HISTORIC BUILDING RECONSTRUCTION
SINCE c1877: THE CREATION OF POPULAR IMAGES OF THE AGE OF TRANSITION

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by

Elizabeth Stewart MA (York)
Department of Archaeology
University of Leicester

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Reconstruction can vary in scale from simple redecoration to the complete demolition and rebuilding of a structure. This thesis traces the history of the reconstruction of historic buildings between the late nineteenth century and the present day.

This topic is studied through the use of one hundred and fifteen examples, broadly dating from the period known as the ‘Age of Transition’, 1400-1600. Analysis of the works undertaken at these buildings, patterns in the types of reconstruction carried out at different times have been identified. The buildings have been filmed, photographed, and archival resources have been utilised to identify when and for what purposes different works were undertaken on them.

The thesis has been structured to analyse building reconstruction in relation to potentially influential factors. The impacts of changing philosophies, the role of institutions, organisations or individuals, the wider conservation movements, authenticity and the notion of Englishness, have all been considered.

This historical overview is then used to suggest ways in which future reconstruction could consider the recent history of buildings in reconstruction and interpretation. Graphical representations are used to model some of the ongoing impacts of reconstruction on the images of historic buildings in the present.
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Chapter One: Introduction and Aims


Outline of Study

In England historic houses have long accepted guests and visitors, and many were built with display to such people as a priority. Since the late nineteenth century, however, owners of buildings have charged entry fees, and education, entertainment and recreation have become reasons for visiting buildings. This has resulted in alterations to buildings, in order to present aspects of their past to the public effectively, and it is those changes which form the core of the research problem which this thesis aims to address.

All the houses studied in this thesis have been transformed by the agencies controlling them to make them suitable for public presentation and understanding by evoking one or more particular historical periods or stages in the life of the structure. Such transformations have been as minimal as internal redecoration or simple refurnishing, or as drastic as complete dismantling and rebuilding, on the original site or another. There is no convenient term to cover this wide spectrum of interventions, so for the purposes of the present work the term ‘reconstruction’ has been appropriated, and should be read in this broad sense throughout.

Research Questions

This thesis aims to answer the research question, how have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings? In order to answer this over-arching question, it will be important to consider a series of subsidiary questions. How have approaches, including philosophies and physical practices, towards the reconstruction of historic buildings changed since the late nineteenth century? In what ways have the institutions, organisations or individuals undertaking the reconstruction differed in their aims and approaches to historic buildings? What impacts have the conservation movements, the issue of authenticity and the notion of Englishness, had on historic
building reconstruction? The thesis will investigate these questions and use the findings
to construct a model or matrix for understanding the history of building reconstruction
which could aid future works to historic buildings.

Research Objectives
Through the process of answering these research questions the author’s objectives are to
identify and analyse changing approaches in historic building reconstruction over the
last hundred and forty years, to examine any discrepancies between the rhetoric about
conservation and the action seen at the buildings, and to assess the impacts of different
conservation organisations and philosophies. Gaining an understanding of these key
changes in approach is vital to an understanding of the structures and histories of the
buildings, and of the way we are treating them in the present. “It is necessary to
consider these adjustments in attitude, not only to grasp a better perspective of our own
opinions, but also to gain a clearer significance of the ‘spirit of the age’: that is, the idea
that at any period of time there is a common belief” (Strike 1994, 6-7). It is a key
objective that the knowledge gained should be forward-looking, using a few of the
example buildings as developed case-studies to examine the ongoing effect of
reconstruction on the buildings, and create a framework for the possible applications of
this knowledge to future works.

The Structure of the Thesis
The thesis is organised chronologically and charts some of the significant movements in
the evolution of reconstruction practices. The formation of the Society for the
Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877 is taken as a loose starting point for
this thesis as it reflected a growing interest in the preservation of historic buildings,
which is evident from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Further chapters relate to
other movements such as the National Trust Country Houses Scheme of the 1930s,
which changed the Trust’s emphasis to the display of larger historic buildings, the
growth of open-air museums in England in the 1960s, and the recent growth of building
preservation trusts concentrating on smaller individual buildings, often presented to
reflect their local history and surroundings.
The five chronological chapters of this thesis (Chapters Four to Eight) will draw on examples to chart the broad changes in approaches towards the reconstruction of historic buildings, the effects of the conservation movements and their developing philosophies, and the differing aims and approaches of the institutions undertaking the reconstruction. Each chapter is structured, through subsections, to answer the research questions in order, with sections dedicated to discussion of period-specific reconstruction styles; organisations involved in reconstruction; conservation movements; authenticity and Englishness. Because several different types of reconstruction and reconstructing organisations may be active in any period there are often several sections covering these in each chapter. Conservation is seen as a series of different movements in the separate chapters, because of the significant differences in approach at different times, and through different organisations. The subsections are highlighted in the naming of the subheadings in the chapter overview at the beginning of each chapter.

There are examples of conflicts between philosophical viewpoints, academic archaeology and practical reconstruction work documented through this thesis. Different themes are highlighted in different eras. Chapter Four starts in the nineteenth century, and sees the development of historic house reconstruction running parallel to the growth of the conservation movements, with the formation of organisations like the SPAB, and a growing interest in visiting historic houses. Through the period from the start of the First World War to the end of the Second World War there was a great deal of reconstruction, and buildings were often converted into local or folk museums. This could be related to perceived threats to culture and history in the aftermath of the First World War and the approach to the Second World War. There was new legislation about historic buildings in this period, discussed in Chapter Five. Chapter Six discusses the National Trust Country Houses Scheme which was launched in 1936, and guided the policy of the National Trust for decades to come, especially through the immediate post-war period of the late 1940s and 1950s. The 1960s and 1970s are discussed in Chapter Seven. This period saw a boom in building reconstruction, and increased confidence in the ability to reconstruct missing sections of buildings. Chapter Eight brings the story of reconstruction to the present. It considers the different types of work which have been the focus of the last twenty years. Each of these chronological
chapters (Four to Eight) is structured relating to the research questions. The key approaches in that period are reviewed in relation to the impact of different organisations or individuals, and the major themes identified – the conservation movements, authenticity, and Englishness. The changes and developments in the presentation of the past since the 1870s have been considerable, and continue to develop, and Chapter Nine discusses the implications of this research for reconstruction in the future. Chapter Ten draws conclusions from the work as a whole.

Scope of Coverage
The buildings which form the examples for this thesis are houses built between 1400 and 1600, a period now known as the 'Age of Transition'. The studied examples number one hundred and fifteen (listed in Appendix One). The period 1400 – 1600 has long been seen as 'transitional'. The Reformation is often considered a dividing point between the medieval and the early modern periods (Johnston 2000, 545-560). The term 'Age of Transition' gained currency after the 1997 conference of that name in London (Gaimster and Stamper 1997). The period between 1400 and 1600 has been of interest and importance to archaeologists, historians and architectural historians for many years, and it is accepted that this period was one of dynamic change as a result of population increase, religious division and contact with distant countries (Schama 2000, 274-285; Morgan 1984, 273-278). It is a significant period which, until recently, has been subdivided by archaeologists and historians along the medieval/post medieval or medieval/early modern divide, making the study of it as a unit difficult. In 1953 W.G. Hoskins put forward the theory of the Great Rebuilding: the idea that between 1570 and 1630 many buildings were rebuilt as part of a modernising movement across Britain (Hoskins 1953, 44-59). This paradigm for the changes seen in buildings has been superseded, but the primacy of this period in evidencing changes expressed through architecture is still accepted, though now discussed in terms of the wider social scene, and related to activities like enclosure and concepts like capitalism (Johnson 1996). Johnson has developed the theory of 'closure', which encompasses social changes in different aspects of society, seen in housing and domestic life, farming and landscape, and objects and their use (ibid.).
The earlier chapters of this thesis will consider the period 1400 to 1600 within the context of academic approaches through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, while the final chapters will concentrate on the new paradigm of the Age of Transition. Much of the comparatively recent research has not yet fully fed back into historic building presentation. This offers an interesting new viewpoint from which to understand the houses, which is not yet clearly reflected in any period of their presentation. The term ‘Age of Transition’ is applicable to the understanding of the period 1400 to 1600 in the late nineteenth century as well as in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, as the period has always been considered transitional, albeit in varying ways.

**Rationale for Coverage**

Not all works on historic houses are relevant to the research questions being addressed in this thesis. Repairs and conservation work may be necessary and not part of a wider aim to change the appearance of a building. Buildings will decay, timbers will rot, stone will weather, and brick can shatter over time. There are constant pressures upon the owners of historic buildings to keep them well maintained, and to ensure that they will carry on standing for many years to come. Philosophies have developed about the best ways to carry out different types of conservation to historic buildings, and specialist architects and craftspeople, as well as institutions like the SPAB, possess a wealth of knowledge for people who need such work to be done. This thesis does not consider the ways in which buildings are maintained, only works aimed to reconstruct them.

The evidence about reconstruction which can be found within the structures of the buildings, and from documentary evidence about the work, is the focus of this research. It is beyond the scope of this study to assess the effects of such work on visitors through the different eras of reconstruction, and such information is impossible to obtain for the earlier part of the period studied. This research instead concentrates on the reconstruction work and looks at the evidence – sometimes divergent – of the philosophies, policies and practices in relation to historic buildings at different times. This evidence is then used to create a graphical representation or model for the understanding of the reconstruction of historic houses, which could, in the future,
inform the ways in which buildings are reconstructed. The group of buildings used as the data set includes all houses from the period 1400 to 1600 which have been identified from marketing as now being open to the public. It includes both rural and urban houses, but excludes ecclesiastical buildings, castles, and ancillary buildings such as barns or dovecotes. This creates a feasible sample-size to work with, and also excludes buildings which are different in type, history, usage and presentation method from the houses discussed. The buildings range in status from the vernacular to the palatial.

The period 1400-1600 was chosen because of the large numbers of surviving buildings, the transitional nature of the period, and the large numbers of buildings being opened to the public. This in turn is partially because of a widespread interest in the Tudor period, possibly resulting from its inclusion in school teaching throughout much of the twentieth century. The long-term interest in this period makes it a significant example for the study of reconstruction of buildings, as changing academic understanding of the period is reflected in the different ways in which buildings are reconstructed.

There have been some houses for which it has been impossible to date reconstruction work, so the evidence within them has had to be excluded. The research has also specifically ruled out buildings which were originally constructed between 1400 and 1600, but which underwent massive remodelling in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, to update the living quarters. In cases where this work has destroyed so much of the evidence of the previous structure that it would be impossible to return the present building to its earlier state, the building has been excluded. Examples of such excluded buildings are Nostell Priory, built as a religious house, and after the Reformation converted into a country house by Rowland Winn and Robert Adam (Fedden and Joekes 1973, 151); and Lyme Park in Cheshire, which was a Tudor house, and was converted in the eighteenth century into a Palladian villa, under the architect Giacomo Leoni. A few Tudor features survive, but the building is essentially now of eighteenth-century style (Rothwell 1998, 4-5).

This research has used English examples, as the history of the period 1400 to 1600 is different in the other countries of the British Isles (Morgan 1984), and the modern laws
and organisations involved in historic building reconstruction are separate in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales (Mynors 1999).

Historic buildings are in use today for a variety of purposes, but it is those which have been refunctionalized as heritage sites which are the focus in answering these research questions. Houses, schools and churches which continue to perform their original function, and those which have been conserved and put to use for a new purpose, as with Knowle Library in the West Midlands or Bowes Morrell House in York, until recently the offices of the Council for British Archaeology, are not relevant to the history being uncovered through this research. This thesis uses evidence from buildings which have been reconstructed to historical periods, displaying collections of artefacts, family or local collections, or representing a famous person with whom they are associated. Detailed study of the example houses has had to be selective, and has concentrated on buildings for which there is greater documentary evidence to support the archaeological analysis. Through the thesis chronological chapters discuss general and widely evidenced trends, and exemplify this with works to particular buildings.

Context of Thesis
Building reconstructions can be seen as a means of understanding approaches to the interpretation of the past in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Shanks (1992, 79-80) views the interpretation of the past through archaeological evidence as a form of translation, “to say in words of one language what one finds in the words of another”. Extending this metaphor, this thesis sees the language of interpretation as evolving over the last hundred and forty years, in response to changes in conservation philosophy, developments in understanding of buildings and notions of authenticity, and reflecting wider changes in popular history and society.

The past is ever-present in modern Britain, and is increasingly accepted as an important part of the lives of modern people, as evidenced by the pressure to preserve sites and buildings, and the popularity of history-based television programmes, magazines, books and websites. This popularity of the past, and the continuing work to historic buildings to present them to the public, inspires the final section of the data analysis, Chapter Nine, which looks to the future, creating a matrix or model for the understanding of past
practices relating to historic building, and the application of this to future reconstruction work.

The level of reconstruction done to historic houses is highlighted in the examples discussed. The ways in which buildings have been displayed over the last twenty years have often included recreation of rooms to seem ‘lived-in’. This had led to an underestimation of the level of reconstruction carried out: it is often assumed that the doors of a building are simply opened, and it is available to visitors just as it was once used; but in many cases alterations are carried out. These vary in scale from placing some period objects around the building, or converting one room into a tea shop, to replacing sections or even completely dismantling and rebuilding the structure. The importance of such reconstruction and conservation work is evidenced in the modern day by the time which elapses between the acquisition of a building for display to the public, and the time when it opens. For example the National Trust acquired Tyntesfield, a Victorian building near Bristol, in June 2002. They started the first preview tours in October that year. Their aim is to present it as they found it, frozen in time; but in order to do this they will be working on the building and its contents for many months before it opens for the public to make visits to more than just a few rooms and without tour guides. The work involves conservation of fabric and artefacts, consideration of health and safety for visitors, and provision of services. The National Trust explain on their website that, “Considerable work remains to be done before Tyntesfield can be shown to its full advantage with a complete range of visitor services” (National Trust 2002a). This approach has become typical, allowing considerable time for works to a historic house before it is opened.

The approach of this research is to consider the development of historic building reconstruction in the context of understanding the institutions which have reconstructed buildings, contemporary conservation movements, and the understanding of authenticity. It has proved instructive to include information from print media and put building reconstruction into the context of the literature which was being written at the time about the period 1400-1600 and set in its historic buildings. Literary figures also provide the focus for some of the buildings discussed, such as Shakespeare’s Birthplace and Milton’s Cottage.
The print media also provide evidence, along with visitor figures and National Trust membership figures, that historic buildings remain of interest in all the different periods discussed through the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century. There is a great deal of other contextual evidence which could be discussed about the other forms of presentation of the past at different times, such as film, educational texts and art (Richards 1997; Harbord and Wright 1995; Phillips and Phillips 1996). These types of sources are not utilised as they are not a consistent source for all the periods discussed, and are beyond the scope of this thesis, which aims to concentrate primarily on the historic buildings themselves, and gains evidence from associated documentation and literature.

**Research Contribution**

The contribution of this thesis is be the cataloguing and analysis of changes in approach to historic buildings through time, followed by the creation of a graphical representation which models the chronological history of reconstruction. This will respond to the research question, “Can understanding of the history of reconstruction provide a model which could aid future works to historic buildings?” and provide a framework for understanding the recent history of a building. The charting of changes through time to a range of examples also highlights the necessity of thorough research into individual structural history before any future reconstruction work is undertaken. In the future reconstruction could take a range of different formats, so the loose term ‘works’ is utilized to describe these.

The history of building reconstruction with reference to specific houses from one period of history has not been approached before, perhaps because it straddles conventional disciplinary boundaries. It is, however, a topic which is of relevance to many archaeologists, and heritage and museum professionals. The history of the ways in which artefacts (including buildings) have been presented at different times in the past can provide a great deal of evidence about why they take the forms they do now, and how they have been altered. This research, and the matrix representing the history of building reconstruction, and the way in which it affects the present structure, may be applicable to future reconstruction works at historic buildings. It will allow for a complete evaluation of the past of the building before reconstruction work takes place,
and before the interpretation and presentation of evidence about the recent history of the building is undertaken.

The perceived value of the past for people in the present has been researched: "heritage is a forceful influence in people's lives, with perceptual and informational values" (Brisbane and Wood 1996, 14). The 2001 English Heritage report, *The Historic Environment: A Force for the Future* concentrated on the relevance of the historic environment to the modern world, and suggested that the historic environment can have a positive influence on people's lives: "Historic landscapes or iconic buildings can become a focus of community identity and pride and proclaim that identity and pride to the wider world" (English Heritage 2001, 7). The presence of the past in the modern environment gives a sense of place and a sense of belonging, related to personal memory and knowledge of more distant history (Lowenthal 1985, 35-52). The valuable resource of historic buildings has, therefore, to be managed carefully and presented in ways which give it meaning for visitors and communicate both the perceived value of the building and the knowledge which has been gained about it.

Presentation of archaeology and of artefacts from the past to the public can influence the way the profession of archaeology is perceived. The level and success of heritage interpretation can have practical implications in terms of the respect gained from public and government for museums and historic houses. This in turn will influence the strategic, legal and funding decisions within the constraints of which archaeologists have to work. Because this thesis is collating information about a large group of buildings in a way never done before, and using this to inform the creation of a framework which could be used in future as part of a Conservation Plan for a building, it is important that this work is disseminated. Public presentation of the work thus far includes:

- Conference paper at *The Theoretical Archaeology Group Conference*, December 2000, entitled, "Representation, Identity and the Reconstruction of Medieval buildings for Public Display".
- Conference paper at *British Association Festival of Science*, September 2001, entitled, "When is a Historic Building Not a Historic Building?" Winner of RAI / EH award for Heritage Presentation, under 30s category.
• Conference paper at *The Theoretical Archaeology Group Conference*, December 2001, entitled, “Deconstructing Reconstruction: the Presentation of Late Medieval Buildings as Heritage Sites.”

It is intended that these will be augmented with further written papers, currently in preparation.

It has been observed that there are two key aspects to the management of the past: physical presence and intellectual presence (Fowler 1992, 81-82). This division highlights the two roles of the building reconstructor, heritage manager, conservator or curator. One is in preserving the artefact as it is, or creating an accurate record of it before any alteration takes place, and making that artefact available to visitors, therefore ensuring its long-term physical presence. The second is making the meanings within the artefact evident for visitors, explaining its interest and value, and offering alternatives in interpretation method where suitable in order that a visitor can gain intellectual understanding. Both of these aspects of the management of the past will be seen, in the example buildings discussed, to change through time, and are affected by the conservation principles and the ideals of the organizations which manage the building.

Decisions are constantly being made which affect the way a building is displayed, the way it functions, and the way people learn about it and the past in general. Inaccurate and misleading reconstructions can be very damaging, and research which raises awareness of the potential problems in reconstruction helps to reduce such damage. As Fowler observed in his comments on entries for the Country House Awards in 1990, “One could only infer what historical and archaeological damage may have been inadvertently perpetrated on the structures in these well-intentioned and imaginative projects” (Fowler 1992, 60). Research is now seen as vital by all the major bodies involved with the presentation of the past, in order that historical accuracy is maintained in reconstructions and in order that staff do not create their own false folklore (Jones and Matelic 1987, 6-9).
Museums are important in society in preserving the past, educating, entertaining and increasing communication between generations. "Histories are official versions of the past, while personal versions are memories. Museums are the meeting ground between the two" (Kavanagh 1996, 1). However, historic houses have taken on an image different from many museums, "the thriving Zeitgeist [is] a heritage entertainment for senior citizens, like country house tours and costume dramas, a gentle narcotic dose of nostalgia, harmless enough if not consumed while driving or operating heavy machinery" (Schama 2000, 15). This approach is commonly reinforced through marketing of historic buildings and gardens. The role of historic houses as embodying nostalgia rather than representations of current academic thought reflects both the long-standing lack of communication between archaeologists and reconstructors and gaps or inaccuracies in the reconstructions which could have been avoided. This research could therefore potentially play an important role in demonstrating the necessity for those links in future reconstruction work.

As academic research continues many stereotypes are being dispelled. "The archaeology of historic periods is often about de-familiarizing what we think is the known past" (Tarlow and West 1999, 1). Historic houses should play a part in the process of realigning the thoughts of the public to accommodate the newer ideas in archaeology. That a house has changed little since a certain date, lifetime or reign has become a cliché of heritage presentations in the media and in historic house tours where the romance of a building as a relic of a distant era is sometimes being promoted. Buildings are remnants of earlier periods, but of many earlier periods – few, if any, houses have survived since 1600 unaltered. If a building is to be instructive it is important that in the process of interpretation consideration is given to the whole history of the building. The type of matrix for analysis of those changes presented in this thesis (Chapter Nine) could inform a method of including a wider range of evidence about historic buildings in future reconstructions. This includes those changes which have been made in the comparatively recent past in order to display it to the public. This thesis will aid understanding of these processes by tracing the history of reconstruction, and creating graphical representations to model different approaches in the past.
Chapter Two: Research Strategy and Methodology


Research Strategy
The over-arching research question that this thesis aims to approach is, how have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings? The answering of this question is achieved through observation of a range of historic buildings to characterise what has been done in the past, and the study of a series of associated documentary sources to understand the background to these works. This will then inform a model for work in the future.

STRATEGY

OUTCOME

Building examination and archival research

OUTCOME

Create model for future use of research knowledge

Understand past practices in building reconstruction

Identify patterns

The data collection will, therefore, come from observation and investigation of individual buildings, and the study of a range of documentary resources. This evidence will then be analysed to reveal patterns in the types of work carried out to historic buildings.

The objectives of this thesis are thus both to create a historical overview and to inform future practices, and in order to do this a series of smaller research questions need to be approached. The research strategy is closely aligned to these specific research questions, as described in detail below. The documentary sources used vary in availability, and this has
become one of the defining factors in the selection of example buildings discussed in detail through this thesis.

**Research Methods**

A hundred and fifteen examples are considered in order to understand the wide patterns of what has been reconstructed, when, and how, since c1877. These houses have been identified through searches of literature designed to attract visitors, such as handbooks of historic houses and tourism websites. The range of buildings considered includes all those English houses now open to the public as heritage sites which were originally constructed between 1400 and 1600 which were identified in the literature trawl. Other examples, which underwent remodelling in the eighteenth or nineteenth century so extensive as to destroy virtually all vestige of the earlier building, have been excluded.

These example buildings have been examined in the light of the research questions. The key research question has been subdivided into smaller questions, and the specific methodological approaches to each is discussed here. The first question is, how have approaches towards the reconstruction of historic buildings changed since the late nineteenth century? In order to understand how past practices in historic building reconstruction have evolved and how approaches towards the reconstruction of historic buildings have changed in this period. The primary archaeological research on the structures of the buildings was carried out during visits to all the buildings. This observational work was recorded using a Building Record Sheet (Appendix Two). The collection of record sheets forms a database record of the works carried out at each site. The record sheets document the building location, type and brief details of development and identified reconstruction work. The record sheets have been supplemented with more detail and different forms of evidence, especially photographic records, sketches of stratigraphic sequencing and access analysis. The archaeological study of the buildings is undertaken through stratigraphic analysis of the structures (Grenville 1997, 2-5; Thornes 1994, 89-96). This utilises the basic archaeological technique of recording and analysis, and allows identification of alterations through detailed understanding of the structural sequencing. Drawn records and photographs included throughout the thesis illustrate the
evidence cited from the building structures. The exact dates for reconstruction work to buildings are seldom evident within a structure itself, and therefore there is reliance on the existence of some documentation and archives about recent history, to understand the structure as it is seen today. These two major sources of information, therefore, are complementary, the text data providing precise dates and in some cases some description of motivation, and the archaeological data showing actions which are sometimes not otherwise recorded, or differ from the record.

The archival research enabled investigation into another research question: In what ways have the institutions, organisations or individuals undertaking the reconstruction differed in their aims and approaches to historic buildings? The differences in approach could be ideological or practical, and to identify these differences both the buildings and their archives were utilised. Prior to visits to all the example buildings the author endeavoured to make contact with property managers, curators or education officers at each of the sites, and access was gained to many archives of building reconstruction. These archives were letters, plans, photographs, reports and notes, which provided details of the date for works identified through the structural analysis, as well as possible background information about why work was undertaken. Further archival evidence was found at the Public Record Office (The National Archives since April 2003), The National Monuments Record, English Heritage Archives and Library and the offices of the SPAB. Some buildings do not have archives associated with them, and access to others was restricted. Consideration of the amount of information that was available at or about a site informed which buildings were selected as key examples for detailed discussion within the chapters. Written records of the recent history of the houses are invaluable, but are variable in scope and quality, and have to be approached individually. The aims in studying them are to gain an understanding of the works undertaken, as reflected in the standing structures, to obtain firm dates for alterations, and to gain an insight into the intentions of the reconstructors in undertaking that work and into the wider context in which the work to the house was set. Some of the information discovered in the archives revealed the dichotomy between the stated approaches and the works actually undertaken, as will be discussed in some of the case studies. The historical record is being used increasingly commonly in parallel with
archaeological evidence: "'History' and 'Archaeology' are moving closer as historians are trying to understand text as material culture – concentrating on the context of its production and use. Meanwhile archaeologists are trying to 'read' material culture through interpretive strategies developed in the study of text" (Tarlow and West 1999, 10). This close relationship, and the convergence of some theoretical techniques in archaeology and history, make the use of both forms of evidence in understanding these houses, and answering these research questions, increasingly viable.

To provide further background information on the interests of the different institutions, historic guidebooks were analysed to understand more about the chronology of reconstruction, and to gain more knowledge about the interpretation of a building in terms of the period to which it was reconstructed or the key aspects of the building or its contents which were highlighted at different periods. Similarly literature which is relevant to specific buildings has been referenced for the descriptions and images it creates of the structures. It was considered important to maintain a consistent methodology in studying all the example buildings. This occasionally meant discounting some potential evidence which was not available for buildings from all periods. This was true of the potential information which could be gained from systematic interviews with people involved in reconstruction work. As the people who worked reconstructing buildings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are no longer here to be interviewed it was considered to be inconsistent to use this form of evidence for more recent building reconstructions.

The research question: "What impacts have the conservation movements, the issue of authenticity and the notion of Englishness, had on historic building reconstruction?" has also been approached through the use of archival evidence. Research at the SPAB, English Heritage and National Trust archives revealed considerable information about the conservation philosophies, the interest in accuracy and authenticity and strength of the conservation movement at different times. There has also been some use of documentary sources for visitor figures to establish the popularity of historic buildings. Through the earlier periods these are relatively sparse, and there is certainly no information about where
people visited from, or their age, gender or social or educational status. If relevant the available statistics have been included. These can aid an understanding of the level of public interest in buildings, which is sometimes seen to reflect wider factors inspiring such interest, such as the threat of loss of historic buildings during and following the Second World War. Some secondary sources were also used in gaining an understanding of some of the issues surrounding historic building reconstruction through time. Reconstruction works can be seen as a reflection of ideas about historic buildings, and their value and role in society at that time. The motivation and actions of reconstructors are enabled or inhibited by material and social conditions around them. Therefore alterations to a house will be made within the context of the understanding of its history at that time, and within the context of conservation principles in operation at the time the works are carried out (Dobres and Robb 2000, 8). Many of the secondary sources which consider these issues are discussed in the next chapter.

All this observational and archival data is then used to identify the evolution of past practices in historic building reconstruction, differing approaches of reconstructing organisations, the influence of the philosophies of the conservation movement, and ideas about authenticity. The buildings are presented to the public in a range of different ways, but all fall into the wide category of what has recently come to be known as the ‘heritage business’. Fowler uses this term to encompass academic approaches in museums, buildings and landscapes, as well as more commercial types of heritage presentation, those which Hewison defined as the commercial ‘heritage industry’ (Fowler 1992, 155; Hewison 1987). There is no clear division between these different types, and all provide access to historic houses and the information they hold about the past. The variation occurs in the ways in which the houses are interpreted and presented. The interpretation of historic houses starts at the point of reconstruction, when decisions first have to be made about physical alterations to the structures.

**Strategy for Applying Research**

One purpose of identifying and understanding past practices in historic building reconstruction is in order to build a model which could aid future works. This responds to
the second element of the key research question: how have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings? Buildings archaeologists consider it important to create records of buildings in order that the structure may be fully understood, and changes and alterations highlighted (Grenville 1997, 1-2). It is also now recommended conservation practice that any person undertaking work on a historic building should make a full assessment of it through a complete survey and analysis (Sharpe 1999, 15-20). This type of survey would consider the development of the structure, and changes and alterations to it throughout its history, and would especially look for any weaknesses, structural failures, or damp problems. This basic information is important for anyone dealing with any building, but historic buildings which are to be reconstructed and presented to the public provide some special challenges. Conservation Plans should include information about the history of the building and the surrounding landscape in order that future reconstruction and interpretation reflect that history (Clark 1998). Many records of historic buildings discount recent interventions, or gloss over their relevance. It is intended that the model described in Chapter Nine will become useful in highlighting the need for a more complete history of a house, right up to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century interventions in the structure, which form part of its entire history. It will be shown how these recent histories form an important part of the development of these structures, and how the changes made in the last 140 years have impacted on the building as it appears today.

The modern conservation philosophy is to make works reversible as far as possible, but this principle does not transfer easily to reconstruction work. There will usually be physical problems in reversing any reconstruction work done, as they will involve the removal of some historic material, and the insertion of modern material. Once a piece of reconstruction work has been done, that work becomes part of the building's history, part of its 'object biography' (Hoskins 1998; Gosden and Marshall 1999). Alterations in houses are accepted as reflective of changes in the meaning of each house to inhabitants, owners and users at that time in the past, while at the same time houses shape the ways in which people use them and live in them (Johnson 1993, 28-33). To be true to the complete history of the building, it would be inappropriate to remove all the evidence of recent works, as
well as impossible to achieve. This debate will be considered in relation to specific example houses within an archaeological framework. The ways in which archaeological techniques can be used to understand the alterations to houses and their changing form and meaning through time is discussed in answer to the final research question, the application of this research to future building reconstruction, in Chapter Nine.

In many cases the greatest change in the meaning of a house is the alteration from home to heritage site. The parallels between museum artefacts and buildings are limited. To draw an analogy, museum conservators would be more reticent in attempting to alter a small find to make it more understandable because of the value placed in that artefact. When sections of a pot are reconstructed it is usually done in such a way that the original section is clearly identifiable as different from the reconstructed. It is also common to construct a new item, either using virtual reality or creating a physical reconstruction. Discussions of ethics, and values of conserving objects in ways which are visible and reversible are more overt in museum objects than in buildings (Price et al. 1996; Ashley-Smith 1982; Berducou 1990). Perhaps because of the long history of alterations to buildings, and the continued alterations to houses which are still inhabited, we feel more at ease with altering the complex archaeological artefact which is a historic building. This research will reveal the extent of such alterations, and suggest how that knowledge can be used in future reconstruction and interpretation.

Summary
The research questions is addressed through the collection of a range of data, analysed in detail in Chapters Four to Nine. The table below briefly reviews how the methodology relates to the research questions.

This mixed research methodology explicitly follows the techniques and approaches of buildings archaeology. There are overlaps between buildings archaeology and architectural history, and the two disciplines have long been intertwined (Taylor 1976, 3-9). There is use of architectural evidence in the dating of buildings, while the research questions,
including understanding the social aspects of building reconstruction, the recording, and the spatial analysis, are explicitly archaeological (Grenville 1997, 2-22).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Methodological Approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings?</td>
<td>Overarching research question answered through the specific research areas (below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How have approaches towards the reconstruction of historic buildings changed since the late nineteenth century?</td>
<td>• Visiting and structured observation of example buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Systematic recording of observations in Building Record Sheets.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Sketch plans and elevations created to understand stratigraphy.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Photographic record created.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Access analysis undertaken where relevant.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Analysis of archives to date alterations identified in structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways have the institutions, organisations or individuals undertaking the reconstruction differed in their aims and approaches to historic buildings?</td>
<td>• Archival research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analysis of SPAB, NMR, English Heritage and National Trust archives.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Analysis of guidebooks, in order to reveal what was highlighted at different times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What impact have the conservation movement, the issue of authenticity and the notion of Englishness, had on historic building reconstruction?</td>
<td>• SPAB, archival and historical research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review literature of secondary texts, including published conservation philosophies from Ruskin onwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build a model for understanding the history of building reconstruction which could aid future works to historic buildings.</td>
<td>• Apply evidence within some example buildings to feed into innovative model for the understanding of the reconstruction of a building through time, which could inform future approaches.</td>
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*Table 2.1: Research Questions and Methodology.*

As with many recent studies in buildings archaeology this research uses physical evidence, and employs functional techniques, such as access analysis, but interprets these to gain a wider view of the relationship between people and the buildings they were using (Johnson 1993, 28-31). The relationships between different disciplines and different approaches to
buildings have led to different uses of terminology surrounding historic buildings. As will be discussed in Chapter Three the terminology used relating to the reconstruction of buildings has changed over time, and has been manipulated to present works being carried out from different viewpoints.

"Conservation is not a static deterministic commodity. We need to see our point of view as part of a maturing process, a reasoned response to change" (Strike 1994, 6-7). As our understanding of the past changes, and new techniques of conservation and reconstruction are introduced, so buildings change, and this thesis aims to increase understanding about those developments, putting a building as it is seen today into a wider context of its distant and recent pasts.
Chapter Three: Building Reconstruction: The Research Context

Past Practices and Approaches in Historic Building Reconstruction –
Institutions which Reconstructed Historic Buildings – History of the Conservation
Movements and Developing Philosophies – Authenticity and Historic Buildings –
Englishness and Historic Buildings – Historic Buildings 1400 – 1600
and their Perceived Value – Popularised Images of the Past –
Accuracy and Historic Building Reconstruction

This chapter aims to highlight some of the key works which form a background of understanding in the answering of the research questions. Answering the research questions outlined in Chapter One will naturally involve both the data collection and analysis outlined in Chapter Two, and an understanding of the existing academic literature on the subject. The research is interdisciplinary, and a range of interlinking themes is highlighted throughout. The literature discussed below therefore reflects some of the differing approaches applied to the issue of reconstruction.

Many of the existing key texts about the presentation of the past and the reconstruction of buildings do not approach specific houses within an archaeological framework, and many buildings have not previously been analysed archaeologically with the aim of understanding reconstruction practices. As will be demonstrated, from the time of Ruskin onward the rhetoric found in archives and literature about buildings did not closely match works actually being done to the structures (Ruskin 1849). In more recent years Lowenthal and Hewison have used buildings as occasional points of reference for theories, but their work is more sociological (Lowenthal 1985, 363-412; Hewison 1987, 35-47). This thesis endeavours to trace the developments in approach towards reconstruction. Other related topics such as the perspectives of the organisations or individuals undertaking reconstruction work, and the values placed on authenticity and Englishness, are considered. This will facilitate a more detailed understanding of the relationship between theory and action, and the ways in which structures are affected by reconstruction, and the reasons for that reconstruction. This literature review does not contain any details about specific example buildings, which are covered in later chapters where relevant.
Past Practices and Approaches in Historic Building Reconstruction

Much of the written evidence used to answer the research question, "How have approaches, including philosophies and physical practices towards the reconstruction of historic buildings changed since the late nineteenth century?" comes from primary sources. It is, therefore, useful to review some of the discussions of terminology and philosophy. This study has appropriated the term 'reconstruction' to mean any alteration to a historic building to make it appear as it did at some time in the past. As has been described in Chapter One these works range in scale from minor interventions, such as refurnishing or redecorating, to completely dismantling a building and re-erecting it on a new site. Because of the problems with many of the terms used for reconstruction work numerous authors have suggested new terms. Stone and Planel suggest that heritage sites be known as 'construction sites', because it is where ideas about the past are constructed (Stone and Planel 1999, 2). This parallels my use of 'reconstruction'. There are numerous other terms which are used throughout this thesis which relate to people's interests in the past and to works to historic buildings and sites. Contemporary terms for the works being discussed as examples will be used, but all fall under the over-riding definition of reconstruction.

The term 'restoration' became common in the late nineteenth century, to describe works to historic buildings. This term implied that what was there in the past was known, and that it was being put back. In the early twentieth century this term gained somewhat negative connotations in discussion of works, especially to churches, which destroyed medieval fabric with the aim of making the building appear more historic. Terms like 'recreation', 'renovation', 'rebuilding' and 'reconstitution' have been used to create a feeling of confidence in the works, and a sense that what was being done was accurate to some period in the past, and was founded on a known fact. None of these terms relates specifically to a type of work of a particular period, so they will not be used in this thesis. Since the 1970s the term 'conservation' has been used more commonly, the works done under this title being intended to protect a building from further decay. 'Preservation', on the other hand, implies not actively destroying the building. Conservation work from the 1970s onwards often followed a more explicit theoretical stance (Price et al. 1996).
Customarily, conservation and restoration are presented as two alternative choices. It is essential to differentiate between conservation and restoration ... Fundamentally, conservation may be defined as an operation aiming above all to prolong the life of an object by preventing, for a more or less long period of time, its natural or accidental deterioration. Restoration, on the other hand, may rather be considered a surgical operation comprising in particular the elimination of later additions and their replacement with superior materials, going on occasion as far as to reconstitute what is called — incidentally, in a somewhat incorrect manner — its original state.

(Berducou 1990, 3-15)

Although the terminological definitions given in this thesis are quite specific, 'conservation' and 'reconstruction' are seen in many actual example buildings to be intertwined, as decisions about each tend to rely on the other. The use of the term 'reconstruction' through this thesis implies that there is 'construction' work undertaken, which can be structural alterations to the building or construction of new images through works like refurnishing. This is done with the overarching aim of making the building as it was at some time in the past, thus 're-construction'.

There is a long history of 'preservation of the past', evidenced through the number of historic sites, monuments, and buildings which survive today. All must have been preserved to some extent in the past, whether the preservation involved active conservation, work to prevent a building from decaying, or passively not demolishing a building (Graham et al. 2000, 13). The first distinct period when preservation was actively pursued in Britain has been identified as the Tudor period. It has been suggested that the Reformation could have had an influence: "the dissolution of the monasteries between 1535 and 1539 contributed, unwittingly, to the germination of architectural conservation. The closure of 850 monastic houses engendered a feeling of loss, and thus a wish to restore, or at least record, the past" (Strike 1994, 7). Although this is debatable, the linguistic origin of the subject is clearer. The word 'heritage' was first attested in 1225 meaning, "that which has been or may be inherited" (OED). The specific meaning associated with a communal past and remnants thereof is a later development, as used by English Heritage, and in reference to the 'heritage industry' (Hewison 1987). The development of the word 'heritage' closely reflects the development of approaches to historic buildings. As buildings move from a purely private sphere and are opened to the public, the term 'heritage' moves from the
private meaning of family inheritance to publicly available heritage. 'Heritage' is now understood to signify something which is preserved from the past and used in the modern day for a number of roles relevant to life today. Hewison sees this usage as developing since the 1970s (Hewison 1987, 31). An understanding of the developing usage of these terms provides the tools to read archival evidence about historic building reconstruction.

The use of historic buildings as a commodity to be sold to tourists has been called the 'heritage industry' (Hewison 1987). In modern society people are seeking leisure, and they want it in a high-quality environment. The historic environment is popular for leisure (English Heritage 2000). Hewison warned that the heritage industry could not continue to grow at the rate it was growing in the 1980s, and indeed that rate has slowed, but the industry remains buoyant (Hewison 1987, 9-11). One of the results of commodification is that historic artefacts, including buildings, are being taken out of their context and treated as static items, because this is often an easier way to deal with the past. This approach denies the idea of history as a dynamic process (Walsh 1992, 103-105). The growth of the heritage industry over the last thirty years has led to more analysis of it as a sociological phenomenon. Lowenthal (1985) sees the commodification of the past as a reflection of a greater conceptual separation of the present from the past in contemporary society. Comparisons of attitudes to the past now and in pre-industrial societies suggest that the sense of separation from the past appears to have grown (Urry 1994, 236). Repetition of activities familiar to one's ancestors was once a part of everyday life. The lack of this rooting in contemporary society has been part of the reason for interest in reconstruction, to give people a perspective on their own lives and times (English Heritage 2000). For this reason vernacular buildings are a popular visitor destination, relating people to their locality (Urry 1994, 236).

'Nostalgia' is a term which is commonly used in relation to museums and historic buildings, describing the reaction people may have to them (Lowenthal 1985, 4-13; Schama 2000, 15). 'Nostalgia' was identified around the late seventeenth century as a feeling of homesickness. It is recorded as having been diagnosed as a medical condition in soldiers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, right up to the time of the American Civil War (Reid 2001, 496; Hunter and MacAlpine 1982, 189-92). During the twentieth century it
developed its wider meaning of a yearning for the past and historic things (Lowenthal 1985, 4-13). Nowadays the term has developed a more derogatory usage, commonly suggesting that it is a less valid outcome for a museum or historic house visit (Shaw and Chase 1989, 20; Lowenthal 1989, 20). Perhaps to escape the shame of being termed ‘nostalgic’, popular publications have become more academic in their approaches. Such publications may include guidebooks, novels, TV and radio programmes, films and many other formats.

**Institutions which Reconstructed Historic Buildings**

The second subsidiary research question, “In what ways have institutions, organisations or individuals undertaking the reconstruction differed in their aims and approaches to historic buildings?” The institutions and organisations and their approaches have been studied through a range of sources, including primary and secondary written sources. The National Trust, for example, have published several histories of their early days (Lees-Milne 1945; Fedden 1968; Waterson 1994). Work has been undertaken about the Ministry of Works, and their early approaches to the presentation of historic buildings (Emerick 1996, 183-196). Their successors, English Heritage are, as yet, too young to have been studied historically. The SPAB have yet to publish a history of their institution, one planned for the 125th anniversary celebrations in 2002 having been abandoned.

Museums and local authorities which run historic buildings have been discussed in relation to presentation and interpretation. Presentation to the public is increasingly seen as a responsibility of archaeology, along with the necessity to publish finds (Pearce 1990, 170-180; Parker-Pearson 1993, 225-231). The history of private individuals opening their houses to the public is also discussed in some detail by Tinniswood and Mandler. Their approach is to look at broad social changes rather than concentrating on the archaeological evidence within the structures, which is the focus of this work (Tinniswood 1998; Mandler 1997).

The type of institution which has attracted most review and discussion for its role in reconstructing historic buildings is the open-air museum. The idea developed in Scandinavia (Nordenson 1992, 149-50) and moved to Britain and other areas of Europe.
The first open-air museum in Britain was The Highland Folk Museum in Kingussie, Scotland, in 1935 (Highland Folk Museum n.d.). Just three years later the Cregneash Folk Museum was opened in the Isle of Man (Isle of Man Government 2003). Museums are laid out like villages or settlements, and often have actors playing the roles of inhabitants (Gailey 1998; Magelssen 2004). Open-air museums became popular in England in the 1960s and 1970s. Debates have considered the validity of moving buildings to a new setting (Gailey 1998), and it has been suggested that while the sites achieve historical accuracy, they cannot recreate the atmosphere of a lived-in place (Philpott 1996).

Smaller organizations like building preservation trusts, which have become increasingly common over the last twenty years as a result of funding organizations’ preference for them, have been little reviewed in the literature. There is an overarching organization, the Association of Preservation Trusts, which advises them (Association of Preservation Trusts 2003).

**History of the Conservation Movements and Developing Philosophies**

The ways in which wider conservation movements impact on works to historic buildings is one of the research questions explored. This thesis uses 1877 as its starting date, as this was a time when conservation ideals were being expressed formally for the first time by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), who promoted sympathetic, minimal conservation work (SPAB 1877). The National Trust adopted these ideals when it was formed in 1895. They aimed both to preserve and maintain buildings and rural areas, and to make them accessible to the public. They wished to create areas where the urban poor could escape, in an effort to give rural England back to the people. *Country Life* magazine (founded 1897) also promoted the protection of the ‘real’ England which seemed in so many areas to be under threat. The novels of Thomas Hardy, published in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, documented the passing of a rural way of life which had survived with little change for centuries. Hardy described the harsher aspects of rural life, for example, in his uncompromising description of life on the “starve-acre place” at Flintcomb-Ash in *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* (1891). In more mellow moments, however, he evoked an image of rural England calculated to inspire nostalgia in his readers. The
description of the Shearing-barn at Weatherbury in *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) catches the mood precisely:

> It was the first day of June, and the sheep-shearing season culminated, the landscape, even to the leanest pasture, being all health and colour. Every green was young, every pore was open, and every stalk was swollen with racing currents of juice. God was palpably present in the country, and the devil had gone with the world to town. ... One could say about [the] barn, what could hardly be said of either the church or the castle, akin to it in age and style, that the purpose which had dictated its original erection was the same with that to which it was still applied. Unlike and superior to either of those two typical remnants of mediaevalism, the old barn embodied practices which had suffered no mutilation at the hands of time. Here at least the spirit of the ancient builders was at one with the spirit of the modern beholder. Standing before this abraded pile, the eye regarded its present usage, the mind dwelt upon its past history, with a satisfied sense of functional continuity throughout – a feeling almost of gratitude, and quite of pride, at the permanence of the idea which had heaped it up. The fact [was] that four centuries had neither proved it to be founded on a mistake, inspired any hatred of its purpose, nor given rise to any reaction that had battered it down ... for once mediaevalism and modernism had a common standpoint.

