. Such objectives are also fulfilled by smaller displays, which have the advantage of flexibility, comparative cheapness and ease of mobility. They can be put up for short periods of time at appropriate locations or events, such as libraries and conferences, and can be easily and regularly updated (see Fig. 94).

WALKS AND TRAILS

While a published guide allows the reader to find out more about the subject and building commemorated by a plaque, there is no substitute for going out and looking at the plaques *in situ*. As discussed above (see pp. 131-134), many plaque schemes have produced leaflets (perhaps including maps) that enable people to follow a trail or guided walk around the plaques and buildings in a particular locality (Fig. 90 and boxed text on p. 132). Such self-guided walks work extremely well as an introduction to a town, village or area, and offer locals, visitors and tourists a fascinating insight into the historical associations of the place.

Depending on the context, the walk may take in buildings additional to those bearing plaques, and will thereby broaden its coverage, interest and appeal. For example, the free, downloadable leaflet promoting the Crawley Heritage Trail – which was created by Crawley Arts Council in 2007 – sets out two walks around the 16 plaques of the West Sussex town and its neighbourhood, noting important buildings and landmarks as well as the properties bearing plaques. Another alternative is to use audio guides, comprising information which can be downloaded onto a digital audio player (MP3) and which can lead people on a walk of a particular area.

In addition, it may be thought desirable to offer guided walks of the plaques in a given area. These can often be run by volunteers – especially those individuals who undertook the historical research behind the plaques – and can be a good opportunity for fundraising. Guided tours also enable the organisers of a plaque scheme to discuss the plaques within the context of the historic environment, to engage their audience with issues concerning the relationship of a plaque with a building, to answer specific questions, and to learn from the views and experiences of others.

For a guided walk to be successful, it needs to take place within a fairly small geographical area – ideally a town centre, village or district of a city – so that the audience is able to see a range of plaques without spending too much time walking between locations. Typically, such a walk should last no longer than two hours and, for logistical and health and safety reasons, it is best to limit numbers to about 25. An opportunity may be taken to begin or end the walk at a site

90 Leaflets offer an inexpensive and accessible means of promoting a plaque scheme, and can be used as the basis for trails or guided walks around a particular area. Such an approach is well demonstrated by this leaflet, downloadable from the website of the Ipswich Society.

of significance which also provides a pleasant place for rest and refreshment; for instance, a commemorated building which is also open to the public, a museum which houses an exhibition or display on a subject of relevance, or a historic public house.

One of the earliest known examples of a guided walk can be found in Bath, where since 1934 the Mayor of Bath's Corps of Hononary Guides have been leading free walks around the city twice a day on every day of the year, taking in many of the houses marked by historic bronze plaques (see Fig. 89). In a large city such as London, where certain areas have a high density of plaques, it is possible to lead themed walks; for example, a walk around St John's Wood could concentrate on the many artists who are commemorated with plaques. One example of a self-guided walk such as this is that mapping the history of anaesthesia

in London, which was produced by the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland in 2008. A guided walk run by English Heritage took a more unusual approach. It looked at the various buildings and sites in a specific area of London (Soho and Fitzrovia) which would have been known to or had connections with a particular individual – the anti-slavery campaigner Olaudah Equiano (*c.* 1745-97) – who, as all of his known former homes have been demolished, cannot be commemorated under the English Heritage blue plaques scheme.

TALKS AND LECTURES

Whereas guided walks and trails are necessarily limited by the distance that people will happily travel to see plaques, talks and lectures have a much wider scope and are therefore better suited to promoting plaques within a larger geographical area. It is essential to accompany any talk about commemorative plaques with images; for instance, of the plaques (*in situ*, as designs, being made, installed or unveiled), the buildings they adorn, and the subjects commemorated. Talks and lectures also enable the speaker to make use of historic illustrations, perhaps showing plaques and buildings which are no longer extant (see Fig. 84); this may be of particular value when talking about plaques which mark sites (rather than authentic buildings).

DIVERSIFYING PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Llanelli Community Heritage has taken a proactive approach to promoting its heritage blue plaques project, which was launched in 2004. It has complemented the installation of over 40 plaques with a series of interpretation boards and the production of a DVD, website, leaflets and a guide book to be used in schools and by community groups. In addition, the heritage group has held lectures and social evenings, organised a display of early history models at the Parc Howard Museum in Llanelli, and instigated an annual open-bus tour of the plaques and sites of historic interest in the town. Subjects commemorated include the site of the Llanelly Pottery [*sic*], which operated from 1839 to 1922. Llanelli Community Heritage is a voluntary body that has received funding from Communities First, Awards for All Wales, Carmarthenshire County Council, Llanelli Town Council, Cadw and the Llanelli Rural Council.


IN REMEMBRANCE.—The Mayor of Bath placing a wreath to-day on the mural tablet at No. 33, The Paragon, Bath, to the memory of Mrs. Siddons.

91 The Mayor of Bath places a wreath of remembrance beneath the bronze plaque to the actress Mrs Sarah Siddons (1755-1831) at 33 The Paragon in 1931, the centenary of her death.

Talks are of course a very effective way of engaging the wider community with issues relating to plaques, encouraging them to submit nominations, and providing an opportunity for discussion. This is especially valuable if a plaque scheme wishes to target a particular community group that perhaps feels excluded from the plaques already installed. Such events can also be a useful means of fundraising, and can provide an opportunity to sell and raise awareness about guides and other promotional material and activities.

EVENTS

Although commemorative plaques are often seen as having primarily local rather than national or international relevance, it is always worth considering the wider picture when seeking to promote a plaque or plaques. Anniversaries of major historical events continue to attract media attention and planning a plaque to coincide with an anniversary will only serve to increase public interest. Such occasions – such as celebrations surrounding the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar in 2005 or the commemoration of the bicentenary of the abolition of the transatlantic

slave trade in 2007 – can prove to be a means of raising awareness, both about the plaques and their subjects and of the wider event being marked. For example, there were a number of commemorative plaques erected in 2007 that honoured key figures in (and therefore drew attention to) the campaign to end slavery and the slave trade. In London, two plaques were erected to the black writer Ignatius Sancho (1729-80): the first (put up by Westminster City Council in partnership with the Nubian Jak Community Trust) marks the site of his former home in Whitehall (see Fig. 18), and the other (erected by the Friends of Greenwich Park) commemorates the remaining fragment of Montagu House, Greenwich, where Sancho had worked as a servant.

