



revitalising industrial sites

Industrial Heritage Seminar 30-31 March 2006

Event Report incorporating the REVIT Industrial Heritage Management Toolkit.



The Workshop took place at:
Workmen's Hall
Blaenavon; Torfaen

www.revit-nweurope.org

This report is part of the REVIT selfguiding trail.

Foreword

The Industrial Heritage Seminar that was held on the 30th and 31st March was undertaken as part of the Common Co-operation thematic work of the REVIT project aimed at best practice to preserve and promote Industrial Heritage on Brownfield sites. REVIT is an ERDF funded transnational project involving partners from Stuttgart, Nantes, Tilburg, Hengelo, Medway and Torfaen. Each of the project partners have different sets of circumstances that they wish to address in terms of industrial heritage components on their Brownfield Sites and instead of undertaking research directed at each individual site a two day focused workshop was arranged to address particular issues and have the benefit of experts, practitioners and ordinary people participate in debating, providing information and adding value to current knowledge bases. The following describes these workshops and their outcomes. This should be read not as a definitive approach – but as a journey and a prompt for ideas that could be used on other Brownfield projects with a heritage component.

The seminar took place on Thursday 30 and Friday 31 March 2006.

The seminar agenda was developed to address the interests and needs of the REVIT partners, who had been involved in setting the topics for the guest presentations and discussions.

Professor Tom Pritchard was the guest keynote speaker for the dinner reception, which was held at Llancaiach Fawr ([hyperlink to Llancaiach Fawr](#) and to the [Heritage Works pdf](#)). Professor Pritchard is the Chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee of the National Assembly for Wales and has been involved in heritage protection and management for many years, having served as the UK Deputy Chair for the Heritage Lottery Fund until his recent retirement.

Workshops

There were four two-hour sessions of workshop-style discussion groups, during which smaller groups of delegates were able to explore a topic in more depth.

Exhibition

The exhibition of delegates' and sponsors' information featured companies and organisations with relevance to heritage and industrial sites ([hyperlink to list of exhibitors and their contact details](#)).

Photographic competition

As part of the overall event, the Countryside Section of Torfaen County Borough Council had organised a photo competition to interpret the Blaenavon World Heritage Site.

Site visits

There were a number of guided tours to attractions and sites in the area, including the Big Pit National Mining Museum (www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/bigpit) and Blaenavon Booktown (www.booktownblaenafon.com).

Thursday diary

The two-day event was designed to encourage an exchange of expertise and ideas from across the UK and Europe with regard to preserving and promoting industrial heritage. It is an element of a wider programme – REVIT –, which aims to create European partnerships for regenerating industrial areas within a number of regions. The purpose of the event was summarised by Andrew Gray (Project Director, Torfaen), with the main aims being to share and develop new ideas for approaches to sustainable development through industrial heritage, and to produce a series of checklists for planners and heritage managers to inform the regeneration process.

The topics covered in Thursday's presentations and discussion sessions focussed on:

- Challenges in creating regional identity
- Managing conflict and change especially in the context of protected sites
- Addressing skills shortages

Session 1

Heads of the Valleys: A Cultural Landscape and the Blaenavon World Heritage Site.

Mr Richard Keen

Richard gave an insightful overview of some key issues for the management of culturally important industrial landscapes, dealing with designation, perception and elements of how a sustainable community can be defined. He used the case of the Heads of the Valleys historic landscape to emphasise the importance for heritage to integrate as a leading part in a holistic approach to planning and community development.

Speaker profile

Richard Keen has spent his working life in Wales directly involved with the care, conservation and presentation of the historic built environment and landscape. He served for sixteen years on the Ancient Monuments Board for Wales with special responsibility for vernacular and industrial buildings and sites. He served for six years on the Committee for Wales of the Heritage Lottery Fund. He is currently Chairman of the Historic Buildings Council for Wales.

He was previously employed by the National Museum of Wales (Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum) where, alongside his research and curatorial work, he was responsible for the major exhibition programmes. Subsequent to that employment he worked for the National Trust as Historic Buildings Representative in South Wales Region then as Welsh Landscape and Culture Adviser and Adviser for Industrial Heritage for Wales, England and Northern Ireland. He has detailed and extensive knowledge of the Heads of the Valleys area having studied, in great depth, its landscape and cultural heritage over the past forty years.