(Hardy 1963 edn., 162-164)

This type of nostalgic view of the past forms a background for much of the work carried out to historic buildings in the late nineteenth century, and it will be seen in later chapters that historic buildings start to be prioritised in this period, as evidenced through the formation of the SPAB and the National Trust at this time.

Research into the history of museums has been in the realm of social history, exploring their role in society, especially in the nineteenth century. In the Victorian period people were interested in their own development, and secondary to that there was a movement for widespread education, of which museums were seen as a part (Taylor 1988, 282-3). Museums have been seen as the collections of the rich opened to the poor as a means of controlling their activity – an act of subordination (Flanders 1999, 72-75). Much of the work of museums, then, has been seen as legitimising existing relationships of power, rather than working towards different perspectives of the past (Merriman 2000, 300). Research into and preservation of some of the best examples of historic buildings was
deemed important in the Victorian period, and is evidenced through the numbers known to have been opened to the public at that time (Buchanan 1999, 173-175). From 1845 there were Acts of Parliament to encourage the creation of museums (Chung 2003, 113-126), but it was much later that historic buildings were given any legal status (Suddards 1988).

The philosophies and approaches of conservationists are seen to change through the period covered by the thesis, and conservation is seen as a series of movements rather than one progression because of these changes. Although there is this evidence of enthusiasm to preserve historic buildings and traditional practices and learn more about them throughout the whole period under study, the preservation of a building depends to a great extent on finances. Opening of country houses to the public, which became popular through the first half of the twentieth century, raised important funds for maintenance (Tinniswood 1998; Mandler 1997). As early as the eighteenth century making visits to country houses was an upper-class pastime, and led to particular opening days being assigned (Clemenson 1982, 166). The idea really took off as a popular pastime through the National Trust and the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works.

From the 1970s there has been a broader and stronger move to preserve historic buildings as new development threatened them, and with them the unique character of towns and cities: "historic buildings and sites have a completely new function as witnesses of the history of the people and of the art of past centuries" (Council of Europe 1963, 7). This culminated in the Year of Heritage in 1975 (Amery and Cruikshank 1975; Grenville 1997, 193). This in turn has led to wider appreciation of the stock of historic buildings; and their presentation through the new media, such as television and now linked websites, has had an important influence in increasing publicity and promoting the importance of these buildings. A circular process developed, where buildings were reconstructed, which increased their profile, and they became more fully appreciated by the public, who then were keen they should be preserved (Council of Europe 1963, 10-16). Through the 1960s there came to be a growing role for buildings archaeologists (Morris 1994, 13-21; Grenville 1997, 13-17). The Council of Europe was concerned that there were considerable variations around Europe in the level of protection which historic buildings received, and
they started to work towards a systematic campaign for the protection of historic buildings. All their arguments were based on an assumption of the importance of historic buildings, and they were aware of the need to educate the population about that importance if their campaigns were to be successful (Council of Europe 1963, 10-29).

Through the twentieth century there developed an increasing ethos of preservation, and buildings were more frequently opened to the public, but this was primarily to gain funds through people visiting as a leisure activity (Tinniswood 1998, 181-209). Records of early twentieth-century reconstruction work show very little investment in interpretation of the building in terms of informative guidebooks, display panels, guided tours or activities. More recently there has been a convergence of academic research and presentation, and a realisation of the importance of including the public in research into and understanding of the past (Urry 1996, 45-65). Archaeology has been able to provide much information about everyday life in the medieval and post-medieval periods. Simultaneously there has been a move to include under the definition of national heritage, “ordinary traces of everyday life” (Wright 1985, 252-253).

In recent years guidance for reconstruction work has come from a range of fields and movements. Art history has developed some of the key guiding principles now in application (Price et al. 1996). There are many parallels between the fields of art and archaeology. Both are looking at historical objects and using them as a starting point for interpretation of an aspect of the past; and they employ both scientific and subjective approaches to their subjects. Art historians may want to dismantle or sample in order to understand the processes of creation, and so may buildings archaeologists (Price et al. 1996; Grenville 1997).

Many of the wider challenges associated with the historic fabric of a building are shared with art conservation, and philosophies are comparable. Conservation constitutes treatment of artefacts to make them stable, so that they will survive longer (Ashley-Smith 1982, 1-5). Art history has had a more sustained, coherent approach to conservation than archaeology, and more explicit philosophies and theories, and has held and learned from more open
debates over the last century. More is published about art conservation, and examination of these texts reveals parallels between art and archaeology. The emphases are different, but the aims of building and art conservation are similar: the preservation of objects from the past in order to gain an understanding of history, life and approaches at the time, and for touristic and aesthetic purposes. The ethical issues are similar too: both groups of conservators debate whether to return an item to its original form as it was created by the builder or artist or whether to preserve the different phases of alteration through time (Price et al. 1996, 7). Major architectural works are sometimes considered to be works of art as well as functional buildings, discussion of the Parthenon in Athens, for example, is as likely to fall under art-history as architecture or archaeology (Riegel 1996, 75).

The debate continues in art conservation about the period to which works are conserved (Price et al. 1996). As with historic buildings there is strong value placed on the oldest surviving section of a work of art, but value is also attached to a work of art appearing consistent throughout, as if it were created at one time, as a reconstructed historic building could appear. This can be achieved through reconstruction. The overall impact of a piece of art is, to some, more important than the evidence it might hold about the work of different individuals. The aim to create a united piece of work rather than one which is evidently altered sometimes overrides other considerations (Price et al. 1996, 162). A crucial difference between art and building conservation is that as art works are not continually used in a physical sense, they are not so often altered, and their alterations are not often as valued by any section of the art community as alterations and developments to historic buildings may be valued by archaeologists.

Some of the aims of artistic conservation are different from those of archaeology. It has been claimed that the aim of art conservation now is to re-establish the unity of a work without producing a new forgery and without erasing every trace of the passage of time (Brandi 1996, 231). The reconstructions themselves become part of the history of the work of art (Brandi 1996, 235). But the problems are sometimes very similar: the original intention of the artist or builder is often hard to discern through a study of the artefact, especially if it has been altered through the ages (Price et al. 1996, 162).
A recent requirement in art and building conservation alike is reversibility, and with both types this is a very difficult aim to achieve (Pearce 1993, 234). The motivations of the owner in obtaining an artefact, be it building, painting or sculpture, will define their approach to the conservation of the object. If they are interested in it aesthetically they might want to restore it to its earliest phase and appearance or keep it looking worn and aged; if they are interested in authenticity and age they will want to keep it as it is, preserving it as they received it, as a custodian for the future owners. If they are academics they might want to dismantle it, or remove parts for examination to gain more information about how the work was done, what it was made from and how it was executed (Price et al. 1996).

Although there are many parallels with other disciplines there are some debates and issues which are peculiar to archaeology and historic buildings. Some recent research on historic buildings has concentrated on the role of the past within society, and discussion of the specific policies relating to historic buildings has been limited. Wright traces the growth in heritage preservation, and the increasing store put on the national past, which he identifies as being solidified in "landscapes, old buildings, monuments, folkways, skills and exhibitable objects" (Wright 1985, 145). One academic analysis of Britain's contemporary relationship with its heritage has concluded that, although it is seen as important, seventy-nine per cent. of people believing that it is definitely worth knowing about, the past is seen in negative terms, with poverty, poor amenities and lack of fulfilment regarded as typifying existence (Merriman 1991, 23-41). Other writers have suggested that in the modern world we use heritage to compensate for the decline of traditional industries, to create jobs and to give a feeling of place and self-worth (Wright 1985; Hewison 1987).

There have recently been attempts to bring current theoretical issues in archaeology to bear on museums and museum studies. Macdonald and Fyfe (1996) confront issues such as feminism, nationalism, race and individual versus group identity in relation to museum presentations. Building presentations are, of course, different from museum presentations, and have more potential to present these 'personal' aspects of life in the past more directly. This study analyses whether those opportunities are taken in the example buildings
examined, and relates interpretations to popular notions of the period c1400 to c1600 at
different times since c1877. Every building presentation or reconstruction involves
numerous decisions, from the period to be presented to the details of colours of furnishings
within a building. "Presenting the story of a site, it is hard to define where it starts and
where it finishes" (Rumble 1989, 25-26).

Other recent writing about the conservation and presentation of the past has often consisted
of practical advice for people such as archaeologists, heritage managers and building
owners rather than more philosophical debates. English Heritage, for example, produced
Visitors Welcome, a guide for archaeologists who wish to open their sites to the public,
giving practical ideas and warnings about what needs to be considered (Binks 1988).
Again this does not examine the background philosophies of historic building
reconstruction, but rather event-management style training. This sort of approach has come
to be seen as necessary because English Heritage and other heritage organisations are
operating in competitive markets. "Visitors' needs are vitally important, as are historical
accuracy and authenticity" (Uzzell 1989, 4). Practical publications have also included
documents aimed to improve the management of the historic resource, such as guidance on
the production of Conservation Plans (Clark 1998).

**Authenticity and Historic Buildings**

One of the research questions of this thesis relates to the role of authenticity in historic
building reconstruction. Authenticity of items from the past, including buildings, is an
issue which surfaces through discussions at different periods represented in the thesis.
Notions of authenticity develop and change over time, to suit particular circumstances, and
are culturally specific (Fowler 1992, 11-13). ‘Authentic’ has been defined as, “genuine,
known to be true” (OED). Reconstructed artefacts may also be considered authentic
reproductions, if they are as faithful to the original as possible. ‘Authentic’ and ‘real’ are
terms which are sometimes considered to be interchangeable, but any fake can be real in the
sense of being a faithful copy made from traditional materials, though the question of its
being authentic is more debatable (Chitty 1987, 137). It could be argued that an artefact
can only be authentic to the period in which it was created; but artefacts will, necessarily,
have changed over time, and become worn and used, so they will never be entirely authentic to their original form. A complex artefact like a building poses particular challenges to any definition of authenticity, because sections can be original, while others can be authentic reproductions, and the relationships between those different aspects of a building may be very difficult to unpick. In art history recent debates about the validity of fakes, in relation to the experience they can provide for gallery-visitors, have produced some innovative discussions (Philips 1997).

These debates are the background for the presentation of the past, and as a result definitions and usages of such terms as ‘original’, ‘authentic’, ‘faithful’, and ‘genuine’ are often specific, while visitors’ understanding of them is not always so precise. Authentic copies are those that are accurately done, and have been considered viable, as long as visitors know what they are (Chitty 1987, 138-140). Even items described by some as authentic copies are not accepted as good conservation practice in the modern day. Conservation theory today dictates that lost sections of buildings should not be replaced, though this is sometimes carried out to re-establish the visual coherence of the architecture. The Georgian Group, for example, believes that windows should be reconstructed to their original style (Georgian Group n.d.). The debate is between the historical approach which makes the building look as it did at some time in the past (often when it was built) and the archaeological approach, which would promote the notion that different phases of alteration to the building should be available and visible in the present structure (Chitty 1987, 130).

For the modern craftsman the guiding principle is, “considerable importance is now attached to the conservation of historic interiors, including the original layout” (Sharpe 1999, 7). The ongoing and repeated debates about this issue make it an important research question, even when evidence for an interest in authenticity is not present for every period of historic building reconstruction (Spalding 2002, 30-31; Reynolds 1999, 121-122).

**Englishness and Historic Buildings**

‘Englishness’, and its impact on historic building reconstruction, forms another research question in this thesis. Englishness will be seen to be a factor in the growing interest in historic buildings at various times in the past. Englishness has been fuelled by nostalgia for
the England of the past (Lowenthal 1985, 102-103). Nostalgia has been found to be especially common when the present is seen as being deficient and the past is available, and is seen to be compensating for those deficiencies (Chase and Shaw 1989, 2; Lowenthal 1985, 4-13).

The changes in the sense of Englishness recorded through the last 130 years can be related to wider issues such as political movements. The increase in mobility (with cars) and the new hobby of travelling around England visiting places, often medieval, which came to be seen as rural, idyllic and quintessentially English, also cemented it in the national psyche (Inglis 2000, 59-61 and 74-76). The popularity of visiting places with a medieval history was not confined to the countryside. Heritage sites grew up in historic towns (Orbasli 2000). This new fascination with visiting places around England created demand for, and was itself fuelled by, a range of new books produced to guide people around the places they were visiting (Tinniswood 1998, 131-132). These books reinforced sentimental feelings about the countryside which was being visited. Morton (1927) wrote that his book *In Search of England* was inspired during an illness when he was in Palestine, during which he promised himself that if he survived he would “go home in search of England. I would go through the lanes of England and the little thatched villages of England, and I would lean over English bridges and lie on English grass watching an English sky.” This romanticised view of England, fed by visits to historic buildings and locations, proved enormously popular, and the book ran to 32 editions between 1927 and 2000, selling over a million copies. The role and nature of Englishness changed through time, and it has been argued that, between 1920 and 1940, Englishness was redefined through a realignment of gender identities, moving away from the heroic, masculine concept of Great Britain to a more inward-looking, domestic, private, feminine Englishness (Taylor 1994, 22). Morton’s success was not unique: other authors such as Burke and Salmon each published on similar topics; they were also well received (Burke 1933; Salmon 1934). Through the thesis it will be seen that a sense of Englishness grows in currency in relation to promoting preservation and visiting around the time of the First and Second World Wars. Romantic imagery associated with historic buildings is used to inspire nostalgia about them and galvanise
efforts to save them, whether in a wide national context or in association with just one or a few local buildings (Hewison 1987, 45-47).

The concept of Englishness is particularly relevant because of the period under consideration in this thesis, the medieval and Tudor periods having been closely associated with popular images of England in the creation of Englishness as a distinct identity (Colls 2002). A notion of earlier periods as idyllic has developed since the Industrial Revolution, when life changed from the medieval more rapidly than previously and the problems of overcrowding in cities, pollution and poverty made the medieval rural way of life seem more desirable. Historic buildings were especially relevant in this creation of scenes of an ideal England (Colls 2002, 234-235). English middle-class identity is now well associated with timber-framed houses: “the contemporary obsession with medieval England was thus expressive of a desire to return to a rural idyll with a shared and ordered life” (Merriman 1991, 11). This backward-looking interest in an idealised England of the past, compared to an imperfect England of the present, is a theme which Wood identifies in his study, *In Search of England* (Wood 1999, 91-106). The shift from the medieval to the Tudor period, and the transitional nature of society during the late medieval period, is not incorporated in these images of the past. The past is seen through historic houses as secure and unchanging, rather than shifting and unpredictable, as it would truly have been through the Age of Transition. This denial of aspects of the past for modern purposes is reinforced in many interpretations of historic buildings, which (with the possible exception of priest holes) do not approach the more problematic issues which would have been the backdrop of people’s lives in the period being reconstructed.

**Historic Buildings 1400 – 1600 and their Perceived Value**

The period chosen as a case study for understanding historic building reconstruction is 1400-1600. This period is a highly suitable example as there are many buildings from this period surviving and presented as historic houses. The specific interest of the Age of Transition lies in the fact that many of the earliest surviving houses in the country fit into that era, and in the important changes in the nature of society at this time, which are reflected in the artefacts, including those standing buildings. Some recent innovative
archaeological work has focussed on buildings of this period: for example, Gilchrist’s work on gender division within castles in the fifteenth century uses the buildings’ archaeology as a strong source of evidence (1999, 109-145). The period has also always presented certain challenges for those displaying the past, and the changing academic understanding of the period has created new areas of interest.

Until the recent interest in this period it has not commonly been studied as a unit, because of academic divisions. Archaeology and history try to compartmentalise it, creating a divide c.1400, when the beginnings of the emergence of modernity can be identified. Historians use ‘early modern’ as dating from c.1500 (Gaimster and Stamper 1997, ix), and museums often divide artefacts by discipline, archaeology ending and social history beginning c.1700 (Pearce 1990, 2).

Over the last hundred and forty years there have been significant changes in the ways in which archaeologists approach and understand buildings. Studies of the history of archaeology have concentrated on prehistory and ancient societies (Daniel 1950; Trigger 1989). Schnapp’s overview gives some consideration to the role of historic buildings in the minds of antiquarians, but the primary concentration is also on prehistory (Schnapp 1996). The development of the discipline has been seen to have followed a pattern of transition from amateur antiquarian interest into a more scientific and ordered discipline of archaeology (Schnapp 1996). Historiography often discusses the development of dating methods, the gradual dismissal of the Bible as a historical document as a result of geological research (Calloman 1995, 127-150) and the publication of Darwin’s Origin of Species (Darwin 1859; Trigger 1989, 65-109). But histories of archaeology have been less likely to consider archaeological study of historic buildings in the nineteenth century (Schnapp 1996; Trigger 1989). Gerrard (2003) has started to rectify this balance with his consideration of the history of archaeological study of the medieval period.

Research into domestic buildings from the medieval and early modern periods developed from around the 1890s. The first major academic work published was Addy’s study, The Evolution of the English House (1898). Addy’s history followed buildings from the earliest
prehistoric remains through to timber-framed buildings of the medieval and post-medieval periods. Details were included of construction materials and methods at different times. Addy describes buildings in terms of ‘bays’, “a sort of architectural unit, for the building of one ‘bay’ might be increased indefinitely in length by adding other bays” (Addy 1975, 39). Addy did not invent the term ‘bay’, but traces it back conceptually to the Anglo-Saxon, ‘cleofa’ - 'cell'. The word ‘bay’ was introduced in the late medieval period. The first typology of houses relating them to their dates was published by Fox and Raglan in their volumes about houses in Glamorgan (1951). During that half-century of academic development, in which studies of houses were primarily of individual buildings, and tended not to be closely dated, we will see substantial changes in the reconstruction and presentation of historic houses.

Hoskins and Mercer built on the typological understanding of buildings developed through the 1950s, notably discussing the periods of transition in relation to a possible ‘Great Rebuilding’ between 1570 and 1640, and changes in plan-type (Hoskins 1953; Mercer 1975). Buildings archaeology has been following two major lines of research since its inception as a discrete discipline. One has been continuing data collection to understand the typology and distribution patterns of buildings (Alcock 1981; Barley 1979), and many regional studies of buildings, which take into account both local typologies and the social aspects of the buildings (Grenville 1990; Pearson 1994). This detailed analysis, either individually or at a local level, has provided the foundations for the second line of research, a synthesis of knowledge about buildings into theses about general changes and processes visible in their architectural development (Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994; Samson 1990). Buildings archaeologists are able to relate both of these forms of study to the people who have lived in the buildings in the past.

Much recent research into medieval buildings has concentrated on the importance of the spaces within buildings and how they are utilised by people, thus relating buildings to their inhabitants, rather than simply understanding the structures technically and for their own structural interest, which had previously been the focus of architectural historians. Brunskill’s detailed analysis, *Timber Building in Britain* (1985), for example, concentrates
on the meticulous understanding and naming of features of a timber frame rather than understanding why people would have chosen to live in houses built in that way. Anthropologists and archaeologists have argued against this sort of fetishisation of objects and buildings (Pfaffenberger 1988 quoted in Johnson 1993, 9), and have moved away from simple typologies towards more explicitly theoretical analyses of buildings which concentrate on the people who once lived within the buildings (Johnson 1993; Gilchrist 1999; Schofield 1994). The work of Johnson (1993; 1996) concentrates on this period, and has identified a series of alterations made to buildings, including adaptation of old buildings for changing ways of life, and new styles and designs for new buildings. The process which he calls ‘closure’, identified especially through the insertion of a first floor into the medieval great hall, is seen as symbolic of changes in this period, which focus on social changes, increased desire for privacy and comfort, and division of spaces into separate functions rather than multi-function rooms. Johnson has also related this and other processes of change to the nature of society at the time. Wider changes in everyday life are seen in the decline of the medieval field system and the enclosure of fields under private ownership; and the construction of new forms of societal order is seen archaeologically in buildings and smaller objects alike (Johnson 1996). This thesis will use similar theoretical approaches, viewing reconstructors as an active agent, or group or agents, altering buildings in ways which suit their needs, and reflect wider approaches towards historic buildings contemporaneously.

This heightened interest in historic buildings amongst professional archaeologists has translated to more professional training in the subject, including the growth in popularity of conservation courses at the Weald and Downland Museum over the last six years (Diana Roswell, Weald and Downland Museum, pers. comm.). In recent years Planning and Policy Guidance Note 15 (Department of the Environment 1994) has provided a framework within which an increased number of historic buildings officers in planning departments can work to preserve buildings. The future for historic buildings and their presentation to the public is discussed in Chapters Nine and Ten.
This ongoing study and interpretation of historic buildings reflects the continuing value they are given in western society. This is evidenced in every chapter of this thesis, as buildings are constantly being preserved, reconstructed and interpreted for the public. The types and ages of buildings being preserved vary through time. There has, for example, been an increased interest in urban buildings since the 1970s, as will be seen in the examples of buildings being discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight. This may have been as a reaction to the threats of the Second World War. Attention was drawn to the destruction which was taking place after the Second World War by Amery and Cruikshank (1975), and since then there has been a greater concentration on the preservation and presentation of medieval and Tudor urban buildings. Raising awareness of the value of historic urban buildings by presenting them to the public is an important part of ensuring their survival (Hewison 1987, 37).

The desire to preserve the past is a complex aspect of modern society, and reflects the widespread interest in history, archaeology and the historic environment. Jokilehto suggests a series of reasons for this modern desire: historicity and nostalgia; our esteem for past achievements, and desire to learn from the past; and the shock caused by inappropriate alterations to historic buildings (1999, 102). The desire to save evidence of the past has developed through a series of changing motivations from the Victorian period to the present. The role of society in effecting the preservation and presentation of historic buildings, and the part played by the historic environment in forming people’s perceptions of their society, is a reciprocal relationship. “The definition of objects and structures of the past as heritage, and the policies related to their protection, restoration and conservation, have evolved … and are currently recognised as an essential part of the responsibilities of modern society” (Jokilehto 1999, 1).

Historic buildings are part of a broad western ideology which values the past, and uses object like buildings as symbols of a lineage from the past. They can therefore represent the aspects of society which reconstructors and visitors perhaps wish to be unchanging (Hewison 1987, 52-53). The link between the past and the present is expressed through some reconstructions as comfort and contentment. Historic houses opened to the public
have also played on these feelings, and have marketed themselves on their idealised images of the past. Gradually heritage has become 'political capital' as it has evolved from an elitist preoccupation to a popular movement (Delafons 1997, 1). Government policy and the legal requirements relating to historic buildings and monuments have changed over time and this has been recognised as reflecting wider social and cultural issues (Delafons 1997, 1).

There has been some research undertaken about public interest in the past. Merriman (1991) suggests that “the ways in which ordinary people think about the past and the extent to which their images of the past may reflect their contemporary concerns is an area that has been relatively neglected”. Little work has been done in environmental psychology relating to this topic, but it was observed from studies in the 1970s and 1980s that people who like historic buildings and collect antiques are likely to be younger rather than older, and that they are also likely to indulge in intellectual, artistic or cultural pursuits in their leisure time (McKechnie 1974 quoted in Merriman 1991).

Preservation of historic houses is not always possible or desired. When explaining the motivation for the National Trust Country Houses Scheme the fact is often quoted that between 1918 and 1945, 485 country houses were demolished, partly as a result of owners’ inability to protect and care for them through the depression of the 1920s and 1930s (Hewison 1987, 54). This statistic has been related to the economic history of the period, and the complex interlinking factors which led to a decline in the fortunes of country house owners (Worsley 2002, 7-16). Many historic houses were therefore destroyed before they were ever opened to the public. In the whole of the twentieth century 1,700 country houses were destroyed, equating to seventeen a year (Worsley 2002, 23), almost exactly the rate during the interwar period. At that time, then, the perceived threat was greater, but statistically it was no higher than at other times in the century. The survival of the English country house has been attributed to the National Trust’s Country Houses Scheme of the 1940s, which enabled the Trust to purchase numerous houses which could otherwise have been demolished (Hewison 1987, 54; Waterson 1994, 109-113).
Private country house owners who did not want to give their houses to the Trust have often had to open their buildings to the public, and have also employed effective marketing strategies. "The lions were installed at Longleat, the motor cars at Beaulieu, and nudist camps and jazz festivals held at Woburn" (Hewison 1987, 63). The opening of historic houses was primarily undertaken as a means of providing income for the maintenance of the property, and many have been made to function very successfully in this way (Sampson 1962).

**Popularised Images of the Past**

The use of historic buildings as places to visit for enjoyment and education acts as part of the popularisation of the past, creating images which people take away with them about a place or a period in the past. This is part of a wider growth of 'tourism'. Tourism is a growing area of research in sociology, geography, and history (Stone and Planel 1999; Urry 1994; Binney and Hanna 1978). It is abundantly evident that tourists are interested in seeing, amongst other things, historic buildings and historic towns [historic towns York and Chester welcomed 4 and 6 million visitors respectively in 2003; nearby cities of Leeds and Liverpool attracted 1.4 and 1.7 million respectively (English Tourist Board 2004)]. Tourism can have a beneficial effect on the preservation and conservation of historic buildings, widening the range of buildings being conserved, as it is often a whole cityscape or rural environment which attracts tourists (Orbasli 2000). The economic benefits of tourism are considerable, valued at over £37 billion a year across Britain (English Tourist Board 2004). This can provide money in the local and national economy, which may be directed toward preservation of historic buildings. The presence of tourists can also focus local attention on aspects of the environment which are easily ignored when part of the everyday scene (Orbasli 2000, 40).

The ways in which archaeological evidence and reconstruction may create popular images of the past runs parallel with the images created in other media. Popularised notions of the period as created through modern literature and films have been analysed. The medieval period is sometimes used as a setting for popular fiction to distance the action from the present. Medievalized images are also used in films to create post-apocalyptic scenes
(Ziegler 1998, 27-28). This is similarly true in novels such as John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids* (Wyndham 1955). Ziegler has also argued that the nature of medieval society portrayed in these popular narratives reflects the period at which they were created. For example, since the 1970s the medieval has been portrayed as more individualistic, reflecting the growth in risk society since the 1970s, identified by sociologists (Ziegler 1998, 35).

One approach to reconstruction work is the creation of alternative images of historic objects, including buildings, through drawings. This is a contentious issue in the modern day, especially with the potential of computer-generated virtual reality. Visual representations are seen as a key factor in inspiring interest in the past (James 1997, 22), but these pictures have to be based on real data. “The purpose of making a reconstruction illustration is to convey information and ideas; the aesthetic element is essential, but secondary” (James 1997, 23). In many archaeological reconstructions much of the evidence for the previous appearance of a site is missing. The archaeology of the Age of Transition provides considerable evidence which, combined with historical, art-historical and literary studies, can contribute substantially to accurate reconstruction. There is still an element of “probability as against certainty” (James 1997, 26), and while reconstruction will always be based on the best evidence available, that evidence could still be interpreted in different ways. The biggest issues now surround how and whether to present buildings which have changed and developed over time to just one or to multiple periods. These problems are approached in very different ways in different places, two extremes being Montpelier in Virginia, USA and the Medieval Museum in Bologna. In America they are taking the bold step of demolishing huge sections of Montpelier which were added in the first decade of the twentieth century, to return the building to its state in the 1820s, when President Madison lived there, by removing all later extensions and additions. This will reduce the building from 55 rooms to 22 rooms (Hales 2003, C01). In Italy the Bologna Medieval Museum is housed within the Palazzo Ghisilardi-Fava, which contains sections of architecture from the Roman, through the medieval to the modern. Here all sections are retained and presented with equal value in the history of the building as a totality (Bologna
Each of these approaches will create images of a very different type.

**Accuracy and Historic Building Reconstruction**

Some previous research has concentrated on issues such as accuracy of presentation in the past. This thesis does not aim to appraise past works, but to understand the history of reconstruction, and then to create a model which will allow this knowledge to feed into future works.

Some recent research into the presentation of history, including historic houses, has challenged our ability in the modern day ever accurately to represent life in the past. Rosenstone casts doubt on the adequacy of any medium. Film is seen as inadequate by many academics, but Rosenstone argues that words on paper are equally so (1995, 25). Such a post-processual view must be acknowledged, but this thesis takes a more pragmatic view. Historic houses and heritage sites exist, and will continue to be visited. The types of messages they have presented about the past, and the history of the individual site at different times since the late nineteenth century therefore demand consideration. The matrix which reviews that history (Chapter Nine) may also inform ways in which the more recent history of a building can be analysed and presented to the public. Other commentators have questioned the necessity of aiming to be accurate. How real is a building reconstructed to its past state, and how real is the experience a visitor has at a building? “Ultimately, the answer is probably not all that important, except to those whose business it is to develop and write about the presentation and interpretation of historic buildings” (Tinniswood 1998, 202). Tinniswood suggests that “impressions are accurate and fun, so where’s the harm in that?” (ibid.). This approach is dangerous if the level of inaccuracy is not clear: “most visitors today assume that all the collections in museums are genuine, and that everything they tell you about them is true” (Spalding 2002, 25). This could lead to an assumption among visitors that all presentation of the past is offered with equal seriousness, and is fully accurate. Memory, whether accurate or inaccurate, entertainment and the present historical environment are relevant to people today, as is knowledge about the past. It may be that for some “history is not about truth; it is about us,
here, now, and our ambivalent relationship with the past” (Tinniswood 1998, 209). The very notion that history is relevant in the modern day will mean that accurately representing it is an emotive political issue for many people.

Whether it is an important issue or not there are aspects of inaccuracy about the past which can never be overcome: “very few artefacts from the past have come down to us intact. It is not just that most of them have suffered or altered in one way or another, by being damaged, worn, or changing colour with age; they have also often been tampered with by people in the past, in an attempt to preserve them or restore them” (Spalding 2002, 25). In museums descriptions of exhibits seldom address changes in objects or meanings of objects in the past and the present as they might (Spalding 2002, 25). This is equally true of historic houses, where changes in the buildings and their meanings could be presented to much greater effect.

If historic houses and museums are aiming at, but not succeeding in, creating accurate images of the past then they are open to criticism. Writing about museums Merriman discusses the type of criticism which is common: “the essential critique that emerges from this literature is that museums represent a partial, commodified and mythical past. This serves to legitimate the dominant forces that brought it into being, and to exclude other versions of history that might provide a different perspective on the apparent inevitability of the contemporary social structure” (Merriman 2000, 300). Few museums show things as they were when first made and in use; they show old objects which are now worn and tarnished. Museums have to make people interested in these objects, get them to relate to them, and understand their relevance. They also have to approach multiple meanings of objects and changing meanings over time, rather than just promoting and validating one meaning. “A museum’s job is to make the past interesting. It can’t do that without preserving the past. That goes without saying. But a museum’s collection is its tool, not its end product. Its job is to use that collection to stimulate our interest, extend our understanding, and deepen our enjoyment” (Spalding n.d., 3-4). This is equally true of historic houses, which also have multiple roles, including enjoyment and education.
One key issue in this thesis, then, is not to judge the accuracy or effect of a certain type of reconstruction, but to record what has been done in order that that can inform future interpretations. Surviving buildings from the medieval and Tudor periods have all undergone processes of change and alterations to their fabric throughout their history, including in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. "We live with the results of cumulative actions, phases of creation and alteration which have their own historically specific contexts" (Tarlow and West 1999, 2). The period to which a building is reconstructed is often one of the most problematic issues. Buildings have invariably survived numerous phases of development, but only a small number – often just one – is presented. "History is treated, not as a process of development and change, but something achieved on arrival at the present day" (Hewison 1987, 72). Analysis of the whole of a building’s history has to be undertaken and the process of choosing a period or periods to present to the public is a difficult but crucial decision.
Chapter Four: The Birth of Building Reconstruction


This chapter examines the period of historic building reconstruction between the 1870s and the First World War. The starting point for this research is the growth in interest in historic building conservation and reconstruction in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the reaction against Victorian restoration of buildings, which had redesigned many historic buildings according to the Victorian image of the medieval past. This chapter will look at the reasons for the growth of interest in historic buildings, and the subsequent growth in the Victorian conservation movement and historic building visiting (Tinniswood 1998, 139-158).

It will be seen that a range of organisations and individuals was involved in the reconstruction of historic buildings in this period, and they are seen to take different approaches. The largest organisation was the National Trust and this was advised by the SPAB, who provided the latest conservation philosophies.

The new-found interest in visiting historic buildings led to pressure for relevant and interesting displays, while the SPAB led a campaign for accurate and truthful reconstructions. There was a battle between the needs of conservation and those of reconstruction, played out in debates and reflected in the works carried out at specific buildings. The SPAB reflected interest in authenticity and the National Trust attempted to apply this in practice to their properties. The initial relationship between these two institutions, which could have been tense, is a theme throughout this chapter.

It is apparent that public interest in historic buildings was fuelled by publications like Country Life magazine, historical novels and museum exhibitions. The resurgence of interest in Shakespeare and production of his plays (Foulkes 1987; 2001) is another enabling factor which is considered in relation to the increased popularity of the past and the buildings reconstructed in the late nineteenth century. This interest, along with
new marketing of buildings, resulted in increased historic building visiting (Tinniswood 1998, 139-158). The role of the popular appeal of the past in the approach to the reconstruction of historic buildings is discussed.

In this chapter some disparity will be seen between conservation philosophy, especially the statements of Ruskin (Ruskin 1849), and the SPAB (SPAB 1877), and the approach actually taken to historic buildings seen in the structures themselves, this is highlighted through of the approach of researching specific example buildings, and relating the historical documents of the period to them. The rhetoric of the time did help shape the new legislation about historic buildings, and works were later influenced by this (Mynors 1999). The slow progress towards legislation and the listing of buildings is highlighted in this chapter (ibid.).

**Early Historic Building Visiting**

From the late nineteenth century buildings were more commonly opening on an official basis, and receiving many visitors (Tinniswood 1998, 41-90), this section reviews some of the history of the process of buildings opening to the public. This practice of house visiting had previously been the preserve of the upper and upper-middle classes, but from the late nineteenth century became increasingly widely practised (ibid.). One of the milestones in this process was the opening of Hampton Court to the public without charge in 1838 (Evans 2000, 55). This marked the start of the breakdown of the strict social rules dictating who could and could not visit such a building, and caused national debate about the role of historic buildings, and the suitability of “the masses” visiting them (Tinniswood 1998, 138-147). Concern was expressed that objects within Hampton Court might be damaged by drunkards going through (ibid.). It seems from documents of the time that the real concern underlying this was that house visiting might be becoming the pastime of the lower classes, rather than the preserve of the rich. A reviewer in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* commented in 1840 that the Reform Bill passed to make Hampton Court a free attraction “has given encouragement to the busy, meddling, swaggering, vulgar insolence of the low-born bully”, who “is not content unless he can, and he will, imprint his hoofs upon its [Hampton Court’s] polished floors” (Tinniswood 1998, 141). Ethical and social issues aside, the move was certainly popular. In 1840 the antiquarian writer Howitt published a book about places to visit, including historic houses open to the public, and promoted Hampton Court (Howitt
1840; Tinniswood 1998, 138-140). This increased the popularity of the palace, and by the mid-nineteenth century 180,000 people were visiting each year (Evans 2000, 55; Mandler 1997, 36). Hampton Court’s elaborate Tudor decoration was very popular with the Victorians who expanded on it in their additions, such as the carved and painted cornice added in 1840 below the Tudor hammer-beam roof of the great hall (Evans 2000, 6-7). This ‘Tudorization’ of Tudor buildings by adding to the decorative theme will be seen in other buildings later in the chapter.

In the mid-nineteenth century a growing interest in the medieval and Tudor periods was demonstrated by inclusion of those styles within the Great Exhibition of 1851. Tudor chimney pots were displayed (Auerbach 1999, 77-8, 116) and Pugin created an *English Medieval Court* (Figure 4.1). This was a reconstruction of a great hall in the medieval style within the Crystal Palace (Auerbach 1999, 116). The exhibit, like the building itself, was not universally admired. Auerbach writes of the medieval court, “although it was popular, and a tribute to craftsmanship, most contemporaries saw the medieval court as backward and outdated, antithetical to progress.” Because it was stuffed with gothic-style objects the court was seen as Catholic propaganda. Pugin had converted to Catholicism: “for Pugin and his followers, Catholicism was the very essence of English culture: one style meant one faith” (Auerbach 1999, 170, 171). The exhibition received some criticism in the press, which ensured that it was well visited. “When he [William Morris] visited the Crystal Palace in 1851 he sat down and refused to go round, declaring it ‘wonderfully ugly’” (Weiner 1981, 69-70). Fellow medievalists of the late nineteenth century had differing views on aesthetics, and used medieval styles, designs and patterns differently in their own work.
In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was a growing interest in the medieval and early modern periods, and this led to the opening of many more buildings to the public (Tinniswood 1998, 136-158). The long history of country house visiting in England had commonly worked as a reciprocal arrangement among middle and upper class families. Housekeepers would show visitors around the house if they looked suitable (Garnett 1995, 81). Through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, great houses were available for gentle-folk to visit, as is described in *Pride and Prejudice* in 1813, when Elizabeth Bennet visits Pemberley. Elizabeth was not unfamiliar with house visiting. “She must own that she was tired of great houses; after going over so many, she really had no pleasure in fine carpets or satin curtains.” The group was escorted by the household staff. “When all of the house that was open to general inspection had been seen, they returned downstairs, and taking leave of the housekeeper, they were consigned over to the gardener, who met them at the hall door” (Austen 1993 edn, 162-167).

Payments were first made for entry to historic houses in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when it was an unwritten rule that a payment would be made to
enter a royal palace (Tinniswood 1998, 36-37). By the 1830s admission charges were making a significant contribution to the economics of some households. At Hampton Court, for example, they paid the housekeeper’s wage (Tinniswood 1998, 139). The system began to change in the late nineteenth century, as more buildings were opened to the public. Country houses were now charging, but allowing anyone to visit, rather than vetting them at the door, though visiting was still limited by strict opening times, and the entry charge (Mandler 1997, 71-106). Palaces were starting to dispense with charges, and as discussed above this caused an outcry, as it would be possible for everyone to visit if there were no limitations. This shift was supported by some and opposed by others (Tinniswood 1998, 145).

Country houses actively encouraged visitors from the earliest days of their opening commercially, mainly, of course, for the income they provided. In the early nineteenth century Penshurst Place ran coach journeys three times a week from London to bring tourists (Tinniswood 1998, 126). In 1838 the Tower of London opened some of the most historic sections of the building to the public, and used a novel by Harrison Ainsworth, called *The Tower of London: A Historical Romance* as a means of promoting the building and its “Olden Times” exhibition (Mandler 1997, 36). In 1841 the Tower of London suffered a fire, which attracted much public attention. Within a few weeks it was open again to the public, so people could see the extent of the damage, and a standard fee of sixpence was charged for entry (Tinniswood 1998, 136). This commercialisation set the scene for the development of a wider approach to tourism and historic houses.

These early visits to historic houses were limited to large and stately homes; visiting vernacular houses was relatively uncommon, and restricted to ones which had particular historical rather than architectural or social interest (Tinniswood 1998). The understanding of the historic building became an increasing interest for people through the Victorian period, as will be seen through some of the examples later in this chapter.

From the early Victorian period onwards there was a disconnection between scholarly antiquarianism and popular Gothicism, it being commonly assumed that the former strove for authenticity while the latter was a loosely historical style. This distinction was not as hard and fast as is sometimes imagined; the audience with an interest in the
past was likely both to follow antiquarian interests and to read popular novels (Mandler 1997, 21-35; Levine 1986, 7-8). Similarly members of the British Archaeological Association such as Thomas Wright, Samuel Caterhall, F.W. Fairholt and Harrison Ainsworth were also writing for the popular market (eg. Ainsworth 1900). The mass marketing of the past was done without much concern for the historical accuracy of the information, and history tended to be seen in very general terms, with phrases such as “olden times” being much in use (Mandler 1997, 21-35; Sanders 1978, 40). The language was generally highly romantic and evocative of the past, Ainsworth using archaisms such as, “redouble”, “forego”, “acquiescence”, “desirous” and “sepulchral” (Ainsworth 1900; Sanders 1978, 40). As early as 1828, Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, a scholarly antiquarian and populariser, was working to ensure the historical accuracy of exhibitions for the public. He arranged for the Tower of London armour to be displayed to the public in the 1828 “Olden Times” exhibition, which contained Tudor and Stuart artefacts (Mandler 1997, 36). In the late Victorian era, books about archaeology, history and architecture aimed at a wide market were increasingly common, such as Charles Knight’s *Popular History of England* (Knight 1856-62). Travelling by rail for pleasure became popular following royal patronage; Queen Victoria’s first rail trip was in 1842 (Freeman 1999, 195). The railways led to the new genre of ‘railway literature’, that which was suitable for reading on trains, which included guides to places which could be visited by train (Freeman 1999, 86-89 and 204). Increased travel by all forms of transport led to a demand for guidebooks of sites of interest, including buildings. Some were guides to specific buildings, others covered larger areas, for use when touring. Charles Knight’s *Excursion* was a train companion and Thomas Frognall Dibdin’s *A Biographical, Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in the Northern Counties of England and in Scotland* was for use when touring round the countryside, and included historic buildings to visit (Knight 1851 and Dibdin 1838 cited in Tinniswood 1998, 131-132 and 154).

In the late nineteenth century archaeology was conceived as incorporating the study of historic buildings and their decoration. A brief survey of archaeology journals through the late nineteenth century suggests that there was interest in the medieval past from the earliest days of archaeology, and that the post-medieval period was studied, but was widely seen as the domain of historians. The first volume of the Archaeological Journal, published in 1846, for example, includes articles about military and domestic
architecture, and Rockingham Castle, amongst other more ancient subjects (Clark 1846 93-107; Wright 1846, 212-221; Hartshorne 1846, 356-378). Because of the academic interest in historic buildings there were publications which explained the archaeology of individual historic buildings up to the present day. A good example is Ightham Mote. A book about Ightham Mote published in 1907 states that there are “many interesting archaeological problems connected with this building” (Bennett 1907, 84). Visitors were able to investigate these for themselves from 1910, when Ightham Mote opened to the public (Harris 1910). The guidebook from that first opening observes that the building, “at the present time, after endless rebuildings, additions, and alterations, consists of a completed quadrangle” (Harris 1910, 2). This description admits the evolving nature of the building, but goes no way to explaining it to the visitor. Early reconstruction, which was described in the guidebook, included work carried out by Norman Shaw in the 1870s, when he created an internal porch in the hall, and rearranged and sub-divided the service rooms (Nicolson 1998, 16). These changes to the layout to the building (Figures 4.2 and 4.3) are now part of its history, but were never, even immediately after their construction, presented as modern insertions. In 1900 the building was photographed, and appears to have been in good repair except for the stables which were completely overgrown with ivy (Centre for Kentish Studies Archive, photograph IGH.7).

Figure 4.2. Hall at Ightham Mote, showing (bottom right) the interior porch inserted by Norman Shaw in the 1870s. (from Nadia Mackenzie, in Nicholson, 1998)
In the late nineteenth century some buildings were altered little before they were opened to the public, such as Hampton Court, which was not altered specifically for this purpose, although decoration was added, but areas were cordoned off, so visitors had a route to follow and would not enter areas restricted to private use (Mander 1997, 36). Many buildings started to be divided off in this way, with only certain areas open to the public. This gave a set route for the visitor, which would not have corresponded with the way in which the rooms would have been accessed at any time in its past.