If the plaque is honouring an individual, it can be worth planning an unveiling around a significant date within that person's life, particularly their birthday or a centenary of their birth or death. Plaques erected under the London-wide scheme have frequently tied in with such occasions, including those commemorating the film director Sir Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1980) and the poet Sir John Betjeman (1906-84), both installed during the centenary years of their birth (see boxed text on p. 117).

It is always worth thinking ahead about such events and, where appropriate, ensuring that plaques are ready to be installed to coincide with the occasions. Such an approach ensures not only a maximum level of interest and publicity, but can also aid with fundraising, especially where events are of national or international significance. For instance, many activities will be taking place around the staging of the Olympic Games in London in 2012, and grants may be available for the commemoration with plaques of sporting heroes across the country. For schemes, such events also offer a valuable opportunity to draw attention to plaques which already exist, and to reach new and wider audiences; relevant guides, lists, trails and/or webpages could be created, focusing on commemorated subjects which are of relevance to the larger occasion taking place.

Following installation, a plaque may continue to be a focus for events and commemoration. In Bath, the historic bronze plaques erected from the late nineteenth century are often accompanied by a hook; this was designed to bear a laurel wreath, hung beneath the plaque on the occasion of significant anniversaries. For example, the Mayor of Bath placed a wreath of remembrance below the plaque to the actress Mrs Sarah Siddons (1755-1831) in 1931, the centenary of her death (Fig. 91).

WEBSITES

It is increasingly the case that the principal means of promoting commemorative plaques is via a website, an approach which serves to reach a very wide audience, international in scope. Certainly, there is a general expectation among the public that it should be possible to access online a list of plaques in a given area. It is desirable, therefore, that plaque schemes aim to provide on their own or an associated website a complete and up-to-date list of plaques, detailing their location, inscription, and the date of their installation. If the scheme includes a large number of plaques – such as the London-wide blue plaques scheme – it is recommended that a searchable database is provided on the website. There may also be maps, or links to other online maps, enabling people to see precisely where the plaques are situated. Larger schemes may warrant a Geographical Information System (GIS), allowing users to access textual and pictorial information pertaining to a plaque by clicking on the relevant point on a map.

For schemes that are ongoing, it is vital that the website includes details of how to propose a plaque, together with full contact information, a summary of the selection criteria and process, and photographs showing some of the plaques already erected. In some cases, it may be appropriate to include a nomination form, which can either be completed online or printed out and submitted by post; such a form appears, for instance, on the website of Southwark Council in London, which has run a blue plaques scheme since 2003. A notable example of a highly informative website is that provided by Aberdeen City Council, which provides a full description of every commemorative plaque in the city, together with the criteria of the scheme and a downloadable leaflet with a suggested walking trail.

Websites are ideally suited to ongoing schemes such as that in Aberdeen, as it is easy to add details of new plaques, events such as exhibitions and talks, publications, and general news and updates; there may even be an associated e-newsletter, sent out at regular intervals to

interested parties. It is also possible to include on the website more information about the subjects commemorated than can be expressed in the plaques' inscriptions, thereby making the website a valuable educational source. Certainly, it is important to ensure that websites are attractive and easy to use, and – where information on plaques is contained within a larger site – that it can be quickly identified. It is also advisable to ensure that the pages are regularly updated and maintained, something which may need to be factored in when an outline budget is set for a plaque project.

APPLICATION SOFTWARE (APPS)

The continuing development of computer software and, in particular, the proliferation of application software (apps) has created a new means of promoting commemorative plaques. In principle, it is possible to access information about plaques via a mobile phone, Blackberry or similar device, either by dialling up a service provider or by using global positioning software to trigger a mechanism whereby the user is alerted to the proximity of a plaque.

In 2010 Preston became the first place in the United Kingdom to have a free iPhone application dedicated to the blue plaques in the city. Developed by Preston City Council in partnership with the University of Central Lancashire, the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), and Preston and South Ribble Civic Trust, the application uses photographs, audio clips and an online map to enable users to learn more about a particular plaque or person, and to take a tour of the buildings marked by plaques. A related application has been developed by Norwich HEART; this utilises a 'hypertag', which is embedded within an interpretative panel and delivers historical information (in the form of text, audio and video) free to mobile telephones.

A summary of the many ways in which mobile technology can form part of heritage projects has been published by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, entitled *History in Your Hands: Using Mobile Devices in Heritage Interpretation* (Aberystwyth, 2008). Further development is required in terms of plaques, and the potential of this technology to engage new generations of people has yet to be fully exploited. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the growing popularity of such

92 The plaque to Emmeline and Dame Christabel Pankhurst, erected in 2006 at 50 Clarendon Road, Holland Park, London.

technology may well provide the most immediate means of finding out more information about a plaque than is included in its inscription.

MERCHANDISING

The creation of a product or product range can be a very effective means of promoting plaques to the public. Although they involve an initial outlay, such initiatives are not necessarily very costly or time-consuming – they can, for instance, be based on existing photographs (perhaps those taken for a website or published guide) – and can be a valuable means of raising funds. There are a large number of possible products; the appropriateness of many of these will depend on the design of the plaques concerned. A handsome plaque, of an easily recognisable design, lends itself particularly well to products which focus on the plaque's design, such as coasters, button-badges, bags, mugs, fridge magnets and tea-towels. In addition to bearing an image of a plaque, such items can include brief historical information and contact details for the scheme.

However, an attractive photograph – whether it shows a plaque in detail, or a general view of the building on which the plaque is placed – has a great many uses. For instance, such photographs can be compiled as a calendar, and used on gift cards, postcards and even jigsaws. Where there are a number of plaques in a particular locality (they may even be a notable feature of the place or area), local shops will often be pleased to stock such items, which have appeal both to residents and visitors.