Mr John Rodger MBE

John emphasised the role of the heritage sector in helping to overcome social and economic difficulties in areas facing industrial decline, showing us how Blaenavon has achieved World Heritage Site status as part of an area-wide conservation and management strategy.

Speaker profile

John Rodger trained as an architect in Dundee in Scotland in the early 1960's and then as a town and country planner at Edinburgh. From 1970 he has worked in local government as a town planner in South Wales and has been directly involved in the restructuring of the economy of South East Wales which suffered from the decline in the traditional heavy industries of steel and coal. He was directly involved in major projects including new build and regeneration and had an active interest in conservation, particularly industrial heritage.

John retired in 1996 from his role as Director for Planning and Economic Development at one of the South Wales authorities and set up as a private planning consultant. In 1997 he was invited by Torfaen County Borough Council to advise on the regeneration of Blaenavon and was then appointed as Project Director. His tasks were to seek World Heritage Site status for the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, to set up and co-ordinate an effective management system for the World Heritage Site and to provide specialist advice on various projects. In 2000 the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape was successful in being inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. John continues to present and promote the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site locally, nationally and internationally.

Marketing the Valleys

During the coffee break, participants were asked to jot down ideas about their perception of the South Wales Valleys region.

The following is a summary of the words and phrases given to define the South Wales Valleys:

- Lines and spaces – a broken landscape
- Vistas and views
- Constant change and vibrancy
- Landscape, buildings, people and industry
- Community spirit
- Huge potential
- Drama
- Traditions
- Communications and barriers
- Dirt and dust
- A comprehensive place made of complementary places illustrating and enhancing the collective memory

Workshop 1 report

The first challenge for participants was to design an advert for the South Wales Valleys to appear in a mainstream news or lifestyle publication.

Group 1	To explore....
Publication	Daily Newspaper Weekend Section
Reader profile	Middle class anglo-centric Travel, gardening, property investment, seeking comfort, relaxation and value for money but with lots of it to spend Living and working – downsizing to the country or visiting for a short leisure break
Keywords	Nature, landscape, vistas, space, accessibility but remote

	Black to the green Beyond the pithead...my valley is green
Other considerations and comments on the final advert	Heritage needs to be quick and accessible In order to get noticed, you need to break the mould of London-based publishing houses and journalists

Group 2	To move to....
Publication	Period House magazine (monthly glossy)
Reader profile	Middle class or aspiring proud home-owners interested in gardening, family issues, property improvement and the 'good life'
Keywords	Space to think – quality of life 2 hours and a millions miles away Mountains – welcome in the hillside Chapels and rugby OR opera and broadband Investment opportunities – still room to make money Perception of high crime and poor local amenities but this can be overcome with use of technology and internet retail
Other considerations and comments on the final advert	Heritage tends to be associated with a sense of well-being and traditional family values (whatever this means) Juxtaposition and balance are key to creating strong communities

Group 3	To visit....
Publication	New Woman glossy monthly magazine
Reader profile	Young female audience with a keen interest in fashion and 'labels' City/town dwellers with aspirations
Keywords	Pubs and canalside retail/leisure opportunities Low price but perceived good quality/trendiness
Other considerations and comments on the final advert	They represent a major untapped market for heritage as visitors/accompanying partners/ to sporting events in the capital

Group 4	To visit...
Publication	Country Living monthly glossy lifestyle magazine
Reader profile	Outdoor type living in or near urban areas but with a repressed desire to revert to cave dwelling
Keywords	Festivals, gastronomy Beaches and heritage coast Space for adventure and to breathe Miles of heritage Escapism and freedom
Other considerations and comments on the final advert	The feeling that the historic landscape is alive and a great place to live/work etc. can sometimes conflict with reality – how can this be resolved?