Other buildings were altered a great deal before they were opened. Selly Manor in Bournville, Birmingham was one of the earliest buildings to be moved to a new site in England for modern display (Figure 4.4). It was moved to its present site in the late nineteenth century as part of the development of the model village of Bournville, Warwickshire. Made into a museum in 1907, it is maintained by Bournville Village Trust (Henslowe 1995, 2). Moving buildings to a new site became increasingly common in Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as discussed in later chapters.
This building was unusual in being displayed as a historic house museum and a vernacular house when the wider fashion was for larger houses or those with specific historical associations. Selly Manor was a philanthropic venture by George Cadbury (the chocolate manufacturer) who aimed to save a building with which he was familiar from demolition and to provide a museum for the factory workers who lived in his model village of Bournville.

In Britain the opening of historic buildings was very much in the style of the new free museums and libraries, and was similarly a media event (Flanders 1999, 72; Spalding 2002, 18-22). Late nineteenth-century museums were expressions of civic pride, and people wanted to know about them because they had a high profile. *The Times* regularly published visitor figures for stately homes through the late nineteenth century (Flanders 1999, 77). Arguing for free opening in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, William Howitt wrote, “Hampton Court has been made the daily resort of any, and of all, of the English people who choose to tread the pavements, and disport themselves in the garden, and gaze on the works of art, which for ages were wont only to be accessible to the royal, the aristocratic, and the ecclesiastical dignitary” (Tinniswood 1998, 139).
Numerous houses were donated to town corporations or opened to the public by local dignitaries in the late nineteenth century. These buildings were no longer viable as homes, and presented an opportunity for the type of philanthropy which made local magnates more popular. The Oak House in West Bromwich (Figure 4.5) was bought by Alderman Reuben Farley in 1894, who undertook works, including removing a floor in the central tower, the belvedere, and opening up the floor below to allow light down to the hall and create a gallery (Sandwell Museums Section n.d., 6). This reconstruction work aimed to give the building historic-style features such as a minstrels’ gallery, but involved what is now known as Victorian restoration. The modern guidebook suggests that, “the restoration, although extensive, was essential to the existence of the house” (Sandwell Museums Section n.d., 6). Some work was certainly required, but there was also some reconstruction: the gallery around the entrance hall replaced an earlier complete floor, and was designed to let more light in from the seventeenth-century lantern; the panelling in the entrance hall also dates to 1894-5 and recreates possible earlier panelling replicating a design from the dining room. The building was then donated to the town as Farley’s gift and the opening to the public included a civic banquet (Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell n.d., 5).

Figure 4.5. Oak House, West Bromwich
Another charitable act by a local public figure involved Bolling Hall in Bradford which was let out to tenants by the Bowling Iron Company, but in 1834 was bought by G.A. Paley Esq. JP, along with 6,000 acres of land. It was presented to the citizens of Bradford in 1912, for the City Council to restore and maintain (Robertshaw 1947, 6; Anon. 1978, 3). Some archaeological analysis of the building was done as it was reconstructed for opening to the public. Its earliest guidebook, published in 1915, stated that "the earliest part of Bolling Hall is undoubtedly the tower at the south west angle. Built of small stones, and with scarcely any of its original openings remaining, it is impossible to state its age" (Robertshaw 1947, 32-33). This was the level of detail which was known when the building was reconstructed. This earliest phase of the building is now dated typologically to the mid-fifteenth century. The replacement of some stonework and mullions in some of the windows was, fortunately, done sympathetically to the original style despite lack of full analysis or accurate dating. General Pitt Rivers was very knowledgeable about the medieval period when he restored King John's House, Tollard Royal, Wiltshire, removing later internal plastering to reveal the timbering. He opened the building as an art gallery (Gerrard 2003, 58).

**Organisations and Individuals Involved in Historic Building Reconstruction**

Through the late nineteenth century as historic building visiting grew to become more popular a wider range of organisations and individuals became involved in reconstructing buildings to present them to the public, this section looks at some of their varied approaches.

Private owners opening stately homes are one group who start to become more systematic in their opening, charging admission and limiting visitor hours, and for the first time opening to anyone interested to visit. Mandler sees this as surprisingly slow to develop, and suggests that this is because of the distrust between the classes: the potential visitors did not know whether to see the owners of the buildings as patrons or tyrants and the owners were uncertain whether the visiting public were friend or foe (Mandler 1997, 39). Early examples of stately homes open to the public include Knole in Kent (later belonging to the National Trust) and Penshurst Place also in Kent. The owners were keen to get people into their buildings for financial reasons. As visitors came to know stately homes and their condition in the late nineteenth century, they used this new knowledge against the modern aristocracy to compare it with the allegedly
better aristocracy of the past (Mandler 1997, 143). This meant that the architecture of stately homes and the history of the aristocratic way of life could be appreciated without compromising some popular socialist opinions of the time, as promoted by, among others, Ruskin and Morris (Kinna 2000). This use of buildings to gain an understanding of life in them both in the past and in the present shows an evolution of motivations for visiting from Beauchamp-Proctor’s aim simply to look at the contemporary way of life.

There was some resistance to the opening of houses by the gentry. Mortimer Sackville-West fell out with the community near his home, Knole Place (Figure 4.6), about access to the house, and in 1884 the park was invaded by 1,500 local people (Garnett 2000a, 86). The Sackville-Wests only ever opened small sections of Knole to the public, to protect the building from unnecessary damage, and to protect their own privacy. Sackville-West, like other house-owners, was worried by the wear-and-tear produced by visitors and the petty vandalism experienced by the houses. Knole had 10,000 visitors in 1874. He closed the house after the disturbances of 1884, and it was not reopened until after his death in 1888 (Garnett 2000a, 86-88). There are records of his descendant, Lionel Sackville-West, buying books of tickets for sale to the public in 1905-6 (Centre for Kentish Studies Archive, document U269 A612). Many house-owners charged for tickets as a form of limitation to visiting, and visiting hours were fixed. Visitors in this case were clearly a mixture of local people and tourists. Restricting visiting to small areas of the house, charging for tickets, and having limited opening times increased the privacy at Knole and other buildings (Tinniswood 1998, 96-99). Even in the present only around twenty rooms of this massive country house are open to the public through the summer under the National Trust. There are currently two families of the Sackville-West extended family living in two separate sections of the house (Garnett 2000a, 95).
Figure 4.6. Grand frontage of Knole. Visitors enter under the arch of the central gatehouse, but no rooms along this elevation are open to the public

It was no coincidence that conservation of historic buildings started in the late nineteenth century: at this time many faced threat from collapse, demolition or alteration. Many buildings had fallen into disrepair in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as is seen in the romantic art of that period (Garnett 1995, 84-87). The danger to the buildings as a record of the past was that as the work to repair them was being carried out, they were also being conjecturally reconstructed (Rodgers 1998, 119-120).

The other danger to the buildings was the loss of economic viability of the estates which had supported them. The cost of maintaining large buildings was becoming insupportable, and owners were needing to sell, divide, or even demolish historic buildings. Until the late 1870s landowners were generally wealthy and influential. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was a major depression in farming, and grain prices collapsed as a result of new cheaper imports from the USA (Worsley 2002, 11-12). The Corn Production Act of 1921 removed the guaranteed corn price, and corn sold on the open market led to a collapse in prices, resulting in a land value collapse. Landowners lost substantial income as rents from their tenants fell. Death duties were introduced in 1894, and land taxes in 1909. These were repealed temporarily in 1919 and 1920 respectively (Worsley 2002, 11-12). Faced with these
burdens, many owners of estates, including country houses, sold their land and buildings in what became known as the "great sell-off" between 1910 and 1914 (Worsley 2002, 8-10 and 43). Some buildings were sold to the USA in sections (Worsley 2002, 12-13). This became increasingly common in the 1920s and 1930s, as will be seen in Chapter Five.

Rural houses, like Knole, discussed above, were some of the first to be opened, but urban houses soon followed. The Tudor Townhouse in Southampton, for example, was opened in 1912 as the first municipal museum in the town (Southampton City Council 1997). This building was obtained and reconstructed by the City Corporation. The building had been conserved by Spranger, who had saved it from collapse, but added sections to the building, including the north façade, which was imported from a building in Oxfordshire. The work in part aimed to 'Tudorize' the building. The name 'Tudor House' was adopted at this time.

Figure 4.7. Tudor House in Southampton in 1880 (from Southampton Archive Service)
This series of photographs shows the development of the building from a Tudor building containing a Victorian shop with shopfront (Figure 4.7), to a plainer Tudor building. The front was plastered (Figure 4.8), which would have been the finish in the Tudor period. Following the nineteenth-century Tudorization the building had its timbers revealed (Figure 4.9), looking more as contemporary people would have expected a Tudor building to look. This ideal has been passed down, and the building still has its timbers revealed. The interior was plain, and shows the historical features (Figure 4.10).
The reconstruction, ironically, destroyed some Tudor fabric: several wind-braces have been cut, for example, in the process of inserting windows. The building now has its timbers revealed, but recent research has suggested that it was originally plastered, the revealed original timbers having been ‘pecked’ to hold plaster. There are also photographs from the late nineteenth century where the building was weather-boarded (Kevin White, Curator, pers. comm.). In Hampshire the local timber-framing style was to cover the timbers, usually with lime plaster, and sometimes with weatherboards, as was done here, and reversed in the reconstruction. The Corporation obtained this building as an example of local historical architecture (Kevin White, Curator, pers comm.), but it was reconstructed in a way which destroyed some of the local features.

Other buildings were obtained by local dignitaries, as discussed above with Oak House and Bolling Hall. Similarly, Wygston’s Chantry House in Leicester had been purchased in 1910 by “public spirited men as a private trust to be opened to the public” (Rutland et al. c1910). As part of this benevolent act three houses were to be purchased, William Wygston’s Chantry House and two Jacobean houses in the area of Newark in
Leicester. The proposal was that they would be used as an extension of the Leicester Museum and Art Gallery. "The buildings would be a most suitable home for a Leicester and County Museum, telling the story of town and country in ages past" (Rutland et al. c1910). The two Jacobean houses were under threat, and £9,000 had to be raised to save them and Wygston's Chantry House (Rutland et al. c1910). Wygston's House is still extant in Leicester, but has recently been closed due to lack of funding to keep it open to the public.

Because there was interest in preserving local historic buildings, some historic houses were obtained by corporations for purposes other than opening to the public. The Bishops' House in Sheffield was first obtained by the City Corporation in 1886, and there is a suggestion in the records that works were carried out in 1910 and 1916, although the house was not opened to the public until the 1970s (Beswick 1976, 37). If the dating is correct these alterations included the demolition of associated outbuildings, possibly even including one wing attached to the building, and internal rearrangement of the ground-floor room divisions.

Historic house visiting was encouraged by Town Corporations. The first house to be opened to the public by a Corporation was Aston Hall in Birmingham in 1857 (Worsley 2002, 17). The house was then given over to a private company, Aston Hall and Park Company Limited, which ran the house and opened it to the public. The house itself was not the main focus of the exhibition, but was used to display museum artefacts and artworks, including scenes of Eskimo life, a stalactite cave, Chinese scenes and botanical specimens. The displays were criticised at the time for being money-making ventures, "pandering to the demands of the sensational and vulgar" (Davies 1985, 95-96).

**History of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings**

Increased numbers of buildings opening to the public, increased numbers of visitors, and the development of conservation practice resulted in the need for a society to oversee works to historic buildings, offer advice and act as a pressure group. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) filled that role, and their history will be overviewed here. The formation of the SPAB in 1877 is highly significant for building reconstruction as it reflects an increased interest in historical architecture and
preservation of the past, and the wider growth in interest at the time in the arts (Bell 1967, 6). The SPAB were campaigning against the ongoing fashion for reconstruction of buildings, then known as restoration, which involved the removal or replacement of sections of the building in order to make it appear as it might have done in the past. This was done both for personal use, and for opening to the public. By the time of its formation, the SPAB's guiding principles were already accepted and implemented by some architects. There was nevertheless still a great amount for it to do, advising on and undertaking work itself. Within five years of its formation the SPAB was handling over a hundred cases a year (Wiener 1981, 67).

The SPAB was the first group to try to persuade people of the value of conservation. Previously, in 1854, Ruskin had suggested that the Society of Antiquaries should form a conservation fund for ancient buildings, but this was rejected on the grounds that it would interfere too far with owners' rights (Mandler 1997, 101). The SPAB was the world's first national society devoted to advising about the repair of the built heritage, and campaigning for preservation (Pearce 1982, 3). William Morris, who had been an exponent of Victorian restoration work, at the time when Ruskin started to campaign against it, established the SPAB. Morris and Co. had provided furnishings and stained glass for reconstruction until the 1860s (Henderson 1967, 74-75 and 197; MacCarthy 1994, 378). He had developed a more subtle approach towards historic buildings through the 1870s, as evidenced in his lack of interference at his own Tudor home, Kelmscott in Gloucestershire. His attitude changed when he saw first-hand some of the restoration work which was being carried out. His visit to Burford in 1876 and Tewkesbury in 1877 exposed him to the demolition of historic buildings to make way for restoration work (MacCarthy 1994, 376). He wrote to the *Athenaeum* opposing destructive restoration, and proposing a society in defence of historic buildings (MacCarthy 1994, 376-378). Morris recruited members for his new society from among his acquaintances. He convened a meeting inviting Carlyle (historian and social writer), Ruskin (artist, scientist, poet, environmentalist, philosopher, and art critic), Burne-Jones (artist), Holman Hunt (artist), Alma Tadema (artist), Pattison (academic and author) and Coventry Patmore (poet) to be involved in the formation of the new Society. The process was very fast: Morris's letter was published in the *Athenaeum* on 5th March 1877, and on 22nd March the SPAB was formally founded.
Morris's call struck a chord; architects and artists, professional men, and a number of aristocrats of a variety of political persuasions rallied to the cause of the SPAB. In the first years Morris was secretary, and remained afterwards the leading spirit on the committee, but the society was quite non-partisan. Its influence grew steadily; within five years over a hundred cases were being handled every year, and by 1889 the committee could note with gratification a changed attitude among the educated public toward restoration.

(Wiener 1981, 67)

The formation of the SPAB was a reaction against what was deemed to be unsuitable restoration of buildings, which had been especially prevalent in ecclesiastical buildings in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, as work was carried out to try to return them to their earliest imagined form, often returning buildings to their supposed pre-Reformation state (Jokilehto 1999, 103-108). The SPAB was concerned to protect medieval buildings of all types, for the craft skills they displayed. They disagreed with restorations which attempted to reconstruct a building to an arbitrary time in the past, and appreciated that later additions were an important part of a building (SPAB 1877). Morris argued that modern additions were not part of this interesting continuation in usage and development of a building because, "it was no longer possible to add unselfconsciously to old buildings" due to changes in society since the medieval period (Spence 1982, 6). Powys, the secretary of the SPAB (1911-1932), redefined repair: "to preserve and give renewed life to fine and old buildings that have been neglected or are decaying, and in so doing to avoid making reproductions to take the place of damaged features or missing parts when this involves the destruction and not the protection of what remains of the original work" (SPAB n.d.). This builds upon the initial aims of the SPAB, and suggests that the real objection that the founders of the SPAB had to most Victorian restoration work was the destruction of original parts to add new ones.

Morris's philosophy may have "struck a chord" (Wiener 1981, 67), but the interested group remained a small élite until after the Second World War, with membership rising gradually from 372 in 1880, to 435 in 1900, to 520 in 1920, to 1069 in 1935 (SPAB 1937). This small body acted as a pressure group, however, and was successful in challenging and changing the philosophy of the architects who worked on buildings and the individuals and societies who owned them, such as the National Trust and local county councils. The SPAB was recruiting at a time which saw a decline in membership for some other historical organisations, such as the Royal Archaeological
Institute, which boasted membership of over 1500 in 1845, but saw this drop to 550 by 1870 and level off around 400 through the first decades of the twentieth century. The SPAB, however, had some sway with the authorities, for example, London County Council received deputations from them, which Morris described as being “listened to” and “opinion changed in consequence” (MacCarthy 1994, 643).

The SPAB was influenced by the ‘Arts and Crafts’ movement and pre-Raphaelitism, in both of which William Morris was prime mover. It was for that reason that the founder members were artists rather than architects; sixteen of the first fifty-six members were artists, while only three were architects (Spence 1982, 6). The architects were perhaps somewhat mistrusted, as it was the work of some of their number which was causing damage to buildings. Architects working under Scott, Street or Pearson were more knowledgeable in their reconstructions, and protested against earlier attempts at restoration, but they themselves destroyed some medieval work in the name of consistency, and had no respect for post-medieval work (Spence 1982, 5). In the late nineteenth century the Society began to attract more young architects to carry on the work of Philip Webb, one of the founders, and a key conservation architect of the period. In the 1890s the SPAB recruited famous names like Lethaby (1893), Ashbee (1894), Powell (1896) and Weir (1902) (Spence 1982, 6). The term “restoration” gained a negative connotation (Jokilehto 1999, 174) with many architects, especially following Ruskin’s *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) in which he attacks restoration:

> It means the most total destruction which a building can suffer: a destruction out of which no remnants can be gathered: a destruction accompanied with false description of the thing destroyed. Do not let us deceive ourselves in this important matter; it is impossible, as impossible as to raise the dead, to restore anything that has ever been great or beautiful in architecture ... Do not let us talk then of restoration. The thing is a Lie from beginning to end.

(Ruskin 1849, 6)

Ruskin promoted preservation in preference to restoration, writing that maintaining a historic building will obviate the need for it to be restored in the way that he so despised.

> Take proper care of your monuments, and you will not need to restore them...count its stones as you would jewels of a crown, set watches about it as if at the gates of a besieged city; bind it together with iron
where it loosens; stay it with a timber where it declines; do not care about the unsightliness of the aid, better a crutch than a lost limb.

(Ruskin 1849, 9)

Restoration nevertheless went on at some buildings, such as Beaudesert in Staffordshire. The building was a family home, not open to the public, and the immediate reason for works in the second decade of the twentieth century was a fire in 1909. The Gothicization of the building a hundred years earlier had now become unfashionable, and the owner, the Marquess of Anglesea, wished to regain the former character of the building – an Elizabethan mansion (SPAB Archive, Beaudesert File). The work involved the addition of a new wing by Edmond Warre. The work of Wyatt and Potter was removed from the interior, and the rooms were redesigned, each inspired by a different architectural period. Some conjectural reconstruction was used; for example a former window in the great hall, a mullioned stone window, which remained in fragments, was reconstructed and inserted into the west wall (Worsley 2002, 80-81). The only room which had survived as it had been in the Elizabethan period was the long gallery – and that had been subdivided, and much plasterwork lost. This was reconstructed with a new chimneypiece, made to match the original Elizabethan overmantle (Worsley 2002, 81-82). The work at Beaudesert does not survive as the building was demolished in 1935, because the Marquess of Anglesea could not maintain the building as well as his London home (Worsley 2002, 80-82). The SPAB did look into the matter of the building, and considered intervening to purchase part of it for removal to another site, but the costs were too high for a building which had been so altered from its original form, and instead they had a catalogue of the contents sent to the National Trust (SPAB Archive, Beaudesert File).

Some Victorian restoration work was done for private use, but has affected the material remains of the buildings, and poses a problem for current presentation. Speke Hall in Liverpool was built in phases between the late fourteenth and the early seventeenth centuries. It was extensively reconstructed by Miss Adelaide Watt in the late nineteenth century, and when opened to the public in 1944 was displayed as a Victorian house (Cousens 1994, 34). This allowed later alterations to be retained, and used the Victorian furniture acquired with the house to furnish it (Figures 4.12 and 4.13).
Figures 4.12 and 4.13. Servants' Hall and Dining Room at Speke Hall, decorated in Victorian style

Restoration work on Little Moreton Hall in Cheshire started in 1893 when it was owned by Miss Elizabeth Moreton. The stone parapet walls of the bridge were rebuilt, walls and foundations round the building were repaired, the north side of the banqueting hall was conserved, and “iron uprights, cased round with oak firmly embedded in cement concrete, were fixed in the entrance gateway and the room over the oratory chapel” (Head 1914, 12-13). “I was present when work was in progress and noticed that pickaxes had to be used in removing portions of the walls and floors – woodwork which was probably more than three hundred years old!” (Head 1914, 13). This type of work was later opposed by the SPAB. The building now contains some Tudor furniture, but is substantially empty, and is displayed for its structural interest. The Long Gallery for example, is empty, much as it would have been in the Tudor period, and shows the warping and sinking of the building (Figure 4.14).
The SPAB were keen that any alterations made to buildings should be obvious, should not try to replicate what might have been there before, and should, where possible, be reversible (SPAB 1877).

Haddon Hall in Derbyshire was first opened in the 1880s, and alterations to the building were discussed clearly in early guidebooks.

This pile of buildings is undoubtedly one of the most perfect specimens of medieval domestic architecture extant. Built at various dates – altered and added to – from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, it probably owes its present condition to the fact of its never having been fortified, and therefore, never having invited or defied the attacks of artillery in troubled times.

(Anon. 1907, 3)

Following the philosophy of the SPAB, the alterations are seen positively, but are clearly described in the guidebook, in order that no visitor would be confused as to the dates of sections of the building. The work and hospitality of the owner are praised: “no-one, I think, can go through Haddon Hall without a feeling of gratitude to the noble owner, who, jealous as he undoubtedly is of its safety and good preservation, so generously allows it to be visited by the public” (Anon. 1907, 45-46). The ways in
which the owner has altered the building are also explained, and even judged, to allow
the visitor to understand alterations to the building: “the window in the gable over the
dais is an insertion, and the present high-pitched roof is modern and incongruous”
(Figure 4.15) (Anon. 1907, 61).

Figure 4.15. Haddon Hall with an even more modern high-pitched roof, added in 1924,
in similar style to the previous one

The approaches of the SPAB fed into the work of the National Trust, and when they
started work on buildings they followed SPAB techniques, such as the use of tiles to
repair stonework, making the repair visible, strong, and reversible. This is seen at
Montacute House in Somerset (Figure 4.16).
The SPAB came to be a school of building construction as well as a pressure group. It had links with other societies, and with contemporary architects. The annual report of the SPAB for 1910 serves as an example of the stage that the society had reached at that time. It discussed individual buildings in which the SPAB had been involved during that year (SPAB 1910). They had advised on the restoration of a number of churches and on some houses. Their work encompassed both buildings in private ownership and usage and those open to the public.

The SPAB gradually grew in influence, and members, including Morris, made site visits to campaign against proposed reconstruction work. The beliefs of the SPAB were not unanimously accepted. Their membership grew, but their campaign did not to any great extent reach the ordinary people who were starting to visit historic buildings. Robert Kerr, an architect and critic of the SPAB, wrote:

> Its objective is not even artistic, but historical: to preserve what is left of the past in the most indiscriminate way; whether good or bad, old or new, preserve it all, so that the reverie of the wayfarer may have not only something authentic, but everything veritable to dwell upon, even when the light of life, perhaps never a very bright light, has quite gone out.

(Kerr, 1884)
Throughout this thesis it is evident that aims, philosophies and ideas about reconstruction change over time. Much work carried out in the late nineteenth century was at odds with the stated objectives of the SPAB, including work by famous architects associated with the society. For example, the work carried out by Lutyens at Great Dixter in 1910 involved the combining of two different buildings, and ended up as more of a pastiche than a representation of a historic building (Weaver 1921, 170-174). This building will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

**Developing Philosophy and Practices of the National Trust**

The role of the National Trust in relation to a few example buildings has been touched on very briefly above, but this section provides a detailed consideration of the aims and actions of the National Trust in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The inaugural meeting of the National Trust was held on 16th July 1894, and The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest and Natural Beauty was registered under the *Companies Act* on 12th January 1895 (Waterson 1994, 16). Conservation groups were not working independently of each other but were closely interlinked from their formation. The National Trust was formed as a reaction against the powerlessness of the Commons Preservation Society to buy land and properties; indeed the early meetings of the National Trust were held at the Commons Preservation Society’s offices (Waterson 1994, 14). The philosophy behind the National Trust was one of preservation for the Nation of both England’s architectural and landscape heritage (Fedden, 1974, 17). There were links among all the different pressure groups and societies. Membership of some conservation societies overlapped; when it was suggested that the SPAB should be represented on the Ancient Monuments Board, the SPAB replied that Mr Lethaby was a member of the Ancient Monuments Board, and also a “distinguished member of the SPAB” (Ancient Monuments Board 1951, 79).

Octavia Hill, one of the three founders of the National Trust, was a philanthropist involved in a range of causes (Weiner 1994, 160). She linked her interests in bettering the lives of working class people with preserving landscapes and buildings, and one of the early aims of the National Trust showed her guidance: the concentration on preserving areas of countryside near towns and cities for the urban poor to enjoy (Waterson 1994, 19-24). This approach separated her from some former allies and
counterparts, such as John Ruskin, who grew increasingly socialist in approach and believed that only a re-ordering of society could solve the social ills of the time (ibid.).

The National Trust has always aimed to follow the philosophies of the SPAB in relation to their properties, but many of the historic buildings which were to be opened to the public were actually reconstructed, and taken back to a period of the past to allow people to understand what it might have been like to live there. The National Trust used the terms ‘repair’, ‘restore’ and ‘maintain’ for their actions related to different buildings between 1877 and 1914 (Waterson 1994, 40-42 and 52), but the common theme in their approach was a desire for traditional-looking depictions of buildings, as they might have been in the past. We see through a series of examples in this thesis that the National Trust made considerable alterations to buildings to make them appear as historical as possible. If the SPAB philosophy were followed, and that of Ruskin before it, it would have been seen as impossible to return a building to its original form (Ruskin 1849, 6-9). The National Trust was the first group to be involved in trying to create a balance between the sometimes conflicting considerations of education and preservation in its reconstruction of historic buildings (Waterson 1994, 29).

The first building bought by the National Trust was Alfriston Clergy House in Sussex (Figure 4.17). The building is a fourteenth-century hall-house. It was probably constructed by a private individual, but had come into use by the church. It had been altered over the years for private usage. The SPAB had their attention drawn to the fate of the house in 1892, when the Vicar, F.W. Benyon, wrote to them about it (National Trust Archive at Alfriston Clergy House, letter from Benyon n.d.). He included a drawing showing the fireplace which was later removed. The Clergy House had been out of use since the early nineteenth century, and was divided into cottages in the mid-nineteenth century. It had been approved for demolition by the Bishop in 1879 and was saved only by the efforts of the Vicar. He failed to raise the money to save the building himself and turned first to the Sussex Archaeological Society for help. They campaigned for it to be preserved. In 1894 the Bishop had finally ordered its demolition, and Benyon then wrote to Hardwick Rawnsley, another of the Trust’s founders, on 26th July 1894 (National Trust Archive at Alfriston Clergy House, letter from Benyon, 26.7.1894). By this time he was being backed in his campaign, and the
magazine *Church Bells* had published a piece about the building in April 1894, describing it as:

One of the most curious and interesting relics of a bygone age. This ancient building is peculiarly interesting, not only from an archaeological, but also from a historical point of view.

Anon 1894

The National Trust bought the house in 1896 for a nominal sum of £10. Octavia Hill was determined that the National Trust would be able to restore it, and she worked to raise money. The SPAB guided the work, indeed Fedden describes it as being “acquired with the co-operation and valuable help of the society” (Fedden 1974, 159). The conservation philosophy was agreed by the SPAB with Octavia Hill, and it was stated that they should “restore it, in so far as that odious word means preservation from decay” (Waterson 1994, 41-42).

![Figure 4.17. Alfriston in early 1890s.](from Alfriston Clergy House Archive)

The need for preservation from decay is obvious

The building was immediately recognised as a hall house, and the original structure was meticulously conserved from 1896, despite lack of funds (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, Hill to Turner letter 11.8.1896). An archaeological survey was carried out and the possible reconstruction was discussed before work began. How the
building would be used after the planned far-reaching Victorian-style restoration was unresolved at the time when the work began. In 1896 The Standard reported that,

The repair of Alfriston Clergy House has been commenced by the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest. The architect entrusted with the work of repair is Mr. A. Powell, who is acting under the supervision of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. It is intended by the National Trust to devote to village purposes the central hall of the building, noted for its massive cambered tie beams and moulded king posts.

(National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, cutting from The Standard, 16.10.1896)

The National Trust were certainly proud of the architectural detail in the building, and were keen to maintain the medieval detailing, such as the carved leaf end to the chamfered beam (Figure 4.18), which is thought to have inspired the oak leaf logo of the National Trust.

Powell stated at the time that the National Trust was taking on the building that “a considerable amount of work still requires to be done”. He noted works which had already been undertaken, including re-plastering, replacement of the roof plate on the south side, and the east end of the hall, and a new sill and studs on the south side. He also mentioned that a fireplace has been removed from the hall (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, Anon. n.d.). There is no mention in these documents of the
first floor in the hall, which is known to have been removed in 1896 (Figure 4.19). The works completed in 1896 are detailed by the architect in two short reports from that year, and included repairs to the leaking roof, replacing the thatch and any rafters which were rotten, repairing and replacing sections of the windows, and new oak surrounds for the windows where necessary, as well as other works to make the building “in all aspects secure and weatherproof with as little alteration of its present appearance as possible and compatible with modern occupation.” (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House and SPAB Archive, letters from Powell). There is photographic evidence for the work of weatherproofing the building while work was ongoing (Figure 4.20).
The rear wall of the house was entirely rebuilt at this date with no attempt at copying the original design, if indeed the original design was known (Figure 4.21). “Apart from this, the restorations were carried out faithfully, without the inclusion of any fanciful or conjectural new work ... the reclamation and restoration of this house at such an early date can only be commended.” (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, Anon., n.d.).

Figure 4.19. Internal wall in the hall at Alfriston, showing the notches which previously supported the first floor.

Figure 4.20. Photograph of Alfriston under renovation 1896 (from Alfriston Clergy House Archives).
Powell remained enthusiastic despite the overwhelming amount of work to be done, even when those around him were not entirely supportive. His father advised him “...Alfriston looks a lovely place, but one end will (apparently) need rebuilding. Don’t waste much time on it if it does not pay” (SPAB Archive, letter from Powell senior 10.7.1896).

Alfriston was the first house to be acquired, conserved and reconstructed by the National Trust. Through their early years they were learning about conservation techniques, and inevitably mistakes were made. When sections of timber were replaced in the late nineteenth century it was done with “inappropriate soft wood” (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, Woodworm Report, 26.7.1938). Ironically this saved the replaced sections from damage when there was an infestation of woodworm, *Xestobium rufo-villosum*, when only the hardwood sections of oak were affected. This problem was treated in the 1930s with Cuprinol (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, Woodworm Report, 26.7.1938).

The building was leased to tenants between 1896 and 1976, and the hall was open to the public (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, Anon. n.d.). This meant visitors were viewing a reconstructed section of the house, where the first floor had been removed, out of context with the rest of the building. This first opening of a building to the public may not have been primarily for educational purposes, though as a social improver the Trust felt they had to do this. They were also making money from entry fees, and were able to employ a live-in caretaker through that funding (National Trust Archive Alfriston Clergy House, Anon. n.d.). Membership of the National Trust
brought visiting rights. Membership increased slowly from 100 in 1896 to over 700 by 1914, which also brought an income.

Modern commentators now see as significant the choice of a timber-framed vernacular house as the National Trust’s first building. Hewison describes the fact that it was built of timber, plaster and thatch as suitting the ‘medievalizing’ aims of the National Trust’s earliest members (Hewison 1987, 56). The building was considerably altered, and broadly returned to its fourteenth-century appearance, as it would have been until closure in the Tudor period. Its surroundings are essentially a modern recreation of a kitchen garden, and nearby buildings are of a later date. The earliest known photograph of Alfriston is dated 1858 and shows the building with the roof still sound and the barn still standing nearby, completely unlike the situation by the 1890s, where the building is shown standing in a space, in a state of disrepair. Of the sixty-eight properties obtained by the National Trust before 1920, thirteen were buildings (19%), and of those buildings nine date from before 1600 (69%). The early properties of the Trust included the Priest’s House in Muchelney in Somerset, a late medieval hall house obtained in 1911 (National Trust 1997, 212); Buckingham Chantry Chapel, built in 1475 and obtained in 1912 (Waterson 1994, 50); and Winster Market House, a seventeenth-century building in Derbyshire obtained in 1906 (National Trust 1997, 105).

The National Trust was endeavouring to raise funds by capitalizing on the increased freedom, spending power and education of the lower and middle classes, which created a demand for historic building reconstruction in the form of an increasing appetite for places to visit. Initially members were associates of the founders, but as the Trust grew an increasing number of the middle class enjoyed visiting the properties as non-members, and then joined to support the Trust. There was a class division in preferred destinations: the working classes chose to spend much of their leisure time visiting the newly-developing coastal resorts, while the growing lower middle class were more interested in visiting the countryside and historic buildings (Morgan 1984, 484).

The early experiences of the National Trust in relation to reconstruction of houses has guided policy since (Waterson 1994, 42-44). The National Trust continued to acquire other buildings as work on Alfriston continued. Within the National Trust there was a debate about the comparative importance of open spaces and buildings in their work.
Octavia Hill was keen to engage antiquarians and artists among their visitors and supporters, and felt that buildings would be of interest to them, and therefore campaigned for more emphasis on buildings. There was at the same time a fear that buildings would be great a drain on funds (Waterson 1994, 50). The National Trust acquired different types of building, and intended a range of different uses for them, many of which would make them self-financing.

Long Crendon Courthouse was purchased by the National Trust in 1900. It was probably originally used as a wool store, and the National Trust at first intended that the building should serve as a holiday home for London boys (Waterson 1994, 42). C.R. Ashbee, a committee member of the SPAB, was to provide classes about art and architecture for them there. At a late stage Octavia Hill insisted that it should be open to the public as a tourist site, and Ashbee resigned from the National Trust Council in protest. He wrote that the “beautiful Court House is for the present at least to remain a mere dead lumber house with no humanity in it but just to be looked at by tourists” (Waterson 1994, 42).

In 1903 the National Trust obtained the Old Post Office in Tintagel, Cornwall (Figures 4.22 and 4.23). This is a small late fourteenth-century stone house which was repaired by the National Trust under the supervision of the architect Detmar Blow. His work included aesthetic changes to the building, altering the windows and the chimneys to suit early twentieth-century tastes. National Trust historian, Merlin Waterson describes the work as “restrained and respectful” (1994, 49-50). The fourteenth-century building was opened to the public and was (and still is) displayed as a nineteenth-century post office. This is an early example of using an earlier building to display a later use, rather than taking it back to its earliest period. This type of work becomes increasingly common in the twentieth century, and will be seen again in Chapter Six.
Another building acquired by the National Trust that required some work before it was opened to the public was Paycocke's in Coggeshall in Essex. The building had been restored privately around 1905-1910, and the National Trust faced decisions about which phases of the building to display, and which to alter (The National Trust 1988). They followed a different policy from that at Alfriston when working on Paycocke's, and retained the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century alterations to the layout, and continued to use the front doorway which had by that time been moved twice. The
building had had considerable replacement of timbers, which was recorded and has been explained in the guidebooks and tours ever since (National Trust 1988). The reasons for this completely different approach are not recorded in the Archive and may relate to appraisal of the work done at Alfriston, or may be related to what was deemed interesting about this building: a more complete history because of its changing usage over the centuries. One of the largest buildings acquired by the National Trust before the First World War was Barrington Court in Somerset (Figures 4.24 and 4.25). It was gifted to the Trust in 1907, and required considerable repair. This was an expensive undertaking, the £11,500 required being secured before the building was acquired. The repairs went over budget and there were financial problems associated with the building for over thirty years (Waterson 1994, 51-52). This experience has informed fundamental policies of the National Trust: they will not now carry out work until a building is legally theirs; and they require an endowment for repair and maintenance with any donated building (Waterson 1994, 52-102).

Figures 4.24. Barrington Court, before the National Trust acquired it, with ground floor blocked windows
While there were academic developments and moves towards understanding medieval and post-medieval buildings at the turn of the century, there were considerable social problems which were more pressing on government, society and private funds than the preservation and presentation of historical monuments. The National Trust did, however, obtain sixty-two buildings before the First World War, as gifts, or bought through their own funds (raised through membership, legacies and entrance fees) and with public donations made for specific buildings (Fedden 1974, 24).

The Study of Archaeology and the Victorian Conservation Movement

As seen above, the late nineteenth century saw growing interest in historic buildings, more buildings reconstructed for presentation to the public, and more organisations involved in owning, reconstructing, and advising on historic buildings. The conservation movement was, in part, fed by increased research and understanding of historic buildings, as explored in this section.

Antiquarians from the Renaissance to the early nineteenth century were the first group of people to try to apply a scientific approach to the study of the past, including standing buildings. John Aubrey, most famous for his work on Stonehenge and Avebury, undertook rudimentary typological analysis of architectural features (Figure 4.11).
Antiquarianism became a popular study, which considered itself more academic than previous approaches to the past. The term 'archaeology' was first applied to the study of historic buildings in the mid-nineteenth century (Morris 1994, 14-16). Ideas were introduced to the discipline through the nineteenth century from other developing disciplines, evolutionary theory, for example, being applied to finds in the form of typology, and stratigraphy, imported from geology (Barker 1977, 19). There was a belief in this period that nationalities were biologically different, and archaeology was used to inspire and confirm feelings of nationalism for the first time (Trigger 1989, 150). The division of Europe and the world into separate 'cultures' became a fascination for archaeologists in the early twentieth century (ibid., 162). They included within their field of study approaches to the past through buildings. These early archaeologists saw their scientific approach as inductive, observations of phenomena being used to devise ideas or rules. One of the main methods of applying these ideas was typology, a very early idea in archaeology which was applied increasingly in the late nineteenth century in combination with stratigraphy, and which is still in use today (Schnapp 1996, 188-198 and 310-314). Archaeologists approached buildings from this viewpoint and attempted to order the vast array of architecture with which they were
faced, and as they grew in understanding, their confidence in attempting to reconstruct buildings also grew.

Buildings had been reconstructed on paper as early as the Renaissance, but the early nineteenth century saw the first attempts to realise this physically at the sites of the actual buildings (Buchanan 1999, 169-177). This new scientific approach to buildings archaeology was not mutually exclusive of the previous, purely aesthetic approach, which had consisted in the creation of romanticised images of the Gothic past (Buchanan 1999, 177). The balance between presenting buildings to the public in the style which they favoured, and researching them scientifically, was becoming increasingly difficult to strike.

Never before had there been such pressure on archaeological sites and buildings as there was in the late nineteenth century, due to increased visiting. Travel increased the demand for historic buildings and areas of natural beauty, and there was the potential for interested visitors to arrive in such numbers that they could damage the delicate materials in these places. There was a movement towards preservation in different areas of life. For example, in 1865 the Commons, Footpaths and Open Spaces Preservation Society was founded. This was followed by other significant events, such as the Ancient Monuments Protection Act of 1882, which allowed for the creation of the first "schedule" of ancient monuments (Mynors 1999, 6). It covered any artificial building, structure or erection above or below the surface of the ground, and any cave, stone or other natural product which had been artificially carved, sculpted or worked which was considered to be of national importance, and which was therefore worthy of preservation. This did not include houses, but allowed for later legal developments into the Planning Acts which incorporate building listing. The initial list included sixty-eight monuments in Britain, which compares to the modern figure of 15,000 scheduled monuments and 500,000 listed buildings. The 1882 Act was later updated with the Ancient Monuments Protection Act of 1900 (Mynors 1999, 8), and the Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act of 1913 (Mynors 1999, 9-10), which introduced the listing of Ancient Monuments under the Ancient Monuments Board. The parliamentary debate about this Act called the Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Charles Peers to comment. He stated "Powers practically do not exist for preserving ancient monuments". He also made comparison with European countries,
suggesting that, “In France, the government do not take any notice of anyone but officials in the treatment of their historical monuments” (House of Commons 1912, 1 and 72-73).

In these early days of legislation about heritage, historic buildings were as likely to be included in Housing Acts as Ancient Monuments Acts. In 1909 the Planning Act suggested that towns should have a planning scheme, and allowed for creation or preservation of open spaces – which could leave historic buildings in a more open context (Mynors 1999, 6-12). There was no mention of preservation of historic buildings. The first legislation which directly protected historic buildings was the Planning Act of 1932, where local authorities were empowered to create preservation orders to prevent the demolition of historic buildings (Mynors 1999, 16).

The countryside and old buildings were seen as two aspects of a single phenomenon, places people could visit which were an idealised representation of Englishness. The National Trust devoted its work to both. They were both being increasingly appreciated, as they were increasingly threatened. Pressure groups campaigned for the preservation of both because they were increasingly distant from the lives and experiences of a growing number of city-dwellers in England (Tinniswood 1998, 168-169). It was not just rural buildings which were being opened to the public. Many of the examples discussed in this chapter are buildings in urban settings, often surrounded by parks, which gave access to entertainment, education and moral improvement for the urban poor (Flanders 1999, 72-81). The spread of knowledge, and the dissemination of new academic understanding of historic buildings was one of the key aims of the National Trust from its foundation, in 1884, ten years before the National Trust was officially formed, founder Robert Hunter described the plans for the new organisation, referring to historic buildings as “places for instruction” (Waterson 1994, 29).

Reconstruction was also deemed important because buildings were under threat of demolition. Industrial development threatened numerous buildings and monuments. As seen above, Selly Manor in Birmingham was moved to its new site and opened as a museum because it was threatened by development on its original site (Henslowe 1995, 2). In York there was a plan in the eighteenth century to tear down the city walls and use the stone to repair roads and bridges (Jokilehto 1999, 106-9). Many other buildings
and monuments did not escape this treatment, such as the medieval Hulme Hall, Manchester, demolished in 1845 to make way for a canal (Fletcher 2003, 77). Historic buildings gradually gained increasing significance in the minds of architects. "The conservative movement of élite culture in the second half of the nineteenth century also extended to architectural opinion and work. From the Gothic revival through the spread of Old English styles and the simultaneous rise of preservationism, architects gave changing cultural values a physical form" (Wiener 1981, 64). The value of historic buildings increased as an antidote to the present, which was disliked by some conservationists (Tinniswood 1998, 164). Instead of accepting the present, the past was recreated in reconstructed buildings, either as part of exhibitions, as at the Great Exhibition, or more commonly within historic buildings. "Adjectives such as 'quaint' and 'old-fashioned' epitomised this world to them, and were applied with ... enthusiastic approbation" (Girouard 1978, 5).

As increasing amounts of work were done, guidelines for restoration work began to appear, following the principles of the time. Viollet-le-Duc and Mérimée produced a booklet in 1849, which stated that, "however well done, the restoration of a building is always a regrettable necessity which intelligent maintenance must always prevent!" (Jokilehto 1999, 150-151). In practice, however, work was continuing to maintain and alter buildings for current usage, this included work by Voillet-le-Duc himself, whose criticism of restoration seems rather disingenuous in consideration of his extensive reconstruction work at Carcassonne (Libal 1999, 46-48).

**Authenticity and Historic Building Reconstruction**

Authenticity is an issue which simmers in the late Victorian period and early twentieth century. It is not overtly discussed in many of the documents, but the philosophies which are developing point towards a new interest in it.

The notion of authenticity is not directly mentioned in the 1877 SPAB Manifesto (SPAB 1877). The need to preserve all the phases of a building is a key theme. The manifesto discusses Victorian Restoration of buildings, 'a strange and most fatal idea, which by its very name implies that it is possible to strip from a building this, that, and the other part of its history - of its life that is - and then to stay the hand at some arbitrary point, and leave it still historical, living, and even as it once was" (SPAB
It is clear that the removal of sections of buildings was seen as denying the history of the building, so the authenticity of retaining all the historic material is promoted. Through restoration, which aimed to return buildings to a previous form, later phases could be lost, and the building could thus be seen to lose authenticity.

The SPAB's manifesto was a reaction against the approaches of many Victorian reconstructors. Before the resurgence of interest in the preservation of historic buildings in the late nineteenth century, the Gothic Revival movement had been the greatest restoration movement to date, but it was also where conservation principles started. Wyatt's work restoring churches and cathedrals between the 1770s and the 1820s sparked particular debate (Jokilehto 1999, 104-105). There were those who believed that decaying buildings should be repaired, and those who regretted the loss to ancient monuments in the repair:

Preservationist sentiments began to take shape within the Gothic movement itself. As new Gothic design became more commercialised, and at the same time began to become more boring, Gothic revivalists became uneasy about contemporary Gothic alterations to older structures. Even Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), the dean of restorers, began to warn against excessive restoration.