In creating such products – as with all of the promotional materials and activities discussed in this section – it is important to aim for high standards, and to be sure that the items reflect the quality of the plaques and (where relevant) plaque scheme. As merchandise often has a comparatively long shelf-life – mugs, for instance, may be used for many years – it is important to aim to get things right first time around. With this in mind, it is usually advisable to start simply, issuing one or two products, and to become more ambitious depending on feedback and demand. It is also advisable to consult the owners of the buildings bearing the plaques to be featured in any form of merchandise, in order to inform them about the plans for promoting the plaque in question and to ensure that they are happy for further attention to be drawn towards their property.

OUTREACH

All of the promotional methods described so far offer great potential for engagement, encouraging an interest in history and the historic environment among people of all ages and backgrounds. It is important, however, to realise that certain groups in society may feel that their history and heritage are inadequately reflected in plaque schemes, both in their locality and across the country. Taking a proactive approach to addressing these concerns and to seeking the views of all the people in the community, not just the traditional audiences, is a valuable way of reassessing a plaque scheme and determining the objectives of any future activity. These issues should be acknowledged and addressed at an early stage in any plaque project, both during the consultation phase and during the process of inviting nominations.

If the plaque scheme is long-established, then consideration needs to be given as to how to ensure that the initiative is representative of society as a whole, in terms of gender, class, ethnicity, religion, belief and economic background. For instance, in producing published guides, websites and merchandise, care should always be taken that featured plaques honour as wide a range of subjects as possible. This variety should extend to professional categories; plaques commemorating subjects from a particular field – such as popular music or sport – can often help a scheme to engage with entirely new audiences. The era in which a person lived can also be a consideration, as can the geographical location in which the plaques are placed and therefore experienced.

Where such plaques do not exist, a more proactive approach may need to be taken, rather than relying on the public to make nominations. In order to make a plaque scheme more representative and reflective of the full diversity of society, it makes sense to identify people or groups in specific

93 This charming plaque to Lewis Carroll (1832-98), author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), commemorates his former home at The Chestnuts, Castle Hill, Guildford, Surrey. It was designed by local children, who managed to incorporate many of Carroll's fictional characters.

communities who could be encouraged to make nominations for plaques. Alternatively, experts from such communities may be consulted when canvassing nominations.

In addition, those involved in a plaque scheme could carry out relevant research and make suggestions of their own, with the aim of achieving a more balanced group of plaques or of erecting more plaques in a particular geographical area. For instance, in 2000 English Heritage's Blue Plaques Panel considered a historical report on a number of women active in the suffrage movement; this resulted in plaques to figures such as Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928) and Dame Christabel Pankhurst (1880-1958) (Fig. 92).

More recently, a similar initiative was undertaken for sporting figures, with the aim of installing plaques in the run up to the Olympics in London in 2012. It is interesting to note that the Birmingham Civic Society called for more nominations of female figures when it erected what was only the second plaque (out of a total of 90) to honour a woman in 2008. Also of interest is a Black History Foundation project which aims to honour black figures who made their mark in the Midlands; this is being accomplished through a series of 'virtual' plaques on the project website, which will act as portals for further information. These approaches offer different means of redressing the balance and making sure that commemorative plaques honour people from across the community.

An important method of reaching out to new audiences is to promote plaque schemes in schools. Plaques can form part of a local history project, and offer an accessible way for pupils to learn about the history of their surroundings and community. Talks, guided tours, booklets and DVDs about plaques can be tailored to suit school children according to their age and interest, and are an ideal introduction to understanding the history and heritage of their area (see boxed text on p. 136). It is easy to make activities interactive, perhaps by encouraging children to nominate their own heroes for commemoration or by inviting them to design and create their own plaques (Fig. 93).

There are several plaque schemes around the country that have commissioned school children to create plaques and have held competitions to decide the best designs. In autumn 2009, Blackpool International Airport invited entries for a commemorative plaque to mark '100 years of flying from Blackpool', offering a prize of £5,000 to the school that submitted the winning design. The material of the finished plaque is dependent on the design of the winning entry, thereby allowing children a free-hand in terms of composition. In the village of Willenhall, Warwickshire, two heritage trails feature eight plaques that were designed by children from local schools; this was an initiative organised in 2002 by the Willenhall Local History Group, with funding from the Awards for All scheme of the Big Lottery Fund (see p. 26). A key element of the proposed plaque scheme in Chipping Sodbury, South Gloucestershire, is engagement with local schools; a local history module has been developed and pupils at the local secondary school have been encouraged to design the form that the plaques will take.

Interactive games and displays based on plaques can be another means of engaging with young people. For several years, English Heritage has featured such a game at its annual Festival of History (Fig. 94). This features a series of photographs of buildings of different types and dates, most of which bear a plaque (and therefore have a particular historical association). Those using the game are invited to guess which plaque belongs to which building, a process which is fun as well as educational about history and architecture. In this way, plaques remain relevant and of continuing interest to people of all ages.

94 Interactive games and displays based on plaques can be an effective means of engaging young people. For several years, English Heritage has featured such a game at its annual Festival of History, shown here.

95 A Ludlow Civic Society plaque draws attention to the history of the Butter Cross in Broad Street, which was built in 1743-44 by William Baker. The building housed the town corporation's meeting room above an open arcade where a market operated.

8

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ENGLISH HERITAGE: CRITERIA USED IN THE EVALUATION OF SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES IN LONDON

English Heritage has adopted the following principles for the guidance of those who wish to suggest the erection of commemorative plaques:

(a) English Heritage will erect plaques on buildings associated with famous people in those cases where the following requirements are met:

i. There shall be reasonable grounds for believing that the subjects are regarded as eminent by a majority of members of their own profession or calling.

ii. They shall have made some important positive contribution to human welfare or happiness.

iii. They shall have had such exceptional and outstanding personalities that the well-informed passer-by immediately recognises their names

or

They deserve national recognition.

(b) Without exception, proposals for the commemoration of famous people shall not be considered until they have been dead for twenty years or until the centenary of birth, whichever is the earlier.

(c) Proposals will not be considered for the commemoration of individuals still living.

(d) A person's residence in London should have been a significant period, in time or in importance, within their life and work.