Group 5	To play in....
Publication	What Mountain Bike monthly specialist magazine
Reader profile	Young male audience with a keen interest in adventure sports and the outdoors in general with some disposable income Urban romantics
Keywords	Wheelie wonderful Wales How extreme is your Valley? Wheel keep a welcome...
Other considerations and comments on the final advert	There is a whole user group looking for new sites to explore – just make sure that the uses ADD TO the site's value (is it an appropriate environment?)

Group 6	To invest in....
Publication	Daily Newspaper Weekend Business Section
Reader profile	Middle to upper income bracket well educated professionals and entrepreneurs feeling a bit jaded Predominantly male and London based with a need to escape and a desire to maximise returns on investment
Keywords	IT connectivity – plug into the rest of the world (when YOU want to) Transport links including historic options Harness the power of the dragon Valleys, communities and connections
Other considerations and comments on the final advert	Need to turn the concept of marketing on its head and consider the question: 'Why wouldn't you move here?'

Session 2

Historic Environment Conservation Skills: How do we meet the shortfall? The Halland Model

Mr Graham Bell

Graham introduced the afternoon session with an interesting view of the considerable problem of resourcing the heritage industry. He presented numerous examples of work in the North East of England to illustrate the need to involve a range of stakeholders in heritage projects, particularly to maintain the status quo in what is an increasingly risky business. He recommended that sustainable development should be integral to such projects, and that heritage has a key role to play in pursuing sustainability and community regeneration targets.

Speaker profile

Having worked as an architect on Ralph Erskine's internationally acclaimed Byker social housing redevelopment in Newcastle upon Tyne, and on other award-winning regeneration schemes, **Graham Bell** joined the North East Civic Trust in 1995 to promote the public benefits of informed conservation and creative design in the built environment.

His concern about redundant floorspace in urban centres resulted in him representing English Heritage on the Board of the Grainger Town Partnership in Newcastle upon Tyne, overseeing a six year £200m regeneration programme that has won many UK regeneration and planning awards. On behalf of the Project, he received the Europa Nostra Prize for cultural environments at the 2003 annual congress in Munich. He chaired its Urban Design and Public Arts Panels and was involved in planning its international heritage conference. He also represented the project as a speaker at a conference at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. His interest in European culture has involved exchanges with central and eastern European architects whilst in practice, leading to an invitation to join a British Council delegation to Moscow to coincide with the Queen's State Visit in 1994. The Trust is an active member of Europa Nostra and is one of only a few UK members of the European Network of National Heritage Organisations (ENNHO), resulting in an invitation for him to lead a workshop at its General Assembly in Antwerp on working with communities.

He has been a member of a working group to establish a Regional Centre of Excellence for regeneration. He is a member of SPAB, a founding member of the North East Historic Environment Forum, Chair of the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust, Secretary of the North East Mills Group, a member of the Council of Newcastle Cathedral, and has been a judge for several award schemes. He has been involved with the National Trust for fourteen years and is now a member of its Architecture Panel advising on its projects across the UK.

Mr Christer Gustafsson

Christer gave us an illuminating talk about the work of the Halland Model, which has proven in western Sweden and beyond that heritage regeneration and traditional skills training need not be prohibitively expensive and are ideal mechanisms for building communities and recreating strong local economies. He emphasised the need for project managers to work with funding and with partners from a variety of sectors in order to achieve diverse targets and outputs on the back of heritage restoration projects.

Speaker profile

In his dual role as museums director and heritage consultant, **Christer Gustafsson** is involved in a number of initiatives in Sweden for the protection and restoration of heritage sites. He was the founder of the 'Halland Model', through which over 100 historic buildings and sites have been restored and brought back into long-term use for the benefit of local communities. He is involved in developing training programmes in historic building skills and has since been establishing international research and development networks for heritage regeneration, using the Halland Model as a tool for promoting local democracy and economic regeneration.

Workshop 2 report

Develop a sales approach to either attract new trainees in historic building skills or to encourage more companies to work on conservation projects

The afternoon group session stimulated a lively debate about some of the detailed issues relating to craftsmanship, training and recruitment, many of which require a significant amount of further consideration and consultation with heritage companies and training providers.

Workshop 2a report – recruiting young people into the industry

The groups discussed the following issues,

- What problem areas and barriers exist?
- What types of skills are needed?
- How might these be overcome?

and the summary below shows the resulting ideas on how to recruit people into the industry and on what sort of message heritage should be presenting to such groups.