(Wiener 1981, 67)

George Gilbert Scott worked on numerous churches, restoring them for continued use, and replacing decayed or collapsed sections. He saw churches as both evidence from the past and modern venues, and justified the removal of later alterations to a church, supposedly returning it to an earlier form, with the belief that in that form it would be more suitable for its modern use. His work and his rhetoric were at odds at times. He worked on cathedrals between 1847 and the late 1850s, but in 1850 he published "A Plea for the Faithful Restoration of our Ancient Churches", in which he wrote, "An authentic feature, thought late and poor, is more worthy than an earlier though finer part conjecturally restored – a plain fact" (Scott 1850, 31).

The Notion of Englishness and the Role of the Print Media
The interest in historic buildings was, in part, fuelled by the media presentation of them as examples of the English past. Country Life magazine regularly included a feature about historic houses and country living. This was a form of escapism for an
increasingly urban population. It was launched in 1897 and promoted aristocratic values through topics such as farming, field sports, golf, society figures, fashion and interior decoration (Hewison 1987, 57). The magazine continues today, and still promotes heritage and medievalism to underline its values and priorities (Hewison 1987, 57-58). It has a close relationship with the SPAB, which is mentioned and quoted regularly. The first issue carried an article about Baddesley Clinton, and every issue since has featured a country house. The country house is used as symbolic of traditional country life and Englishness and creates an image of an ideal place, “the core of country living, and at the same time as a means of escape into a fictional past” (Tinniswood 1998, 170). Tinniswood analyses the vocabulary of the article, and its use of “deliberate archaisms”. That first article about Baddesley Clinton includes the words, ‘dwelt’, ‘troublous’, ‘oaken’", and the terms “old”, “old-world” or “olden” ten times in a page (Tinniswood 1998, 172). As discussed above, this type of language was not unusual in descriptions of historic buildings at the turn of the century. As the description of Baddesley Clinton suggestively proposes, “its aspect carries you back hundreds of years. You will readily, if so disposed, conjure up an old-world history when you look at it”; “you can easily forget for the time that you are living in the nineteenth century” (Anon. 1897, 20-22). The magazine uses historic manors as emblems of nationhood, and continues in its use of history to create idealised images of England and the past, as will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

*Country Life* magazine was also influenced in its choice of subjects for its country house feature by changing tastes in historic styles. Older, especially medieval, buildings were much preferred over more modern examples of country houses, and Victorian buildings were not featured commonly in *Country Life* in its early days, although some key contemporary architects were featured, such as Luytens (Anon. 1931a, 110-112). Similarly, Victorian buildings were not commonly opened to the public until the middle of the twentieth century. The National Trust acquired Wightwick Manor in 1937 as their first Victorian house presented to the public, but this has been followed by relatively few examples until the 1970s. The recent strong campaign for Tyntesfield shows the change in values of the National Trust.

Bramall Hall in Lancashire (Figure 4.26) is a good example of the buildings featured in *Country Life* (Anon. 1903, 790-798), and was altered to create a romanticised image of
a historic building. It is a fifteenth-century house, with many additions of the sixteenth. A Victorian owner, Charles Nevill, repaired and restored the house before the advent of legislation to control such works, adding much new material. The Victorian restoration here was far-reaching, and included a whole new floor to the top of the rear wing (Burton 1981, 42-3). Bramall had been in the Davenport family until 1877 when the hall and its contents were sold separately at auction. The hall passed to Charles Nevill in 1883. From 1896 there were rumours that the building was to be demolished (SPAB 1937). Today Nevill is regarded as the saviour of the hall, the current guidebook stating that his priority was the preservation of the hall, “ensuring the survival of the Hall we can view today” (Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council 2001, 6). He Victorianised the house, making it more practical for life then, and replacing or adding to the Tudor material of the building with a more stereotypically medieval English style loved by the Victorians, adding gables to give an irregular roofline, and Tudor-style chimneys. Later these additions and alterations caused concern when the Ancient Monuments Board were considering whether to schedule the building, and it was agreed not to because of the modern treatment of the building. Instead it was agreed to “write to the owner and endeavour to persuade him to keep the building intact” (English Heritage Archive, Minutes of meeting of Ancient Monuments Board 5.5.1925).

Figure 4.26. Bramall Hall, with added gables, to create the medieval-style irregular roofline so loved by the Victorians
Country Life magazine may have been creating a medievalized image of the English past, which could be blamed for promoting a desire for alterations to historic buildings, but it did come to be highly respected at a time when there was little popular writing about individual buildings. An application for a grant for the Treasurer’s House in York in 1954, for example, was augmented with notes to see Country Life for details about the building. (PRO, file HLG 126 1479). The National Trust came to rely on Country Life. When the National Trust were starting their Country Houses Scheme, Country Life were called upon to compile a list of the buildings in that classification which were considered to be of “real historic interest and artistic merit” (Waterson 1994, 104).

Romantic images of the medieval past were created through writing, and through engravings in the late Victorian era. For example, Nash published Mansions of England in the olden time in 1841 (Mandler 1997, 44). It contains views of many historic houses, focussing on aspects of the past in which Victorians were most interested, such as warmth and hospitality, with a surfeit of food and high spirits in the hall (Figure 4.27).

Figure 4.27. Celebrations at Athelhampton Hall (from Nash 1841)
Some of these prints and engravings led to inaccurate, even fanciful alterations to buildings, which became a driving force for the growth of the first coherent conservation movement, aimed at preserving historic buildings for their historic and artistic merits (Jokilehto 1999, 137).

Like historic house visiting, attendance at theatrical productions of Shakespeare evidenced widespread interest in the past. Audiences were mixed: "as late as the 1880s and 1890s ... certain West End Theatres, like the Adelphi, the Princess’s and Drury Lane had a strong element of lower middle class and working class patronage, confined to the pit and gallery perhaps but still an influence on the choice of repertory" (Booth 2001, 7). The cost of tickets at the time was very low, and set design was grand, with people like Pugin being involved in medieval-style designs (Foulkes 2001, 9-10).

Writers in the late Victorian period who concentrated on historical writing prided themselves on being able to humanise the past, finding human qualities under "the dust of ages and heaviness of antiquarian rubbish" (Mandler 1997, 34). Antiquarian writers "did not consider that they were inventing a past to fit their own preoccupations, but rather were reanimating a past that had been flattened and edited for exclusive purposes by virtuosi and aesthetes" (Mandler 1997, 34). The interpretation of historic buildings was likewise a form of presentation of the evidence from the past which was seen as having potential to humanise the past.

Buildings were sometimes directly tied to literature and representations, as discussed above relating to Howitt’s book about Hampton Court. Other buildings were of interest specifically because of their literary associations. Literature and written representations of the past were of use in marketing buildings. In 1835 historical recreation was defended for its ability to extend audiences for history: "we hold it to be so great an advantage that multitudes should realise impressions (which are seldom contrary to truth) concerning historical places, persons, and circumstances, of which they would otherwise have had no impression at all, that none of the minor evils to the few who have subsequent occasion to discover that the writer dressed the facts, which he found naked, before he offered them to notice, are sufficient to neutralise it" (The Penny Magazine 1835 cited in Mandler 1997, 35).
Some literature of the period confronted the issue of change, and looked backwards to review the changes in rural life in the late nineteenth century. The folk life and traditions which Hardy's novels have come to represent were being broken down as a result of economic changes and pressures which led to social changes such as the increase in travelling labourers (Morgan 1984, 479). This perceived loss was addressed in the formation of folk museums, such as that at Hall i’ th’ Wood in Bolton, which will be described in detail in the Chapter Five.

Historical literature was one of the motivating factors in the visiting of historic houses in the late nineteenth century. Historical events, figures, and settings had long been of interest in literature. There was a growth in the genre of historical novels in the Victorian period, initiated by Sir Walter Scott, in his *Waverley* novels (Devlin 1971, 3-8). The use of famous events in the past as a backdrop for a story was not a new phenomenon, and Scott drew especially on Shakespeare’s history plays (Devlin 1971, 73; 96). In the mid-nineteenth century, Ashby de la Zouch in Leicestershire became a fashionable spa town. The growth in its popularity was in part due to *Ivanhoe*, (published 1820), where Scott describes the “Tournament Field”, “our banquet in the Castle of Ashby” and the “stateley (sic) ruins” of Ashby Castle, which he describes as being earlier than the extant ruins which interest visitors (Scott 1993, Chapters 20, 9, 14). This led to attempts to protect and preserve the buildings (Tinniswood 1998, 134).

Scott is the clearest example of the use of past settings for modern stories, which reflect real places, but other writers included Ainsworth, whose stories were set in Tudor and Stuart times (Mandler 1997, 36). The works of Dickens, Ainsworth, Watts and Hall were all serialised in newspapers or magazines, making popular history available to the masses (Mandler 1997, 34). The written word was a strong force in Victorian England, but newer media were also becoming more widely available. Technological developments in engraving and colour printing allowed for the creation of prints of romanticised historical scenes (Mandler 1997, 44).

The most famous of historic places for visiting because of literary connections was and is Stratford-upon-Avon. Tourism grew slowly at first as Londoners found it remote and inaccessible. It was only with the coming of the railway to Stratford in 1860 that there was a chance for it to attract more visitors (Beauman 1982, 3). However, within a
generation or two it had taken on an iconic status as a place which reflected the greatness of the English achievement. The Shakespeare tercentenary of 1864 was celebrated in Stratford under the auspices of the Mayor, Edward Flower (brewer of Flowers beer). In 1874 his son Charles Flower planned a Shakespeare Memorial Theatre for the regular production of Shakespeare’s plays in Stratford (Beauman 1982, 3-7). As early as the mid-eighteenth century Garrick had been involved in the organisation of Shakespeare-themed events, and it was realised about this time that there was potential value in the link with Shakespeare, and the first record of visitors is in the late eighteenth century when reviews are published in the Gentleman’s Magazine (Eagle 1970, 1). Shakespeare’s birthplace was purchased for the Nation in 1846, and was heavily reconstructed (Fairholt 1847). In the early 1890s there was a campaign to save Anne Hathaway’s Cottage for the public (Shakespeare’s Birthplace Trust Archives: The Standard 29.3.1892). Another article discussed the offer of Anne Hathaway’s to the Birthplace Trust at 3,000 guineas, and expressed regret that they could not afford it. It stated that the threat was that it could be sold to an American and moved (Shakespeare’s Birthplace Trust Archives: The Daily Graphic 30.3.1892). It was subsequently sold to the Birthplace Trust in 1892 and opened to the public later that year, under the custodianship of Mary Baker, the tenant when the Trust bought the building, who stayed until 1899 (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust 2002).

Early illustrations of Shakespeare’s Birthplace suggest the level of alteration to the building through the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The building is illustrated in 1769 with three gables, an oriel window and a porch (Figure 4.28), all features which are lost before 1792, when a much plainer shop building is shown (Figure 4.29). Some features of the timber-framing are common, and show the illustration to be from life, for example the diagonal wind-brace near the eaves above the middle of the three doors is common to all the illustrations, and is still visible in the building today.
By the mid-nineteenth century the building is shown as a small shop, perhaps representing the subdivision of the building (Figure 4.30). From the mid-nineteenth century the building has been reconstructed considerably. Comparison of the photograph of it today (Figure 4.31) and the print from 1769 (Figure 4.28) shows that the reconstruction was based primarily on that earliest known representation of the building. It is clear from the two pictures that the reconstruction aimed to make the building appear as it had in the past, but there was very little evidence of how the building had functioned internally in its earlier form, and alterations have destroyed any evidence that might have survived.
Figure 4.30. Shakespeare’s Birthplace 1847 (from Fairholt, 1847)

Figure 4.31. Shakespeare’s Birthplace today

Other sites have been opened to the public because of their literary associations, for example Milton’s Cottage in Buckinghamshire, opened in 1887 following a public appeal with much made of its brief occupancy by the poet. The reading room gradually became a Milton Museum, and the house is still presented to the period of his life (Philip Birger, Milton Museum, pers. comm.).

Summary

This chapter has explored the types of work undertaken in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries to reconstruct historic buildings. The ‘restoration’ of historic buildings, as it was commonly called then, often had the aim of opening them to the
public as places where people could learn and improve themselves, as discussed in relation to Hampton Court. The interest in the medieval past led to buildings of that period being preferred for acquisition and presentation to the public, and buildings often being reconstructed with that era in mind, as discussed at Alfriston Clergy House.

The roles of two key institutions at this time, the National Trust and the SPAB, have been discussed throughout this chapter, and their close relationship will be seen in future chapters. Other outside influences have also been discussed, including the ongoing debates about legislation to protect buildings. Initially the SPAB and the National Trust were in control of protecting the stock of historic buildings in England until legislation began to influence preservation of monuments, reinforcing the philosophy of preservation. Meanwhile, many house owners would have been keen to prove that legislation was not needed, in order that they would retain their buildings in their control, something which is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

The new-found interest in visiting historic buildings has been seen to lead to pressure for authenticity. Much of this debate was carried out in publications like Ruskin's *Lamp of Memory*, and responses from architects (Ruskin 1849). The works to historic buildings started, in this period, to be related to the desire for authenticity, but the conservation philosophy was still being formed, and works were carried out which would later be frowned upon. Interest in the past was high, and romanticised images of the English past, as promoted by the media may have influenced the amount and style of reconstruction carried out, despite the work of conservation organisations like the SPAB. In Chapter Five, a more coherent conservation philosophy begins to emerge and this will be investigated in relation to example buildings.

The role of the media and literature in this movement has been discussed. The formation of the SPAB and the National Trust was influential even if membership remained limited, and it has been seen in this chapter that attempts to open buildings to a wider audience, such as the free opening of Hampton Court, were frowned upon in some circles. The widening of audiences, as owners needed to increase visitor numbers will be a theme in Chapter Five.
Chapter Five: Building Reconstruction in the First World War and Interwar Period

Historic Houses as Museums – Folk Museums – Reconstructors and the Cost of Reconstruction – The Role of the SPAB – The Role of the National Trust – The National and International Conservation Movement – Building Reconstruction and Authenticity – Englishness and the Role of Historic Houses in Society

Between 1914 and 1939 new approaches to historic building reconstruction emerged, and these are the main concern of this chapter. Many more buildings started to be opened in this period as museums. The opening of houses as museums could be interpreted as a commercial decision, but the increased interest in local history and the growing popularity of folk museums can be discussed in relation to the social history of the time. Historic houses were themselves representations of history which were also used to display other aspects of local history. The impetus for this type of work was from museums services, archaeological societies and private individuals. Larger country houses were under threat, and their survival and maintenance sometimes depended on public opening.

Many local museums within historic houses were opened by individuals or trusts, who were involved with just one building or in one local area. Larger national organizations were still able to provide guidance for this type of work. In this period the SPAB and the National Trust were able to define their roles more precisely, avoiding overlap. The nature of the developing approaches of these two institutions is a key theme throughout this period. The SPAB retained its role as an advisory body and did not acquire buildings itself, but it worked closely with the National Trust in relation to their properties. Little has been published about the history of the SPAB, but the present research project has traced its development in relation to the National Trust and revealed an interesting symbiosis (Waterson 1994, 42-53).

The SPAB guided many of the conservation principles applied to historic buildings at this time, but there were also newly-emerging international agencies. The works carried out on the example buildings are used to reveal how their aims were pursued in practice, and some discrepancies are discussed.
As seen in Chapter Four, there was, by 1914, an established concern for authenticity in historic building reconstruction to which was now added an increased interest in the preservation of historic fabric. In this period, there is an increasing tendency to concentrate on key examples of buildings rather than promote equality in protecting all historic buildings (Waterson 1994, 108-109).

The impact of the First World War, and later the impending Second World War, generated increased patriotism and a more focused sense of Englishness, a refined awareness of what that term entailed (Wood 1999). Through this period the English identity also became more closely linked with specific periods of history, and nostalgic views of the country in the past (Mandler 1997, 234-6). Historic buildings, as representations of the history of the country, maintained a high level of importance. Their use through this period was varied, some as houses open to the public, others as museums. This dichotomy is explored, and the differences between the approaches discussed.

The public level of historic building visiting was high. As transport improved and disposable income increased, tourism became a bigger factor, and some buildings were presented as archetypally English, with romanticised images to appeal to the new tourists (Taylor 1994, 122). National Trust membership increased nearly fourfold to over 7,000 in the 1930s. The popularity of historic buildings seems to have resulted in increased access to vernacular buildings for the visiting public.

**Historic Houses as Museums**

One key development which has been identified in the interwar period is the use of buildings as local museums. Examples of this, and possible reasons will be explored in the next two sections, about Museums and Folk Museums. An example of a historic house utilised as a museum is Blakesley Hall in Birmingham was bought by Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery in 1932 for £3,000 after the death of the previous owner, Thomas Merry (Davies 1985, 71). Some maintenance and reconstruction work was undertaken, and then the house opened as a ‘Museum of Manorial History’ in 1935 (Figure 5.10), the history of the building itself being, at that time, obscure. The use of historic houses as local museums also promoted the history of the local area and aided the development of a sense
of local identity related to that history. The Museum of Manorial History at Blakesley Hall included a lot of local detail, including coats of arms of local families hand-painted by a heraldry expert, but the exhibits did not survive intact following Second World War damage (Davies 1985, 71-2).

In the 1930s some later additions to Blakesley Hall were removed, such as an extension to the oriel, and an internal division between the hall and the oriel was created. There is no documentation for this phase of the reconstruction works. In the 1950s iron pillars were inserted where the screen of the screens passage had previously been (Figure 5.14) (Davies 1985, 71). Works were carried out, but because of a lack of documentary evidence there was not the confidence to present it for its own worth; instead it was used as a venue for a local museum. The level of alteration was considerable. Some external alterations included stripping plaster and revealing more timbers, as seen in the front gable (Figures 5.11 and 5.12). The interior was made much more plain for its use as a Museum of Manorial History, and the Victoriana was lost (Figures 5.13 and 5.14).
Figure 5.11. View of Merry family, with Blakesley in the background c1910. Note the plastering over some of the timber-framing (from postcard sold at Blakesley Hall in the 1980s)

Figure 5.12. Blakesley Hall: plasterwork removed revealing curved timber braces, making the building conform with the twentieth-century image of a Tudor building
Figure 5.13. Interior of hall, Blakesley Hall, late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The screen is decorated with hanging plates, this was later removed because it was not the original screen (from Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery Archive)

Figure 5.14. Interior of Blakesley Hall in the late twentieth century. The screens passage has now been reconstructed, and the woodwork is differentiated from the original by its colour
A number of buildings were opened to the public as museums because they could not be fully interpreted as houses for lack of historical information. This was true of Anne of Cleves’s House in Lewes, Sussex, which was opened by the Sussex Archaeological Society in 1923 (Poole 1996, 8). Anne of Cleves probably never visited this building, which was granted to her as part of her divorce settlement. The name is a twentieth-century invention, the building having been known as ‘The Porched House’ until 1910 (ibid.). The first guidebook for the house reads, “It would be interesting to know who had lived within these walls during their four or more centuries of existence, but I regret that there has not been time to make research into the story of the house and occupants” (Godfrey 1927, 3).

The building was used to display local archaeological finds, but it has a very interesting history in its own right. The range parallel to the street was built in the medieval period, and was extended to the rear shortly afterwards. Much was then remodelled in the Elizabethan period, and the rear section (Figure 5.15) was rebuilt, the ground floor utilising medieval stonework; and the first floor is in a different style from the original. The lack of interpretation of these aspects of the buildings’ history by the Archaeological Society, perhaps starts to reflect the move of archaeology away from historic buildings.

Late nineteenth- and twentieth-century alterations saw the insertion of staircases, five of which are seen in access analysis diagrams for both 1910 and the present (Figures 5.16 and 5.17). The access analysis diagrams show the building to have the same basic structure and number of rooms and the same number of staircases, before and after the reconstruction, although the locations of some staircases have been altered in relation to the numbers of spaces before and after them. This relates to some rooms being subdivided while others have been opened up. It would be very hard to accurately establish the layout at an earlier date, but these changes in the reconstruction show the historic layout was not a primary concern for the reconstructors. None of this architectural detail was explained in the original interpretation, and it is still only a minor element in the exhibition today.
Figure 5.15. Anne of Cleves's House, Lewes. View of the rear. Note the difference between the timber-framing styles of the two ranges. The left hand is the original medieval range, the right hand first floor is an Elizabethan replacement.

Figure 5.16. Historical Access Analysis of Anne of Cleves's House as it was in 1910, from plan of that date.

Figure 5.17. Access analysis of Anne of Cleves's House as it is today.
Much work to historic buildings between the two World Wars concentrated on removing accretions. At the Thetford Ancient House Museum in Norfolk the renovation in the 1920s involved removal of later plaster to reveal interior timber-framing. Evidence for this remains in the nail marks to support lath, and pecking in the wood to hold plaster, but the exact date of the earliest plastering is impossible to ascertain. There has been some rearrangement of rooms, one of the doors of the screens passage being blocked and the rooms of the service end combined into a larger room (Figure 5.19). The philosophy behind all reconstruction in Thetford Ancient House at that time was to make replacements of sections obvious to visitors (Figure 5.18). Over one fireplace, for example, there is an inserted section of wood which is not carved or coloured like the original, so it is clearly visible. The museum was used to display local archaeological finds.

Figure 5.18. Thetford House, with replaced section of fireplace lintel clearly visible. It is not carved, and the wood is not stained.
Figure 5.19. Thetford House. The service end has been rearranged into one space, leaving all but one of the doorways from the screens redundant. They have been blocked

Folk Museums
Parallel to the use of houses as local history and archaeology museums in the interwar period, there was a movement to represent traditional life in the country through folk museums. Many historic houses were taken over by local authorities or small trusts and converted into folk museums, displaying life at various dates in the medieval or Tudor building. Folk museums had developed in Scandinavia from the late nineteenth century, and were very popular because they related closely to the lives of the people who visited them (Gailey 1998, 17-44). They provoked nostalgia and memories, and they evoked a way of life which many people regretted had been lost (Lowenthal 1985, 8, 175). The folk history described in the museum was not always tied directly to the known history of that individual building, but often represented a ‘typical’ house. The folk museum in
Gloucester at Bishop Hooper’s Lodgings was bought by the Corporation and opened in 1935 as a museum for the display of folk culture, bygones and historical relics of Gloucester and its surrounding district. The house was said to have been where Bishop John Hooper lodged before his martyrdom in 1555 (Green 1944, 5). The building was never displayed to represent Bishop Hooper’s time, and research in 1933 suggested that it was actually the house next door where he had lodged, although the existing structure there was of the seventeenth century (ibid.). Bishop Hooper’s Lodgings was opened as a folk museum, with exhibits on the themes of agriculture, trade, Severnside and home life (ibid.).

Reconstruction work on houses to be used as folk museums tended to be relatively minimal, and each concentrated on numerous different phases of the building’s history. The Cambridge and County Folk Museum, for example, was founded in the former White Horse Inn in 1936. The building is originally sixteenth-century, but it has not been stripped of its later accretions (Hawke-Smith 2003). The collections it displays are mainly nineteenth-century, including some loosely relevant to the history of the building, such as a large collection of pub signs. The collection was formed from an early twentieth-century collection from local cottages which was being dispersed (ibid.).

Some buildings were suited to use as folk museums because of their direct link with a particular aspect of folk life. Hall i’ th’ Wood, near Bolton, was the birthplace of Samuel Crompton, the inventor in 1779 of the spinning mule, which transformed the cottage industry of cloth-making (Mills 1995, 19-20). “The late Viscount Leverhulme purchased Hall i’ th’ Wood, and after a careful restoration of the building had been carried out, presented it to the corporation of Bolton in 1900.” “The same generous donor purchased practically the whole of the objects it now contains to furnish the Hall as a ‘folk museum’” (Midgley 1927, 13). The furnishing was from a range of different periods, and there was a concentration on the spinning mule in several rooms (Figures 5.20 and 5.21). From 1927 the building was promoted as a folk museum based around Crompton, as Leverhulme had intended. “The scheme was submitted to Leverhulme by the writer [Thomas Midgley] in 1915, and the interest which his Lordship took in the acquisition of these antique furnishings and obsolete household appliances is shared by his fellow townspeople, to whom they were presented” (Midgley 1927, 13). It was also considered that the building
itself was of “considerable interest”; “better than any existing building in this neighbourhood it illustrates the architecture during the XV, XVI and XVII centuries of the type of dwelling occupied by those well-to-do yeoman farmers who were also small manufacturers of woollens and fustians before the Industrial Revolution of the XVIII century” (Midgley 1927, 3).

Figure 5.20. Kitchen of Hall i’ th’ Wood. Furniture of different periods, including spinning wheels

Figure 5.21. Samuel Crompton’s Spinning Mule at Hall i’ th’ Wood
The original interpretation included a significant amount of information about the building and its construction. This was just one part of the presentation, the life of its most famous inhabitant, as well as folk life in the area, being also presented to visitors:

The plan of the original building was a parallelogram with a short projection forming the buttery or larder at the north-east angle, the roof running north and south over the whole. The main hall or general living room, 25ft long by 21 ft wide, was divided from the kitchen and buttery at the north end by a passage way and a high panelled screen. The mortise holes for the posts of this screen can be seen in the massive oak beam which crosses the ceiling at this point.

(Midgeley 1927, 3-4)

Another building dedicated to one local character was Izaak Walton’s Cottage near Stafford. The building was bought by the Izaak Walton Trust in 1923, and they worked to restore it and reconstruct it to the period of its most famous owner, the author of *The Compleat Angler* (1653). There were two fires at the building, one in 1927 and another in 1938 (Figure 5.22). It has therefore had considerable new material inserted into it, timbers are now revealed which were previously covered, and there has been a rearrangement of the doorways and windows (Figure 5.23).

*Figure 5.22. Izaak Walton’s Cottage in 1938 after the second fire (from Izaak Walton’s Cottage Archive)*
The presentation of the house has concentrated on Izaak Walton, but also displayed traditional furnishings from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, presenting that idyll of cottage life in the past which was typical of folk museums. The building was displayed partly as rooms laid out as if for use, and partly with items in cases.

The Strangers’ Hall Folk Museum in Norwich is another example of a historic house used to display local folk life. The building was furnished and displayed in the 1920s and 1930s as “illustrative of the evolution of domestic life according to varying tastes and needs” (Anon. 1938, 37). It was a gift of Mr Leonard G. Bolingbroke who had “visited Scandinavian Folk Museums early in the present [twentieth] century and on his return to Norwich purchased a portion of this building and opened it to the public as the first Folk Museum in the country” (Anon. 1938, 41). The rooms were reconstructed to make them appear as they had in different periods (Anon. 1938, 37-44). Some rooms were presented as a museum: “In the oak-panelled room contemporary with the main hall is a collection of “bygones” in pottery, glass, iron and pewter, representative of domestic life of the time when the manufacture of these utensils required the skill of craftsmen” (Anon. 1938, 42). The displays included “a series of three crypts in which are shown shop signs of a bygone
age; a number of bicycles from a "hobby horse" to a "penny farthing"; mantraps, spring guns and other unpleasant contrivances in use in the early nineteenth century" (Anon. 1938, 42). Other rooms were laid out as if they were still in use, reconstructed to various periods of the building’s past. A contemporary description of the house as a folk museum gives an insight into the interests of visitors at the time:

The Victorian Parlour is full of those ornaments so dear to our grandparents, silk, wax and wool flowers under glass shades, cases of brightly plumaged birds; wool mats; vases of china and “bluejohn” and the hundred and one other objects considered necessities in the mid-Victorian times. The family portrait album is placed in a conspicuous position on the central table together with the rose-wood writing box inlaid with pearl, the ornamented blotter and the family Bible. Typical family portraits adorn the walls and the furniture, although ugly and heavy in design, shows excellent craftsmanship.

(Anon. 1938, 39-40)

This description suggests that contemporary visitors seem to have been looking for items which they might find nostalgic, associated with their grandparents’ generation, things which are of curiosity value such as gins and mantraps, and things which represent life at a particular period in the past such as the pottery. The information about these items was limited. Guidebooks like that quoted above were written in a loose style, unlike the highly academic contemporary Ministry of Public Buildings and Works guides to sites like castles (eg. Peers 1953).

A later popular means of displaying folk history while preserving threatened houses was the open-air museum. Open-air museums had first been created in Scandinavia, but the idea soon spread (Nordensen 1992, 149-150; Gailey 1998, 17-44). Britain’s first open-air museum was opened at Kingussie in the Highlands of Scotland in 1935 (Highland Folk Museum n.d.). It was closely followed by one at Cregneash on the Isle of Man in 1938 (Isle of Man Government 2003). In 1948 another open-air museum was opened, the St Fagan’s Museum in Wales, which has collected over thirty buildings dating from medieval times to the present (National Museums of Wales 1946, 3). The buildings were moved from their local areas and rebuilt with emphasis on their earlier form. For example, all the cottages at Cregneash form a crofting village of the nineteenth century, and do not display
any changes to that lifestyle in the early twentieth century, before they were moved. These early open-air museums were in the style of the folk museums, concentrating on rural life, and aiming to preserve physical remains such as buildings, as well as skills and ways of life traditional to those areas (Gailey 1998, 17-44). Open-air museums will be discussed further in Chapter Seven.

Reconstructors and the Cost of Reconstruction

The expense of reconstructing a building prevented some potential owners from taking on projects, whether they were private owners, City Corporations, the National Trust or the SPAB. There was increased pressure to reconstruct buildings following the philosophy of preservation of fabric, and accurate representation of the past. This became a contentious political issue. In 1936 Keynes published a paper criticising society for the “precarious and insufficient” funding for preservation of national monuments, and describing the “prostituting” of art “for the purposes of financial gain [as] one of the worser crimes of present-day capitalism” (Keynes 1936, 371-374).

Some individual buildings could become political minefields. The negotiations over King John’s House in Romsey, Hampshire, for example, show what effect the age of the building has on financial value, and the ways in which this could become problematic. The building was found to be a medieval house in the late 1920s, when W.J. Andrew surveyed and dated it. Evidence for the date was found in 1927, when Mr Andrew and the house’s owner, Miss Moody, started their research, uncovering areas which had previously been plastered over, and finding places where Tudor doorways had been inserted, replacing even earlier openings. The window in the west wall was discovered to be earlier still, and is now the key architectural feature for dating (King John’s House Trustees 1998, 1-3). The building obtained its title, King John’s House, because Mr Andrew and Miss Moody related the discovery that it was medieval to a document in the royal records at the local abbey which showed that King John had had a hunting lodge built in 1206, and that the building was given to the abbey by John’s son, Henry III. The abbey owned this house in 1539 – the time of its dissolution – so it was assumed that this was the building constructed for King John as a hunting lodge (Allen 1999, 76-77). This revelation made it more important as a
local building, but also increased its financial value. More recently it has been recognised that the building is mid-thirteenth century in origin, so too late for any direct association with King John, but the name has stuck (King John’s House Trustees 1998, 5; Barbara Burbridge, pers. comm.).

Mr Andrew was keen that the building should be preserved (SPAB Archive, Andrew to SPAB letter 23.3.1928). There were suggestions that it could be used as a free public library or reading room, or a small museum (SPAB Archive, Andrew, King John’s House Report March 1928). At this time the SPAB met the National Trust to discuss preservation, but neither could buy it, or become involved with its reconstruction, for financial reasons. Its importance had been published (Andrew 1927, 10), increasing the potential cost of purchase. Miss Moody was asking to sell it for up to ten times the price it had commanded before the ‘discovery’ (SPAB Archive, Moody to SPAB letter 19.4.1928).

Miss Moody opened it to the public, but lack of finance prevented her reconstructing it. She offered it to the SPAB, asking them to propose a price for it as a going concern with a tea room which received between 1,200 and 1,500 visitors annually between 1928 and 1933. This was a steady, but not great visitorship (SPAB Archive, Moody to SPAB letters 14.1.1933 and 18.1.1933). The SPAB were not accustomed to acquiring properties, but they did offer £1,500 for this building. This was turned down by Miss Moody, who said that she could get £10,000 for it. Later Miss Moody accepted the £1,500 on condition that the building was preserved as an ancient monument for the country (SPAB Archive, Moody to SPAB letter 30.1.1933). The SPAB eventually refused the building a year later (SPAB Archive, SPAB to Moody letters 29.1.1934; 14.5.1935). It seems likely that they feared taking on an expensive project, which had already been begun without their conservation advice (Philip Venning, General Secretary SPAB, pers. comm.).

Miss Moody had already started work on reconstruction from 1928 onwards, removing later accretions. The SPAB asked one of their members to advise on the work already carried out, and the work which still needed to be done. T.D. Atkinson recommended that the Georgian cottages to the east, known as Queen Anne’s Cottages, should be pulled down to allow the archaeological investigation of the rest of King John’s House (SPAB Archive,
Atkinson to Powys letter 14.1.1933). This work was, indeed, carried out in 1938. Miss Moody remained in contact with the SPAB, who advised her about works, and reviewed planned alterations to the building and surrounding buildings (SPAB Archive, Moody to SPAB letter 27.7.1935; SPAB Archive, SPAB to Moody letter 31.7.1935). The National Trust continued negotiations to have the buildings given or sold to them from 1935 to 1938. They, too, asked the advice of the SPAB, who advised against the suggestion of the National Trust of taking down the Tudor cottage at the west end. The possibility of moving the building to another site was raised. The argument was that the cottage was now below present ground level and that they would like to expose the end of King John’s House (SPAB Archive, Herbert Collins (architect) to SPAB letter 25.3.1938). The SPAB accepted that this was an exceptional case, but advised that accretions like the Tudor extension were part of the history of the building, and should therefore be preserved. Miss Moody agreed to leave the cottage to SPAB after her death (SPAB Archive, Moody to SPAB letter 2.9.1965); but they suggested that she should leave it to the Ministry of Works (SPAB Archive, SPAB to Moody letter 2.11.1965). She finally gave it to the town of Romsey in 1969. The building is now run by a local building trust, established in 1979, who care for the fabric and ensure its accessibility to the public and local community.

The Role of the SPAB

The SPAB remained one of the key organisations involved, indirectly, in historic building reconstruction and a proponent of conservation ideals in the interwar period. By carrying out research, learning about building repair and disseminating their knowledge the SPAB was pivotal in guiding the development of philosophies towards historic building reconstruction as the numbers being reconstructed grew. The SPAB still worked to its manifesto, discussed in Chapter Four, but in advising about works to individual buildings they modified their ideas to suit these real-life situations. This work is described in their annual committee reports. The report about Bakewell Church in Derbyshire typifies the conservation philosophies at the time, and states that

Very few buildings, whether of timber construction or of stone, are ever so far beyond repair as to necessitate complete renewal. For the most part, in the case of roofs, the defects are found to be at the timbers’ ends where they
rest on the wall, and at those points where they join each other in the construction of the roof. The lengths between these points are seldom seriously damaged ... It stands to reason then that if it is possible, in this case, to put new ends on to the timbers, very little change will be noticed in the repaired work.

(SPAB 1925, 22)

Their approach was interested in preserving what could be retained of the past structure, but not directly based on replicating past evidence or collecting more evidence (SPAB 1877). While the fabric of the historic building is given significance, the need to replace like with exact like is not here described as an utmost priority.

The discipline of buildings archaeology was developing in the interwar period, with a concentration on larger domestic buildings, castles and religious buildings (Quiney 1994, 228). There was very little recording on smaller domestic buildings at this time, although the techniques of accurate recording were in use and being developed in relation to larger buildings, such as churches, cathedrals and civic buildings, especially following the work of Charles Peers (Emerick 1996, 183-195).

The SPAB has advised on projects for both individuals and institutions since its foundation. Some early reconstruction work carried out by individuals for their own use was later opened to the public. An example of such work is Stoneacre in Kent. The building was bought by Aymer Vallance in 1920 (National Trust 2001b, 2). The farmhouse was stripped down and the timbers revealed. Later insertions, probably of the sixteenth century, such as a first floor in the hall and a dormer window at the north-west end of the hall were removed to light the new first-floor rooms (National Trust 2001b, 2-5; Dotty Owens, National Trust, pers. comm.). The building was also considerably extended, using another timber-framed building, North Bore Place from Chiddingstone, which was moved to the site and reconstructed in two sections at the north and south ends of Stoneacre (Figure 5.27). North Bore Place is of a different style of timber-framing, despite having been built within twenty miles of Stoneacre. Stoneacre was constructed in the late fifteenth century, while North Bore Place was built in the late sixteenth century (National Trust 2001b, 7). Vallance was a disciple of William Morris, and wrote a biography of him. He aimed to follow the lead of Morris in sensitively restoring Stoneacre (National Trust 2001b, 2). Stoneacre was due for
demolition before it was bought by Aymer Vallance, so while he must be credited with its rescue the combination of two different buildings does not aid the understanding of either of them for the visitor. It should be noted that in the medieval period the re-use of sections of older buildings was common in the creation of new buildings, and this approach could be seen as a continuation of that tradition (Grenville 1997, 13). This medieval reuse of timbers, however, tended to involve using single timbers in new positions to create a new frame of a new design rather than transporting whole structures to a new site.

Because this work was initially carried out for private use it was not necessary to make the building appear as it had at some time in the past for educational purposes. Vallance did remove external plasterwork to reveal timbering (Figures 5.24 and 5.25), and return the hall to its original state, open to the roof, because he admired the traditional design (National Trust 2001b, 8). This building was not merely a reconstruction, however. It combined sections from another building to create a larger historical-style structure completely from old material, but to an entirely new design. This is evident in the different styles of timber-framing (Figure 5.26). This type of pastiche work is relatively uncommon; it represents the desire to use structures from the past, but to interpret them in a contemporary way for private use, or for educational and recreational visits by the public.

Figure 5.24. Stoneacre before reconstruction in the 1920s. Much of the building is plastered over (from National Trust 2001b, 6)
Figure 5.25. Stoneacre after reconstruction, with the timbering revealed

Figure 5.26. Stoneacre after reconstruction. A variety of timbering styles is evident following the combination of two different buildings
Aymer Vallance, for whom the work at Stoneacre was carried out, is described by the current Historic Buildings Representative for the National Trust, Dotty Owens, as “a man of his age, ecclesiastical historian and a keen antiquarian” (Dotty Owens, National Trust, pers. comm.). The work aimed to conserve a building which was then in a derelict state (National Trust 2001b, 7). The wide-ranging nature of the work was typical of this age of confidence in ‘improving’ buildings (National Trust 2001b; Dotty Owens, National Trust, pers. comm.). A few years later, in 1928, Stoneacre was given to the National Trust, who similarly appreciated that timber-framed buildings were being lost at this time (National Trust 2001b, 7).

This type of work, and the acceptance of it, despite the obvious discrepancies between theoretical conservation philosophy at the time and the approaches actually used, highlights one of the factors which created the gap between rhetoric and action: the personal desire to create a building in a specific style. Many of the individuals involved in reconstruction of historic buildings did it as a hobby of their own, and desired to create their dream of a
medieval or Tudor building. There were also close links between many of the people involved in historic buildings at the time. For example Vallance, an aesthete and collector, donated heavily to the Victoria and Albert Museum in the 1920s and 1930s (National Museums 2005). Perhaps because he was part of that élite, there was no intervention by the SPAB to make any suggestions about the work at Stoneacre, and the National Trust saw no reason not to acquire the building once the work was completed, even though they questioned the validity of acquisition of other reconstructed buildings such as King John’s House, discussed above.

Work involving the relocation of buildings and medievalisation of their appearance was relatively uncommon at the time, but was done by enthusiasts who were happy to make considerable alterations. This was true at Great Dixter in East Sussex, where two buildings were combined in 1910-1912, a forerunner of the work at Stoneacre. The SPAB had to remain aware of these types of works, and advise where suitable. Work here was done by Lutyens, a prominent ‘Arts and Crafts’ architect, and the type of person whom the SPAB would have been aiming to influence through their campaigns (Anon, n.d.b. 3-8). Great Dixter was greatly extended with a new section and the movement of the barn from Benenden to the site (Figures 5.28, 5.29 and 5.30).

The SPAB Archive documents all correspondence about specific buildings, but there are no documents relating to Great Dixter. The SPAB did not intervene, perhaps because it was again initially for private use, or perhaps because they trusted the capabilities of Lutyens in relation to historic buildings, despite the fact that up to this time in his career he had primarily built new structures. The reluctance of the SPAB to intervene in such projects could have weakened their cause, but because there were so many buildings being altered or destroyed they felt justified an allowing specialists to undertake the works they chose. Because they were one of the few groups interested in historic buildings the SPAB were not openly criticised for this partiality.
Figure 5.28. Great Dixter. The close-studded section from the porch to the gable is the only original part of the building. The rest is of new build or brought from another building at Benenden.

Figure 5.29. Sketch plan of Great Dixter, showing three different phases of the building.
A privately-owned building with which the SPAB had involvement in an advisory role was Little Hall in Lavenham, Suffolk. The owners were the Gayer-Anderson brothers, who had previously let the building out to tenants. In the early 1930s the tenants moved out, and the owners had full access to the building, and initiated reconstruction of it (SPAB Archive, Gayer-Anderson to Powys letter 29.7.1934). Col. T.G. Gayer-Anderson was in close contact with the SPAB in the later days of his work, but by the time the SPAB became involved it was noted that the building had already been gutted and that Col. Gayer-Anderson had discovered that it was originally two large rooms, and had found that there had been a few alterations, such as decreasing the size of the windows. He said in a letter to the SPAB that he was “anxious to ‘restore’ it to its original form as much as possible” (SPAB Archive, Gayer-Anderson to Powys letter 29.7.1934).
Powys (the secretary of the SPAB) advised the owners about works, and made a visit in September 1934. Some of the results of the intervention of the SPAB are visible (Figure 5.31). They suggested a colour for the daub to be painted (SPAB Archive, SPAB to Gayer-Anderson letter 17.9.1934), and advised about the treatment of new wood inserted into the building "I should leave them from the saw, or only a little planed, and I should let them lie about in the open for a month or so, if you can spare the time, before fitting perhaps turning them over two or three times during this period" (SPAB Archive, SPAB to Gayer-Anderson letter 10.10.1934). This technical advice suggested a treatment for the wood to allow it to season in situ, and to discolour a little in the process, perhaps creating a more "historic" appearance. The Gayer-Anderson twins were also interested in creating an inspiring place for art students to live, so they added pieces of art-work and architectural fragments, which they had collected during their travels (Suffolk Building Preservation Trust. 1996) (Figure 5.32).
The interpretation of the building is now influenced by the level of reconstruction carried out in the 1930s. It is, for example, mentioned in the relevant volume of Pevsner's *Buildings of England*, but is described as "much reconstructed" (Pevsner 1961, 323).

Another building owned by a small trust is Samlesbury Hall in Lancashire, whose Trustees received advice from the SPAB in the 1920s (SPAB Archive, Samlesbury Hall File). The way in which the attention of the SPAB was drawn to this building highlights their close relationship with the National Trust. In 1929 the secretary of the National Trust, Hamar, sent a letter to Powys in which he described Samlesbury as "...a place worthy of your attention as there is to be work done there, but no architect on the spot to superintend. The house belongs to three or four Trustees who bought it simply to preserve and they are proposing to carry out extensive 'restoration'; some of this has already been done" (SPAB Archive, Hamar (secretary of NT) to Powys (secretary of the SPAB) letter 12.6.1929). The building was undergoing reconstruction, which included the removal of some of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century alterations, which had turned it into a series of flats. The
SPAB and the National Trust clearly see the term restoration as contentious, and it could be implied that the works proposed by the Trustees would not be of a suitable standard because they are classed as restoration, rather than as repair (a more common term at the time) or conservation. The National Trust was clearly concerned about the level of work being undertaken, but without purchasing the building was unable to act. The SPAB did send a caseworker, but did not recommend any recording of the sections removed. Perhaps too much work had already been undertaken, but detailed recording was not a common practice at the time for smaller domestic buildings (SPAB Archive, Powys to Healey letter 25.11.1929). The records held at Samlesbury document what was undertaken: “this long gallery was divided by a very substantial partition roughly in the same position as the partition between the Ground Floor rooms. It must have been put in when the house was sold to Mr Thomas Bradyle on 10th March 1678 and transformed into tenements. The trustees have had this removed” (Healy 1929, 5). The remains of that partition are visible as a wooden frame crossing the long gallery (Figure 5.33).