(e) Plaques shall not be erected on the sites of former houses occupied by famous people, but in exceptional circumstances consideration may be given to erecting plaques on reconstructed buildings which present an exact facsimile frontage on the identical site.

(f) Proposals will, however, be considered for the commemoration of sites of special historical interest.

(g) A building marked with a plaque must be clearly visible from the public highway.

(h) Although most plaques are erected on houses associated with famous people, the erection of plaques on blocks of flats is not excluded, nor, exceptionally, on significant places of work.

(i) Unless a case is deemed exceptional, plaques shall not be erected on educational or ecclesiastical buildings or Inns of Court.

(j) Plaques can only be erected on buildings, not on boundary walls or gate piers.

(k) The City of London and Whitehall are ruled out for consideration under the blue plaques scheme.

(l) A building or person shall not be commemorated solely because they figure in a work of fiction.

(m) Unless a case is deemed exceptional, suggestions for a plaque will not be considered where the person is already commemorated by a plaque previously erected by the Royal Society of Arts, the London County Council, the Greater London Council or English Heritage.

(n) A plaque shall generally take the form of a circular ceramic plaque about 490mm (19 inches) in diameter with white lettering on a blue background. A different design or material may be used if for special reasons such a course is deemed appropriate.

The following additional principles have been adopted for guidance when plaques to overseas visitors are under consideration:

(o) They should be of international reputation or of significant standing in their own countries.

(p) The form of name, forename or title in the inscription on a plaque should be in accordance with that given in a standard English work of reference, or as would be readily recognisable to a well-informed passer-by.

English Heritage asks proposers of plaques to note that many more suggestions for plaques are received than can be approved within the resources available. Although all plaque suggestions falling within the criteria will be considered, English Heritage reserves the right to determine priorities among suggestions received.

APPENDIX 2

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL: GUIDELINES FOR THE NOMINATION OF COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES

That the nominated person is worthy of commemoration, that they are of national or international standing or of such outstanding local importance as to deserve a plaque. They should be regarded either within their profession as eminent or be recognisable to the well-informed passer by.

That the nomination is vetted by both the Assistant Keeper (Research) and subject to final approval by the appropriate council committee.

That the person or group who have made the nomination make available finance necessary to see the plaque created, shipped and installed (approximately £350). A letter of financial commitment will be required. Finance must be raised independently: unfortunately Aberdeen City Council officers will not be able to become involved in the fund raising process.

That the person in question is dead and where appropriate any living relative has granted their consent to the erection of the plaque.

That an appropriate location for the plaque has been found. Appropriate means that either the person lived within the building upon which the plaque will be fixed or they worked there for a significant period and that the location of the plaque is such that members of the public will normally be able to view it from a public road or street without needing to enter upon private property. It will be necessary to have permission from those either resident within that building or those who work there. Consent will also be required from those who own the building.

That the plaque will conform to the normal dimensions of other commemorative plaques within Aberdeen City. That is to say that they are cast aluminium, round, 20 inches in diameter and with white raised lettering on a fawn background.

That no notice of sponsorship will occur on the plaque. However notice of sponsorship will occur on the plaques information on the City Council's Corporate Website and in any forthcoming versions of the plaque leaflet. Aberdeen City Council will retain ownership of the plaque.

That the wording on the plaque should be in normal English, with exceptions where a piece of fiction or such like is being indicated.

APPENDIX 3

BIRMINGHAM CIVIC SOCIETY: CRITERIA FOR THE ERECTION OF BLUE PLAQUES

The Society may erect Blue Plaques on sites within the City.

The Board shall decide on the erection of Blue Plaques in honour of individuals or groups of people who have had a close connection with the City of Birmingham.

Individuals or groups to be honoured in this way should:

- Have been born in Birmingham or have lived in the city for a period of at least five years and
- Have been dead for at least 20 years and
- Have achieved national or international prominence in a significant field of endeavour (for example: academia, architecture, the armed services, the arts, commerce, education, engineering, industry, the law, literature, medicine, music, philanthropy, politics, religion, science, etc.) or have made a major contribution to the development of the City or the well-being of its citizens.

The design of Blue Plaques shall be approved by the Board and shall be erected in accordance with all relevant local planning and other regulatory requirements.

A brief biography of anyone honoured by the erection of a Blue Plaque should be appended to the minutes of the relevant meeting of the Board and maintained as an official document of the Society.

APPENDIX 4

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL: BLUE PLAQUES SCHEME SELECTION CRITERIA

Initial selection criteria

Persons to be commemorated :-

(a) Should have been dead at least ten years.

(b) Should have been Cambridge born, educated or resident.

(c) Should have been eminent through their profession or calling.

(d) Should have made a significant contribution to the life of the city and its residents.

(e) Should merit recognition because of an outstanding [or notorious] act.

Events to be commemorated:-

(a) Should have occurred at least ten years ago.

(b) Should be instantly recognisable to the majority of the general public.

(c) Should have significance in the history of the city or country as a whole.

Arrangements for erecting plaques

(a) The building on which the plaque is to be placed should have been the residence [or site of the residence] of the person concerned or the place where the event took place.

(b) Only one plaque will normally be placed on any building.

(c) Only one plaque will normally be erected for each person or event to be commemorated unless the form of commemoration is felt to be inadequate.

(d) Plaques will be made to a standard design approved by the Blue Plaque Committee and will on no account advertise any company or product.

(e) Plaques will only be affixed with the express consent of the owners of the building concerned.

(f) The means of fixing of each plaque to the chosen building will be approved by the City Council's Conservation Officers. Normally the preferred solution will be for plaques to be surface mounted and bolted into mortar joints and / or glued to the wall. The Conservation Officers will also advise on the most suitable position for each plaque and will advise whether any statutory approval is required from the Local Planning Authority.

APPENDIX 5

CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION: COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES: CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Individuals or groups of people

Without exception, proposals for the commemoration of famous people shall not be considered until they have been dead for 10 years or until the centenary of birth, whichever is the earlier. In addition, at least one of the following requirements is to be met.