How to recruit young people?

- Provide financial incentives
- Make the industry have 'street cred'
- Offer taster courses
- Give people a stake in the projects
- Provide clearer opportunities and support for career progression and national networking for jobs
- Raise appreciation of heritage as a 'job for life'

Workshop 2b report – widening the skills base in construction firms to address conservation needs

The groups discussed the following issues,

- What might encourage companies to engage in conservation projects?
- How can this be achieved?

And the summary below shows the resulting ideas. At the highest level, it was suggested by both groups discussing these issues, that it is only through a change in the attitudes and practices of planners, developers and their agents that building companies will respond to the demand to provide specialist crafts and training in traditional skills. At present, it is the norm for much of the work in the heritage

building industry to be carried out by a limited workforce consisting primarily of sole trader or owner managed firms, a situation that has reached a critical point in the UK. Change might be achieved through:

- Incentives (including fiscal and financial)
- Providing inspiration and motivation
- Education and awareness raising
- Investment in skills development and provision of mentors
- Making training more accessible and available
- Ensuring quality standards are implemented
- Aiming to support new product development for and within the heritage sector
- Working with local communities to achieve a balance of conservation and new development

Tools for heritage management

Key elements from Day 1

‘Experience is the name we all give to our mistakes’ – Oscar Wilde

- Challenges in creating regional identity
- Managing conflict and change especially in the context of protected sites
- Addressing skills shortages

A manager’s checklist – remember the following points when developing your project site!

1. What historic features are there on your site?
2. How do they contribute to regional identity and a sense of place?
3. Are they protected under current legislation?
4. Are there any others, which have particular local or intangible value?
5. How do people living, working and visiting your area feel about them and what ideas do they have about their future?
6. How does their future use fit with the local and regional planning context?
7. Could they be integrated into the site masterplan and contribute to its distinctiveness?
8. Are there any elements of the historic features on or around the site, which could be used to inform the detailed design?
9. What work needs to be commissioned in order to address the above issues?
10. What skills and trades would be needed?
11. How will you procure these skills and are there any gaps?
12. Could you provide a site and link up with any training providers specialising in traditional skills?

Friday diary

Following on from some of the themes in the previous day's discussions, Friday's programme began to consider a number of key issues in greater detail. These focussed on:

- Making heritage business sustainable financially and environmentally, and appropriate to the site and its setting within the local community;
- Finding ways to promote industrial heritage as part of wider tourism networks;
- Defining and debating the challenges that industrial heritage projects have to address.

Two very interesting tours took place at lunchtime to the Big Pit and to the chapels and churches of Blaenavon – thanks go to all those involved.

Session 3

Is Heritage Sustainable: Making Historic Buildings Pay?

Mr Bernard Lane

Bernard started the day off with a fascinating perspective on how heritage-based regeneration can both contribute to, and compromise, sustainability. He encouraged us to re-think existing views of heritage and emphasised the need for projects to be totally aware of their markets, customers and long term business strategy.

Speaker profile

Bernard Lane is a consultant, writer and lecturer specialising in heritage conservation, sustainable tourism, small towns and rural development. He is an Associate of Red Kite Environment, a consultancy specialising in the management and sustainable development of heritage sites, protected areas, and rural regions. He is Co-editor, with Bill Bramwell, of the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* and an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Ecotourism*. He is also a visiting research fellow at both the Universities of Bristol and Sheffield Hallam in the U.K. He holds editorial board positions on *Current Issues in Tourism* and the USA based *Journal of Interpretation Research*.

Bernard has been a consultant on rural development, heritage management and sustainable tourism issues to over 60 organizations, including the Paris-based OECD, the government of Australia, development agencies and tourist boards in Canada, the Caribbean, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania and the USA and to many communities, agencies, and local authorities, throughout Britain. He has also worked for several private sector travel companies, and for the World Travel and Tourism Council. Recent work has focused on both the theory and practice of how to make heritage pay, including consultancy work on redevelopment, audience creation and interpretation for a nineteenth century boatyard and its buildings, a Roman Villa, a nineteenth century mansion, a medieval Bishops' Palace and two large country estates.