Figure 5.33. Samlesbury Hall long gallery, position of removed dividing wall marked by modern supporting framework during works. Notice the tie beam and lack of arched braces over the modern wood, compared to the design of the original framing.
At the time of these alterations the Trustees, who were not architecture specialists, did not always agree about the correct course of action. For example, in the case of the dividing wall in the long gallery some of the Trustees were keen to retain the wall, “not entirely for its antiquarian interest but so they may have two small rooms to furnish as a small museum showing the rise of spinning and weaving in the district” (Healey 1929, 5). The SPAB suggested that the dividing wall at the end of the long gallery could be removed “providing that suits the use of the building” (SPAB Archive, Powys to Healey letter 25.11.1929). Some of the timbering was being revealed, for example where the ceiling of the chapel has been removed to reveal the arches, braces and purlins of the roof, which may have been aimed at making the building appear more historic. Conservation philosophy was followed, however, in not staining the previously-hidden wood, marking the alteration (Figure 5.34). The SPAB were keen to ensure that a building stayed in use. Their manifesto of 1877 recommended: “put Protection in the place of Restoration, to stave off decay by daily care, to prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof” (SPAB 1877). They were also able to offer advice about the colouration of new wood – not as dark black as the
older timbers — and the method of cleaning of the stonework. The three main priorities of the SPAB are outlined in Healey’s report to them, which discusses the possible removal of the dividing wall in the long gallery: “from a constructional point of view, the support given is nil, from an artistic point of view it is negligible, from an antiquarian point of view it marks the end of the old house” (Healey 1929, 5).

Eastbury House in London was another property which was conserved with the advice of the SPAB, after having been used by the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War. The Corps had made alterations, including the removal of one first-floor mullioned window to make a doorway accessed by an external staircase, but this was accepted by the SPAB as it protected the historic newel staircase. Parts of the building had been protected during the First World War: asbestos was placed around chimneypieces, and wall paintings were covered with match boarding, for example (PRO file WORKS 14 191). The SPAB campaigned to raise funds to save the building between 1914 and 1917, and the National Trust bought it in 1918 (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham 2003).

The reports of the SPAB are useful in revealing policies at the time. In 1925 they particularly praised work in Guildford Castle, Surrey: “At the castle and the castle gate ...the decayed stone has been cut out where it is structurally defective and has been repaired by means of tiles laid in mortar as bricks, the whole being whitewashed afterwards” (SPAB 1925). A similar type of work was carried out at Montacute in 1931-1932 after the National Trust took over and the SPAB were involved in its conservation (Rogers 2000, 32). Also in the 1925 report Wellbrooke in Manchester is discussed, and it is noted that after a new roof had been added it would have been beneficial “to remove the middle floor and to strengthen the walls so that they will safely support the newly exposed roof”, but that this “entailed the spending of more money than was available at the time, but this work can, if desired, be carried out later.” This type of work — removing the inserted first floors in medieval halls — was common, but contradicts the SPAB’s manifesto, which stated that buildings should not be returned to an earlier period by the removal of later added sections (SPAB 1877). There was a clear need to compromise when real buildings were considered, and the SPAB, while trying to work within the framework of their
manifesto, had to disregard some of that rhetoric when faced with complex decisions about real buildings. The manifesto therefore functioned as a set of aspirations which could not always be put into practice as a policy. The emphasis in this case was, however, the structural stability of the building under the new roof (SPAB 1925).

Many building reconstructions of this period were done with the full awareness that there have always been alterations to buildings. In the earliest guidebook about the Old House on Butcher’s Row in Hereford, the author writes,

> Over three centuries old and in exact condition as built? No such house exists. This one being part of a row, had for its east and west ends bare party walls, left without finish, when adjoining houses were demolished. Consequently all the present windows in these faces (except perhaps the west bedroom window) are additions made in 1882, as are covered bargeboards and the pent roofs below at these ends.

(Watkins 1934, 4)

The building was constructed in 1621, and had been used as a house, and then went into commercial use, and was presented to the town by Lloyds Bank in 1928. There is no evidence of communication directly with the SPAB, but the style of the works to it shows that aspects of their philosophy were becoming more widely adopted. It was opened as a historic house in 1929, and was loosely displayed to the seventeenth century (Watkins 1934).

The SPAB were keenly promoting the ongoing need for their work as a pressure group. The 59th annual report to the committee included a photograph of a car park in Shrewsbury where a timber building had been destroyed (SPAB 1936, 64). Another article promoted the need for the accurate presentation of buildings to the public. It stated that members of the public found great enjoyment in ancient buildings, although they could not date them and did not have the technical knowledge to understand them. It suggested that there would be added value in visiting if visitors understood the buildings more fully (Underhill 1936, 92). In the same year the SPAB were given an anonymous cheque for £20,000. The report discussed their intention to use the money to acquire and restore buildings which could then be rented or let, so that the capital would form a good investment, rather than
funding a one-off cost, as a building bought to open to the public might bring more limited returns. Following this decision, the Ancient Buildings Trust was formed as the commercial wing of the SPAB, and obtained twenty-five buildings dating from 1400 to 1600. They carried out reconstruction work to these buildings. For example, at Jacobes Hall, Brightlingsea, Essex, later internal and external plastering was removed and timbers were replaced where historic timbers were decayed (Brightlingsea Town Council n.d.). The SPAB were able to use the Ancient Buildings Trust to promote their ideals. As seen above at King John’s House, they refused to buy the building because of the way in which it had been reconstructed before their involvement. The SPAB chose not to become involved directly in the presentation of historic houses to the public, although its educational role developed, and it offered advice to individuals and presented regular lectures. An annual scholarship for a nine-month training course in practical building conservation has been offered since 1930 (SPAB n.d.).

The SPAB had a crucial role to play during this period in advising about works to buildings which were to be displayed to the public. This advice went to different types of institution, and reflected each individual building, and the approaches of the reconstructors. The interest of the SPAB was always in preserving the building as well as could be. The use of properties as vehicles for education about the period of their original construction, or a subsequent one, was not a primary concern for the SPAB.

The Role of the National Trust
As the SPAB took on the role of advisers, with technical skills and knowledge, the National Trust took on the role of property owners, restorers and presenters. As their financial situation improved they increased their ownership or custodianship of buildings. They had recovered from their early financial difficulties following the acquisition of large high-maintenance properties and their membership was growing, rising from two thousand in 1930 to over seven thousand in 1939 (National Trust 2000, appendix two). Buildings were acquired as bequests, bought, and sometimes leased to or from the Trust. In all these situations the Trust guaranteed to preserve the buildings in the interest of the Nation. They conserved buildings, and in some cases reconstructed them, and also altered buildings to
meet the demands of visitors, and to allow for them to move around conveniently. Little
Moreton Hall, Cheshire (Figure 5.35), was acquired by the National Trust in 1937 as a gift
from the owners, Bishop C.W.R. Abraham and his son, Mr. Rupert Abraham. The building
had already acquired a reputation as a perfect English Tudor house (Figure 5.36). A public
appeal was launched to raise money for necessary repair work and it was then opened to the
public in 1938 (Lake 1994, 46). In the process of the repairs, reconstruction was also
carried out, and routes created through the building in order that visitors could follow a
circular route around its three ranges (Figures 5.37 and 5.38). As with many other
properties a tea room was also created, here from the service wing of the building. The
approach of the National Trust to conservation at Little Moreton Hall in these early days
was splicing in small pieces of wood to replace rotten sections, especially at the ends of the
timbers (Thackray 1994, 175). This directly follows the philosophy of the SPAB, as stated
above in relation to Bakewell Church.

Figure 5.35. Courtyard of Little Moreton Hall as it is today
Figure 5.36. Drawing of Little Moreton Hall, emphasising the black-and-white, detailed nature of its timber-framing, and showing life at the building imagined as happy and festive (from Nash 1840)

Figure 5.37. Little Moreton Hall, recent repairs. The 'exit only' sign reflects the one-way route around the building
Direct ownership and care seemed the most effective means for the National Trust to work towards the preservation of buildings. Not every property owned by the Trust was opened for display to the public. Many farms were purchased, and continued to be used as working farms (Waterson 1994, 92-96). In such cases the National Trust were simply protecting that way of life and its landscape. This was true of the Chadwich Manor Estate, near Bromsgrove, which included agricultural estates (National Trust 1997, 152). Bailey (Chairman 1923-1931) wrote in The Times that, "access will be given where possible up to the hills. But farms will remain farms and will not become playgrounds" (quoted in Waterson 1994, 99). Other historic houses were reconstructed for display, but their function later changed. This happened at Willy Lott’s House in Flatford, Suffolk, a medieval building with later additions and alterations, made famous by Constable’s paintings and sketches. In 1925 the National Trust refused the building because its maintenance could not be guaranteed and it was in a poor state of repair (SPAB 1927, 54). The SPAB similarly could not take it on, and it was sold to Mr. T.R. Parkington of Ipswich, who was restoring it by 1927 and intended to give it to the Nation on his death, with the
aim that a building made famous by such a well-known painting should be available to the people (ibid.). It was sold to the National Trust in 1943, and the sale money was repaid to the Trust in 1948 after Mr Parkington’s death, as part of his will (National Trust 1997, 219). It is now let to the Field Studies Council, is not regularly open to visitors, and can be viewed by the public only from the outside or if they attend one of their courses (Field Studies Council n.d.).

Some buildings were taken on by the Trust in this period specifically to prevent their being sold to people who might restore them badly, or to Americans who might move them to across the Atlantic. Some buildings were moved abroad, such as Agecroft Hall, Lancashire, a Tudor building dismantled and re-erected in Virginia (Tinniswood 1998, 185). In 1934 there was a rumour that Rufford Old Hall in Lancashire was to be sold. In 1935 the Trust negotiated that it would be offered to them first, and commissioned a report from William Weir to confirm whether or not “the hall is in its original state, or but little restored” (Weir 1935, 3). If the hall was authentic the National Trust said that preserving the building was a priority. William Weir’s report stated that the building was as constructed, except for some alterations, comprising a new lantern in place of the louvre (Figure 5.39), a window replacing the south doorway in the hall and the removal of the dais (ibid.). The building was eventually given to the National Trust by Lord Hesketh, as he moved to the other family home in Easton Neston in Northamptonshire (The Times 20.7.1936). In his initial report about the building Weir mentioned the added seventeenth-century wing and said that the entrance hall was “now used as a kitchen” (Weir 1935, 6). From the time when the National Trust acquired the building this room functioned as both the entrance, including ticket desk, and the first room of the house tour, the kitchen. The route which the visitor takes around the building includes sections of several different phases, and the dating is very confusing, and is not clearly explained. Following reconstruction the hall was not entered directly from outside into the screens passage as it would have been originally, but through an ante-room.
There was considerable destruction of houses in the interwar period. Four hundred and eighty-five country houses were destroyed between 1918 and 1945 (Hewison 1987, 54), and the threat of buildings being demolished or moved out of the country was high in the minds of the SPAB and National Trust. There was a campaign in the 1930s by the SPAB to save Churches’ Mansion, Nantwich, and stop it going to America (SPAB 1936). It was saved, went into sympathetic private ownership, and was conserved and reconstructed under the control of Thompson, the architect who had worked at Little Moreton Hall. The reconstruction took it back to its possible Tudor appearance. This work included stripping layers of paint from oak panels, removing later plaster around a fireplace to reveal the original arch, removing plaster elsewhere to reveal a window, and taking away brick cladding to reveal timbers (Anon. c1930s, 2). The threat of expatriation of buildings evidently caught the public imagination, and was even represented in film in *The Ghost Goes West* 1936 (Alexander Korda) about a Scottish castle being moved, and the ghost going with it (Tinniswood 1998, 185).
The National and International Conservation Movement

It has been seen that the SPAB were still active in this period, and guided conservation philosophy and offered advice and support to those involved in historic building reconstruction. At this time, however, a fresh international conservation movement arose which gained support through international agreements and national legislation and also started to have an impact on conservation philosophy.

The period immediately after the First World War saw efforts concentrated on the economy and industrial reconstruction, including the reconstruction of functional buildings (Lowe 1988, 61-63). New legislation introduced in this period suggests that the preservation of England's heritage was starting to be seen by government as a priority. In 1931 an *Ancient Monuments Act* allowed local authorities to set up preservation schemes to protect historic monuments and their surroundings. A year later the *Town and Country Planning Act* extended the provision of the *Ancient Monuments Act* (1931) to inhabited buildings and groups of buildings (Hewison 1987, 26). This growing interest in the past also saw several institutions were formed in the 1920s, notably the Ancient Monuments Society (1921), the Council for the Care of Churches (1922) and the Council for the Protection of Rural England (1926) (Hewison 1987, 26). These new societies may have been formed as an instinctive reaction, to protect historic Britain because of the threat it had faced during the First World War. Much of this concern with historic buildings was limited to specialists rather than being of general interest, and the past remained primarily a pursuit of the upper and upper-middle classes through university study and membership of societies.

While preservation of the remains of the past was an important issue in the interwar period and much effort was put into the preservation of ancient monuments, in archaeological legislation there was a stronger emphasis on prehistoric sites, with work being carried out at Stonehenge, Avebury and Roman monuments, including a preservation scheme for some stretches of Hadrian's Wall (Sheail 1981, 60-62). Although buildings were widely recognised as a record of history, and an important part of landscapes and townscapes, and had been studied archaeologically since the late nineteenth century, the reconstruction of
medieval buildings was not a priority for archaeologists in this period, as a result of the bias towards earlier archaeology.

As early as 1882 there was a clause in the *Ancient Monuments Protection Act* indicating that the Government could obtain ownership of monuments. The 1913 *Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act* defined monuments to include non-religious buildings (Mynors 1999, 6). Many historic buildings were taken into the direct care of the Government in the interwar period, through the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, and they were presented to the public in a standard form.

Care of the government stock of archaeological sites, historic buildings, and medieval ruins in England was carried out by the Office of Public Works. Their approach during the interwar period was one of tidiness and straight lines. Preservation consisted of taking out the undergrowth and the ivy, removing the loose stones, re-pointing and capping the walls, and providing close cut grass with neat edges. The guide books were of a standard academic format, full of historical detail.

(Strike 1994, 12)

There were regular updates to the legislation affecting historic buildings in this period. In 1931 an amendment was made to the *Ancient Monuments Act* which removed the necessity for preservation orders to be approved by Parliament unless the owner objected. The respect for private ownership and the owner’s right to alter their property as they required slowed the move towards greater legislation. The 1932 *Town and Country Planning Act* allowed a local authority to prevent the demolition of buildings with preservation orders, and the 1944 Act made demolition without consent a criminal offence (Mynors 1999, 6). A second amendment in 1933 allowed for objections to be heard by a public enquiry rather than a parliamentary sub-committee. Owners negatively affected by a preservation order gained rights to compensation in this amendment (Delafons 1997, 32).

There was increased international pressure relating to the preservation of the past. Some of the approaches to historic buildings in this period were written into the International Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments, originally known as the “Carta del Restauro”, which was signed by representatives of many European countries, including the United Kingdom, in Athens in 1931, and became known as the Athens Charter (Jokilehto
It agreed that international organisations for advice about work then known as restoration should be established. These ‘restoration’ works were ones which incorporated what is now termed both conservation and reconstruction (ICOMOS 1996). It was suggested that these organisations should evaluate proposals to prevent mistakes; and that preservation should be part of national-level legislation (ibid.). It advocated the use of modern techniques and materials in restoration, and suggested that historical structures and the areas around them should be given strict custodial protection (ibid.). The preservation of historic buildings was a priority, but if this was not achieved records of the buildings were not highlighted as a worthwhile alternative. Buildings archaeology had not yet developed the idea that an accurate record of a building was a viable means of retaining the information about the past held within a structure. The aesthetics of having historic buildings around a town or in the countryside was seen as more important than the science of gaining information from them.

Building Reconstruction and Authenticity
Following works during the late nineteenth century, some of which had involved the removal of historic fabric and the reconstruction of buildings, there was a new-found concern for historic structures amongst people working on them. There was a desire to preserve as much of the original as possible, and an interest in the authenticity of the building, which was reinforced by pressure from groups like the SPAB and from local historic building preservation societies (SPAB 1877). Larger institutions such as the National Trust, local authorities and some local trusts and societies moved away from reconstruction and towards an approach of more limited and sensitive conservation (Waterson 1994, 94). Private individuals who owned and opened historic buildings continued to use reconstruction as a method of presentation. Some buildings in a poor state of repair had to have structural conservation work carried out to preserve them. There was also a move toward considering the interests of the visitor. As visitors increased in number, and were less likely only to be specialists, reconstruction work was designed to enhance a wider understanding (Tinniswood 1998, 196).
Although the term was still in use by some, the idea of Victorian-style restoration was considered to be outmoded in this period. A plan to convert the Pilgrims’ Hall in Winchester in the late 1920s and early 1930s, for example, was debated exhaustively. The building had been divided into two floors, of which the ground floor was in use as a garage. T.D. Atkinson of the SPAB wrote a report in 1932 about the architecture of the hall, and the importance of what was then termed repair being carried out (Atkinson 1932). The garage doors would be blocked, adding strength to the structure and making it appear more as it had in the medieval period (ibid.). The idea of restoring the building obviously stirred up some strong feeling. Atkinson defended the proposals, stating that “any attempt at ‘restoration’ in the old-fashioned sense of the term cannot be too strongly deprecated (ibid.). It has all too often meant the destruction of all post-Reformation features, and the substitution of new work in the Gothic style” (ibid.).

Some buildings were deemed already to have undergone a level of Victorian restoration which precluded them from any necessity to preserve what was ancient, and Stratford-upon-Avon provides two useful examples. Shakespeare’s Birthplace had undergone renovation in the late nineteenth century, as discussed in Chapter Four. B.A. Newdigate from the Shakespeare Head Press, sent a letter about Shakespeare’s Birthplace to the SPAB in 1923. “I understand from the secretary of the Birthplace Trustees”, he wrote, “that it has been necessary to remove some of the decayed timbers from the house. I am told that these were timbers added in the ‘restoration’ of the middle of the last century. The timbers have been replaced with new timber” (SPAB Archive, Shakespeare Head Press to Newdigate letter 11.1.1923). The response of the secretary is not recorded, but there is a note on file relating to a newspaper cutting about work to the Birthplace, about which Powys has written: “This hardly concerns the SPAB. The committee feel that the house has been so altered in previous restorations that its repair is hardly a matter for it. The work proposed in this cutting seem (sic) harmless and may even be an improvement to the house. This society is not interested by restoration in such a case” (SPAB Archive, note on Shakespeare’s Birthplace).

From the time that the Birthplace was acquired in 1847, work was carried out to reconstruct the building for presentation to the public. The SPAB were asked for their advice about
work from the 1920s onwards, for example about repairs to a lead rainwater gutter in 1923. The reply from the SPAB correspondent was, "All the work done in the middle of last century was so bad that I feel no regret at its being removed" (SPAB Archive, Newdigate to Powys letter 21.1.1923). There was also work to the interior, decorating it as a house of the period of Shakespeare, and making a particular feature of the main bedroom, known as the "birthroom" (Figure 5.1). Authenticity, the fact that this was the very spot where Shakespeare was born, seems to have been considered highly important by these reconstructors.

There was also concern for Anne Hathaway’s Cottage through the 1920s. A letter from Alex Tweddle to the SPAB raised the issue: "I hear that Anne Hathaway’s cottage is in a very dangerous condition; a thousand people in one day tramped up and down stairs. If these wonderful old beams give way and the cottage falls to pieces we shall lose one of England's greatest treasures and one of her most attractive tourist spots" (SPAB Archive, Tweddle to SPAB letter 11.8.1929). This letter raises one of the difficult issues which was starting to be of concern in this period, and which continues to be a concern to the present. The building is deemed to be of importance for its association with Shakespeare, and the
Birthplace Trust are keen to encourage visitors and to educate; but those very visitors are, by their numbers, going to cause wear to the building. The SPAB contacted the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust who replied with assurances that the building was in "thoroughly sound condition in every respect, and is continually watched with the utmost care, as are the other ancient buildings administered by this Trust" (SPAB Archive, Wellstood [on behalf of Trustees and Guardians of Shakespeare's Birthplace] to SPAB letter 29.8.1929). In the interwar period the tension between wanting to encourage visitors to visit, to educate and entertain them and for the money they bring in, and the need to limit wear on a building increased as the numbers of visitors grew.

The priority for conservationists was to preserve the building and not to allow alterations to take place which would mean any loss of historical significance. At Harvington Hall in Worcestershire works were intentionally limited to those which were necessary to prevent the building from becoming structurally unsound. "In 1929 the decision was taken that the Hall must not be permitted to perish" (Hodgetts 2002).

The structural work began early in 1930 and was completed early in 1931 at a cost of £2,500. The ivy was stripped, the roof was retiled, with new rafters where necessary; chimneys were rebuilt and flooring relaid ... When the ivy was removed from the medieval block, the withdrawing room ceiling collapsed, bringing with it part of the east wall of the nursery above and damaging much of the Elizabethan panelling. Nevertheless, by late summer of 1931 the Hall was fit to be opened to visitors, though they were warned that no responsibility was accepted ‘for any patent or latent defect’.

(Hodgetts 2002, 68)

The house was opened as a centre for devotion to John Wall, a Catholic martyr, without emphasis on the building’s structure. The guidebooks of the time show a concentration on Father Wall (Hodgetts 2002, 69). One of the early guidebooks discusses the history of the hall and the people who owned it in three pages, the life of Father Wall in eleven and then describes a tour of the building, with an emphasis on its Catholic usage, in six pages (Owen Chambers 1933). In time the owners came to realise that while Catholics were interested in the building, there was also a market for non-Catholics: "as the wall paintings were uncovered and rooms refurbished its presentation came to resemble that of other historic
houses” (ibid., 69-70). The modern guidebook suggests that the building was being made to fit in with the image of a historic house, rather than reflecting the individuality of that building, or being ‘true’ to its history (Hodgetts 2002, 70).

Despite the growth in concern about the fabric of historic buildings, there was still considerable intervention. Some of this was done because there was a need for replacement of decayed early materials, and in many cases this is easily identifiable, and, in the case of the hall roof at Haddon Hall, even labelled and dated (Manners n.d., 16). Work was, however, still done which damaged buildings in an effort to return them to earlier forms. As was seen in Chapter Four, some of the works to historic buildings directly contradicted the contemporary stated aims and philosophies of the conservationists such as the SPAB and the National Trust. Work at Bradley Manor in Devon, for example, aimed to return the building to its primary phase (Woolner 1989, 20; 36-47). Cecil Firth had been the owner since the early twentieth century, and had started the work on the house which continued under the ownership of the National Trust. The first phases of this work included removal of coal grates and lowering and reconstruction of chimney pots in traditional local style (Woolner 1989, 36-47) (Figures 5.3 and 5.4), the removal of a false floor in the chapel and renovation of the Tudor screen (Figure 5.2), all intended to recreate its Tudor appearance (ibid.). The screen shows evidence of its renovation in the difference between the colour and texture of the wood of the screen itself, and that which had to be reconstructed above the screen. The overall achievement was the removal of later sections of the building. “Bit by bit most of the Gothic Revival embellishments were removed, not only because they were spurious but because they were inappropriate and confusing alongside the real thing” (Woolner 1989, 46), although in fact many such embellishments to the structure of the building were retained (Figure 5.5). This judgement as to the authenticity of an aspect of the building, based on the date of its addition, suggests the owners’ interest in returning it to its earliest date wherever possible. The later history of the building is not presented within the structure, for example there is no representation of its use during the Second World War, when gifts of clothing and bedding sent to Britain from Canada for bombed-out families were stored there (Woolner 1989, 46).
Figure 5.2. Screen at Bradley Manor, removed and conserved in the 1950s, before being returned and reinserted within a new surround (from National Trust, 1989)

Figure 5.3 and 5.4. Chimneys at Bradley
Another building which has seen alterations which put into question its authenticity and its apparent period of creation is Packwood House. This building was originally constructed in the late sixteenth century, and was altered through the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. It was then acquired in 1905 by Alfred Ash, who is said to have bought it for his sixteen-year-old son, Graham, because of the schoolboy's interest in Shakespeare (Haworth 2000, 5). A few years later Graham Baron Ash took over the building and started restoring it. Ash was fascinated with Packwood because it was in the forest of Arden and dated from Shakespeare's era. He was keen that it should be a typical Tudor manor house (ibid.). The hall is the oldest section dating to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, and is entered through a screens passage, with rooms of about a hundred years later at either end. The hall had been altered, and a gallery had been built round three sides of it. Ash removed two sides and put linenfold panelling in the gallery on the remaining side. He also installed a new heavy wood ceiling and reduced the size of the hall, moving a doorway (ibid., 8).
This original hall did not fulfil the typical idea of a medieval great hall, and Ash was keen to have one in his house. There was a barn some fifty metres away from the hall, and Ash set about converting the barn into a great hall in 1924 (Haworth 2000, 14). The work was completed in 1927, and in that time the room had had the hayrack turned into a gallery, a fireplace inserted which had been taken from a shop in Stratford, and has the initials of the original owners of that shop, John and Margaret Smith. The tie beams were cut, to create the open effect, and the ends were carved into corbels which were based on some which Ash had seen in France. In the north-west corner of the barn an oriel window was inserted (Haworth 2000, 14).

This room originally remained separate from the rest of the building, but in 1930 Ash had the idea to link the two sections of the house with a ground-floor long gallery. The long gallery was another traditional feature of a Tudor house which Ash felt his building lacked so he built a new one from scratch, incorporating floorboards from Lymore Park, panelling from Shaftsmoor and Hall Green in Birmingham – buildings which were to be demolished (Haworth 2000, 13). The fireplace is from Chipping Norton, while the surround to it came from Shaftsmoor. The building is therefore not simply a renovation, but a pastiche, with sections brought from other buildings and used to fulfil the owner’s image of a Tudor house, reconstructing it from his imagination rather than from the evidence about the building. It is now displayed as a historic house, and emphasis is placed on the twentieth-century work, which is partly admired for “the immense care lavished in repairing, restoring, and adding to the buildings” (Haworth 2000, 4-5). Simultaneously the falseness of the building is acknowledged, “a 1920s and 1930s recasting” (ibid., 4).

Building conservation and reconstruction could have an impact on a whole locality rather than on individual buildings alone. This was the type of approach which the National Trust was first founded for, though they were not commonly involved in such work. The SPAB report of 1927 discussed 32, New Street, Plymouth (Figure 5.6), and the committee recommended the repair of the house rather than its demolition (SPAB 1927). 32, New Street was protected by the Old Plymouth Society, which was formed in 1927 to protect the buildings of the Barbican from demolition in the name of development. It was said to be in
a "thickly populated" area, and was one of "a number of charming gabled and timbered buildings in that neighbourhood" (ibid.). Many of these buildings were later lost in Second World War bombing. The building was conserved and reconstructed by the Society and was given to the city in 1929, and from that time became known as the "Elizabethan House" (Old Plymouth Society 2003). The area of the Barbican had fallen into disrepair at this period, being described as a "slumland" (Pilditch 1929, 1). The plan was to rebuild the area, retaining as many historic buildings as possible and filling in the gaps with flats. "It is proposed that one of these [buildings], No. 32, New Street, which has already been purchased by the Corporation, should, when restored, be devoted to the purpose of a Drake or Elizabethan Museum." (Pilditch 1929, 5). The overall theme for the proposals was to "Sanitate (sic) but Save" (ibid.), to turn the area into a hygienic living quarter, making the sanitary conditions "suffice for a generation or two" (ibid., 10).

Figure 5.6. Elizabethan House, Plymouth, restored and converted into a museum in the 1930s as part of a wider approach to improving historic areas of the city

Plymouth was seen as a pioneering example in this aim to redevelop without destruction, maintaining what was 'authentic' while making it accessible and suitable for twentieth-
century life. There was a feeling that much history was being lost in other “destruction and rebuilding” projects around the country (Pilditch 1929, 10). The aims of the Plymouth development, under the Barbican Association and the Corporation, were the preservation of the historic structures, and the encouragement of tourism and spending in the area, attracting people with “well lined purses” (ibid., 3).

A report of the 1930s discussed the work undertaken at 32, New Street, the Elizabethan House. It stated that “although the main building is intact and in good state of preservation, the ancient tenement building has been formerly demolished but with remains sufficient to indicate its character” (Anon n.d.a.). The tenement, a rear extension for increased accommodation, was a common feature in houses in Plymouth. It was hoped that the reconstruction of the tenement would “not only ... render the house complete but ... give greater space for exhibiting the furniture of the period which is intended to be provided after general restoration” (ibid.). The tenement at 32, New Street was never, in fact, reconstructed, and the rest of the house was displayed as a period building. The evidence for the rear tenement is visible in the garden. Work undertaken in the 1930s did include strengthening the structure with bolt rods and additional beams, re-slating the roof with small old slates, replacing the missing mullions in the upper oriel (Figure 5.7), and casing the stairs in oak, to protect the originals (Figure 5.8). The infilling of the rear wall with brickwork followed conservation guidelines to make alterations obvious to non-specialists (Figure 5.9). It was stated at the time that because the building was of English oak very little replacement was necessary.

The building was furnished as an Elizabethan home, again with the aim of making it appear broadly as it had in the past, though actually it was different in plan from its state in the Tudor period. The completion of the work was reported in the local newspaper in 1930. “Now the renovation has been completed it is hoped to furnish the house with typical furniture of the period. It is considered that when completed this house will be one of the finest specimens of an Elizabethan dwelling in the British Isles”. Comments had been made about funding such work as early as the 1920s (Anon. 1930, 5).
Figures 5.7 and 5.8. Interior reconstruction of the Elizabethan House included insertion of new wood into window frames and the encasing of the staircase

When the Elizabethan House opened in 1930 one citizen of Plymouth was quoted as saying “we want houses to live in” (Western Morning News 31.5.1930, 5). In response Lady Astor, when opening the Elizabethan House asked, were “the citizens doing quite all they should in preserving old, historic houses?”, “Lady Astor considered that there was no greater kindness one could do to the citizens of Plymouth than to help to preserve their historic houses” (ibid.). There were numerous buildings in the area acquired by the Barbican Society, who followed the principles of the time, and kept alterations visible (Figure 5.9). These buildings could then be opened to the public as educational venues, as with the Elizabethan House, or let out as accommodation.
The visitor came higher in the priorities of reconstructors in the interwar period than had been the case previously. A report was commissioned about Astley Hall in Chorley, written by H. Cescinsky, in 1923. Completed before the hall opened to the public, it suggested how the owner should go about “restoring” the house for the public’s understanding and enjoyment (Cesinsky 1923, 9). The report established that the building had five distinct periods traceable in the fabric and suggested that complete reconstruction would be unsuitable, as it would be difficult to revert to the original fabric, because of the layers of additions and alterations. Instead the later alterations were to be seen as part of the history of the building. The report did recommend some conservation work be carried out, but that it should be limited to projects “which are necessary for the proper preservation of the house and its contents, or to remedy any structural defect” (ibid., 8).

Although the work was termed restoration at the time, the report also contained a clause to allow for work which would now be considered reconstruction: “where it is desirable and possible [restoration should] remove anything which hides the original work” (ibid.).
work therefore aimed, at least in part, to make the building appear as it had in an earlier phase.

The report suggested that the house should not be displayed furnished because it would have to be laid out in a formal way, unlike a lived-in house (Cescinsky 1923, 9). This allowed for pieces of furniture to be labelled and displayed cordoned off from the public so they could see what they were and their date, but not gain a true understanding of how the house might have been used in the past (ibid.). The problems of restoring a building suitably for the public are attested by the fact that after this report the local council decided that the works were too costly, and they were not carried out until the 1950s, when they were undertaken in stages (SPAB Archive, Jackson to Dance letter 24.9.51).

**Englishness and the Role of Historic Houses in Society**

It has been seen that preservation and presentation of historic buildings grew in perceived importance through the interwar period. This could have been as a result of many external influences, one of which is the notion of Englishness, this section considers the impact of Englishness in this period. Immediately after the First World War, England saw the loss of many buildings, such as Park Hall, Shropshire, destroyed by fire in 1918. This timber-framed Elizabethan house had featured in *Country Life* magazine (Worsley 2002, 30-31). When the building had undergone conservation and reconstruction in the early twentieth century the work was described by *Country Life* as “careful” (Worsley 2002, 30-31). Another threat to buildings at this time was intentional, rather than accidental loss. Many buildings experienced partial loss as owners could not afford to maintain them, or wanted to return them to just one period. This was true of Adlington Hall in Cheshire, which had some of its eighteenth-century brick buildings demolished in 1928. The hall, which contains a hammerbeam roof, was retained and renovated for private use (Burton 1981, 41). It was, perhaps these stories of loss which spurred the preservation of many more buildings, which has been seen on a local scale, as at King John’s House, or at a national level, with the National Trust increasing their stock of houses with the start of the Country Houses Scheme (Waterson 1994, 97-117).
The First World War altered the social balance in a variety of ways. It has been suggested that between 1920 and 1940 Englishness was redefined to take account of the extinction of some social inequalities and changes in approach to sexual identities (Taylor 1994, 122). Historical visions of Englishness were also being romanticised in this period for specific purposes. For example in the introduction to his guidebook, *In Search of England*, first published 1927, H.V. Morton describes

the picture of a village street at dusk with a smell of wood smoke lying in the still air and, here and there, little red blinds shining in the dusk under the thatch. I remembered how church bells ring at home and how, at that time of year, the sun leaves a dull red bar low down in the west, and against it the elms grow blacker and blacker minute by minute.

(Morton 1927, 2)

The aim of this romantic imagery is to set the scene for visits to English historic houses and the English countryside. Visitors were looking for a glimpse into the past and this nostalgic style of writing would encourage them to read and use the guidebook.

Through the 1920s and 1930s there was a boom in acquisition of buildings in Wales by the National Trust. The National Trust for Scotland, formed in 1931, started to acquire buildings and rural areas throughout Scotland to represent Scottishness (Waterson 1994, 154-155). This may reflect increased patriotic feeling across Britain, which remained somewhat isolated from the continent, could be associated with the aftermath of the First World War and fear of the impending Second World War (Morgan 1984, 550).

Some of the most successful historic houses, in terms of their popularity with visitors and visitor numbers, were vernacular houses, the smaller, more ordinary, regional-style buildings which were situated in or near holiday towns, such as the Merchant's House in Plymouth and Trerice in Cornwall. This could relate to the accessibility of these buildings by public transport. Advertising for public transport promoted the types of places which could be visited (Figure 5.40).
As this interest grew a number of books began to appear suggesting places to visit by car or train, some countryside areas and some historic places. Batsford's *Face of Britain* series was phenomenally successful. Arthur Mee, creator of the *Children's Encyclopaedia* and *Children's Newspaper* produced forty-one volumes describing *The King's England*. The Shell Oil company invited John Betjeman to edit its series of *Shell Guides* to the counties of England. This demand led to the major research project by Nikolaus Pevsner to write architectural guides to all the counties of England. He started his fieldwork in 1933, and published the books between 1951 and 1974 (Pevsner Architectural Guides 2003). Guidebooks designed specifically for car tourists were published around this time and included information about "ancient manor houses", which was one of the reasons why the visitor numbers were increasing. Houses were particularly promoted for their historical or literary associations (Tinniswood 1998, 162-164). “By the 1920s over 230 abbeys, castles,
gardens and country houses in England alone – almost all pre-Victorian – were open to the public on a regular, fee-paying basis” (Tinniswood 1998, 164).

The success of buildings in tourist towns was partly as a result of planned development of these places for tourism, and marketing of them as such. When there were plans to improve Plymouth’s historic centre in the 1920s, they looked to Stratford as a prototype. “The events with which the town [Plymouth] is associated are greater and more intertwined with Englishmen’s sense of patriotism than any other” (Pilditch 1929, 1). “This hilly quarter of narrow streets and tiny courtyards is the most interesting bit of old historical England left, equalled only, if equalled at all, by Stratford-on-Avon, where lived the man who made some of the deeds of the Elizabethan heroes immortal” (Pilditch 1929, 2). Stratford was also an inspiration to other houses related to literary characters such as Milton’s cottage in Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, which had work done to it in the 1920s to return it to one house, as it would have been in Milton’s time. The building was constructed around 1590, and is now displayed to reflect the time Milton spent there in the 1660s. This reconstruction work overlooked the evidence of its later development in order to promote the importance of its famous historical connection (Philip Birger, pers. comm.). Local dignitaries also continued to play on the desire for preservation of representations of Englishness, for example Lord Leverhulme bought Smithills Hall in Bolton in 1937 as a philanthropic gesture because he was keen it should be “preserved for posterity” (SPAB Archive, Surveyors’ Report 8.5.1937). He medievalised the Elizabethan extension and then opened the building to the public.

This increased visitor numbers, and it was even possible for some buildings to be financially self-supporting, their costs being covered through ticket and guidebook sales. This was the case at Samlesbury Hall in Lancashire, for example, discussed above, which received very little external funding for the maintenance of the building and instead raised the money from its visiting public and from running courses and events there (Reed 1953, 1). Catering for the desires of visitors became important if buildings were to attract their share of visitors, so the romantic appeal of houses was often played upon rather than their authenticity. Some buildings were still reconstructed and opened by enthusiastic owners
who had differing levels of skill and knowledge. Godolphin House in Breage in Cornwall consists of two surviving ranges which date from c.1475. The Tudor great hall was demolished in 1805, and its ruins remain. The building, which had previously been the impressive crenellated house of a wealthy mining family, was turned into a more ordinary farmhouse by the demolition of sections in the early nineteenth century. There was the threat that the building might be demolished, because of its high running costs. S.E. Schofield took over the building in the 1930s and was responsible for its preservation and renovation, opening it to the public to gain funding for it (Burton 1981, 57).

Summary
In the interwar period, the evolution of historic building reconstruction involved historic buildings being put to varied uses. Some were acquired by museums services or taken on by individuals or societies, and converted into museums or folk museums. This provided a practical use for historic buildings, and an ideal setting for local museums. It ensured the funding for some which might otherwise have come under threat. In this chapter we have seen that the SPAB acquired some buildings to ensure their survival, and there was increased emphasis on the historic fabric of the building. Some buildings were not bought with a view to opening them to the public, and the SPAB worked with the National Trust to ensure that the latter’s buildings were well reconstructed and presented to the public. The interest in authenticity has been evidenced through several of the examples discussed such as Pilgrims’ Hall, Shakespeare’s Birthplace and the Elizabethan House in Plymouth. In this period there was a growing conservation philosophy, and a range of different approaches has been seen. The SPAB and National Trust remained influential, but the disparity between their official policy towards historic buildings and some of the works actually carried out has been highlighted in several cases, including Stoneacre and Bradley Manor.

Through the interwar period historic buildings, and the traditional English way of life which they were felt to represent, were seen as being under threat. It has been suggested that this may have resulted from increased patriotic feeling, as expressed through an enhanced interest in Englishness. Historic buildings were seen as part of the essence of traditional England, and as such came to be seen as important places to preserve and
restore, and interesting places to visit. Legislation responded to this concern, but finance was required to ensure that buildings would be preserved. Through the 1930s depression little funding was available for historic buildings, and many opened to the public as a source of income. Many historic buildings were taken on by the National Trust, local trusts and private individuals to ensure their preservation. There was a good uptake for buildings open to the public, as tourism and historic building visiting grew.

From the late 1930s the National Trust Country Houses Scheme aimed to increase the Trust’s holding of that type of building, and encouraged owners of stately homes to give their properties to the Trust on the understanding that the family could continue living there. The Trust took the financial burden of maintaining such houses, and the public gained access to some portions of them, while the family inhabited the rest (Hewison 1987, 59). The National Trust Country Houses Scheme will be discussed fully in Chapter Six.
Chapter Six: Building Reconstruction During and After the Second World War


This chapter begins its chronological review of historic building reconstruction with the work carried out during the Second World War and its aftermath. It is commonly assumed that interest in historic buildings may have declined in the aftermath of the Second World War (Mandler 1997, 312), but this chapter highlights ongoing work throughout that period. The reasons for this continued interest in historic buildings are considered. In the post-war period many historic buildings were destroyed while others had been damaged and needed reconstruction work. Part of the history of building reconstruction is therefore focused on work to historic buildings during post-war reconstruction in this period, although many historic buildings were simply demolished without any recording after being damaged by enemy action during the Second World War (Hewison 1987, 35-38).

After the Second World War a specific class of building – the country house – was identified as being under particular threat, and the National Trust took upon themselves the role of protecting these large privately-owned homes (Waterson 1994, 98-105). The key characters involved in leading the National Trust into this scheme and their aims are considered. The National Trust’s interests were therefore diverted from smaller buildings, and much work in this period focussed on larger and more rural buildings. Some smaller and urban buildings were reconstructed by local councils or by interested enthusiasts or small local societies. This dichotomy will be investigated through this chapter.

Individuals continued to be involved, especially owners of country houses opening them to the public. To some people this represented a decline in the rights of private owners which was compounded by legislation limiting the work which individuals could undertake on
until the 1947 *Town and Country Planning Act* under which a building could have been given the special new status of a preservation order (*Town and Country Planning Act 1944*; Mynors 1999, 8).

There was some forethought during the war as to the situation which would arise after it in relation to historic buildings. In July 1942 a memorandum about the uses of country houses after the war was issued (PRO file HLG 103 80). Before the war, taxation had been at a level to make living in country houses impracticable for most people (Hewison 1987, 58). This led to the threat of country houses being sold, and their contents being dispersed. Different post-war uses of larger country houses were considered during the war, suggestions being made in government memoranda that they could be converted for use as colleges, schools, community centres, guest houses, offices, retirement flats or exhibition centres (ibid.). It was considered that outstanding examples should be preserved by the state and opened to the public. The Government believed that the National Trust was a suitable organisation to be involved in the maintenance and presentation of historic buildings, as they had proved their competence in estate management during their work at West Wycombe (PRO file 103 80 Meeting Minutes 21.9.1942). The value of country houses and what should be preserved was also discussed: “often interest lies not only in the building, but in the furnishings and pictures, and gardens. In some cases there is a possibility of securing revenue from visitors, as to a museum” (PRO file HLG 103 80 Note 25.6.1942).

It was agreed that buildings would have to be listed for this sort of public presentation to take place, and during the war preliminary lists with very little detail started to be compiled by local authorities. The National Buildings Record was set up in 1942, and it was able to create a register of buildings, and record damage to historic buildings, but it did not have the resources to move on to its other function of recording buildings before damage was allowed to happen (PRO file 103 80).

Planning and reconstruction areas were discussed in letters in 1942 between local experts and councils and the Government. Three hundred architects had been appointed to report
on war damage to buildings (PRO file HLG 7/610). Local architects commented on specific buildings and assessed the extent of need for repairs. One record, by architect K. Rutherford Davis of Lowestoft, named buildings 3, 4, 9 and 10, The High Street as of archaeological interest. These buildings were not simply listed but were immediately compulsorily purchased, and saved to be passed into private hands (PRO file HLG 103 1).

Immediately after the war the situation regarding historic buildings changed. Central records of them were arranged in the National Buildings Record, which also sent out further investigators (PRO file HLG 103 4). The MacLagen Committee had been established during the war to establish principles for the listing of historic buildings, and was disbanded in 1946 having fulfilled its function (PRO file HLG 103 13). A few years after the end of the Second World War the country house crisis became increasingly obvious, and greater concentration was focussed on country houses. The Ernest Gowers Committee was set up in 1948 to consider the problems of country houses and create a new list to run alongside the statutory lists. It included details of the name, county, construction date and current occupation arrangements of the houses (PRO file HLG 103 12). Some of the findings of the committee led to the 1953 *Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act*, discussed below.

**Post-War Reconstruction and Historic Building Reconstruction**

In the immediate post-war period there was much reconstruction necessary. The Labour Government of 1945-51 had the task of easing Britain through its post-war reconstruction (Lee 1999, 230), which it did through the politics of social democracy, with a mixed economy and the welfare state (Morgan 1984, 567). Much of the nation’s industry was brought into the public sector. Meanwhile public money was used on social welfare, especially the National Health Service, which was very controversial (Morgan 1984, 568). Little public money was therefore available for the reconstruction of historic buildings.

The returning troops and families left homeless by the war were of primary importance to the Government, and money was spent on new clothing for soldiers in their civilian lives, and new ‘prefabs’ for homeless families (Lee 1999, 232). The social welfare scheme also
included National Insurance and state-funded council houses (Morgan 1984, 568). There were increases in pensions and child allowances, and state education was expanded with an increase in the school-leaving age (Morgan 1984, 568). These plans were not received with general acclaim as there had to be compromises, and they appeared against a background of austerity. The country suffered huge post-war debts, and there were continuing shortages of raw materials for industry and of food supplies (Lee 1999, 236).