- There shall be reasonable grounds for believing that the subject is regarded as eminent or deserving of recognition.
- They shall have made some important positive contribution to history or society.
- They shall have had such outstanding personalities that the well-informed passer-by immediately recognises their name or names.

Buildings or sites

The nature of the current building or use of a site shall not preclude the erection of a plaque, but such issues as technical difficulties of fixing and the need to obtain Listed Building Consent shall be taken into consideration. The consent of all parties who have a relevant legal interest in the site of the proposed plaque will be required and it may be useful to know at the point of application if the views of these parties have been ascertained. The following requirement shall be met, but you should note that a building or site shall not be marked solely because it figures in a work of fiction.

- There shall be reasonable grounds for believing that the subject is of archaeological, architectural or historic interest.

National / International organisations

Such organisations may be deemed worthy of consideration provided that at least one of the following criteria are met.

- There shall be reasonable grounds for believing that the subject is regarded as eminent or deserving of recognition.
- They shall have made some important positive contribution to society or history and development of the City of London.
- A well-informed passer-by should immediately recognise their name.

Foreign applications

In these cases a contribution towards the cost of production or erection would normally be expected, either from the relevant Government or the person / organisation making the proposal and the following criteria must also be met.

- They should be of international reputation or of significant standing in their own country.
- Their time in the City of London should have been a significant period within their life and work.
- The form of name, forename or title in the inscription on a plaque should be in accordance with that given in a standard English work of reference or as would be readily recognisable to a reasonably well-informed passer-by.

APPENDIX 6

GUERNSEY BLUE PLAQUES
(RUN BY GUERNSEY MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES ON BEHALF OF THE BLUE PLAQUES PANEL):
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to be eligible for a Blue Plaque:

1. Each nominee must have been dead for 20 years, or have passed the centenary of his/her birth, whichever is the earlier.
2. Each nominee must:
   (a) Have been born in Guernsey or;
   (b) Have lived in Guernsey for a period of significant importance in life or work;
3. Each nominee must also:
   (a) Have made a significant contribution to Guernsey's culture, embracing in its broadest sense the arts, literature, language and heritage; or
   (b) Have made a significant contribution to the welfare or happiness of the people of Guernsey; or
   (c) Have been associated with a significant event in Guernsey's history; or
   (d) Is considered eminent within their own profession or calling and made a significant contribution to this vocation whether in Guernsey or elsewhere; or
   (e) Would satisfy criteria a to d, but achieved eminence elsewhere than Guernsey.
4. Each nominee, or the event with which the nominee is associated, must in addition be recognisable to the well-informed passer-by and/or deserve recognition beyond Guernsey.
5. A building associated with the nominee should survive in Guernsey. This preferably will be the place the nominee was born, or where the nominee lived during the significant period. In some cases the most appropriate building may be the place where the nominee carried out significant work. Consideration may be given in cases where buildings have been replaced or reconstructed on the site.
6. A plaque will not be erected in honour of a nominee in respect of whom there is already a plaque of some sort or other public memorial other than a grave marker.
7. Plaques will not be erected to honour a fictional or legendary person, nor where a site is better marked by, for example, a historical interpretation sign.

8. A Nomination may be for two or more people who were closely association with a significant enterprise. A Plaque may therefore honour more than one person or a group of people.

9. Consideration will also be given for a Plaque to mark a significant historical event.

Notes on 3(d). This is expected to cover people in the fields of sport, science & technology, industry, medicine, other professions, the military and the arts in its broadest sense.

APPENDIX 7

INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS: COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES SCHEME CRITERIA

The Commemorative Plaque Scheme is part of the Institute's Physics in Society programme. It is, therefore, very important that plaques are erected where they will be seen by the general public, or by a sufficiently broad range of individuals who may not otherwise have known about the association with the individual.

The person to be honoured must be recognised as an outstanding physicist, scientist, astronomer, etc. who has contributed to the advancement of physics by his/her theories, discoveries or inventions. They should have a direct connection with the proposed site of the plaque. This might be their birthplace, school, university/laboratory, where he/she taught, carried out their work, place of residence, a building already associated with physics, astronomy, housing artefacts where he/she had a strong connection.

The general rule is that we expect the individual to have died at least 10-20 years ago. To qualify between 10 and 20 years there would need to be a very strong case of the individual's place in science history e.g. Astronomer Royal, Nobel Laureate.

There should not be any other commemorative plaque/inscription to the person to be honoured in the same locality.

APPENDIX 8

LEEDS CIVIC TRUST: PRINCIPAL SELECTION CRITERIA TO BE SATISFIED FOR A SUBJECT TO BE COMMEMORATED BY A PLAQUE

1 **The event, person, institution or building commemorated must be of very special importance in the history, heritage or shaping of Leeds.**

(a) Because blue plaques commemorate history and heritage, a sufficient period of time must have elapsed for the subject commemorated to be truly regarded as part of history. A period of at least 50 years should normally have elapsed.

(b) People commemorated must have had a highly significant impact on the life or development of Leeds, or their achievements or activities must have been of national significance. Such people should have lived or worked in Leeds for a period sufficient for the city to have had a significant influence in forming their character or shaping their activities.

(c) To qualify for a historic blue plaque a person needs to be dead. At least ten years should normally have passed since their death, so that sufficient time has elapsed for an objective evaluation to be made of their local or national significance.

2 **A prominent and physically suitable structure (normally a building or wall) on which the plaque can be erected should exist. There needs to be a strong association between the structure and the subject of the plaque.**

(a) The owner of the structure needs to be amenable to the erection of the plaque.

(b) It is the very nature of a blue plaque that there is a strong association between the physical structure on which the plaque is erected and the subject of the plaque. Departing from this principle would dilute the essence of the blue plaques scheme.

(c) A major element of the scheme is celebrating the city's built heritage. There is therefore a very strong presumption against erecting plaque commemorating the sites of buildings now demolished.

(d) An exception to 2(b) above may be made for pre-19th century buildings. In a few cases the Trust has erected plaques marking the sites of buildings of immense significance in the history of Leeds, for example the medieval manor house and the Georgian Coloured Cloth Hall. In such cases the function and location of the buildings give a very valuable insight into the pre-industrial topography of the town and the nature of town life in earlier centuries.