Workshop 3 report

Case Study: Develop a plan to sustain an historic building, looking particularly at marketing, funding and ongoing management issues

Group 1	
General review and product summary	High quality wood products Craftspeople on site Link to canal heritage and tourism
Marketing approach	Events based tourism Develop service industry and supply of wood products within region and nationally
Management issues	Machinery should be worked but this raises H&S issues Develop a sustainable business plan
Funding proposals	Identify HLF opportunities Work in partnership with other funding agencies in particular British Waterways

Group 2	
General review and product summary	Traditional woodworking and boat fit-out and repairs workshop Training on site
Marketing approach	Floating boaters on canal and related sites Links with National Trust, Powis Estates, Offa's Dyke and other national trails and countryside attractions
Management issues	Sustainable construction approach Public private partnerships Accessible to all Training demonstration facility
Funding proposals	Rental of workshop space and accommodation Income from joint ticketing/local pass Use of museum and training facilities for educational groups WDA, CADW, AHF, HLF, local authorities and community funds

Group 3	
General review and product summary	Tourist accommodation Nature reserve Interpretation of estate and sawmill
Marketing approach	Links to existing business on site Partnership with local stakeholders
Management issues	Accessibility and H&S Set up trust status Look to promote volunteering opportunities with local residents
Funding proposals	Estate in kind funding and capital WAG, ERDF, local funds for tourism and economic development

Group 4	
General review and product summary	Sawmill attraction Tourist accommodation Local food and produce outlet and centre Themed events
Marketing approach	Identify audiences, USP, themes e.g. green, water, local materials and skills, country pubs and activities Local and family tourist markets

Management issues	<p>Training and volunteering opportunities</p> <p>Interpret and conserve existing listed machinery and use replacement/replica</p> <p>Assess water use and availability</p> <p>Overcome H&S issues</p> <p>Set up trust</p>
Funding proposals	<p>BPT to fund building restoration</p> <p>National Trust partnership</p> <p>WTB, HLF, Friends group, local funding sources</p>

Group 5	
General review and product summary	Outlet for local goods and products e.g. organic, agri, forestry
Marketing approach	<p>Develop a network of suppliers and web marketing</p> <p>Identify a key theme to bring it all together</p>
Management issues	<p>Integrated planning approach to the whole site's development</p> <p>Establish a trust</p> <p>Carry out the following stages of assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Site analysis ▪ Conservation plan ▪ Consultation ▪ Build a vision ▪ Appraise options ▪ Confirm feasibility of preferred option ▪ Further survey work ▪ Business plan ▪ Programme
Funding proposals	<p>AHF grants and loans</p> <p>HLF, Friends group, CADW</p> <p>WDA – 12k per job created and for training, start up and marketing</p> <p>Landfill tax credits possibility</p> <p>Other charitable trust funding</p>

Session 4

Industrial Heritage Tourism in Europe – a Resource and a Challenge ([hyperlink to executive summary and presentation](#))

Dr Wolfgang Ebert

Wolfgang presented a wide range of examples of sites across Europe which have successfully used industrial heritage assets as the catalyst for regeneration of local economies. He emphasised the need and opportunities for heritage projects to innovate and to be delivered as part of a sectoral network. The ERIH network was used as a case study of such an approach, which is helping to link sites for tourism, conservation, training, and business benefits.

Speaker profile

Dr Wolfgang Ebert is involved as a consultant and academic in a range of industrial heritage projects across Europe. He has published widely on the issues surrounding regeneration of industrial heritage sites, is currently engaged on a number of large-scale mixed-use development projects, with a particular focus on promoting local economies through tourism and branding.