The past was a popular form of relaxation and entertainment, and visiting was a common weekend activity by the early post-war period, especially among the middle-class (Tinniswood 1998, 191). Mandler sees the period after the Second World War to the 1970s as the second great phase of country house visiting, the first having been in the Victorian era (Mandler 1997, 56-58). Country houses were one of the great focuses of the National Trust, as they were threatened by lack of funding, and were being demolished all over the country. Despite, or even, perhaps, because of post-war austerity country house visiting was popular: in an almost voyeuristic way people were “yearning for contact with a more opulent lifestyle” (Tinniswood 1998, 194). Other forms of information about wealthy rural lifestyles were similarly sought-after. *Country Life* magazine had strong circulation through the post-war period (Caroline Scott, *Country Life* Editorial, pers. comm.). The magazine changed its emphasis around this time, and moved away from promoting the romantic image of historic houses to include more reviews of contemporary architecture (Anon. 1931a, 110-112; Anon. 1931b, 302-307). Where historic houses were mentioned in *Country Life* there was a more pessimistic approach than in the interwar period, describing decay but invoking their former beauty and potential for reconstruction (Kessler 1943, 1050-1052).

**Organisations and Individuals: Finance for Preservation of Historic Buildings**

In the early post-war period there were different organisations and individuals involved in reconstructing historic buildings and opening them to the public, but the predominant organisation was the National Trust. Many historic-house owners donated their buildings to the Trust or opened them themselves as a means of income (Hewison 1987, 54-61; Tinniswood 1998, 181). There was increased expenditure of leisure time on the arts, which reflected the ever-growing amount of disposable income (Tinniswood 1998, 194-197).
Historic properties were now competing for that disposable income against many other forms of new entertainment, and the challenge was to extend what had been a specialist interest to a wider audience of visitors (ibid.). The buildings had to be marketed if they were to be successful, and they had to have unique attractions which would distinguish them from their competitors. The age of the building and the historic feel of its fittings were still of primary importance in the competition for visitors, so, for example, the Old House in Hereford was reconstructed in the 1940s, removing the fittings of the Victorian bank and revealing the timber framing, making the building appear more as it had in the Tudor period (Anon. 1947, 15).

Following the legal developments in protection and preservation of historic buildings, from the 1950s onwards new funds were made available for their conservation and reconstruction (Historic Buildings Council 1955, 12). From 1955 the Historic Buildings Council for England (HBC) were in charge of issuing grants on behalf of the Government. Their aim was to support vital works to historic buildings, to maintain them and undertake works described as repair and restoration (ibid., 12, 19). In their report of 1975-1976 they are more explicit about their ongoing philosophy: “The policy should be to concentrate resources on vital work and to this end we recommend postponing, for example, projects for rehabilitating and enhancing open spaces, except where they can be carried out in conjunction with job creation schemes or are directly given to the major historic towns and other towns with long-term conservation schemes” (ibid., 18).

Among the earliest applications to the Historic Buildings Council was one from the National Trust: “This is the first application for help from the National Trust who have clearly adopted a policy of coming to the HBC for help only in the last resort ... I think it is also very desirable that the first public announcement of grants should include at least one to the National Trust, as otherwise there seems a rise of rumours that the National Trust and the Historic Buildings Council are not co-operating” (PRO file HLG 126 1479). The Historic Buildings Council and the National Trust had similar philosophies of preserving buildings with minimum intervention, while both acknowledged that considerable work was sometimes necessary; and both were keen to promote buildings to the public. The
National Trust thus became the greatest beneficiary of the Historic Buildings Council (Historic Buildings Council 1955; Historic Buildings Council 1976). The Historic Buildings Council worked closely with them, and funded their conservation and reconstruction work to historic buildings more than any other single group, the National Trust being the country’s biggest conserver of historic buildings (ibid.).

The size and regularity of the grants made to the National Trust by the Historic Buildings Council does point to a close relationship and similar outlook of the two institutions. For example the National Trust received a series of grants to work on the country house Knole Place. Knole consists of a building dating from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Analysis of its annual reports reveals that between 1955 and 1973 the Historic Buildings Council gave Knole fourteen grants, totalling £260,246 (example: Historic Buildings Council 1955). All but two of these were for structural works, which are not detailed in the final reports. The other two were £705 for Tapestries in 1964, and £5400 for chattels in 1967 (Historic Buildings Council 1964; Historic Buildings Council 1967). The only other direct reference to the exact works which were carried out was in 1965 a grant, of £8200 for the seventeenth-century colonnades (Historic Buildings Council 1965) (Figure 6.1). The Council were always keen to appear to be sharing grants out fairly. There is a note in the same file from around October 1954 expressing concern that grants were being concentrated too strongly on York to the detriment of other historic cities, namely Durham (PRO file HLG 126 1479).
The new legal interest in protecting historic buildings was evident in the actions of the Government, who started to use their powers of compulsory purchase. In 1958 the Society for Medieval Archaeology expressed concern about the ruinous Wingfield Manor, Derbyshire (English Heritage Archive, Ancient Monuments Board minutes 25.1.1958). This fourteenth-century stone-built manor house seemed under threat of collapse. A preservation order had been discussed as early as 1951, but this had had no impact, and a new solution was sought (ibid.). The Minister for Public Buildings and Works used the power of compulsory purchase, and from 1959 the ruins were opened to the public, under the control of the Ministry of Works (Ancient Monuments Board 1960). The Ministry of Works were able to take on guardianship of buildings and monuments, making them responsible for the care of the monument on behalf of the Secretary of State, who himself represented the Government (Hunter and Ralston 1993, 32).

The Annual Report of the Ancient Monuments Board in 1960 faced this issue, concluding with the story of Wingfield, which was by this time in guardianship, with conservation and reconstruction under way. The annual report also discussed presentation of ancient monuments directly. In the Department of Works there had been an “intensification of ...
activities designed to increase the public appeal of ancient monuments” (Ancient Monuments Board 1960, 6). Nothing was to impair the archaeological interest of the monuments, but the minister also had a “duty to present the monuments to the public in a comprehensible way and to provide facilities to enable the public to derive interest and enjoyment from them.” There had been an “enormous” increase in interest in antiquities in the years leading up to 1960. At that time the Ministry of Works was responding to this demand with a series of informal but academic guidebooks (Ancient Monuments Board 1960, 2).

A fear is evident that opening more buildings to a wider range of people would mean that academic understanding would not be promoted so successfully. A note by the secretary of the Ancient Monuments Board criticised the new style of guidebooks, suggesting that rephrasing them to make them more exciting had blurred their meaning, and there had been the insertion of some imaginative elements, of which the secretary named the example of machicolations at castles being used to pour “molten lead” or “boiling oil” onto attackers (English Heritage Archive, Ancient Monuments Board Secretary’s Notes 1960). Some reconstructions were not of a high standard either, and they often reinforced incorrect stereotypes and confused periods. For example, Burton Court in Herefordshire housed an exhibition of Victorian costumes in a fourteenth-century house with later interior detail, such as a seventeenth-century overmantle. Little explanation was given about the different eras represented (Anon. c1951).

Some historic buildings were most likely to be preserved in the post-war period if they were regarded as useful structures, and could be converted into houses. The Tudor House in Weymouth was conserved in the late 1940s by architect E. Walmsley Lewis with a borough council grant because it could then be used as a home (Hyde 1993). This grant came with guidelines about altering buildings to create new homes, and insisted that this house, which had once been two cottages, should be reconstructed as one useable living space, necessitating the blocking of one door (Figure 6.2) (Bollam 1994, 6-7). Once the work had been done there was a shift in strategy, and it was furnished to the seventeenth century by Mr Walmsley Lewis, and opened as a historic house under the ownership of the
Weymouth Civic Society (Bollam 1994, 6-7). The building opened to the public in 1961 with a caretaker living on site.

The National Trust Country Houses Scheme

As mentioned above, it was the National Trust which were key in the preservation of Country Houses. They took a long view of the decline of country houses. Christopher Hussey commented, after he visited it in 1923, that Beaupre in Norfolk would eventually become a ruin and be demolished, as indeed happened in 1966 (Worsley 2002, 21). A similar story was true of Deepdene in Surrey, which was sold by its family in 1920, and demolished in 1969 (SPAB Archive, Deepdene File). The National Trust realised that they would be unable to save every country house, but their scheme was in place to preserve as many as possible with concentration on the great country houses. They elevated this class
of building in their priorities because they saw no other institutions able to take them on because of the costs involved (Waterson 1994, 108; Fedden 1974, 44).

The National Trust launched their Country Houses Scheme in 1936, with the formation of a country houses committee, and it became law under the National Trust Act of 1937 (Waterson 1994, 108-109). The Act allowed for owners to give their houses to the Trust along with land to act as an endowment for the maintenance of the building. Following this transfer there would be no further costs to the owners in the form of taxation as there had been previously. The first house, Wightwick Manor, was given almost immediately, in 1937 (ibid., 109). The scheme was at its height immediately after the Second World War. Much of the campaign for the Country Houses Scheme was undertaken by the Marquess of Lothian who gave his country seat, Blickling Hall, in 1940 (ibid., 113).

Other legislation for the preservation of historic buildings also followed after the Second World War. In terms of the National Trust's involvement the Town and Country Planning Act of 1944 was reinforced in 1947 with mention of the special status of the National Trust in the preservation of such properties. The National Trust were keen to ensure that owners could continue to live in their houses if they wished to, if the buildings could be suitably maintained, and visitors could gain access to them (Waterson 1994, 109). Soon there was competition with the National Trust from private owners. One of the first was the Marquess of Bath, who opened Longleat in 1949. Beaulieu was opened in 1952 and Woburn Abbey in 1955 (Hewison 1987, 63). It was soon realised that unique selling points would increase visitors, and lions were introduced at Longleat; Lord Montagu of Beaulieu had his classic motor cars; and Jazz festivals were held at Woburn (ibid.).

The Marquess of Lothian suggested that buildings should be exempt from death duties unless they were sold and their contents dispersed (Waterson 1994, 106-112). He was in favour of public access to buildings, and suggested that the National Trust should have a large role to play in owning or managing country houses (ibid., 109). This required an Act of Parliament, for which Lothian campaigned, and which was passed in 1937. He also
campaigned for the Treasury to make grants for the maintenance and upkeep of country houses (Tinniswood 1998, 188).

The National Trust had made important achievements, but this new challenge involved bigger sums of money and concerned bigger and better-known houses. The Trust later looked back on their early successes in rather derogatory terms in comparison with the Country Houses Scheme: “to save the Alfriston Clergy House and Buckingham Chantry Chapel had no doubt been valuable; to preserve a Knole or a Petworth was another greater matter. The Trust in its new role was to become the surveyor of vast mansions, the curator of extensive collections and the foremost gardener in the country” (Fedden 1974, 44). Before 1945 the Country Houses Scheme had enabled twenty-three country houses to be acquired; before the end of that decade another nineteen were added. In the first half of the 1950s twelve country houses were acquired, and another twenty-one were taken on between 1956 and 1960 (Worsley 2002, 19). The impact the Trust had made in raising awareness, and demonstrating that country houses could be saved, led to legislative intervention to allow the National Trust to hold lands or investments to provide for the maintenance of country houses in return for wider access for the public (Tinniswood 1998, 188).

The achievements of the Country Houses Scheme are still a point of pride to the National Trust, and Christopher Hussey, writer for Country Life magazine, described the country house as “Britain’s unique contribution to tourism worldwide” (Tinniswood 1998, 184). The Marchioness of Exeter reflected this and said that owners were keen to open their buildings to the public if they had the staff. Visiting by the public became the new means of maintenance, and to some a complete raison d’être, for country houses (ibid.). In order to ensure tourism the National Trust acquired buildings in which people would be interested, many of which were medieval or Tudor, as exemplified above. The Trust also had to make the buildings comprehensible to the public and provide visitor facilities, and they provided routes around buildings, even if very limited ones as at Knole, and tours and guidebooks to ensure that visitors were well informed (ibid.). Tourism was certainly important in the preservation and maintenance of country houses. “It might be an
exaggeration to say that tourism has saved the country house after its mid-century crisis, but it has certainly helped” (Tinniswood 1998, 200).

Other Work of the National Trust 1945-1960
The successes in the post-war period of the National Trust Country Houses Scheme were important, but through the 1950s and 1960s the Trust became less keen to take on costly investments, and concentrated more on the properties they already owned. The possibility of acquiring each building was discussed by the National Trust on an individual basis. Whether it was a country house or a smaller building, it would have its own individual problems (National Trust Archives, Attingham Park). Buildings had to have land or finances with them as part of the bequest, to provide an endowment for their maintenance. After the National Trust accepted a building this had to be approved (ibid.). For example, a meeting on 15.12.1953 of the Historic Building Council for England agreed that Melford Hall in Suffolk could be accepted by the National Trust in lieu of death duties to the Government (PRO file HLG 125 11). Three years later a similar agreement was reached with the Duke of Devonshire about Hardwick Hall, the agreement allowing for his grandmother to continue living there until her death, and the building then being transferred completely to the National Trust (PRO file HLG 126 71).

Investment in maintenance was considerable: at Little Moreton Hall, for example, work was undertaken to conserve roofs (Figure 6.3) and ceilings and replace rotted sections of timbers, especially post bases, in the late 1950s (National Trust North West Archive Attingham Park, file N.T.I-VIII/91).
This conservation work followed the National Trust’s policy of replacement where necessary, but there had already been considerable work done to the structure of the hall; the first floor, thought to have dated to c.1600, was removed in 1807 (Lake 1994, 11). Debate has been ongoing about Little Moreton as to how the building should be furnished. In 1968 a letter from R.R. Fedden stated that Elizabethan furniture could not be found for the whole house, and suggested that seventeenth-century furniture be used instead (National Trust Archive Attingham Park, file N.T.VIII/91), a policy which seems to have been followed, although much of the house is currently empty. It is ironic, then, that a building furnished following this philosophy, and using evidence including an inventory dating to 1654, should be advertised in a National Trust leaflet in 1999-2002 as having “changed little since the reign of Elizabeth I” (reigned 1558–1603).

The discussions about the accuracy of filling the building with furniture of a later date were detailed (National Trust Archive Attingham Park, file N.T.VIII/91). The same level of academic rigour was not always maintained when consideration was given to the route a visitor takes around a house. As shown in the previous chapter, the opening and blocking

Figure 6.3. Little Moreton Hall, woodwork conserved throughout the 1950s
of doorways seriously affects the routes through Little Moreton Hall, and the understanding of it as a functioning place. There would always have had to be compromise, but it would have been possible to create a series of smaller routes through the building which would not have linked the different ranges and types of rooms in such a disjointed way. It is necessarily going to be the case that modern visitors will move around rooms of different function and status, from the kitchen to the private parlour, in a way that a contemporary visitor would not have done.

Some buildings acquired by the National Trust presented particular problems because they had already been reconstructed, and their authenticity to any period was already questionable. This was true at Cotehele in Cornwall. George, First Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, had been fascinated with the building and had carried out reconstruction work on it and collected medieval and Tudor furniture for it in the late eighteenth century (National Trust 1998, 44). John Comforth has suggested that he was trying to increase the romantic appeal of the house by filling it with antiques (ibid.). The building was reconstructed gradually between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, and had succeeding notions of the medieval period overlain onto the fabric. It was handed over to the National Trust in 1946 (ibid.).

Figure 6.7. Painting from the 1830s of the south elevation of Cotehele (from National Trust 1991, 6)
Figure 6.8. Painting from the 1830s of the courtyard of Cotehele
(from National Trust 1991, 6)

Figure 6.9. Photograph of the south elevation of Cotehele as it is today

Figure 6.10. Photograph of the courtyard of Cotehele as it is today
Comparison of these images of Cotehele (Figures 6.7-6.10) reveals a very accurate record of the building in the nineteenth-century paintings, and some changes in the ensuing 170 years. The doorways seem to have been simplified, the chimneys lowered and their pots removed, and some of the later outbuildings demolished. The hall at Cotehele is a Victorian interpretation of a great hall (Figure 6.11). Rather than being a rather plain room as a Tudor great hall would have been, it is highly furnished with an eclectic mix of items on display including period furniture, armour – including seventeenth-century English armour and a Zulu shield – brass light fittings and even whale jawbones (Figure 6.11). This was the style which the National Trust inherited here, and it was maintained.

Figure 6.11. The Great Hall at Cotehele
In this period several smaller buildings are described as being in need of work. Preparatory notes for the Historic Houses Debate include the examples of Leez Priory, Essex, which was described as empty and up for sale, Mapledurham House, Berkshire, which was occupied by a caretaker and was "empty and deteriorating" and Melford Hall, Suffolk, still occupied by the owner (PRO file HLG 126 11). Oxburgh Hall in Norfolk required work when the National Trust acquired it in 1952 (Garnett 2000b). They carried out works including investigation of and repair to a crack in a wall of the garderobe in 1965, the construction of a moat-retaining wall in 1967, and conservation of the South-East tower (ibid., 47; National Trust Archive, Oxburgh Hall). This tower formed part of the family wing, but the Trust were as keen to conserve the areas of the building in use by the family as those visited by the public, following the ideas of the SPAB that maintenance of the building was preferable to costly repair later. There were areas of the building which were no longer viable and had fallen into complete disrepair, including the old greenhouse which was demolished in 1967 (Garnett 2000b; National Trust Archive, Oxburgh Hall). Some interior sections of the building were redecorated, including the saloon in 1967 and again in 1996. In 1973 the dry rot in the library was treated, and the roof of the building was conserved in the 1980s (ibid.). This is now accessible to the public. Some of the works did have the Trust's profits and their visitors' comfort firmly in mind: in the 1970s the kitchens were renovated and became tearooms (Worsley 2002, 105).

In the 1950s the King's room was redecorated, the wall hangings taken down and the furniture moved. The guidebook for the property talks about the interpretation of the house, including the making of the bed to display decorative fabrics, and suggests that the National Trust aims to "re-create the romantic effect" in that room (Garnett 2000b, 23). They have approached that in different ways over the last hundred years (Figures 6.12 and 6.13). The room as furnished in 1903 is soft, though furnishing is sparse, reflecting the medieval tradition (ibid.). The current decoration is more medievalised, with the removal of some soft furnishings such as tapestries and rugs making the effect significantly colder. The room still uses much of the nineteenth-century reproduction furniture bought for the building when it was in private ownership (ibid.).
Figure 6.13. King's Room, Oxburgh Hall as it is today
In 1949 the National Trust acquired Lytes Cary Manor House in Somerset, another building which had already been reconstructed (Garnett 2001, 2). Sir Walter Jenner had bought the building in 1907 and reconstructed it, furnishing it with seventeenth-century oak furniture. He used coloured fabrics in muted natural colours to represent the colours then thought to have been used in the medieval period (ibid., 12-13) (Figures 6.14 and 6.15).

Figure 6.14. Lytes Carey Manor House as it appears today

Figure 6.15. Seventeenth-century decoration inside Lytes Carey Manor House
Trerice in Devon was bought by the National Trust in 1953 (National Trust 1997). This was deemed an unusual case as, before the National Trust acquired the building, “Trerice ... was let out as a farmhouse so escaped ‘improvements’ and alterations” (Burton 1981, 68). Despite the rhetoric of the period, which stated that there should be minimum intervention and promoted consolidation of what was already on site, considerable alteration followed the National Trust’s acquisition of the house. The long gallery had been divided by two modern staircases (Trinick 1997, 23). These were removed and the gallery returned to its original form. The plasterwork ceiling was also “reinstated” (ibid.). After the National Trust took over Trerice, a tenant, Mr Elton, rented the building for a peppercorn rent, and agreed to undertake the necessary conservation and “improvements” (ibid., 13). The biggest issue with the National Trust was the reconstruction of the north wing of the building, which had collapsed when the building had been subdivided, and was being used by farmers as part house and part store-area before they took it over (ibid., 13) (Figures 6.16 and 6.17).

![Figure 6.16. Trerice as it appears today](image-url)
The state of the north wing can be seen from the photograph below, dated 1953. The works were likely to cost £10,000 (PRO file HLG 126 1690). They were being carried out to improve the building’s appearance, and provide new space for the family (ibid.). Mr Elton applied to the Historic Buildings Council for a grant, who asked the National Trust their opinion. They replied that, “Mr Elton is rescuing all the important features of the house in the most splendid manner”, and that “The Trust ... would not have undertaken the reconstruction of the north wing. On the other hand this reconstruction will be in no way conjectural and will restore the building to its original appearance and ... will be an improvement” (ibid.). On this basis the Historic Buildings Council recommended a grant of £5,000, half the total. The Trust therefore seem at this point to support the reconstruction of a building primarily to make it appear as it did in the past.
The grant stipulated that the building should continue to open to the public two days a week (PRO file HLG 126 1690). The plans produced at this time clearly show the visitor route round the building. This route takes visitors through the porch into the screens passage and on into the hall. They then move upstairs and see the drawing room and the long gallery before going back downstairs and out via the corner of the hall and the screens passage again (PRO file HLG 126 1690). This shows many of the rooms of the house, but they are not approached in any logical order, and this layout would not aid an understanding of how the house was used (Figure 6.18).

Figure 6.18. Plan of Treliske showing routes for visitors around the building (from PRO file HLG 126 1690)

The dismantling and rebuilding of the north wing of the building is evident in the east elevation by the lack of relieving arches in the rebuilt section, and the change in the stonework at that end compared to the east end of the frontage (PRO file HLG 126 1690). The National Trust records tell us that “the gable of the north wing was taken down in the
last century but was restored when the rest of the wing was rebuilt in 1954” (National Trust Archive, Trerice).

There were other buildings which were owned or bought by private individuals who conserved and reconstructed them, and opened them to the public. Sometimes this was done to fund the maintenance of the building, at other times for the love of the building itself. One of these was Compton Castle, a large manor house in Devon, which was lightly fortified in the sixteenth century (Trinick 2000, 10-11) (Figure 6.19). The building was bought by Commander Gilbert in 1930, after he had seen it in 1904 and decided to buy it when it came up for sale. It was reconstructed completely by Commander and Mrs Raleigh Gilbert in the years 1931 to 1956, using traditional materials (ibid.). In 1951 it was given to the National Trust, who continued to open it to the public and worked to reconstruct the hall, which was roofless at the time of their acquisition. They used the evidence within the building to reconstruct the roof (National Trust 1997).

![Figure 6.19. Compton Castle before reconstruction (from Gilbert, 2000)](image)

The National Trust primarily concentrated through this period on acquiring properties for people to visit which the public would find of interest. However, there were some buildings which they deemed of sufficient value to be bought and preserved, but which
have not opened to the public. Some are used as holiday lets or are rented out, others are opened only on request. Horton Court, near Chipping Sodbury, for example, was acquired in 1949 (National Trust 1997). “The National Trust guide classifies Horton Court as ‘of specialist architectural interest’, and there is not very much to see. It is a pleasant medieval manor house of Cotswold Stone, over-restored in 1937”, the tour was said in 1981 to take five minutes (Burton 1981, 9).

Buildings in Trust: Local Building Trusts, Local Authorities and Private Owners

Several specialist organizations were formed in this period which promoted the importance of such buildings, such as the Vernacular Architecture Group (1952), the Civic Trust (1957) and the Victorian Society (1958). Some smaller and urban buildings, which were under threat were preserved by local groups with the support and advice of the SPAB and the National Trust. One building which obtained funding from the Historic Buildings Council was Gainsborough Old Hall in Lincolnshire (Figure 6.22). It had had a mixed history by the mid-twentieth century, having been tenements, a public house, a corn exchange, an auction sales room, a church, a mechanics’ institute and a ballroom between the 1830s and the 1930s (Brace c1952, 1; PRO file HLG 126 1494). This had necessitated changes. For example the east wing was subdivided in the nineteenth century, the first floor being used as a ballroom, and the ground floor as a mechanics’ institute. The west wing was also subdivided into tenements until the reconstruction of c1880 (ibid.). In the 1940s the Friends of the Old Hall Association was set up to preserve the building and its grounds (SPAB Archive, Gainsborough File). In the late 1940s Claude Phillimore was asked to prepare a scheme for the building, making it accessible to people, especially the local community, but this was not implemented for financial reasons (ibid.). By 1951 it was said that, “the roof ... in its present condition leaves nearly all the rooms at the mercy of the weather and nesting birds” and “unless something is done, and done quickly, this grand old building will be past preservation and a national treasure lost to posterity” (SPAB Archive, Bourne to Dance letter 25.6.1951).
Figure 6.20. Gainsborough Old Hall photographed in 1950 with louvre and smaller windows (from NMR Swindon)

Figure 6.21. Architectural Drawing of Gainsborough Old Hall showing louvre (from NMR Swindon)
The first enquiry about grant application for Gainsborough from the Historic Buildings Council was made in 1953, at which time the information in the bid was taken from *Country Life* magazine (PRO file HLG 126 1494). The Ministry of Works stated that the building was scheduled but not listed, and had not been inspected. The application for £500 per annum for ten years was agreed on 21.1.1954, for conservation work to the roof (ibid.). In the application to the Historic Buildings Council the Friends of the Old Hall stated that the building was open on weekday afternoons, and in the agreement the building was to “continue to open weekday afternoons through the year 1pm-5pm, and other times by arrangement” (ibid.). This may have swayed the Historic Buildings Council, whose grants to buildings were classified in their records in relation to the level of public access. There were four categories: open to the public more than 22 days a year; open for inspection by appointment; can be seen by the public in their normal use; or exterior only visible to the public. More access often made a building a more suitable candidate for financial help from the Historic Buildings Council for conservation (Ancient Monuments Board 1956, 1).

A report on Gainsborough was commissioned for the Ministry of Works in 1954. It described Gainsborough as having, “some later alterations and additions, as well as evidence of repairs during the last century, but these do not detract from the general character of the whole” (PRO file HLG 126 1494). It was deemed, “eminently worthy of preservation” (ibid.). This may have inspired confidence as the Friends of the Old Hall applied to the Pilgrim Trust for a grant for the roof, as well as to the Historic Buildings Council (PRO file HLG 126 1495). A report of 1957 described the work which had been carried out and what was to be done (PRO file HLG 126 1496). The concentration was on replacing rotten beams and re-roofing. This conservation work was what attracted the funding from the Historic Buildings Council, but the project also included work to remove later internal partitions and reconstruct the building as it had been in the Tudor period (ibid.). The alterations, apart from the repairs to the roof, are evident in the structure and external appearance, with the removal of the louvre and changes to the windows (Figures 6.20 and 6.21).
Meanwhile as the structural work was under way the Friends of the Old Hall had a Museum Committee who were collecting items to be displayed in the building once work was complete. The minutes of the annual meeting of 1963 describe donated items as “Victoriana”, “firearms”, “needlework samplers” and “photographs of bygone Gainsborough” (PRO file HLG 126 1495). The building was in use at the time of the reconstruction work, and the balance sheet shows “takings” from the visiting public as well as “lettings” of parts of the building (ibid.).

There were always links between the National Trust and other institutions reconstructing, interpreting and displaying buildings. For example in July 1952 it was agreed they would acquire the Hall if the local authority would run it; but this plan never came to fruition, as a good use for the building was never agreed (PRO file HLG 126 1480). They were again involved in the building in 1970 the National Trust provided a recipe for lime ash flooring for Gainsborough (PRO file HLG 126 1495). The National Trust were in principle prepared to use this solution, and owned buildings that local authorities ran elsewhere at
this time. Speke Hall in Liverpool, acquired by the National Trust in 1944 but run by the local museums authority, was interpreted along the lines of other National Trust properties, with period furniture, in this case of the Victorian period (Cousens 1994, 45). Speke Hall is a medieval building, expanded in the Tudor period, and displays the heavy oak Victorian furniture of its last owner, Miss Adelaide Watts (ibid.). The decision has been made to retain the collection of furniture which was acquired with the building almost entirely in situ and to reconstruct the structure as it was in the Victorian period, in terms of interior decoration, rather than trying to return it to an earlier era. The local authority have worked with the direct support and advice of the National Trust to develop Speke Hall as a heritage site, and reconstruct the internal appearance of the building as needed (ibid.).

In 1963 Gainsborough Old Hall was offered to the Ministry of Works as a gift under the 1953 Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act. The Ministry established that repairs and reconstruction would cost £25,000, and agreed, “to recommend that the minister should accept the offer of this building by the Trustees” (PRO file HLG 126 1083 memo 1.8.63). It was accepted, and notes for the minister suggested that “we should not rule out the possibility of using at any rate a part of the building for some purpose such as the county folk museum...” (ibid). The Ministry were keen to maintain the involvement of the local councils, as they were not certain of keeping it in the long term. The recommendations to the minister (ibid.) stated that the building should be accepted, and the long-term future policy for it would be “worked out later”. The Ministry of Works obtained funding from the County Council (Lincolnshire) of £540 p.a. and from the Unitary District Council (Gainsborough) of £270 p.a., and a grant of £12,000 was given by the Historic Buildings Council for the works. This ownership by the state did not last, and in February 1968 the building was described as belonging to the Trustees (PRO file HLG 126 1083). The Trustees took control, and by 1969 the proposed programme of work for Gainsborough included “reinstating” half the timber wall in the great chamber, and “exposing” half the timber wall in the east upper chamber to investigate the soft wood there, which was presumably an earlier insertion (PRO file HLG 126 1495). The folk museum for Lincolnshire, housed at Gainsborough, which was first announced publicly in 1953 (Manchester Guardian 11.9.1953).
The Wimborne Historical Society was established in 1957 to research many different areas of the history of the locality of Wimborne Minster in Dorset. Just three years later they were offered the opportunity to acquire the ground floor of a former ironmongers which was to be closed down (Price 1991, 15-18). The building was well known in the local area as being of historical interest. It dates to the mid-sixteenth century, and is called the Priests’ House, although its use by medieval priests has not been proved (ibid.). The Historical Society had a growing collection of artefacts of local interest, which were in storage in the County Museum, and even included some artefacts retrieved from the Priests’ House when it had been a shop in the pre-war period. The house was acquired, and was made into a local museum, which opened in 1962 (ibid.). The collection, and areas of the building open to the public, have been extending ever since. There were several rooms which had not been touched, and contained a range of items from the building’s history such as a general shop and ironmongery (ibid.). The curator even retrieved the display shelves from the bowed shop window. These, and the curved external shutters, were used to recreate the Georgian shop frontage, but a photographic record also survives of the building as an ironmongery (ibid.). The façade of the house was reconstructed to the Georgian period, but much of the collection relating to it and to the town related to the Victorian period. The history of the site from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries is displayed inside, with a seventeenth-century hall, a Georgian parlour, a Victorian kitchen and the ironmongery all reconstructed (ibid.). This is now interpreted by tying people and exact dates to the different eras of the building’s history, but initially may have been a more confusing way of showing the history of the site.

Many buildings were not fortunate enough to have a local society devoted to them. By the mid 1940s local councils were able to intervene if buildings were seen to be under threat, issuing preservation orders under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1944; as listed buildings with protection under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947; or in the last resort by obtaining the building themselves for use as a local library, museum, or even council offices. Rowley’s House in Shrewsbury was acquired by the Corporation of Shrewsbury when under threat from poor maintenance in the 1930s (Museum Archive, Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery). It was to be used to display excavated material
from the Roman city of Viroconium (Uriconium) at Wroxeter. The building was initially known as The Uriconium Museum; it then changed name to Rowley’s House Museum; and it is now known as the Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Wygston’s House in Leicester was another building obtained by a local council because it was under threat. Concern for historic buildings in Leicester was high: the *Leicester Mercury* commented in 1934, “We have so few of these buildings left that we should do all we can to preserve them” (Anon 1934). In 1954 the building was handed over to the local museums service, who attracted a great number of visitors to the historic buildings of the city (Stevens 1974). A report by the Museums Committee to the local council in 1956 reported that the two houses known as the Newarke Houses (two Jacobean houses acquired at the same time as Wygston’s) had attracted 43,993 visitors that year, which was an all-time high (Leicester Museums Committee 1956). Under the museums service a new scheme for the preservation of Wygston’s House was proposed in 1961, but this had to be delayed until the 1970s. In 1972 the work was completed on the building, and it was decided that it would house a costume collection (Stevens 1974, 18).

**The Role of the SPAB**

As the law changed in favour of protection of historic buildings, and reconstruction became more common and visiting more popular, so the role of the SPAB changed. They started to develop more into a regulatory and advisory body, pressing, for example, for the enforcement of the laws which were in place to protect historic buildings. In 1950 Mrs Dance (Secretary of the SPAB) wrote to *Country Life* citing Rufford Abbey, Nottinghamshire as an example of the failure of the *Town and Country Planning Act* (SPAB Archive, Dance to Country Life Letter 18.8.1950). Although a preservation order had been placed on the building, this could not be backed up with sufficient funding. In the post-war era the SPAB were forced to divide their attentions between alterations to historic buildings damaged during the Second World War, and buildings which were being reconstructed as houses and heritage sites (SPAB 1957). The Rufford Abbey outcry of 1950 led to a compromise being reached whereby the building would not be demolished, but was acquired by Nottingham County Council. The land which came with the building was of more importance to the county council, who would not spend rate-payers’ money on
its conservation. The outcry eventually failed, as the building was finally demolished in 1956 (ibid.).

The SPAB were as keen to support works which did follow their conservation principles as they were to oppose those which did not. Reconstructors were similarly interested in getting the backing of the SPAB. When Winchester Cathedral wanted to reconstruct the Pilgrims' Hall, they applied through their architect for the backing of the SPAB, who wrote in 1932 to the charity and their funding body, the Pilgrim Trust, in support of the application for funding (SPAB Archive, SPAB to the Pilgrim Trust letter 12.5.1932). Works funded by the Pilgrim Trust were carried out to Pilgrims' Hall, which were reported as happening in 1957, but it is not clear whether these were the same works approved by the SPAB in 1932 (SPAB Archive, Newspaper cutting about Pilgrim's Hall 22.7.1957).

The information for the public published in the 1960s described the building as having been, "restored to its present form in 1960 ... The work of restoration and adoption included the removal of a loft-floor, paving the floor at its original level, the making of a small stage at the southern end, at the northern end a new window, gallery, staircase and entrance ... Two new buttresses have also been added on the western side, built off original bases" (Anon. 1960, 1-4). The views of the SPAB have developed with time, and in more recent years they have increasingly supported alterations to buildings, and have published guidelines for alterations to accommodate a change of use of a building. This type of work would have been opposed by Morris in his day, because additions made would have been considered a "lifeless forgery" based on imagined views of the past (SPAB 1877).

Conservation Movement: Importance of Historic Buildings and Legislation

The conservation movement of this era was affected by both domestic and international influences. At a national level, new protective measures for historic buildings in this period were limited. Buildings could be protected under special area schemes under the Housing Act 1923, and in 1944 the concept of a preservation order for a specific building which was under threat of unsuitable alteration was introduced under the Town and Country Planning Act. Legislation increased, as will be discussed below, and by the 1960s buildings were to a greater extent considered to be the heritage of the Nation, and were protected under listed
building control and preservation orders (Mynors 1999, 8-11). The Historic Buildings Council wrote in its report of its first ten years (1953-1963), of its success: "it is no exaggeration to say that the prevalent attitude [in 1953], at any rate amongst owners of large houses, was one of despair ... In 1963 the position is very different, and while there is not room for complacency, the dominant note is no longer one of despair" (Historic Buildings Council 1964). They were keen to promote the value of the financial assistance they gave owners of historic buildings, and the ways in which it had helped to effect this change (Worsley 2002, 21).

Shortly after the Second World War there were some alterations to the law in relation to historic buildings. The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act was a great leap forward in historic building conservation. It was described by Mr. Lewis Silkin, Minister of Town and Country Planning, who introduced the bill, as "the most comprehensive and far-reaching planning measure which has ever been placed before this House" (Mynors 1999). The debate about the Act did not refer to historic building conservation, but the Act allowed ministers to make building preservation orders, and when passed through the House of Lords it was agreed that the Act should require lists of historic buildings to be made for ministers (Delafons 1997, 59-60). In the debate about the 1947 Act, the Lord Chancellor mentioned that listing had begun, following the 1944 Act, and that, in that short time, between 100,000 and 200,000 buildings had already been listed (Delafons 1997, 65).

There was a range of governmental groups involved in the maintenance and presentation of historic buildings. The Ministry of Works was a historical institution, which became a Government Ministry in 1950; "from very early times in our history there has been a central organisation to build and maintain Royal palaces and public building. With the passage of time it developed into a Government Department, the Office of Works." Its functions were various, all controlled by the Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments:

The chief inspector advises on all questions of treatment, maintenance and repair of ancient monuments, whether Crown or private property, placed in the Ministry's Guardianship under the Ancient Monuments Acts. His responsibility includes monuments and buildings of historic, archaeological or artistic interests, such as the Tower of London, Chelsea Hospital,
Stonehenge and numerous castles, abbeys, Roman forts, earthworks and barrows. He is responsible for the excavation of sites of archaeological interest which are threatened by building or quarrying.

(Ministry of Works 1950, 1)

After the Second World War there as considerable inner-city clearance of decaying historic buildings, the peak of ‘destruction’ was reached in 1968 which recorded the greatest number of listed buildings ever demolished in one year (Strike 1994, 13-14). At this time the conservation movement seemed to be facing an uphill struggle, but with support at both national and international levels some achievements we made (ibid.).

A report of 1954 by the Ancient Monuments Board spoke about the then-current problem of damage to ancient monuments. In that report, though, there is no mention of above-ground “monuments” (Ancient Monuments Board 1954). All the problems relate to underground archaeology, which was being damaged by works such as bulldozing. This statement marks the dividing-off of interests in underground and above-ground archaeology within the 1953 Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act.

In the early 1940s and 1950s there was a push for the conservation and reconstruction of historic buildings to be planned in a wider context related to development plans for areas or towns. An amendment was made to the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 to address this: “authorities are asked to state in the written analysis any listed buildings likely to be affected by proposals to amend the development plan” (PRO file HLG 103 90). This move to relate historic buildings to wider development plans later moved into the forum of funding building reconstruction.

Conservation Movement: International Responsibility towards Historic Buildings

As seen above, the struggle of the conservation movement in England in the post-war period was not supported by substantial legislation, but contemporaneously a series of international agreements about the ways in which the historic environment should be preserved, conserved, reconstructed and presented to the public. The first of these was the Athens Charter of 1931, discussed in Chapter Five. It contributed to the development of an international movement which resulted later in the creation of the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1946) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (1965). UNESCO was formed in 1946, and ratified by twenty countries, mainly the Second World War allies, and the People’s Republic of Germany was admitted in 1951 (UNESCO n.d.). UNESCO has had a great range of roles, and is involved in projects worldwide concerning education, the environment and poverty. It was involved in post-war reconstruction from 1945-1950, which involved it in decisions about historic buildings (ibid.). In the 1950s an intergovernmental centre for the study and improvement of methods of conservation was established under the control of UNESCO. It is the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), based in Rome, and established in 1959. This is involved in research into building conservation, restoration and reconstruction. The philosophy behind ICCROM is to promote the importance of cultural conservation and to promote the co-operation of a range of institutions internationally to work towards the preservation of cultural monuments (ICCROM 2005). Increased education about cultural monuments within university curricula and among the general public is another key aim of the Council (UNESCO n.d.). They promote the care of historic monuments and houses, and work for the preservation of the past. Their work has affected approaches towards conservation practice, ideas they developed have been used in historic buildings around the world, and they have trained students in conservation techniques (ibid.). The historic buildings discussed through this chapter have been reconstructed partly following the ideas of these organizations. For example the work at The Tudor House in Weymouth, where the aim was to use a building as accommodation, follows some of the early ideas of UNESCO.

Authenticity

Authenticity is not an issue which received a great deal of attention or discussion in this period. Some of the works carried out, however, raise issues in relation to the authenticity of what was recreated when apparent repair and replacement of decaying timbers was undertaken, as at Rufford Old Hall.

A wing has been removed from the upper end of Rufford Old Hall, possibly in the eighteenth century, leaving two external doors from the hall on the west elevation. In 1950
the National Trust carried out some conservation work on that section of the building (Figures 6.6 and 6.7), and removed any remaining evidence about that part of the building or when it was demolished, by replacing timbers, not recording or retaining the originals, and not replicating disused morticeholes in the replacement timbers (Figure 6.5), thus turning straightforward conservation work into reconstruction, and changing the building’s appearance (Anon. 1950).

Figure 6.4. Rufford Old Hall. Reconstructed wall at upper end of hall. This was originally an internal wall, but the demolition of rooms has left it an external wall. Reconstruction has removed evidence about the nature of the removed sections of the building.
Figure 6.5 and 6.6. Photographs of reconstruction work under way at Rufford Old Hall. The timbers are being removed, and a new timber wall is being constructed flat on the ground ready to be hauled into place in the traditional manner (from 'Country Life' Sept 8th 1950)

The current access arrangements to the hall are also slightly problematical in the messages they convey about the way it was used in the past. It is arguable whether it is appropriate that the entrance to the kitchen should have been the one in primary use since that time. This requires the visitor enter via the kitchen, and then proceed via a small ante-room to the great hall. The original entrance to the screens passage remains, but is not used. There are four main phases of this building, and visitors move to and from them several times in the course of a visit. A visitor will enter through the 1662 kitchen, move through the 1820 and 1724 ranges and then enter the 1530 hall (Dean 1991, 6-26 and 56-57). The different dates of the areas of the house are represented to some extent by the decoration, but movement back and forth through differently-dated phases of the building is difficult to follow (Figure 6.4).
The building had begun the process of being altered for opening to the public in the interwar period, and the National Trust were, unfortunately, slow to react to changes in the understanding of medieval building plans, and the ways in which they were ordered for use in medieval society, as developed by the Vernacular Architecture Group after their formation in 1952 and published in their early journals and by Pantin (1962-3). The building continued to be presented with the visitor passing through sections of the house which dated to and were decorated to different periods.

**Englishness**

Historic buildings continued to be reconstructed after the Second World War, reflecting an interest in recreating the English past. The effect of the notion of Englishness on the works carried out is, however, rather obscure.
Historic buildings retained popularity in this period, partly through the influence of the media. Parallels were drawn at the time of the Coronation between the reigns of the two Queens Elizabeth, and the people of the 1950s were encouraged to see themselves as the "new Elizabethans", sparking new pride in both the past and the present (Rowse 1953, 18-24; Rowse 1971). Television coverage reminded viewers of analogies between the two reigns (Schama 2000, 10-12). The Festival of Britain of 1951 was a conscious celebration of the centenary of the Great Exhibition and was designed to display the best of British, and inspire confidence in the still depressed post-war country (Roberts 1978, 13-15).

Historic buildings were of considerable interest to people and were an easy and relatively cheap means of tourism and relaxation. Visiting increased as the economy developed and optimism grew. National Trust membership increased in the twenty years after the Second World War (National Trust 2000). In 1940 the membership of the National Trust stood at 6,800, a figure which actually reflected a decline in membership because of the impact of the Second World War (ibid.). By the late 1940s the Country Houses Scheme had raised the profile of the Trust, and the effect of this was a near-trebling in membership to 17,165 in 1949 (ibid.). By the late 1940s increases in wages began to materialise, and employment levels were much higher than in the 1930s (Morgan 1984, 568). Through the 1950s the popularity of increased access to historic buildings was seen through the massive increases in National Trust Membership, doubling between 1950 (23,402) and 1954 (48,835) and nearly doubling again from 1955 (55,658) to 1960 (97,109) (ibid.).

Summary
The evolution of historic house reconstruction in this period is characterised by a special interest in a specific type of building, the country house – those larger rural historic houses which were the focus of work by the National Trust under their Country Houses Scheme. This was a wide-ranging and effective programme to preserve such houses and present this type of building to the public.

The National Trust were one of the active building reconstructors in this period, and the role of the SPAB developed into that of a more advisory and regulatory body. The SPAB
were still the primary conservation body, but were being increasingly supported by new specialist groups such as the Vernacular Architecture Group and the Victorian Society, and through legislation. The SPAB themselves, however, were gradually altering their approaches to come more into line with practical needs; for example they started to accept and advise on change of use of buildings.

Private owners also had a part to play in opening country houses to the public, and they developed new and different ways of promoting the buildings. Local authorities and local trusts still had a part to play in displaying smaller buildings, but financial assistance was difficult to come by, and the concentration was on making buildings suitable for habitation rather than as museums or historic houses open to the public. The Tudor House in Weymouth was repaired for habitation after Second World War damage, but was soon opened to the public.