3 There must be a sponsor or group of sponsors prepared to meet the cost of the plaque.

(a) Currently the cost of a plaque is £600. This covers cost of manufacture, erection and future maintenance.

APPENDIX 9

ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY: CHEMICAL LANDMARKS: CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Chemical Landmarks are awarded to recognise chemical discoveries or development. The awards are centred on the site of the chemical discovery or development or some other associated landmark:

1. Nominated sites should meet one of the following criteria.

   (i) The site should have been the site or a major contribution to the development of chemical science; or

   (ii) The site should have seen a development of chemical science that made a significant contribution to the health, wealth or quality of life of the nation.

   In addition, sites may be nominated under both (i) and (ii).

   Sites that fail to meet either criteria but are otherwise worthy of merit will be considered in exceptional circumstances. Contact the RSC to discuss the nomination in the first instance.

2. Nominations are normally made through the Local Section in which the site is geographically located but may be submitted from across the RSC.

3. Nominations should have the support of the site concerned; and the nomination should carry the signature of a senior representative from the site denoting site support for the nomination.

4. Initial nominations should be made on the attached form. Only nominations submitted on the forms will be considered. Those sites short-listed may be asked to supply further details for consideration.

5. Nominations may be made at any time and should be submitted to the External Promotion Manager at the Royal Society of Chemistry, Thomas Graham House for approval.

6. The External Promotion Manager may call upon the advice of the Historical Chemistry Group and other Groups within the RSC as appropriate on deciding the outcome of the nomination.

7. Successful sites will receive a plaque and citation. They will have the opportunity to celebrate the site designation with an appropriate publication setting out the achievement.

8. Successful sites will be required to collaborate with the RSC in the organisation of an event or in the production of any publications and related items to celebrate the award.

9. A budget is available from central RSC funds to celebrate a successful designation. Staff will advise.

APPENDIX 10

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL: BLUE PLAQUES SCHEME: CRITERIA FOR NOMINATING

People, buildings, open spaces, parks, and structures are eligible for nomination. A nominated person or place's achievements or contributions must be historical or nationally recognised.

An address must be given for the proposed site where the blue plaque is recommended to recognise the person or place. This address must be within the boundaries of the London Borough of Southwark.

If nominating a person, the person must have a connection to the borough of Southwark, either through work, residency, or place of birth. Dates must be provided if possible.

A year must pass before a person who has died can be nominated.

Southwark Council employees, Councillors, Council members and local MPs cannot be nominated for a blue plaque.

A nominee already awarded a blue plaque will not be eligible for nomination; to check visit: www.southwark.gov.uk/blueplaques

A nominee that has been up for public vote and is not a winner of a blue plaque will be exempt from nomination for the following year.

If a nominee scores over one hundred public votes but fails to gain enough votes for a blue plaque after three attempts they will no longer be eligible for nomination.

The Blue Plaques steering group will refer failed nominees for other awards, as appropriate.

APPENDIX 11

ULSTER HISTORY CIRCLE: BLUE PLAQUES SCHEME SELECTION CRITERIA

To be considered for selection each nominated person has to meet basic selection criteria. They must –

- be dead for 20 years or, if less, have passed the centenary of their birth;
- be associated with the province of Ulster through birth, education, work or vocation; and
- have made a significant contribution to the development or delivery of education, industry, commerce, science, arts and literature, politics, international affairs or other calling anywhere in the world.
- Proposals will be considered for the commemoration of sites of special historical interest.

A candidate who has already been publicly acknowledged, in Ulster, by way of an existing memorial e.g. statue, plaque, named building or thoroughfare will normally not be accepted for a blue plaque.

Generally, only one plaque is allowed per person.

Except in exceptional cases, buildings marked with plaques must be visible from the public highway.

APPENDIX 12

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL: GREEN PLAQUES SCHEME SELECTION CRITERIA

City of Westminster Green Plaques may commemorate people who:

- are regarded as eminent by most members of their profession or calling
- have genuinely contributed to human welfare or happiness and deserve recognition for it
- are reasonably well known
- sufficient time has lapsed since their life to show their lasting contribution to society

Proposals are also considered for commemorating sites or buildings of special historic interest.

96 English Heritage conference, 'Commemorative Plaques: Celebrating People and Place', held on 18-19 February 2010 at the RIBA in London.

APPENDIX 13

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS OF THE ENGLISH HERITAGE CONFERENCE 'COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES: CELEBRATING PEOPLE AND PLACE', HELD ON 18-19 FEBRUARY 2010 AT THE RIBA IN LONDON.

NB The draft version of this guidance document was sent to all conference delegates in advance of the event

Ruth Addison
Friends of Palmeira and Adelaide

Maria Adebowale
Capacity Global & English Heritage (Blue Plaques Panel)

Frank Ashworth
Manufacturer

Sue Ashworth
Manufacturer

Louise Atkinson
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Ian Ayris
Newcastle City Council

Charles Baker
St Albans City and District Council

Marion Barter
Architectural History Practice Ltd

Alison Bennett
Reading Civic Society

Richard Bennett
Reading Civic Society

Jane Biro
English Heritage

Nathan Blanchard
Heritage Initiatives

Catherine Bond
London Borough of Camden

Kate Borland
Manchester City Galleries

Brian Bowers
Institution of Engineering and Technology

Liz Brand
VisitBrighton (Brighton & Hove City Council)

Joanna Burton
Heritage Lottery Fund

Sophie Cabot
Norwich HEART

Jon Calver
Loftus Audio Ltd

David Cannadine
English Heritage (Blue Plaques Panel)

Francis Carnwath
Formerly English Heritage (Blue Plaques Panel)