Workshop 4 report

Develop the case for or against the view that industrial heritage is important or not

Main points raised in the case for heritage

1. Community benefits
 - Heritage tourism can promote and focus community action
 - It is about people's stories – celebrating this can bring a sense of pride and wellbeing
 - Industrial heritage tourism can bring substantial local benefits (e.g. Ironbridge)
 - It provides people with a positive image of perceived change for the better and reinforces a sense of place
2. Sustainability benefits
 - Heritage can attract people to want to live in, return to, work in and visit an area
 - It can be the focus for improving and protecting a wider assortment of cultural features, including countryside, wildlife, traditional skills, products etc.
 - It is about identifying what and how features and sites can be best put to use for the future
 - Heritage makes sustainable use of existing assets and reduces the need to develop on green field sites
3. Tourism benefits
 - Heritage regeneration is a response to a growing worldwide demand for cultural tourism destinations
 - It is critical that sites aim to emulate best practice (develop a world class product) in order to survive in an increasingly competitive market place
 - History is of interest to everyone, especially when it can relate to personal experience and identity
4. Economic benefits
 - Heritage tourism produces and creates jobs and wealth in numerous supply industries
 - It promotes training in building and heritage management skills
 - Heritage can create a ripple effect of investment
 - Heritage contributes to a sense of place, a place in which people want to live and work and invest, both as visitor and resident
 - Heritage is an area's USP!

Main points raised in the case against heritage

A day at the zoo OR there's no future in history – "Heritage has had its day" (Tessa Jowell, SoS for Culture)

1. Community impacts
 - Heritage is patronising when its done to people
 - It can result in an obsession with preservation as part of grieving for past industrial/cultural glories
 - New is better than old as it has better health and safety, accessibility and lower costs
 - Income is not necessarily going to the community
 - Undermined sense of local community through promotion of tourism and an unsustainable number of newcomers
 - Stagnates social mobility and disenfranchised residents/business owners
 - Loss of local housing for holiday homes
2. Sustainability impacts
 - Pollution and legacy of past industrial uses
 - Preservation and protection can prevent sustainable construction practices from being implemented (e.g. double glazing)
 - Environmental and social progress thwarted by retrospection
 - Health and safety and decontamination costs can be prohibitive
 - Making heritage improvements may not necessarily be true to the past or sustainable e.g. heritage windows made of plywood
3. Tourism impacts
 - Attractions may not respond to customer demand as they are bred of a grant dependent business culture and do not work in partnership
 - Who wants to see an old factory anyway?
 - Why go to it if you can watch it on TV/internet?
 - Heritage tourism appeals mainly to the middle classes – it is elitist
 - Heritage tourism is not working in Blaenavon
4. Economic impacts
 - Huge costs and huge car park – encourages travel pollution
 - Low paid seasonal work
 - Simply a service industry with no intrinsic wealth creation role
 - Partnership – the suppression of mutual hatred in pursuit of public finance
 - Stagnation of local economy can result
 - Heritage tourism deflects resources – opportunity to exploit coal reserves missed primarily as a result of heritage protection for the area
 - Too capital intensive – heritage tourism rarely achieves sufficient revenue return

The judgement!

Tools for heritage management

Key elements from Day 2

'The first step toward change is awareness. The second step is acceptance.'
– Adrienne Rich

- Making heritage business sustainable financially and environmentally, and appropriate to the site and its setting within the local community;
- Finding ways to promote industrial heritage as part of wider tourism networks;
- Defining and debating the challenges that industrial heritage projects have to address.

A manager's checklist – remember the following points when developing your project site!

1. What markets are there for your industrial heritage feature/s?
2. What competitors would you have?
3. How can you make your site more attractive and profitable than others, and make it relevant to people now and in the future?
4. Is there a particular mix of uses that would make your site more sustainable?
5. What finance needs for restoring and operating the site would you have?
6. Can the site become financially independent in 5-10 years?
7. Would you need to set up a structure in order to maintain the site thereafter?
8. Are there any strategic or business partners who could help you?
9. Can you plan to make the site have as low an impact on the environment and the community as possible and, wherever feasible, aim to make this a positive impact by building in sustainability measures (e.g. for energy efficiency, materials recycling, community involvement, carbon neutrality)?
10. Could you benefit from links to other similar sites across Europe and/or from a purchasing and marketing group?
11. Can you integrate the heritage feature/s into the overall economy so that it has a positive effect over many years and will never need full restoration again?
12. Can you stand up and justify why the historic elements of your site are worth saving (think about why they might not be too!)?