In this period, therefore, there was a series of different groups interested in historic buildings, and this resulted in an expansion of the formal conservation principles in this country. This is most clearly evidenced through the growth in amount and strength of legislation on the subject, especially the 1944 and 1947 *Town and Country Planning Acts* and the 1953 *Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act*.

Historic buildings were popular at the time as a form of entertainment, as people were keen to have days out visiting them, perhaps as a relief from the post-war austerity of everyday life. The notion of Englishness may have been inspirational in reconstructing and visiting buildings, but there is limited recorded evidence of this in this period, when much work was undertaken as repair of war damage, or to prevent decay.

Chapter Seven will see these issues change and develop once more as a new ‘boom’ in historic building reconstruction work is identified.
Chapter Seven: The Boom in Building Reconstruction Between 1959 and 1979


The period between 1959 and 1979 saw an increase in the numbers of buildings being reconstructed, and greater confidence in the work being carried out. This chapter will consider the threats to historic buildings and the relationships between academic understanding and the growing popularity of the past, and examples of work during this period will be used to gain an understanding of the approaches at the time. This period is associated with changes in academic and popular approaches to the past (Trigger 1989, 294-303; Johnson 1999, 12-33). An increased confidence in reconstruction is evident in the increasing numbers of buildings being moved, or having new sections added or inserted to try to recreate the form of the building at a previous time. This study terms this new wave of interest in building reconstruction a ‘boom’.

Through the 1960s and especially in the 1970s there was increased concern that historic buildings were under threat, and there were numerous schemes to try to protect them. These were effective in promoting the importance of historic buildings, and in preserving individual examples. A range of institutions was involved in building reconstruction in this era, and their varied approaches are analysed. The overall aims were to make the buildings into furnished historic properties for entertainment visits and educational use. The inter-relationship between the attempt to create an ‘authentic’ period house through physical reconstruction and the functional requirements of a building open to the public sometimes led to conflicting aims, making the reconstruction work difficult and sometimes contentious. This was not in itself a new problem, but some of the new approaches towards heritage interpretation raised new issues around this ongoing conflict.

The aims of works at different buildings were varied, but they were, on the whole, the most far-reaching alterations to historic buildings seen since the Victorian period, and in many
cases aimed to reverse the Victorian modernization, medievalization or Tudorization of buildings. The popular aim of returning to an 'authentic' period style will be discussed. The expression of Englishness through historic buildings is again not a great issue in this period. Many of the buildings chosen for reconstruction are vernacular buildings, and those which represent the lives of ordinary English people.

The ‘Boom’ in Building Reconstruction

One of the key changes in the approach towards reconstruction in the 1960s and 1970s was the confidence in physical reconstructions. I have termed this a ‘boom’ in reconstruction. This will be discussed, with the use of example buildings in this section. Some of this work aimed to remove Victorian alterations to buildings. Dragon Hall in Norwich is an impressive fifteenth-century first-floor hall. In the nineteenth century the hall became six tenements and numerous rooms were created from the original great hall. The medieval Dragon Hall was ‘rediscovered’ in the 1970s, in what by then appeared to be a range of separate dwellings (Knight 1991, 3-4). Considerable reconstruction work was done by the Norfolk and Norwich Heritage Trust, which was formed to conserve and run the building (Peter Sigsworth, Norfolk and Norwich Heritage Trust, pers. comm.). The external appearance has been considerably altered through the removal of the external plastering and the rearrangement of the windows to suit the reconstructed internal arrangement, and later inserted windows having been removed (Figures 7.1 and 7.2). Although the later additions were evident and the decision was made to remove them, there was limited evidence for the exact original appearance of the building. Reconstruction drawings were used to suggest its possible appearance in the fifteenth century (Figure 7.3).

The first-floor hall was recreated by the removal of all the later internal partitions which had created the tenements, and a second floor which had been inserted into the hall was removed, along with the windows which lit that upper range of rooms (Knight 1991, 10) (Figures 7.4 and 7.5).
Figure 7.1. Dragon Hall in Norwich in the early twentieth century (from Norfolk and Norwich record office)
Figure 7.2. Dragon Hall as it is today

Figure 7.3. An alternative reconstruction of Dragon Hall showing the oriel windows which are evidenced in the timber-framing (from display within building)

Figure 7.4. Interior of first-floor hall at Dragon Hall, showing evidence of later inserted floor, since removed
Similarly Ordsall Hall in Salford, a manor house dating from the sixteenth century, had been unsympathetically renovated in the late nineteenth century, with plastering over the timber-framing, and blocking and opening of windows to suit the new internal layout of the building (Vigeon 1973, 17-18) (Figure 7.6). The reconstructions of the 1960s were more far-reaching, and removed later accretions, including external brickwork cladding and plasterwork. The regional-style timber-framing was renovated, with the replacement of some sections (Figures 7.7 and 7.8). The house was opened to the public in April 1972 with three decorated period rooms and a local museum (Vigeon 1973, 17-18; City of Salford 2001). These schemes were devised to return the buildings to their former state, guided by newer academic understandings of their uses and construction.
Figure 7.6. Ordsall Hall in Salford c1900 (from NMR Swindon)

Figure 7.7. Undated photograph of Ordsall Hall in Salford after reconstruction through the 1960s, which removed later lath and plaster to exterior (from NMR Swindon)
The Ancient High House in Stafford had been altered to create Victorian shops and living accommodation (Stafford Borough Council n.d.). The reconstruction work of the 1970s, under the supervision of architectural historian and conservation specialist F.W.B. Charles, reversed some of those Victorian alterations (ibid.). Information about the reconstruction forms part of the exhibition at the house. A video on display to the public at the property explains how an original ground floor corner post, which had been removed to create a Victorian corner doorway for a shop, had been reinserted and a fireplace which had been inserted was removed. Externally considerable replacement of timber is evident (Figure 7.9). The building reconstruction was completed and it opened to the public as a museum in 1986 (ibid.). The visitor experiences rooms which are decorated to different periods of the building’s history. This attempt to present the changing nature of the building within one structure illustrates the dilemma of conflicting aims to create one authentic period house and to educate visitors about the evolution of a building.
There are two main reasons for the replacement of timbers: to replace an extant, but decayed timber, or to be ‘authentic’ to one moment in the past and to that end recreate parts of a building. Both types of work have been carried out at the Ancient High House, with, for example, the replacement of the posts at the north-east corner of every floor of the building and with the insertion of new timbers where old ones have decayed (Figure 7.10).

At ground floor level this involved the replacement of the timber which had been removed to create a corner door to the building in the early twentieth century. The display on site explains the work done to replace decayed timbers and support the structure, for example with a steel support within one of the timbers in the north-west of the building. It also describes how the building was returned to its sixteenth-century structure, rather than recreating any Georgian or Victorian alterations.
It is very difficult to present different versions of the past forms of a building without compromising the integrity of the various historical layouts and uses. Interpreters tend to present a building to show one story in one way, to make understanding of the building easy for the public. As in other fields of archaeological presentation, building interpreters are often loath to admit the areas where there is little knowledge (James 1997, 26).

There can also be issues where the 'value' of extant evidence within the building impacts on decisions made about preservation, and presentation of different periods of history. For example, the reconstruction of the Ancient High House was carefully directed toward taking the timber-framed building back to its sixteenth-century condition, and timbers were replaced where necessary. Exceptions to this were made when rare wallpapers were discovered in some of the rooms. The rooms of the building are displayed to different periods, including the Civil War room, which concentrates on the visit of Charles I to the house in 1642, when he was on his way to Shrewsbury to raise troops. The Civil War room has been panelled and furnished, with costumed mannequins representing that period (Figure 7.11). The reasons for the retention and display of these later periods within a structure which has been reconstructed to the sixteenth century are not discussed within any of the explanatory information, and the structure and the displays are almost treated as separate rather than being closely interlinked and historically associated in the interpretation. This is confusing for the visitor when the rooms are not in a representative location, such as the reconstruction of the Victorian shop on the second floor, recreating part of the history of the ground floor of the building (Figure 7.12).
Figure 7.11. The Civil War room at the Ancient High House

Figure 7.12. Access Analysis of the Ancient High House, showing the deep location of the Victorian Shop
Totnes Elizabethan House was similarly in need of repair and redisplay, which came in the form of reconstruction. The building was listed in 1952, and at that time was in some disrepair, certain areas needing considerable work. In the later 1950s it was acquired by the local council to be renovated and opened as a local museum. The renovation work was a thorough reconstruction as it involved the insertion of sections of other buildings, and new sections reconstructed to appear as historic ones. Two chimneypieces were inserted in the reconstruction, as was a gallery to link the front and rear sections of the building (Figure 7.15). An undated report by Sir Cyril Fox, before the reconstruction work began, recommended that the rear kitchen block should be renovated, and the linking gallery reconstructed, by which he meant completely rebuilt (Fox n.d., 18-21). By 1960, when architects’ plans were drawn up for the work, there was simply a temporary staircase from the courtyard to the upper storey of the front block. The documentary record suggests that there was considerable evidence within the building for the gallery, but this was not recorded in the rush to preserve and reconstruct the building, and is now concealed by the later reconstruction.

![Figure 7.15. Gallery built in 1960s at Totnes Elizabethan house, reconstructing one which had linked the front and rear sections of the building from the sixteenth century](image)
Blakesley Hall in Birmingham was affected by bomb damage, and had undergone the necessary repairs in the 1950s. The display presented then was reinterpreted in the 1970s, and the house had some internal reconstruction work, with the insertion of new timbers to recreate the shape of the screens passage (Figures 7.13 and 7.14) (Price 1978, 7-9). Though there was considerable evidence for the presence of a screen dividing the hall from the entrances, and its form was suggested from the mortice-holes in the structural timbers, the exact design was conjectural. The screen was left its natural wood colour, and therefore contrasted strongly with the older, darker and stained wood of the rest of the building. Between 2001 and 2003, however, further reconstruction work took place at Blakesley which disguised the reconstruction, as will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

The 1970s reconstruction work at Blakesley also concentrated on the long gallery and this too was restored to its former dimensions, with the removal of a later inserted stud wall which had been used to create a room at one end. This alteration presumably reflects the decline in importance of the long gallery, and the desire for more separate rooms at some time in the building’s history. Typically of the time, the details of exactly what was removed from the building were not recorded, so little may now be learned about the age of that stud wall. The house was decorated with period furniture and a small number of reconstructed items such as a truckle bed, following a probate inventory, to display it as a mid-seventeenth-century house (Davies 1985, 70-71).

![Figure 7.13. Inserted screen at Blakesley Hall, Birmingham](image-url)
Another strand of the ‘boom’ in building reconstruction is the confidence which is being shown in this period to move buildings to new sites as part of open-air museums. This was, in part, a reaction to the threat to historic buildings from development. Open-air museums collected threatened buildings, dismantled them, and then rebuilt them on a new site, in association with other historic buildings. Most open-air museums contain buildings from many different periods. The two which contain most buildings which date from between 1400 and 1600 are the Weald and Downland Museum in Sussex and the Avoncroft Museum in Worcestershire, and they will be used as the key examples here.

The Avoncroft Museum opened to the public in 1967 and the Weald and Downland Museum opened in 1971. Each contained exhibits of timber-framed buildings which had been relocated from the surrounding area and presented as reconstructions of their periods (Leslie 1990; Penn n.d.). These museums were independently run, and usually obtained buildings which were to be destroyed (ibid.). These had often been bought by the developers to allow the work to go ahead, and were then given to the museums (Leslie 1990, 10; Penn n.d. 32-33). The creation and popularity of the museums demonstrated interest in local history and identity.
Buildings were interpreted as they were reconstructed, and some developments in academic understanding of buildings have altered initial interpretations. One of the first buildings to be reconstructed at the Weald and Downland Museum was the Winkhurst Farmhouse, which was on the site by the time the museum opened in 1970 (Leslie 1990, 10-12). The Winkhurst Farmhouse is a yeoman farmhouse which stood in Chiddingstone in Kent until 1967 (Harris 1999, 42-43). It was threatened by the flooding of the Bough Beech reservoir, and the East Surrey Water Company presented the building to the Weald and Downland Museum in 1967 (ibid.). It was dismantled and the oldest section was placed in storage for reconstruction, while the later phases of the building were disposed of. This earlier section has been dated typologically to the late fourteenth century (Harris 1987, 2-3). Photographic evidence suggests that the lost section was late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century. As happened at Blakesley Hall, removed sections of the building were disposed of, and little evidence about them remains to be interpreted in the present. The remaining section of the building was originally interpreted as an unusual form of agricultural building (Mason and Wood 1968, 33-37).

The building as it stands today reveals evidence of the reconstruction work. Original timbers appear rough due to weathering, while the modern insertions have sharp, straight machine-cut lines (Figure 7.16). The reconstruction work aimed to remove all later accretions to the building, and took it to just two rooms, the oldest section remaining in the building in the 1960s. The building also contains evidence about its former structure, and recent reinterpretation has suggested that this section was a kitchen wing which had always had adjacent buildings, originally to the north-east (Figure 7.17) and later to the south-east (Figure 7.18).
The internal arrangement has also been modified to cope with these external changes, with the movement of the fireplace and stack from the west corner (Figure 7.19) to the south corner (Figure 7.20), and the rearrangement of the staircase to the first floor (Figures 7.20 and 7.21). The sixteenth-century building which was not retained by the museum is thought to have been a replacement of an earlier adjacent wing, but little interpretation can now be made from evidence which has been lost. Below-ground archaeological research on the original site was not carried out, so information is lacking (Harris 1987, 2-3).
Figure 7.17. Winkhurst Farmhouse with adjacent wings to the north-east and south-east

Figure 7.18. Winkhurst Farmhouse with two doorways from the south-east wing

Figure 7.19. Winkhurst Farmhouse with stack in north-west corner

Figure 7.20. Winkhurst Farmhouse with stack in south-west corner and inserted staircase

Figure 7.21. Winkhurst Farmhouse with staircase in new position
Another building reconstructed at the Weald and Downland Museum early in its development as a museum was the Bayleaf Farmhouse, in 1971. It was moved from a site in Edenbridge in Kent, when it was threatened by development, and is a typical Wealden house (Harris 1999, 24-26). These are very common in the south-east, especially in Kent, Essex and Sussex. Some later additions were not retained such as hanging tiles and brickwork, so revealing the timber-framing (Figures 7.22 and 7.23). These are common in the post-medieval period, and became especially popular as part of the local style in Kent in the nineteenth century (Brunskill 1985, 54; Breckon and Parker 1991, 62). The Bayleaf Farmhouse has been reconstructed to represent life there c1540. This has been achieved by not retaining later additions, and through furnishing the building using evidence from local probate inventories (Figure 7.24) (Zeuner 1990, 3-4).

These two buildings are farmhouses of different types. The outstanding difference between them now is that the Bayleaf Farmhouse is a complete building, with hall, service rooms, and private rooms, while the Winkhurst is more fragmentary, only the service bay having been retained. This difference is a result of the policy of the museum in its early days to retain only the earliest section of a building. This policy was perhaps more suitable for the Bayleaf Farmhouse, which was reconstructed as a typical Wealden house with the removal of a rear wing. The less typical and more difficult history of the Winkhurst Farmhouse eluded the reconstructors, and decisions were made which are now regretted (Richard Harris, Weald and Downland Museum, pers. comm.). The present policy of the museum is to retain and reconstruct all phases of a building. This has been achieved, for example, at the Longport Farmhouse, discussed in Chapter Eight. Different policies of reconstruction rely on and in their turn create different concepts of the authentic historic building. Whether it is the earliest phase only, or the complete development of the structure through time, different values change the concept of authenticity.
Figure 7.22. Bayleaf Farmhouse before relocation and reconstruction (from archives at Weald and Downland Museum)

Figure 7.23. Bayleaf Farmhouse at the Weald and Downland Museum
The Avoncroft Museum was opened a few years before the Weald and Downland, in 1967. It was established because of the threat to one particular building, a fifteenth-century Merchant’s House in Bromsgrove. This building could not be preserved *in situ* because of modern development, and instead this new open-air museum was established to house it and other threatened local buildings (Penn n.d. 32-33; Thomas 1972, 153-156). Like the Winkhurst and the Bayleaf Houses only the earliest phases of the Merchant’s House were retained, and it is presented as a Tudor building. The museum has expanded to accommodate a wide range of buildings within its collection, including several buildings dating between 1400 and 1600, and others from different periods of history through to a post-Second World War ‘prefab’ house.

Both museums have developed their policies towards the preservation of different phases of historic buildings, and now promote good practice in conservation of timber-framed
buildings, and encourage preservation on site. The Weald and Downland Museum runs courses in building with timber frames and the Avoncroft Museum has carried out work on buildings outside the museum in order to preserve them in situ (Thomas 1972, 153).

Because buildings have to be moved to open-air museums, and changes in situation are therefore necessary, they have become a source of discussion in relation to the meaning installed in a building in relation to its surroundings (Jones and Matelic 1987; Robertshaw 1997). Open-air museums have sometimes undertaken some of the more conjectural reconstruction work to historic buildings, perhaps relating to the period of boom in reconstruction in which many open-air museums were formed, and perhaps relating to the process of moving historic buildings, in which many decisions and choices have to be made.

Organisations Involved in Reconstruction

The complexity of the relationship between the different organisations preserving, managing and interpreting the past increased through the 1960s and 1970s (Jokilehto 1999). At this time further institutions and pressure groups were formed in the push for conservation (Hewison 1987, 58). The roles of preservation, conservation and reconstruction and presentation overlapped amongst institutions. Policies were established from international forums such as ICOMOS, at national governmental level, through national societies and within individual houses (Hewison 1987, 51-80).

As discussed in Chapter Six the National Trust had a considerable role in preserving larger country houses in the post-war period, and this continued into the 1960s and 1970s (Waterson 1994, 136-140). The SPAB also continued their work as a pressure group, celebrating their centenary in 1977 and growing in stature and recognition (Tinniswood 1998, 193).

The Ministry of Works was involved in the management of some properties which had been given to the country (Daifuku 1972, 32), and its successors from 1969, the Department for the Environment, was later in charge of these properties and held grant-
giving functions (Thomas 1993, 136-138). Private owners were able to apply for and use these grants on condition that the houses were opened to the public. Chavenage House in Gloucestershire, for example, opens two days a week to fulfil its commitment (Caroline Lowsley-Williams, Chavenage House, pers. comm.). Funding through the Ministry of Works and Department for the Environment was given following two principles: conservation of historic properties and their availability to the public (PRO file HLG 126/1104). This led to reconstruction of the buildings, which were conserved to be presented as they were at some time in the past. The motivation for such reconstruction work seems to go deeper than interest in seeing what life was like into issues of improving modern quality of life through relaxation and education and promoting national identity through history (Waterson 1994, 237-259).

Some houses in the control of local authority local museums services in the 1960s and 1970s have been seen to have undergone modifications at this time, as discussed above. This is either because this is when they were being interpreted and presented to the public for the first time, as at the Totnes Elizabethan House Museum, the Bishops' House in Sheffield, Ordsall Hall in Salford, and the Ancient High House in Stafford; or because previous interpretations had then become outdated, as at Blakesley Hall in Birmingham. The acquisition or redevelopment of these buildings reflected some of the organisational changes which were thrust upon museums services in this period (Pearce 1990, 36). Pearce suggests that one of the key benefits of the new democratic structures within local authorities was the increase in archaeologists in museums (ibid., 37), which perhaps provided staff who were both interested and expert enough to preserve and interpret historic buildings for the public, even though specialist buildings archaeologists would have been relatively rare.

The view that preservation of historic buildings was economically viable and even beneficial to the economy was promoted by those keen to encourage conservation (Binney and Hanna 1978; National Trust for Historic Preservation 1976). In Britain considerable investment was made into the preservation of historic properties in the 1960s and 1970s. In contemporary politics building conservation and reconstruction were often seen as an
unnecessary financial burden, when spending was also required to resolve more pressing social issues. In the late 1960s and early 1970s there was a debate in Manchester about the viability of reconstructing Ordsall Hall in Salford. Work had to be suspended between 1966 and 1971 while further funding was arranged. When the *Salford City Reporter* published this they were not adamantly against the expenditure, perhaps reflecting the public interest in the preservation of the past at the time (*Salford City Reporter* 13.11.1971). Indeed local interest was high, and when the building re-opened it immediately received over 30,000 visitors in its first year. This remained steady between 20,000 and 30,000 through the next decade (City of Salford 2001). At Bishops’ House in Sheffield, the cost of works to the building totalled nearly £40,000, while the display cost under £6,000. The entry charges were minimal, and have now been abolished, so although visitor levels there were high, the investment was never truly intended to be recouped in financial terms.

The threat to historic buildings led to the formation of a series of conservation groups run by influential people, and the problems of urban rescue archaeology and building conservation affected everyone involved in academic archaeology, excavation, presentation and planning (Wheeler 1973, vii). The problems came in the 1970s to be seen as a crisis (Fowler 1970, 343-345), and one of the side-effects was a growth in public interest and desire to preserve the past. 1975 was European Architectural Heritage Year, and this coincided with the formation of a preservation society, *SAVE Britain’s Heritage* (Hewison 1987, 58). Also in 1975 the publication of *The Rape of Britain* by Colin Amery and Dan Cruikshank examined the damage done to thirty British towns, and concluded that “The destruction during the nineteenth century pales into insignificance alongside the licensed vandalism of the years 1950-75” (Amery and Cruikshank 1975). In the twenty years between 1957 and 1977 8,000 listed buildings were destroyed, compared to just 485 in the twenty-seven years between 1918 and 1945 (Hewison 1987, 37, 54). This may, in part, reflect the growing number of listed buildings, but specific threats to buildings were also being identified. New roads, for example, were a major problem, and about a third of the destruction was by local authorities (ibid.). The growth of preservation movements
reflected growing public opinion in favour of the preservation of country houses and listed buildings. Private house owners were becoming more willing to open their houses to the public in this period, through either a desire to educate or financial necessity. The Historic Houses Association, an organisation which represents privately owned houses opened to the public and provides a marketing tool for them, membership for the public allowing access, and advice and assistance for historic house owners, was formed in 1973 as the number of privately-owned houses open to the public increased. The Architectural Heritage Fund was established in 1976, to give loans or grants to enable conservation and reconstruction work to be carried out on properties, and encouraged the formation of building preservation trusts which will be seen further in Chapter Eight (Architectural Heritage Fund 2003).

The 1960s and 1970s Conservation Movement and Reconstruction
The pressure on historic buildings in the 1960s and 1970s led to a renewed conservation movement in this era. The formation of new groups, as discussed above, created a new impetus. As post-war redevelopment continued, urban historic buildings were threatened in the name of progress due to redevelopment work in city centres following Second World War damage (Urry 1990, 109; Samuel 1994, 149). Likewise rural buildings, especially larger country houses, were still under threat from lack of funds for their upkeep as a result of the changes economic situation, as has been observed in previous chapters (Hewison 1987, 54-55). In response to these processes, a series of associated movements was formed to protect historic buildings, and campaign for a better economic environment for them, allowing for funding for their preservation and maintenance (Hewison 1987, 66-69). The conservation movement of this period became a much greater part of the legislative process, than previous movements, and the ways in which buildings were reconstructed reflected this (Mynors 1999). The funding necessary for such preservation was often felt to relate closely to the buildings’ availability to the public (Historic Buildings Council 1976, 21). This could provide financial support, either directly or through the availability of grants linked to access, and create a new function and use as an educational institution.
The fate of urban archaeology was considered in Heighway's *Erosion of History* (1972), while rural buildings were fought for by the Heritage In Danger Committee. The *Erosion of History* report was a national survey which considered both underground and standing archaeological evidence in towns (Heighway 1972). The relationship between rescue archaeology and museums and the presentation of the past has always been close (Thomas 1976, 106-109). The *Erosion of History* emphasised the importance of archaeology and made recommendations which were later implemented through official movements like the *Ancient Monuments and Areas Act* of 1979, discussed later in this chapter. The Heritage in Danger Committee was formed in 1974, led by art dealer Hugh Leggatt (Hewison 1987, 31). This campaign again highlighted the fact that despite the efforts of the National Trust there was still a danger that private house owners would not be able to afford to run their houses any longer and property would be disposed of and the national heritage would be depleted by dispersal into smaller private collections, perhaps overseas (ibid.). The opening of some buildings in this period therefore continued to offer financial support for some private historic house owners.

‘Building preservation orders’ were introduced in the *Town and Country Planning Act* 1968 (Suddards 1988, 10-22). It is only on the basis of knowledge of the historic buildings across the country that issues of reconstruction and authenticity can be approached by buildings archaeologists and other specialists. The *Town and Country Planning Act* 1971 extended ‘Lists of Buildings of Special Architectural Interest’, which were a basic requirement for the planning and preservation process. These were to be deposited with the National Monuments Record in Swindon, and the Sites and Monuments Records around the country. The value of historic buildings was promoted in part through the presentation of examples to the public.

By the 1970s the economy was in recession, and historic house owners were inevitably affected by this. After the return to power of the Labour Party in 1974 a Green Paper was published outlining the proposals for a ‘wealth tax’ on assets worth over £100,000, including houses (Hewison 1987, 66). Despite these less favourable economic conditions for historic houses, preservation lobbies had some successes, and the 1970s was an
important era for legislation for the protection and presentation of historic buildings (Mynors 1999). Throughout the 1960s post-war rebuilding had continued, in modern architectural styles. Much of this work was forward-looking and aimed to create new modern cities for the future, and was actively involved in destroying old and outdated buildings and underground archaeology (Biddle, Hudson and Heighway 1973, 31-35). This work threatened the survival of many historic places. The reaction against this through the 1970s created a preservationist momentum with renewed vitality and the determination to campaign vigorously to save historic buildings (Amery and Cruikshank 1975; Heighway 1972; Rahtz 1974).

The *Town and Country Planning Act* of 1971 granted further powers to planning departments, including compulsory purchase of buildings which were under threat. It also introduced the requirement for listed building consent for works to listed buildings, although in practice consent separate from planning permission for any works other than demolition was not required until 1980 (Suddards 1988, 238-290). The *Field Monuments Act* of 1972 provided for conservation schemes especially in outstanding conservation areas (Suddards 1988, 287-289). The *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* (1979) initiated a system of consent for archaeological sites and introduced the concept of an archaeological area where developers are obliged to allow access to archaeologists (Hewison 1987, 25). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the value of the past was high on the political agenda. This legislation was the official expression of the wider desire for the protection and preservation of the past.

Through this period there were changes in the organisation of local government, which led to the creation of new county and local authority areas. This raised issues of identity in local areas, as counties changed name and shape. Through local government-run museums and historic houses, local history was used to reinforce local identity, and reassure people of their heritage (Pearce 1990, 36). The reorganisation also affected the budgeting in different areas. Loughborough, in his review of the effects of these political changes on museums, identifies between 1974 and 1978 a steady growth in expenditure in the heritage
sector, but with much of that taken up with staff costs there was little potential for development in displays and education programmes (Loughborough 1978, 165).

**Authenticity and Alternatives in Reconstruction**

The changing notion of authenticity, and the impact of different policies has been considered above. There are always different options in reconstruction work, and it is considerations of practical needs and requirements for authenticity which can be seen to have guided some of these decisions. Consideration of some of these alternatives survive in the records of the works of the period, and give some insight into the decisions made, and therefore the reasoning behind the works. At Bishops’ House in Sheffield, for example, other possible forms of reconstruction were considered. The house was seen as both an “interesting piece of vernacular architecture” and an opportunity to establish a local history museum in an area of Sheffield not previously served by museums (Lewis 1971, 1). The building had been altered and sub-divided in the eighteenth century, but it was planned that it would be reconstructed to c1700 because there was considerable remaining evidence of its form in that period, and details about the house’s history and structure were included as part of the original exhibition (ibid.). Substantial work was done to reconstruct it to that period, some of which was based closely on evidence from the building, while some was more conjectural. One proposal put forward by the ‘Civic Design Section’ shows one alternative considered, and gives an insight into the lack of knowledge about the exact original layout. This plan includes divisions of the hall and the room above the hall to create smaller display spaces (Figure 7.25).

The alternative plan proposed by the Civic Design Section sought to maintain all four of the doors present in 1974, whereas the reconstruction which was actually carried out blocked two doors which were thought to be later insertions (Figure 7.26). The building has had new walls inserted, especially in the north wing to the rear, which is a seventeenth-century addition (Sheffield Museums and Art Gallery Archives: Bishop’s House File). These internal walls have created areas now used for a small office and shop. At first-floor level most of the divisions are original, being an unusual type, with timber boards inserted vertically to create room divisions (ibid.). The aims of the presentation in 1974 were
outlined as being preservation and display; insertion of necessary items such as display equipment, lighting and heating which do not conflict with the architecture; no "period room" displays; no offices; and fire and security systems to fulfil requirements (ibid.). There seems not to have been detailed consideration at this time of how the building functioned in the past or what the most suitable form of reconstruction would be.

Figure 7.25. Planned reconstruction at Bishops' House in Sheffield (from archives at Sheffield City Museum)
The works which were undertaken included the removal of later internal decoration and partition walls, as seen on the architects' plans (Figures 7.25 and 7.26). There was also creation of spaces to suit its new function, such as the provision of an office. Sections of the fabric were also replaced, such as the king post roof (Figure 7.27). These timbers, which were major structural elements, needed to be replaced because of decay caused by years of exposure outside. The work was carried out by a local company, Stannington Rural Crafts Ltd., who specialised in traditional building techniques. In an attempt to be authentic, following the wishes of the local council, they used traditional tools to create a replica of the removed timber, and it was lifted into place in 1975 (Sheffield Museums and Art Gallery Archives: Bishop's House File) (Figure 7.28). Other defective timbers were treated with the modern chemical, epoxy resin. Heating and electrical fittings inserted into the building were designed to be unobtrusive (Lewis 1971, 2).
Figure 7.27. Repaired king post being inserted into structure at Bishops' House (from archives at Sheffield City Museum)
The seventeenth century was chosen as a suitable point to which to reconstruct the building because of the amount of evidence for it at that time, amongst which was a probate inventory, dating from 1665, for William Blythe, once owner of the house. This lists twelve rooms. Notes in the records suggest that there was a discussion about the possibility that some rooms had been in an east wing which had been lost. This interpretation has now been superseded, and all twelve rooms have been given locations in the present house (Beswick 1976) and have now been decorated following the inventory.

The Bishops’ House was later analysed in more detail by Pauline Beswick, who dated and phased it (Beswick 1978). Her work draws analogies from other local examples and uses substantial evidence from the house, but her interpretation leaves questions as well as providing some answers. The plans show a thick wall between the hall and the kitchen, which in Beswick’s interpretation is simply marked as a dotted line (Beswick 1976). The architects’ drawing does not record this feature. This wall ties in with a straight joint in the
ground floor stone facing of the south wall of the building, and could suggest an extension, although it is more likely that the straight joint represents two phases of stone cladding (Figure 7.29 and 7.30).

Figure 7.29. Straight joint in stonework at Bishops' House

Figure 7.30. Architects' elevation drawing omitting straight joint seen in Figure 7.29 (from archives at Sheffield City Museum)
Another unanswered question relates to the location of the original staircase. Beswick's plans do not illustrate a staircase until the mid-seventeenth century when the stone wing to the north of the west wing was added (Beswick 1976; 1978). The plasterwork in the parlour shows a break in one corner, which might suggest a staircase. There is little attempt at the house to raise such questions or guide visitors. The use of the house at any time in its past is not clearly reconstructed through any medium, and the functions of the rooms are not described. The house is seen, rather, as an interesting situation in which to consider local history.

One of the key choices in reconstruction work is the selection of the period to which a historic building is to be reconstructed. This is sometimes based on surviving physical or documentary evidence, as discussed above. In some buildings the association with a famous person drives the reconstruction work, and the chosen date is that of their lifetime or habitation of the building. The known connection with any named person is important in the presentation of historic buildings, as it gives visitors a more personal view of life in the house. The idea that Shakespeare may have performed at Rufford Hall on the basis of a William Shakeshafte mentioned in an inventory may be tenuous, but seems to hold considerable currency in the imaginations of the curators and the public (Wilkinson 2000, 90-91).

Another decision which is made when a historic house is reconstructed as a public building is the way in which it is going to be used. Many buildings which open on certain days to the public provide background information about their history in books, leaflets, tours or interpretation panels, and are primarily tourist sites. The Civic Trust are a national group interested in preserving historic buildings and suitable environments for them, especially in urban areas (Civic Trust 1960). Their local organisations, the Civic Societies, take on buildings, but do not open them simply as historic houses. Instead the buildings are let out or used, and opened to the public on request or for special events. The Civic Trust acquired Bear Steps Hall in Shrewsbury in 1968 (Figure 7.31). It is a range of timber-framed buildings dated by dendrochronology from the mid-fourteenth century to the early seventeenth (Moran 1982).
The Civic Trust followed the philosophy of the time when they reconstructed Bear Steps Hall. The eastern end of the range had been demolished in 1968, just before the Civic Trust stepped in, and the rest was threatened, but was saved by the Shrewsbury Civic Society, who raised money and undertook reconstruction work (Moran 1982). They replaced many timbers and recreated the original layout, which had been altered for later usage. The building had been subdivided into separate units of living accommodation (ibid.). Bear Steps Hall reopened in 1972, and now houses a public arts centre, and is used commercially and for events. Guided tours about the history and architecture of the building are given during special events.

Figure 7.31. Bear Steps Hall

Englishness and the Growing Popularity of Vernacular Buildings

The reconstruction of a large number of building suggests that they are popular in this period, this section considers whether that is the case, and possible reasons for that. Visitor numbers can sometimes be obtained, for example for Ordsall Hall, where a large number of visitors was received in the 1960s or 1970s, and that number rose until the end of the
1970s, but through the 1980s they declined (City of Salford 2001). National Trust membership rose gradually through this period, from 97,109 in 1960, to 226,069 in 1970, reaching above the million mark in 1980.

Documentation related to reconstruction work seems to suggest that the smaller buildings were reconstructed and used to serve the local community, concentrating on local history and local expressions of the typical English past (Lewis 1971, 1; Sayle and de Boo 1998; Davies 1985, 71). Some places aimed to present the different people living in historic buildings, for example at Avoncroft Museum, where there were activities for children about the lives of children in historic houses.

One of the reasons for ongoing high levels of interest in historic buildings is that they are seen to represent a local English past. If this is the case it represents a different understanding of Englishness than the romanticised views discussed in previous chapters. Amongst archaeologists interest in historic buildings was often for the understanding of local processes, such as the desertion of medieval villages (Beresford 1954), although archaeologists primarily concentrated on underground evidence.

Architectural historians were researching historic buildings, working on wide-ranging studies (Girouard 1978; Glassie 1975; Mercer 1975) and detailed examples (Emery 1970; Roberts 1974, 18-20). Growing interest in smaller buildings led to the formation of the Vernacular Architecture Group in 1952, as an inter-disciplinary forum for discussion. This started to bring together different aspects of the study of buildings, and conferences and journals were foci of discussion. The growth in the understanding of smaller historic houses and the correspondingly increased value placed upon them had not completely transferred to the presentation of buildings. In the information sheet to the Bishops’ House in Sheffield, Beswick describes the value of the house almost apologetically:

Although too small ever to have been an imposing manor house, the house is important because it typifies the development of the smaller English domestic house in the 16th and 17th centuries.

(Beswick 1976, 1)
It was during this period that interest in smaller houses developed, and authors such as Brunskill started to publish on vernacular buildings (Brunskill 1974; 1978; 1981). This research identified house types, and started to relate them to the ways they would have been used, and the people who would have lived in them (ibid.). This was, perhaps, the means by which an ongoing interest in Englishness was expressed at this time.

In the 1960s and 1970s there were some moves to develop museum presentation. Museum professionals and academics were publishing on the importance of communicating ideas about the past, and ways in which that could be done successfully (Cameron 1968; Fowler 1979, 120-121; Fritz and Plog 1970, 405-412; Knez and Wright 1970, 204-212; Reynolds 1978; Schroeder 1976, 7-12). When these ideas were applied, it was mainly to the collections within buildings, as seen at local museums and folk museums within historic buildings, and not to the buildings themselves which were considered differently from other archaeological artefacts.

The Seeds of the Heritage Industry
The new approaches towards historic buildings in the 1960s and 1970s have been described here as a ‘boom’ in reconstruction. The movement also equates to the start of the ‘Heritage Industry’ described by Hewison (1987). Through the 1960s and 1970s there was a social concern, a sense that academics had too much control of the past, and a desire to legitimise academic studies by making them more directly accessible and useful to people (Wright 1985). The need to bring people closer to ‘their’ history was therefore considered important, and History Workshop Journal promoted this ideal from 1976 onwards. By this time buildings were already a popular location and forum for people to sample their local history (Turner 1990, 65).

The reasons for an increased desire to present the past, and the renewed interest in the medieval and post-medieval periods in the 1960s and 1970s have been discussed by other authors. The political and social changes at the time remain to be considered:
The middle ages of popular narrative can thus be taken to be a part in the negotiation of a larger hegemonic shift which started, not incidentally, in the 1970s: the break up of the post-war consensus on social responsibility and welfare. The new middle ages are thoroughly individualistic.

(Ziegler 1998, 35)

There are some details of the history of the period which might shed light on the use of the past at the time. The insularity felt after the final demise of the empire and the rebuff from Europe could have led to an introspective frame of mind, and an interest in Britain’s past would have afforded some reassurance (Morgan 1984, 570-578). Walsh sees this boom in interest in the past as a first-world phenomenon and puts it down to a need for heritage as a result of the rise of post-modern culture. He suggests that while meta-narratives have been rejected, the post-modern aesthetic, especially in architecture, relies on drawing influences from the past. This could reflect a feeling that in the increasingly homogenized world people were searching for a sense of place (Walsh 1992, 53-65). The economic situation in the UK, in the 1960s especially, was favourable, as people had money for trips to buildings, owned cars, and enjoyed increased leisure time, and were interested to see cultural and historic places (Urry 1990). While Hewison sees the development of ‘Heritage’ as an industry, it can also be seen as becoming simultaneously a commercially viable popular entertainment genre and an important educational tool (Hewison 1987, 135-139).

There was a massive rise in sites which purported to be representations of the past in the 1970s, sometimes known as the ‘heritage boom’, which saw the growth of open-air museums and heritage centres which used new means of interpretation such as many costumed guides and actors, and established museums adopting new techniques (Walsh 1992, 94). These presentations were intended to be accurate and educational, so there had to be some professional checks on the quality of presentation at such sites. The Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage (now the Association for Heritage Interpretation) was formed in 1975 (Robertshaw 1997). Its aim is to promote a high standard of communication to visitors about the significance of their heritage, so that they may enjoy it more, understand it better, and develop a positive attitude to conservation (Robertshaw 1997, 17-20). Other institutions such as the SPAB continued to attempt to warn
reconstructors of the possibility of anachronisms and to promote reversibility in reconstruction.

Hewison sees the development of the heritage industry through the 1960s and especially 1970s as the first seeds of commercialisation of the past, which he links to economic decline, suggesting that the only industry still functioning well in Britain is the backward-looking heritage industry. He argues that commercialisation is detrimental because of inaccuracies in presentations, its influence on modern social values and its negative effect on the "climate of decline" (Hewison 1987). The 1960s and 1970s certainly saw new interpretation techniques which appealed to a wider audience and were more commercial, but as has been seen in previous chapters, historic houses had used hooks such as free bus transfers and displays of cars or animals as attractions for many years, and the burgeoning heritage industry could simply be seen as a development of that. Urry (1990, 111) has suggested that many of Hewison’s ideas about the nature of interpretation and presentation are condescending to visitors, who are assumed to be able to view a set of objects or a presentation only as they are expected to. Urry argues that every person brings their own ideas, and that exhibitions will be read in many different ways depending on what visitors bring to the site. It seems that through the 1960s and 1970s while reconstructions aimed to provide interpretation and present buildings as they were in the past, they allowed little room for imagination (Urry 1990, 111-113).

Summary

This period saw striking changes in approaches to historic buildings. The boom described in this chapter was reflected in a great number of buildings being worked on and a greater confidence about how they could be altered. The removal of later accretions in buildings was routinely carried out. Reconstruction in the form of insertion of new elements to look like ones which have been lost is a phenomenon of heritage presentation not widely seen until this period, but which becomes popular from the 1960s onwards. This corresponds to the growth in academic interest in and understanding of historic buildings. Increased academic study produced increased knowledge and led to a belief in contemporary abilities to return buildings to their former states. Building reconstructions were bolder than in previous decades, as has been seen at Blakesley Hall, the Winkhurst Farmhouse, the Ancient High House and the Bayleaf Farmhouse.
Several different organisations and individuals have been seen to be involved in historic building reconstruction through this period. Perhaps as a result of the range of organisations and individuals involved, and despite increased research, a consensus about the ways in which historic buildings should be presented was not reached, resulting in the different types of display seen at the different buildings discussed. Through this period, museums services and open-air museums were obtaining buildings, and as a result of the perceived threat to historic buildings they were reconstructing them for presentation to the public.

Post-war development in this period presented considerable threats to historic buildings, and as a result the conservation movement has been seen to have been renewed. This was reinforced by legislation, most notably the 1968 and 1971 *Town and Country Planning Acts* which initiated the system of listing historic buildings which were deemed to be of special interest. Historic houses were still being preserved as examples of the local and national stock of historic buildings, but the philosophies behind reconstruction work were not as concerned with the notion of Englishness as in previous periods, and the background to these works was an increasing alignment between British philosophy and legislation and that abroad, especially through organisations like ICOMOS. It is seen that there is, however, increased interest in vernacular buildings, as reflections of the ordinary lives of people, an interest which is, perhaps, inherited from the former interest in Englishness.

The bold style of reconstruction in this period of 'boom' was not as preoccupied with authenticity as in previous periods. Buildings were reconstructed on limited evidence about their previous form, as has been seen at Dragon Hall, the Winkhurst Farmhouse, and Totnes Elizabethan House. Many of the bold reconstructions did, however, aim to be accurate and recreate what had been there previously, as seen at Blakesley Hall.

The public showed a new-found interest in historic buildings, and visitor numbers were high, as was seen at Ordsall Hall in Salford (City of Salford 2001). It has been seen that the boom in building reconstruction in the 1960s and 1970s differs markedly in scale and type
from some of the more necessary reconstruction works of the immediate post-war period, discussed in Chapter Six. Chapter Eight will see another change in approach, and the different priorities in heritage presentation since the early 1980s.
Chapter Eight: Building Reconstruction from 1979 to the Present


This chapter will see several parallel developments in the reconstruction of historic buildings. There are relatively few buildings taken on for reconstruction for the first time in this period, but many are being actively worked-upon by building preservation trusts, keen to present buildings to the public, but also often interested in making a building economically viable, as will be discussed below.

Historic buildings benefited from an increasingly high profile in the media, and historic styles became popular for modern architecture and artefacts, and famous historic buildings were receiving high visitor figures, but some buildings suffered, and the survival of some buildings as heritage attractions was threatened. There was a widespread continued interest in historic buildings, and they continued to be reconstructed and conserved, and the relationship between those two approaches will be discussed in this chapter.

In the 1980s and 1990s there were developments in conservation techniques, principles and philosophies, and conservation ideals became more explicit, and more openly discussed. This resulted in more published work about them (Swain 1993; Strike 1994; Baker 1997; Pye 2001). As seen in previous chapters, written statements of policy and the evidence of actual works to specific example buildings do not always correlate. The developments in the 1980s and 1990s in academic approaches to buildings archaeology were considerable, but exercised scant influence on the work actually carried out to historic buildings through the same period.
Waxing and Waning Popularity of Historic Buildings

Historic houses were popular visitor attractions in the 1980s and 1990s, and three houses of the period 1400 – 1600 appeared on the top twenty list of heritage visitor attractions in 1980: Hampton Court fifth with 567,000 visitors a year; Shakespeare’s Birthplace seventh with 490,000 visitors a year; and Anne Hathaway’s Cottage eleventh with 368,000 visitors a year. Between 1979 and 1980 Penshurst Place received a 22% increase in visitors (English Tourist Board 1981, 28).

Throughout the 1980s historic buildings were opening to the public all over the UK. In 1980 there were 1,419 historic buildings and monuments opening to the public on a regular basis, of which 44% were privately owned, 22% owned by local authorities, 21% Department of the Environment and 13% National Trust (English Tourist Board 1981, 22). Privately-owned buildings and those owned by the National Trust tended to be houses which were still inhabited. Local Authority properties tended to be used as local museums and heritage sites, and Department of the Environment buildings tended to be uninhabited, often ruins of castles, ecclesiastical buildings and other monuments (English Tourist Board 1981, 22). New buildings also continued to open: in 1980 they included Dorney Court in Berkshire and several buildings at the new Chiltern Open-Air Museum, which date between 1400 and 1600 (English Tourist Board 1981, 11-12).