John Cattell
English Heritage

Gillian Cheetham
Bracknell Forest Society

Alan Clarke
Salisbury Civic Society

Diane Clements
Library and Museum of Freemasonry

Emily Cole
English Heritage

Nick Collins
English Heritage

Jo Coombs
Loftus Audio Ltd

Ron Cooper
Lewisham Environment Trust

Jane Corfield
Stoke on Trent City Council

Sean Creighton
Black and Asian Studies Association

Toby Cuthbertson
Westminster City Council

Ricci de Freitas
Marchmont Association

George Demidowicz
Coventry City Council

Sally Jane Deves
London Borough of Lewisham

Alicia di Sirignano
Chelsea Society

Julie Dompierre
Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada

Denis Dunstone
Transport Trust

Douglas Eaton
Elgar Estates Ltd

Courtney Finn
Grantham Civic Society

Eda Forbes
Oxfordshire Blue Plaques Board

Sally Furness
Derbyshire County Council

Emily Gee
English Heritage

Aretha George
Heritage Lottery Fund

Beryl Gibbs
Lewisham Environment Trust

Freddie Gick
Birmingham Civic Society

Kevin Grady
Leeds Civic Trust

Andrew Green
London Borough of Wandsworth Council

Michael Green
Clapham Society

Emily Greenaway
Heritage Lottery Fund

Christine Grime
Middleton Heritage and Conservation Group

Geoffrey Grime
Middleton Heritage and Conservation Group

Hazel Guile
Wokingham Civic Society

Ian Handford
Torbay Civic Society

Julie Harford
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

John Harrison
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Simon Harriyott
Open Plaques.org

Rachel Hasted
English Heritage

Colette Hatton
London Borough of Islington

Heather Hawker
Surrey History Trust

Ned Heywood
Ned Heywood Ceramics Workshop

Pauline Hill
Photocast Products

Anne Hills
Esher Resident Association

Peter Hills
Esher Resident Association

Derek Hunnisett
Wilmington Parish Council

Sheila Huntley
City of London Corporation

Jonathan Hurst
Cambridge City Council

Edward Impey
English Heritage

Derrick Johnson
Clapham Society

Hussain Kapadia
City of London Corporation

Bill Kataky
Durham County Council

Frank Kelsall
Architectural History Practice Ltd

Reuben Kench
Stockton on Tees Borough Council

David Lewis
Groundwork North Yorkshire

Jan Erik Lindh
County Council of Vestfold, Norway

Mark Lloyd
Hotelier and member of Rotary Club of Chipping Sodbury

Michael Loveday
Norwich HEART

Jeffrey Manley
Anthony Powell Society

Tony Marsden
Ipswich Society

S. I. Martin
Writer and historian

Paul McAuley
City of Edinburgh Council

Anthony McCullagh
Photocast Products

David McLaughlin
McLaughlin Ross llp

Pauline Meakins
Royal Society of Chemistry

Wendy Morgan
Liverpool City Council

Ian Morrison
Heritage Lottery Fund

Paul Newing
Lewisham Local History Society

Geoff Noble
Kent Architecture Centre and Urban Practitioners

John Nolan
Ulster History Circle

Jenny Oxley
Welwyn and Hatfield Museum Service

Chris Pond
Loughton Town Council

Pat Reynolds
Surrey Heritage (Surrey County Council)

Frankie Roberto
Rattle

Peter Robinson
Beeston and District Civic Society

Martin Ross
Historic Scotland

Florence Salberter
British Waterways

Ron Sands
Lancaster City Council

Chris Scull
English Heritage

Rosie Sherrington
English Heritage

Clair Shields
North York Moors National Park Authority

James Simmins
Huntingdonshire District Council

Harbinder Singh
Anglo Sikh Heritage Trail

Susan Skedd
English Heritage

Cheryl Smith
Islington Council

Juliette Sonabend
Heath and Hampstead Society

Howard Spencer
English Heritage

Gavin Stamp
English Heritage (Blue Plaques Panel)

Moira Stevenson
Manchester City Galleries

Peter Stone
Transport Trust

Martyn Taylor
Bury St Edmunds Society

Nicholas Taylor
Lewisham Environment Trust

Mike Tiley
Ealing Civic Society

Maureen Turland
Tewkesbury Civic Society

Libby Wardle
English Heritage

Gina Warre
Chelsea Society

June Warrington
English Heritage

Anya Whitehead
London Borough of Southwark

David Whitlock
Cleveland Corrosion Control

Gareth Wilson
English Heritage

Malcolm Wood
Railway Heritage Trust

Roger Woodley
Cheltenham Civic Society

97 Plaques to Thomas Wakley (1795-1862) and Thomas Hodgkin (1798-1866) at 35 Bedford Square, Bloomsbury, London. They were erected by the LCC (in 1962) and the GLC (in 1985).

9

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ONLINE RESOURCES

KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

Big Lottery Fund
1 Plough Place
London, EC4A 1DE
0845 102030
general.enquiries@
biglotteryfund.org.uk

Cadw
Welsh Assembly Government
Plas Carew
Unit 5/7 Cefn Coed
Parc Nantgarw
Cardiff, CF15 7QQ
01443 33 6000
cadw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Civic Society Initiative
Unit 101
82 Wood Street
The Tea Factory
Liverpool, L1 4DQ
0151 708 9920
admin@
civicsocietyinitiative.org.uk

Blue Plaques Team
English Heritage
1 Waterhouse Square
138-142 Holborn
London, EC1N 2ST
020 7973 3794 / 3757
plaques@english-heritage.org.uk

Heritage Lottery Fund
7 Holbein Place
London, SW1W 8NR
020 7591 6000
enquire@hlf.org.uk

Historic Scotland
Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh, EH9 1SH
0131 668 8600
hs.inspectorate@
scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Land Registry
32 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London, WC2A 3EH
0844 892111
customersupport@
landregistry.gsi.gov.uk

The National Archives
Kew
Richmond
Surrey, TW9 4DU
020 8876 3444

Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Waterman House
5-33 Hill Street
Belfast
County Antrim, BT1 2LA
028 9054 3095
bh@doeni.gov.uk

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
66 Portland Place
London, W1B 1AD
020 7307 3700
info@inst.riba.org

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
Parliament Square
London, SW1P 3AD
0870 3331600
contactrics@rics.org

USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCES

Access to Archives (A2A)
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/

Ancestry
www.ancestry.co.uk

Anglo Sikh Heritage Trail
www.asht.info/trail

ArchiveGrid
www.archivegrid.org

ARCHON directory of record repositories
www.nationalarchives.
gov.uk/archon/

Art Workers Guild
www.artworkersguild.org

Bibliography of British and Irish History (BBIH)
www.history.ac.uk/partners/bbih

Big Lottery Fund / Awards for All
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk
www.awardsforall.org.uk

Birth Marriage & Death (BMD) records
via www.ancestry.co.uk
www.1901censusonline.com
www.findmypast.com
www.freebmd.org.uk

British Associaton of Picture Libraries and Agencies (BAPLA)
www.bapla.org.uk/

British History Online
www.british-history.ac.uk

British Newspapers
http://newspapers.bl.uk/blcs/

Building Conservation Directory
www.buildingconservation.com/
directory.html

Cadw
www.cadw.wales.gov.uk

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via www.familysearch.org

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www.1901censusonline.com

Chartered Institute of Building
www.ciob.org.uk/

Civic Society Initiative
www.civicsocietyinitiative.org.uk

Companies House
www.companieshouse.gov.uk

Conservation Register
www.conservationregister.com

Crafts Council
www.craftscouncil.org.uk

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
www.culture.gov.uk

Digital Archives Association
www.digitalarchives.co.uk

Digital Historic Map Archive
www.old-maps.co.uk

Directors Guild of Great Britain
www.dggb.org/

Enclosure maps of England and Wales
http://hds.essex.ac.uk/em/

Encylopaedia Britannica Online
http://library.eb.co.uk/eb

English Heritage
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Federation of Master Builders
www.fmb.org.uk

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www.francisfrith.com

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www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/

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Getty Images
www.gettyimages.co.uk

Grove Art Online
www.oxfordartonline.com/public/

Grove Music Online
www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/book/omo_gmo

Guild of Master Craftsmen
www.guildmc.com and www.findacraftsman.com

The Heritage Foundation
www.theheritagefoundation.info

Heritage Gateway
www.heritagegateway.org.uk

Heritage Lottery Fund
www.hlf.org.uk

Historical directories
www.historicaldirectories.org

Historic Scotland
www.historic-scotland.gov.uk

Images of England
www.imagesofengland.org.uk

Institute of Physics
www.iop.org

Institution of Civil Engineers
www.ice.org.uk

Landmark Historical Map Pack
www.landmarkinfo.co.uk/histmappack/

Land Registry
www.landreg.gov.uk

Listed Buildings Online
http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk/Login.aspx

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www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma

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www.english-heritage.org.uk

Mary Evans Picture Library
www.maryevans.com

Memorials Grant Scheme
www.memorialgrant.org.uk

MOTCO
www.motco.com/MAP

The National Archives
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

National Federation of Builders
www.builders.org.uk

National Monuments Record
via www.english-heritage.org.uk

National Register of Archives
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra

Newspaper Archive
www.newspaperarchive.com

Northern Ireland Environment Agency
www.ni-environment.gov.uk

Nubian Jak Community Trust
www.nubianjak.com

Ordnance Survey
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

***Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB*)**
www.oxforddnb.com

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www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography
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PastScape
www.pastscape.org.uk

Pevsner Architectural Guides
www.pevsner.co.uk

Planning Portal
www.planningportal.gov.uk

Principal Probate Registry
www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/infoabout/civil/probate/index.htm

Railway Heritage Trust
rht@networkrail.co.uk
(*email only*)

Regional Development Agencies in England
www.englandsrdas.com/

Researching Historic Buildings in the British Isles
www.buildinghistory.org

Royal Aeronautical Society
www.aerosociety.com

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
www.architecture.com

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
www.rics.org/uk
www.ricsfirms.com/

Royal Society of Chemistry
www.rsc.org/chemicallandmarks

Royal Television Society
www.rts.org.uk

Survey of London
via www.british-history.ac.uk

Times Digital Archive
www.galeuk.com/times/

Trading Standards Institute
www.tradingstandards.gov.uk

The Transport Trust
www.transporttrust.com

TrustMark
www.trustmark.org.uk

UK Copyright Service
www.copyrightservice.co.uk

Victoria County History
via www.british-history.ac.uk

ViewFinder
http://viewfinder.english-heritage.org.uk/

War Memorials Trust
www.warmemorials.org/

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via www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/

Who Was Who and Who's Who
via www.xreferplus.com

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ABBREVIATIONS

BAPLA	British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
EH	English Heritage
GLC	Greater London Council
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
LCC	London County Council
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
NMR	National Monuments Record
Norwich HEART	Norwich Heritage Economic and Regeneration Trust
NRA	National Register of Archives
OS	Ordnance Survey
RCHME	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
VCH	Victoria County History

Inside front cover and inside back cover (clockwise from top-left), plaques to: Willy Clarkson, 41-43 Wardour Street, London; Pandit Shyamaji Krishnavarma, 60 Muswell Hill Road, London; William Ewart, Roe Street, Liverpool; Christina Rossetti, 30 Torrington Square, London; plague victim Peter Halksworth, Eyam, Derbyshire; residents of Bow Street, London; William Wilberforce, 111 Broomwood Road, London; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 7 Addison Bridge Place, London; Earl Kitchener, Broome Park, Kent.


COSTUMIER
PERRUQUIER
REVOLUTIONARY
SANDHI
SYAMAJI
KRISHNAVARMA
SANSKRIT SCHOLAR
&
INDIAN PATRIOT
LIVED HERE
1900 - 1907
VANDE MATARAM
WILLIAM EWART MP
HERE
LIVED AND DIED
CHRISTINA GEORGINA
ROSSETTI
POETESS
BORN 1830 DIED 1894
On the site behind this house stood until 1904 Broomwood House (formerly Broomfield) where WILLIAM WILBERFORCE resided during the // CAMPAIGN against // SLAVERY which he // successfully conducted in Parliament
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
1772 - 1834
POET AND PHILOSOPHER
1ST EARL KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM
7

ENGLISH HERITAGE

Cover:
Free Trade Hall, Peter Street, Manchester, and cast aluminium plaque marking the site of the Peterloo Massacre of 1819. It was erected by Manchester City Council in 2007, replacing an earlier plaque of 1972.

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