Throughout the 1980s there started to develop a wide divergence between buildings which were popular, and gained very high visitor figures, and therefore collected significant funds in entry fees and funding, those which received little investment. Some of the ill-funded buildings recorded a drop in visitor figures in the 1980s compared with the time of the 1970s boom, such as Ordsall Hall in Manchester (Figures 8.1 and 8.2), which saw its visitor figures decline steadily from 31,569 in 1973 to just 9,820 in 1991 (Salford City Council 2001). Around this time there was a question of the viability of the building as a heritage attraction, and its survival was threatened (Les Willis, Local Historian, pers. comm.).
Figure 8.1. Interior of Ordsall Hall, Manchester

Figure 8.2. Exterior view of Ordsall Hall, Manchester
The numbers started to climb gradually as funding allowed for a more wide-ranging schools programme and events schedule to be implemented (Salford City Council 2001). The building thus did not suffer greatly from its drop in visitor figures. Money was still available for maintenance: wet rot treatment in the 1980s and 1990s was paid for by a European Union grant and the local council. At such less popular buildings little reconstruction work was carried out in the 1980s and 1990s due to lack of local council funding so there was limited change to the way in which these buildings were displayed through the 1980s and 1990s.

Another building which went through mixed fortunes before being revived in the 1990s was the Merchant’s House in Plymouth (Figures 8.3 and 8.6). It opened in mid-1977 as a museum of the town.

In the 1890s it was a shop with living accommodation above, but by the late 1960s the ground floor was boarded up, and the rest of the building was a house and a taxi office. The importance of this building had been recognised in the 1970s, when a report on it by
Joan Wilson was written, “33, St Andrew’s Street, Plymouth, is a large, fine merchant’s house of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is an important example of its type and period, not just on a local scale, but on a national level. It is situated in what was the nucleus of medieval Plymouth” but this was never published (Wilson 1975). Its conservation and reconstruction through the 1970s caused some dispute, with the Evening Herald publishing in 1976 the fact that by the end of the project “£401,670 will have been extracted from the ratepayers”, and questioning “Is the preservation of the past worth that kind of money?”, and calling the benefits to the public of the work “minimal” (Anon 1976). The works carried out were discussed in local publications, such as Devon Life, which reviewed the site and commented about the architecture and reconstruction, “modern materials and techniques are well disguised. Wherever possible original features have been retained and made sound” (Brayshay 1983, 42) (Figure 8.7).
Large sections of timber were replaced, giving a coherent look to the building, rather than preserving the evidence that small sections had been added piecemeal (Figures 8.4 and 8.5). This disregard for the authenticity of the fabric is seen in some examples of work in the 1970s to 1990s, but others show complete devotion to authenticity, as seen at Ightham Mote, discussed below. This was just one of the approaches of the period, to create an overall impression of a building which did not seem to have been altered. A very modern fire escape was also added. It was thought that a more historical design might have misled visitors into thinking there had been rear, upper-floor access at an earlier date (Figure 8.8).
Figure 8.7. Merchant's House, Plymouth during restoration in the 1970s (from local studies archive, Plymouth City Library)

Figure 8.8. Merchant's House, Plymouth. Rear view showing modern fire escape added in 1970s
The museum opened in 1977, but was under threat of closure again by the late 1990s. The *Evening Herald* reported on March 25th 1999 that, “the council wanted to cover the cost of keeping it [the Merchant’s House Museum] and the Barbican’s Elizabethan House open by attracting more visitors to them” (Grant 1999, 18). The local press did not support the council’s approach to opening the historic buildings of the city, criticising both council funding of them, and raising money through entrance fees: “leisure services committee approved a hike in admission charges ... The 90p admission charge for adults is being increased by over 11 per cent to £1. The charge for children aged between seven and 16 will rise by 60 per cent from 30p to 50p” (ibid). The charge to local people actually went down, and they could get in free for the last half-hour of each day (ibid).

The building itself is not part of the current exhibition, but is discussed in the guide leaflet. The dating is explained in terms of architectural features, and its history through the twentieth century to its reconstruction in the 1970s is described. The Old Plymouth Society, which had originally reconstructed the building, had almost ceased to exist but was relaunched in 1992, and was able to take it back in the late 1990s, following a phase of management by the National Trust (Old Plymouth Society 2003).

**Interpretation Centres and Reconstruction**

Interpretation strategies have started, in the last twenty years, to play an important part in the process of designing reconstruction projects, and will be considered in detail in this section. When conservation work was proposed at the Tudor House in Southampton it was designed on a pair of strands in a funding application: physical building reconstruction and interpretation (Kevin White, Curator, pers. comm.). It is now considered just as important that a building be interpreted properly for the public as for it to be preserved (Pearce 1990, 1-3). At the other extreme it is deemed archaeologically acceptable for a building to be demolished as long as it has been recorded, and the information held about the past within it has been extracted (Annis 1994, 209-218).

There has been a series of modern projects on a large scale which create new spaces for the interpretation of historic buildings within new buildings nearby. Blakesley Hall, discussed
above, is one of the pioneers of this type of work, the aims of the recent project being to remove the intrusive modern elements in the house so that more rooms can be returned to their seventeenth-century appearance. The separate new building provides facilities such as a tea-room, a shop and toilets, and in a new exhibition gallery the history of the local area, Yardley, is more fully interpreted. The extended garden is big enough for outdoor theatre and other events.

A similar project has been undertaken at the Weald and Downland Museum, with the construction of the modern Grindshell building, which houses the curatorial centre, the timber store, the archives and records and allows public access to the timber workrooms, and research access to the archives, which previously were rather awkwardly arranged. The use of interpretation centres lessens the need to alter historic buildings, although alterations for modern access are still being made, such as the work at Eastbury Manor in London in 2002-2003, which included the insertion of a modern lift (National Trust 2003, 178-179).

Shakespeare’s Globe is an interesting comparative project built in this period, and entirely of new materials, but using archaeological evidence about the structure of the building. Shakespeare’s Globe was constructed to function as a place for people to visit, as a theatre, and as an interpretation centre, and under the building is a large suite of interpretation and education spaces.

The conjectural nature of this building represents part of the aims of the project. The rebuilding of Shakespeare’s Globe in London is a form of experimental archaeology, “a thorough reconstruction ... needs a specific location and well informed users. These factors are the keys to the decision to rebuild The Globe in Southwark” (Gurr and Orrell 1989, 22). As early as 1912 Sir Edwin Lutyens designed a half-size model of the Globe for an exhibition of “Shakespeare’s England” at Earls Court (ibid., 33). The possibility of a new Globe was again discussed for the Festival of Britain in 1951 (ibid., 34). The idea was brought to fruition by Sam Wannamaker, and the role of Shakespeare’s Globe is to house productions, show people around the building, and explain its construction and features, to
allow actors to train on a stage as Shakespeare might have known it, and to gain a greater understanding of the ways in which Elizabethan theatres functioned (ibid., 27-28).

The building is itself almost entirely an interpretation centre, there being no historic fabric on the site. The structure is used to interpret how theatre space may have been used in the Tudor period, what the theatre may have looked like, and how it may have been built. There is ongoing debate about aspects of the reconstruction (Schadla-Hall 1999, 104-123). There is no denial that the building is conjectural, and it is designed to teach about the way a building like that would have been used.

Given the fragile and fragmentary nature of much of the evidence about The Globe's original design, the reconstruction ... must necessarily be regarded as conjectural. It is simply the best-informed conjecture that the present state of knowledge allows us to provide ... Any reconstruction involves some element of guesswork, and this scheme necessarily depends on quite a few guesses to fill gaps in our knowledge ... Without having tried to reconstruct the original shape we should know far less than we do at the present time about Shakespeare's Globe (Gurr and Orrell 1989, 42).

There has to be more behind an enterprise like rebuilding Shakespeare's Globe than to create a theatre to make money. "To rebuild history purely to create a new commercial use lacks commitment to our time and negates the potential of good modern architecture to achieve the same results" (Chitty 1987, 134).

Reconstructed for Residency and Opened to the Public
One of the groups of people responsible for opening buildings to the public have been private owners. In this period, more than at previous times, some of them developed a very different outlook from all other groups involved in opening buildings. The opening of buildings which are not primarily reconstructed with the public in mind, creates a tension between the notions of authenticity and the reality of the history of the building. It has was recognised that the visitors of the 1980s and 1990s were hoping to find an authentic portrayal of the past (Reynolds 1999, 112). In such a situation a range of aims comes into play, some of which look to recreate the past while others seek to create a new historic-style house.
An example of this is Kentwell Hall in Suffolk, which has been reconstructed by its owners since 1970 and is open to the public. In 1970, as the Phillips family were looking to buy the building, the Historic Buildings Council (HBC) agreed to “recommend that a grant of up to £22,500 to meet 50% of the cost of repairs should be offered to any prospective owner, subject to his proving financial need and his ability to carry out the conservation and reconstruction and make proper use of the building” (Historic Buildings Council 1970). The Phillips family bought the house in 1971 and have been working on it ever since. The HBC have part-funded the work (English Heritage Archive, Minutes of HBC meeting, 10.12.1970).

The focus in the public presentation of the building is on its reconstruction. It is not presented as a stately home, but as a house undergoing work to create a historicized masterpiece – and the guidebook concentrates on this aspect, at the expense of the earlier history of the building. Work started in the great hall, which was completed in the 1970s. Mock-timbers were inserted into the room, and the plasterwork was renewed, creating a gothic vision of a great hall (Kentwell Hall n.d.) (Figure 8.25). Not all the works were aimed simply at ensuring that the building was structurally sound. The floor of the great hall had been condemned in the 1970s, and was not replaced until 1999 (ibid.). Removing the joists revealed a Tudor brick floor, now again covered up, and almost all the timber had to be replaced – much had been affected by worm, beetle and dry-rot. Structural work in the 1980s and 1990s included re-roofing of sections and rebuilding of outbuildings (ibid.). Much of the concentration has been on interior redecoration of the main house. This has included the creation of the Chinese room, because the owners wanted one, rather than because of any earlier decorative scheme (ibid.). The owners are not willing to admit this, however, and state that they, “strive for authenticity in all we do to eliminate anachronisms” (Walsh 1992, 101).
Rooms have been altered in their appearance, though some early features have been revealed and retained, such as a blocked-up fireplace in the ante-room to the kitchen, which was previously obscured by later panelling. Areas have changed in use and style, and some are used very differently from how they were at any time in their history before the 1970s, for example the undercroft has been oak panelled, and the panels painted with murals. Some alterations to the building are simply for modern comforts, for example a one-storey extension made to the kitchen was made because, “when our children were young we needed a larger kitchen for the family” (Kentwell Hall n.d.). The owners are actively adding to the history of this house, rather than presenting the building as authentic to any period in the past. The estate has also gained some entirely new structures in the 1980s and 1990s: a ha-ha has been added in the garden, a sixteenth-century-style granary has been built and a cart lodge with a new queen-post roof constructed (ibid.). Other structures incorporate what was already there, for example the stableyard was made up from the 1930s sheds, using a mixture of materials to extend and make it safe for use as storage space (ibid.).
This type of display of a historic building which does not follow any one historic style could confuse visitors, but this is not something which can be controlled: anyone is free to own a house and alter it within listed building regulations, and open that house to the public. The only requirement to explain the history of the building and the reasons for reconstruction or alteration is to enable the visitor to understand the building, and therefore enjoy their visit.

**Preservation Trusts**

Private owners are one type of reconstructor with a particular philosophy, another type, with a contrasting philosophy, is the preservation trust. Two new buildings of the period 1400-1600 were acquired by preservation trusts and displayed to the public for the first time in this period. Many more continued to undergo reconstruction by preservation trusts which had owned them previously. Securing funding for purchase, conservation or reconstruction of buildings was among the greatest challenges for heritage sites and historic houses in the 1980s and 1990s. One means of applying for more grants was as a building preservation trust. This is defined as a charity which aims to preserve a building, or a group of buildings. There is an Association of Building Preservation Trusts, and since 1976 the Architectural Heritage Fund has supported building preservation trusts restoring buildings through low-interest loans and advice. The buildings discussed in this section are single-building trusts where, once the building was conserved, the trust assumed responsibility for its maintenance and running. Some building preservation trusts work on buildings, then sell them on, putting the profit from one venture into the next, but never retaining or maintaining a completed building for opening to the public (Architectural Heritage Fund 2003).

Preservation trusts associated with individual buildings were not new in the 1980s and 1990s, but had been a means of ensuring the preservation of historic buildings for many years. Samlesbury Hall in Lancashire had been one of the earliest examples. In 1925 the hall was to be sold, and it was taken over by a group of trustees and has been managed that way ever since. With Samlesbury this has meant that the building has had to be run in an economically viable way. It was used purely as a catering establishment in the 1950s and
1960s, and is now multifunctional, being open to the public as a historic house, with a café, an antiques shop and bookshop, and for weddings every Saturday, when it is closed to other visitors (Lancaster University Archaeology Unit 1997, 8-11, 38).

The Samlesbury Hall Building Trust is involved in works to the building. There have been three major phases of reconstruction under the Trust. The first, in the 1920s, immediately after the trustees took over, involved the partitioning of the upper end of the hall, re-using the historic screen at the opposite end in a modern form (Lancaster University Archaeology Unit 1997). In the 1970s the timbers were sandblasted to return them to a more natural colour, as may have been intended originally. They were repainted in their Victorian black
a few years later to conceal the replaced sections (ibid.). Most recently, since 1999 there
have been works to the south end of the west wing. They were aimed at the conservation of
the fabric, which was under threat from water seepage, and the removal of earlier twentieth-
century repairs which "do not meet current standards" (David Hornby, Director, pers.
comm.). The physical works to the building as part of the current programme reflect good
conservation practice, and involve the replacement of some decayed sections (Lancaster
University Archaeology Unit 1997) (Figure 8.9), and the making good of some previous
damaging repairs, such as ribbon pointing to brick and stonework (David Hornby, Director,
pers. comm.). Some internal alterations are also being reversed, as in the chapel, where
former inserted tie-beams are being removed (Lancaster University Archaeology Unit
1997). The status of the building as owned by a building preservation trust has made it
possible for the trustees to gain funding from English Heritage who place a high value on
long-term stable ownership of historic buildings and the work of building preservation
trusts (David Hornby, Director, pers. comm.).

Another building which had been protected by a building preservation trust since before the
1980s, but which underwent reconstruction in that period was Mary Newman's House in
Saltash, Cornwall. The house was taken over by the Tamar Protection Society in 1974,
when its previous owner died. The society aims to:

   Improve, protect and preserve for the benefit of the public the countryside
   and the country towns and villages of the Tamar and its surrounding area,
   and to educate the public in the local history of the area by provision of a
   museum.

   (Tamar Protection Society 1995, 14)

Mary Newman's House dates back to about 1450, but is displayed as it may have been
during the life of its most famous owner, Mary Newman, wife of Francis Drake. Mary
Newman lived from 1552 to 1583, and inhabited the house as a child (Tamar Protection
Society 1995, 1, 7). The aim of the 1980s project was to return the building to its
sixteenth-century form, reflecting the lifetime of its most famous inhabitant. Later inserted
features have not been entirely removed, and some are retained to show the development of
the building, such as the Georgian windows and shutters (Tamar Protection Society 1995,
1-4) (Figure 8.10). The work was completed and the building opened to the public in the mid-1980s. The picture below shows the internal woodwork, which has all been sanded and cleaned to make it appear as it would have done in the eighteenth century, and some sections have been replaced.

![Figure 8.10. Mary Newman's House, retained and reconstructed interior woodwork](image)

Another building managed by an individual building trust is King John's House in Romsey. The building was formally transferred to the ownership of the present trust in 1979. It was thought to have been a hunting lodge built by King John in 1206, but recent dendrochronological dating has proved it to be around fifty years later than that. The building is displayed as a medieval house, and has a reconstructed medieval garden behind it, which was created in 1994 (Allen 1999, 74-114).

Many buildings run by charitable trusts have to be commercially run to ensure that the building will be preserved in the long term. Hiring out buildings for weddings and similar events adds significantly to the income of many historic houses, and many give over much
of their time and presentation effort to that. The Director of King John's House in Romsey explained that, "presentation is low-key to allow for private hiring, but great care is taken in improving facilities" (Barbara Burbridge, pers. comm.).

One of the largest reconstruction projects of the last twenty years is now in the control of a local building preservation trust. Barley Hall in York was rediscovered as a historic building in the mid-1980s, the timber frame having been encased in brick and so many ad hoc additions having been made that its original form was barely recognisable (Michelmore 1987, 5). The York Archaeological Trust bought it in 1987, having been involved in excavations on the site in 1986. In 1986 the building had been listed for its fourteenth- and fifteenth-century fabric (York Archaeological Trust Archive). The listing was upgraded from II to II* following some of the discoveries made in the process of archaeological analysis, but this status has now been downgraded again following the reconstruction work.

The building was surveyed, and excavations undertaken in 1987 to establish the archaeological evidence about the early flooring and arrangements outside which could be used in the reconstruction (York Archaeological Trust Archive). The reconstruction work involved the removal and disposal of all the brickwork, the complete dismantling of the structure, and then the rebuilding of a structure on that site based on the evidence collected, and incorporating some historic timbers (ibid). One of the most contentious issues in the reconstruction was the creation of an external staircase in the courtyard to lead to the first floor of the north-west wing (Anon 1992). This was based on archaeological evidence, an area of brick and mortar was found in the courtyard which was interpreted as the base of an external staircase, so such a staircase was reconstructed, based on other examples of a similar type (York Archaeological Trust archive). The City Planning Officer for York in the early 1990s described the reconstruction as "fanciful" (Anon 1992, 12). In the early reconstruction plans for the building there were alternatives in the ways that it could have been laid out, with doors opened in different walls to create circular routes around the building. This suggests a disregard for the historical evidence of the layout in order to provide a building which modern visitors could move around easily. The building has now
been heavily reconstructed, and a majority of the timbering, all the infill panels and all the internal features are modern recreations (York Archaeological Trust Archive) (Figure 8.11).

Figure 8.11. External view of Barley Hall. All the timber visible was replaced in the 1980s and 1990s

Figure 8.12. Interior of the Hall at Barley Hall, showing the reconstructed dais
Figures 8.13 and 8.14. Archway to screens passage at Barley Hall, before and after reconstruction, showing removal of brickwork, and reconstruction of timber-framing and plaster panels (Figure 8.13 from York University Archaeology Department slide collection)

Much of the reconstruction is somewhat conjectural, the reconstruction of a hood over the dais in the great hall, for example, being based on similar surviving examples, though there was no evidence in the building to suggest that there ever was one at Barley Hall (York Archaeological Trust Archive) (Figure 8.12). The alternative designs for reconstruction did not include this, and placed a door in that wall, highlighting the lack of good evidence in this building of its former state (ibid.).

The building has been completely transformed, brickwork removed, and timber replaced. This type of work is on a different level from what was seen at the Merchant’s House in Plymouth, some ten years earlier. The building has been substantially rebuilt, and is now a modern reproduction of what might have been there in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.
The rear range of the building is a sixteenth-century addition, and is brick-built. It has been retained as a remnant of a later phase, which is discussed in the guidebook as the decline of the building, when that range was used as a plumber’s premises (Kightly 1999, 14). This section is therefore not interpreted for its part in the history of the building. The preservation of this section makes the image of the medieval building more difficult to appreciate by setting it against a later section of the building. The act of retaining this section is also detrimental to visitors’ understanding of the arrangement of the medieval building. The route around the building takes the visitor into sections of different periods, without fully explaining their roles and relationships. The route from the kitchen to the hall, for example, would originally have been through the screens passage, but this is now an external alley (Figures 8.13 and 8.14). Access from the hall to the service rooms is now upstairs to the private chamber, through the sixteenth-century extension and down into an ante-room and into the service rooms (Figure 8.15).

Some of the materials used in the reconstruction are traditional, the reconstructors have recreated the framing using oak and traditional methods. Some of the materials are very modern, however, such as the infill panels, which are expanded wire mesh and modern plaster rather than traditional wattle and daub. The York Archaeological Trust seem to
have used these as cheaper alternatives, and Peter Addyman defended their decision with the proposition that the use of modern materials in non-structural sections made it possible to replace them with something more suitable as finance became available (Figure 8.16). The finance has not become available; in fact the project has not been economically successful, the guidebook even describing how the building was passed to a trust following “a period of financial problems” (Gill Page, Property Manager, pers. comm.). In the early 2000s these problems are being overcome, and funding from visitors, weddings and events is increasing (Gill Page, Property Manager, pers. comm.).

![Figure 8.16. Expanded metal lath with modern plasterboard infill](image)

Plans show that the York Archaeological Trust were expecting the reconstruction to attract large numbers of visitors. One early plan of the possible alterations to the building which was never carried out, shows a circular route created around the building with a door inserted in the north wall of the hall, and outside barriers, planned to allow for queuing visitors to wait in order (Charles Kightly, personal collection). The discrepancy between the internal arrangements shown in different early architects’ plans for the building shows how much evidence about the true history was lacking, and what a high level of conjecture was being substituted (York Archaeological Trust Archive). The visitor moves through spaces from the shop to an annexe with foodstuffs to another hallway with modern toilets, and then into the hall, which is decorated with highly colourful medieval-style wall
hangings, reproduction pottery based closely on the collection from the Yorkshire Museum (Jennings 1992), and anachronistic Victorian-style brass candlesticks. This level of conjectural reconstruction in historic buildings is uncommon, especially as recently as the late 1980s, but it shows the level of confidence which was being developed about buildings and their display to the public.

**Long-Term Processes of Change within Buildings**

Academic approaches to historic buildings constructed between 1400 and 1600 have altered considerably over the last twenty years. The notions of the great rebuilding, the reformation and the medieval – post-medieval divide have been renegotiated (Johnson 1986; 1993; 1996; Gaimster and Stamper 1997). The complexities of the changes through the period now known as the Age of Transition were being recognised, and discussed from newly-conceived theoretical viewpoints. The confidence which the reconstructors showed in their work to Barley Hall was not being supported by any unanimous view amongst academic archaeologists about the nature of buildings or of other aspects of society.

Notions like the Great Rebuilding had long been debated (Hoskins 1953; Machin 1977; Alcock 1983; Johnson 1986). The work of Johnson was innovative, and marked a new direction in the study of buildings dated 1400 – 1600. Johnson was one of the first archaeologists confidently to apply the approaches of post-processual archaeological theory to the study of buildings (Johnson 1993). His research focussed on physical alterations to buildings in the period 1400 to 1600, which he related to changes in society. He termed this process of change ‘closure’ (ibid.). Johnson also considered changes to the material culture within houses, as seen through probate inventories, and related these to changes in the importance of status symbols, from the space of a large hall being valued to more furnishings, especially soft furnishings, being valued (ibid.; Spufford 1984).

Historic building reconstruction lags considerably behind the academic understanding of the subject. A delay of many years can be seen before any new interpretation is likely to be presented. This research has sought to identify the changing approaches to historic buildings, outlining the need to look at their history in its entirety. The notion of change
and the multi-phase nature of all historic buildings is not widely presented, but there have been a few notable successes in trying to show how buildings develop, and how succeeding generations have placed their mark on the building.

One key example is Sutton House in Hackney, London (Figure 8.17). This building was acquired by the National Trust in 1938. The Trust were unable to concentrate efforts or funds on this site through the Second World War, or immediately afterwards, when their work was primarily focussed on the Country Houses Scheme. They let the building out to tenants, including the Mission for the Relief of the Suffering Poor, Hackney Social Services and the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staff (Gray 1992, 30). None of these tenants had funds to work on the building, and all made minor alterations to suit their varied needs. In the 1980s the National Trust failed to find suitable tenants for the building, and it was left empty from 1982 (National Trust Archive, Sutton House). During the 1980s it was inhabited by squatters, and was used for rock concerts (Gray 1992, 30)! After the squatters were evicted thieves removed some of the historic features of the building, including fireplaces and Tudor panelling (ibid.). The panelling was recovered and with the remaining panelling was put into storage by the National Trust away from the site (ibid.). Sutton House was boarded up. The National Trust then attempted to sell the building to a developer for conversion into flats (ibid., 31). The local community opposed this and the Sutton House Society was formed. Between 1987 and 1989 the Society planned a scheme for refurbishment, which was implemented from 1990 to 1994 (Mike Grey pers. comm.). The philosophy of this reconstruction work was to give snippets of the appearance of the house at different times in the past (Mike Grey pers. comm.) (Figures 8.18 and 8.19). This created a complex account of the history of the building, displaying representative features of its past from its construction in phases from 1535 to its inhabitation by squatters. Through this progressive project, which reflected academic understanding of historic buildings, Sutton House, formerly one of the National Trust’s least esteemed properties, has become one of the best interpreted, with much concentration on how the building and the people who have lived in it in the past can be understood through the analysis of the different aspects of its structure.
Another example of a building, which has been reconstructed with many different phases in mind, is the Longport Farmhouse at the Weald and Downland Museum (Figure 8.20). The building was dismantled in 1992 as part of the development for the Channel Tunnel (Harris...
1992, 3-4). The Canterbury Archaeological Trust and the Weald and Downland Museum recognised that it was a typical Kent farmhouse, and that it had been built in the sixteenth century, and developed, augmented and altered ever since (ibid., 4).

The current building at the Weald and Downland Museum is a combination of a sixteenth century wing, which originally formed the private chambers at the upper end of the hall, and a hall, and service bay moved to the site in the seventeenth century, and erected at the opposite side of the surviving wing to the original hall, which was demolished, though the date of this demolition is unknown (Harris 1997, 3-7). The aim of the reconstruction was to display several aspects of the history of the building. “In the reconstruction we have tried to reconstruct faithfully the historic building as it came into the 20th century, with all its phases of alteration” (ibid., 7). The one alteration which was made was the decision not to reconstruct the seventeenth-century chimney stack, which instead has had its ground plan marked out with bricks in the floor. The option to reconstruct it in the future remains – the bricks are marked and recorded and maintained in the museum’s collection. The space was left to allow visitors to see the relationship between the two sections of the building clearly, which would be obscured by the stack (ibid.).
Conservation of Historic Buildings

Conservation and reconstruction were becoming increasingly intertwined in the 1980s and 1990s. The removal of later additions can be seen to be an act of reconstruction, or could be described in terms of its importance for the stability of a structure. Making a building more ‘historic’ in appearance was not cited as a reason for carrying out works in any 1980s or 1990s documentation seen in this research, but that was still an incidental effect of much work. The pressure for conservation, as seen in previous periods through a series of conservation movements was more formalised in this era, with legislation, conservation officers, and project workers working to ensure buildings were suitably preserved (DoE 1997). Pressure groups such as the SPAB started to feed into this formal conservation strategy through listed building casework under PPG 15 (ibid.).

Conservation’ is now the term which is used when works are carried out to historic buildings. This term implies careful work which is needed to ensure that the fabric of the structure is sound, and will be preserved into the future. Works to historic buildings almost always include this type of work, but many also include within the project work which is not structurally necessary, but is instead done to make the building appear as it did at some time in the past. As discussed at the Longport Farmhouse, above, there are almost always decisions about what should be preserved, where and how.

In Chapter Seven it was seen that much work to historic buildings in the later twentieth century involved the reversal of previous alterations. This remained the case through the 1980s and 1990s. Many buildings which were repaired, conserved and altered in the late nineteenth century have recently undergone more work, often with the aim of undoing inadvertent damage which was done a hundred years ago. This was the case at Hall i’ th’ Wood near Bolton, discussed in Chapter Five. The early conservation and reconstruction work was carried out by Jonathon Simpson, and the firm of Grayson and Ould of Liverpool (Mills 1995, 23). It followed the practice of the time, and was considered good meticulous work; but a re-examination of the structure in 1992 revealed that these repairs, which had been undertaken in pine, were not structurally sound (ibid.). An area of roof sag had been treated by leaving a rotten A-frame in place, and plating it with pine, the long-term result
being that when the roof was re-examined in the early 1990s, it was found that the purlins were holding up the A-frame, not vice-versa (ibid.).

Conservation in this instance was therefore seen to be necessary for the structure. In other areas, however, the pine was adequate to maintain the structure, for example in the east elevation of the sixteenth-century extension of the hall (Mills 1995, 23-4). A decision was made to retain this pine, as it is now itself a part of the building’s history, although further conservation work may be required in the future. The roof was repaired again in 1995, and the works were fully recorded through a photographic survey (ibid., 25). Little of this extensive work is now clearly visible in the building except from inside the roofspace. All the recent renovation work has been carried out with oak, and there has been minimal use of modern materials (ibid.).

A major conservation project in the 1980s and 1990s was carried out at Ightham Mote in Kent. The south façade of Ightham Mote has undergone a series of modifications. It was altered in the early twentieth century, and Elizabethan-style studs were added to the external face of the upper floor, over the plastered and painted frontage, behind which is the structural frame (interpretation panel 2002). There was a debate about the conservation philosophy to be applied in the 1990s to works less than a hundred years old. The interpretation panels at the site explain, “normally the Trust would not contemplate restoration but in this case a repair would involve applying wholly new material to reproduce a 1900 alteration. Elsewhere we have followed conservation principles with piecemeal repair of the frame and refrained from replacing sound late timbers” (interpretation panel 2002). The decision was made to retain the timbers which date to 1904 because “the alterations ... have contributed to the familiar image of the house for the last 70 years” (interpretation panel 2002) (Figure 8.21). This was another case where there were decisions to be made about the works to be undertaken, and a choice had to be made as to whether to reconstruct the Victorian work or the medieval. The National Trust justify their decision to reconstruct the Victorian appearance because of its aesthetics and its familiarity (interpretation panel 2002) (Figure 8.22). The structural stability of the building is therefore not the only issue in this conservation.
The National Trust have utilised this philosophy throughout the building, making it appear as it did when they acquired it, reconstructing every layer which they have uncovered back to the medieval and Tudor work, and then returning the appearance to more modern
periods, reflecting the complete history of the building as accurately as possible in their reconstruction, rather than taking the building back to one arbitrary time (Channel 4 2004).

Much of the framework has had to be renewed, following the philosophy of piecemeal replacement only where necessary, and new sections have been scarfed in using traditional joints found elsewhere in the building (Figure 8.23). Some of this work has been to the late nineteenth-century timbers, which are softwood, with cement panels between. “These [panels] were not porous and shed water into joints between the panels and the frame resulting in fungal and insect attack” (interpretation panel 2002). The conservation work has also involved replicating traditional methods of carpentry: “traditional timber jointing methods were used incorporating English oak into the building fabric” (interpretation panel, 2002).

![Figure 8.23. Window to courtyard at Ightham Mote, showing replaced timbers which are fitted into place using traditional joinery techniques such as scarf joints](image)

The architect maintains that replacing sections which were unsuitable late-nineteenth-century insertions is not a primary aim of the current conservation work at Ightham Mote, although it has been done in some areas of the building (Stuart Page, pers. comm.).
The Listed Building Consent Application included works to remove later internal dividing walls within the house. The application was to "remove partition between servants' hall and strong room, remove strong room, remove temporary partitions to chapel and solar. Remove stud partition dividing north-south solar. Remove ceiling over north-south solar. Change use from Butler’s rooms to Administrator’s office" (SPAB Archive, Ightham Mote file, Application dated 7.11.1988). In the fifteen years since this application was submitted the conservation philosophy and aims of the work have developed. There has been an archaeologist involved in the work from the outset, and this has enabled recording work to be undertaken at every stage (Channel 4 2004). This will be invaluable in the future, and should allow for informed decisions to continue to be made about the presentation of the building in time to come.

The primary motivation for reconstruction work is the necessity for conservation, to prevent any damage to a building through its falling into disrepair. As seen at Ightham Mote and Hall i’ th’ Wood, Victorian restorations have often themselves been damaging. Architects and conservators now use traditional materials and techniques to replace sections of buildings, for example lime plaster is used for infill panels, rather than concrete mixes, and oak is used in preference to other woods for structural timbers.

Another building where previous conservation work had caused damage which needed to be repaired is the Tudor House Museum in Southampton. The repair bid was made to address the two main structural defects of the building. The management of water off the building has been poor, which has resulted in water seeping into the base, and into the building at wallplate level, causing rot (Kevin White, Curator, pers. comm.). There has also been seepage of water into the north gable, where the gable is a façade which was added in the late nineteenth century, and water has seeped between the original façade and the added one (Kevin White, Curator, pers. comm.). The other problem is that the building is bowing, at the level between ground and first floor, and steel ties need to be inserted to pull it back into shape. One of the aims of the current repair programme is to retain some sections of the Victorian restoration, as this is recognised as part of its history (Kevin White, Curator, pers. comm.). The second phase of this work will involve obtaining
separate funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for re-interpretation inside (Kevin White, Curator, pers. comm.).

Similarly at Blakesley Hall works between 2000 and 2002 have involved the removal of more modern intrusions, such as a boiler and some incongruous radiators and heating pipes, and redecoration (Katherine Sayle, Education Officer, pers. comm.). The redecoration involved the whitewashing of the whole of the interior of the hall, including the screens passage. The screens passage was reconstructed in the 1970s, and is now much less distinguishable from the original timberwork than it had been in the original reconstruction (Figure 8.24). Reconstructed sections of buildings can gradually become part of their fabric and their history, and will become less and less obvious, which will make interpretation harder for the non-specialist visitor.

![Figure 8.24. Screens passage at Blakelsey Hall, reconstructed in the 1970s, whitewashed in 2002. Now more difficult to distinguish from the original timbers than when first reconstructed](image)

There have also been changes in the interpretation of Blakesley Hall. There were discussions in the 1970s and 1980s about its use for educational interpretations of the 1830s
and 1920s, and it was considered whether this should be done alongside Tudor interpretation or separately, and whether it should be done with schools or with guided tours (Price 1978). A former resident, Mrs O.M. Merry, was recorded talking about her experiences visiting and working as a maid at Blakesley between 1912 and 1932. She talks about how the different rooms were used in her routine, which forms an invaluable resource for the interpretation. The building is now presented as a Tudor house, and Mrs Merry's oral history is available to all visitors on audio sticks in the rear range of the building, which is used as an education room.

International Context for English Conservation Philosophy and Legislation

In the 1980s conservation followed many of the same principles as those of the 1970s, now formally expressed in the Department of the Environment circular 8/87. This document was an advisory paper, and was the first to state the desirability of preserving ancient monuments and their settings as a material consideration in the planning process. It created the categories of listed building, and the criteria for listing (DoE 1987). This was then superseded by Planning and Policy Guidance Note 15, which expanded on the details of appropriateness of alterations to, or demolition of, historic and listed buildings (DoE 1994). As described above this legislation formalised much of the work of the contemporary conservation movement, and created a forum for organisations to feed into the process.

The legislation of the time encouraged preservation of heritage sites and their presentation to the public (National Heritage Act 1980). The legal distinction between historic buildings and archaeological sites increased, resulting in more specific and suitable legislation to protect each (Monuments and Historic Buildings Act 1988; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Britain was also involved in international agreements about archaeological heritage management, and preservation of the archaeological resource. In 1985 the Granada Convention was signed, requiring "ratifying countries to introduce legal procedures to prevent the disfigurement, dilapidation or demolition of protected properties. These maintenance obligations avoid the necessity for full scale restoration at a later date" (Council of Europe n.d., article 4.2). This reflects much of the philosophy behind the early work of the SPAB. It has taken a hundred years to
make this a requirement of national and international law. The challenge now is to enforce that law. The Lausanne Charter for Archaeological Heritage Management (1990) aimed to create a professional structure for the preservation of historic monuments, as well as legislation within ratifying countries for the protection of their archaeological heritage – be it underground or part of the built environment (ICOMOS 1996). The Charter recognized the value of archaeological research in understanding the past, but championed non-destructive methods of finding out about archaeological material (ibid.). Archaeological heritage management it holds, should aim to preserve heritage in situ, and there should be provision for the long-term care of the site, including research, presentation and reconstruction where these are deemed to be suitable (ibid.). The Charter also recommended the promotion of teaching of current issues in tertiary education, and the creation of professional qualifications in the specific fields encompassed within Archaeological Heritage Management (ibid.). These conservation agreements reflect the wider ethic of the conservation movement, but some aspects of the philosophical debate are not reflected in such charters relating to historic buildings, such as the aim to make conservation work reversible and visible.

To make the aims and requirements for individual buildings more explicit, conservation plans have come to be seen as a necessity for historic buildings. They are required by funding agencies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, and are seen as the proper framework within which to undertake work to historic buildings. The National Trust have prepared them for each of their buildings. The Heritage Lottery Fund have published guidelines about how to write a conservation plan (Clark 1998).

One building which is managed through use of a conservation plan, which has closely guided the reconstruction work, is Fiddleford Manor in Dorset. The plan outlines both the past of the building, the restoration, reconstruction and conservation work already undertaken, and the future requirements of the structure to ensure its survival and promote its understanding by the public (English Heritage Archive, Bristol, Fiddleford Manor File). The building was taken over for management by the Ministry of Works in 1959, before which time it had been occupied by the Pitt Rivers family, who still own the building,
although it is now managed by English Heritage (English Heritage unpublished). There has been considerable reconstruction work undertaken: in the early 1980s there were repairs to the roof to make it watertight, and some sections of the building were rebuilt using modern brick. This has been cemented over, but the alterations remain highly visible to allow the public to interpret the building for themselves (ibid.) (Figures 8.26 and 8.27).

Figure 8.26. Fiddleford Manor undergoing conservation work in the 1980s (from English Heritage Offices, Bristol)

Figure 8.27. Fiddleford Manor after completion of conservation work
The interior has also been substantially dismantled and reconstructed (Figures 8.28, 8.29 and 8.30). This allowed for conservation of internal wood and recording of the structure (ibid.). Excavations were conducted inside the building in 1983, and following that the gallery over the screens passage was reconstructed from some original panels, and some newly-inserted ones, where sections had been altered.

Figures 8.28 and 8.29. Galleried screens passage at Fiddleford Manor during extensive conservation work and reconstruction (from English Heritage Offices, Bristol)

Now that the building has a conservation plan, these works and some of the archives relating to them are together in one document, and future works can be discussed in the context of what is already known and future aims and repairs.

Figure 8.30. Reconstructed gallery at Fiddleford Manor
Where a building does not have a conservation plan, legislation is used to protect it. New amendments to historic building legislation continued to be made in the 1980s and 1990s, making the conditions for listed building consent more formal, and strengthening enforcement of listing legislation (Mynors 1999). Legislation also created the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage), created under the 1983 National Monuments Act. In 1999 the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments was subsumed into English Heritage, again increasing their role in offering advice about works to historic buildings. English Heritage are involved in listing decisions, actively recording and surveying, and making records available at the National Monuments Record (English Heritage 2000; English Heritage 2001).

**Authenticity and the Heritage Industry**

Historic Houses are part of the wider ‘heritage industry’, a growth in the heritage industry has been identified in the 1980s and 1990s (Hewison 1987). According to Hewison, the creation of numerous heritage centres reflects the lack of modern industry and innovation, and shows an increasing reliance on the past (Hewison 1987). One of the most famous heritage centres is Wigan Pier, opened in 1986. Hewison compares the heritage centre attraction with the modern industry in the area, and the mock-Tudor shopping centre in the town (ibid. 20-23). New building in the late 1980s and 1990s has often been sympathetic to a towns’ historic aesthetic, and the Galleries shopping centre in Wigan, criticised by Hewison because it replaced Victorian buildings, incorporates mock-Tudor details in the balconies and eaves which reflect the surroundings (ibid.). These are modern creations, not truly authentic to any period past or present, but designed to complement their environment.

Hewison’s views do not necessarily represent the ways in which people are thinking about history. From the 1980s visitors started to become more aware of alterations being made to buildings, and more interested to know how authentic the structure they are viewing is. This is evidenced through the amount of information which guidebooks provide on that topic. The *Historic Houses Handbook*, published 1981, for example, is keen to note where buildings have been reconstructed and reworked. Gawsworth Hall, near Macclesfield, is
described as "like all such houses, with a number of later additions" and at Peover Hall, near Knutsford, visitors find, "in the mid 1960s a large eighteenth century range was taken down, leaving the older house behind" (Burton 1981, 46, 49, 111). There has been an increasing frustration with unrealistic claims about the historicity of buildings. This has resulted in ironic descriptions such as that in a leaflet displayed on the tables of De Grey’s café in Ludlow in the 1990s, which stated,

Among the distinctions enjoyed by the De Grey building may be mentioned the facts that it is the only house in England where Queen Elizabeth I has not spent a night, and also where Dick Turpin has not stabled his famous mare Black Bess. Of course there can be no doubt that had they been alive today both Queen Elizabeth I and Dick Turpin would have stopped at De Greys ... because the food is so excellent and the prices so reasonable!

(leaflet at De Grey’s)

This interest in authenticity has also led to newer research being fed into the presentation of houses, sometimes with important consequences. Mary Arden’s Cottage near Stratford, for example, has undergone a change in emphasis since it was found not to have been the house where Shakespeare’s mother lived.

The managers of Shakespeare’s former estate admitted their embarrassment yesterday after revealing that in the past 70 years millions of visitors have been guided round a house which had no connection with the Bard. Since 1930 some 100,000 tourists a year have made the pilgrimage to the village of Wilmcote in Warwickshire, paying to look round the house where Shakespeare’s mother, Mary Arden was said to have lived before moving to Stratford upon Avon. Research by Nat Alcock has revealed that the nearby glebe farm is in fact Mary Arden’s House. Roger Pringle, director of the Birthplace Trust said, “I believe Dr. Alcock’s discovery justifies the Trust’s commitment to making people aware of the evidence for our historic houses.

Fortunately for the Birthplace Trust, next door Glebe Farm was Mary Arden’s house. It was previously furnished as it might have been in the early twentieth century (Pringle 1986, 30-31). The farm was acquired by Shakespeare’s Birthplace Trust in 1968, conserved and reconstructed and incorporated into the site. Ironically this building was acquired and displayed because it was a fine sixteenth-century farmhouse, rather than for any association with Shakespeare.
Basically there has been no change in the layout of the building from Shakespeare's time to the present ... Originally open from the floor to the raftered roof, the hall was subsequently converted into two storeys by the insertion of a floor supported by a massive oak beam, thus making possible another bedroom above. Later another wing was added and used as the servant's quarters.

(Fox 1987, 4)

While Hewison characterises the rise of the heritage industry as decline rather than growth, he also admits the role of heritage sites as objects of pride and prestige, and accepts their ability to focus ideas of civic and national identity, suggesting that they are taking a place previously held by a ruler or the church (Hewison 1987, 20-22). The role of the past and historic buildings in modern people's lives is an issue which has gained importance in recent years. English Heritage's publication, *Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment* (2000), reflects the growth in importance of the past in people's lives in recent years. It was published following a national survey by MORI, which highlighted how people valued the historic environment, and their interest in it. Here the historic environment is presented as a stimulus for pride and economic success. English Heritage's follow-on document *The Historic Environment: A Force for the Future* will be discussed in Chapter Nine (English Heritage 2001).

**Englishness and Popular demand for History**

It has been seen that interest in and visiting of historic buildings has waxed and waned through the period from 1979. Buildings have continued to open to the public, and new museums and heritage sites have been established (Hewison 1987, 9). There was, therefore, ongoing interest in and demand for places of historic interest to visit. The media portrayal of history, archaeology and historic buildings in the 1980s and 1990s was an important element in the drive to continue reconstructing historic buildings, and the maintenance of public interest in them as representations of the English past (ibid., 51-2). Through the 1980s and 1990s history and archaeology developed into major areas of entertainment, "the zeitgeist is for popular demand for history, as a means of relaxation. History is seen as an easy and immediate form of entertainment, as if it were detached from the reality of the past" (Strike 1994, 16). The growth of the heritage industry seems to have mirrored this interest. The heritage industry itself, however, has also been seen as a threat
to historically accurate and academically innovative approaches to the past: reconstructors are more likely to produce what they think visitors want to see than a true reflection of the past history of an individual building (Uzzell 1989, 4). For example, clichés such as priest holes are presented in tours at many different buildings, rather than promoting a concentration on what is distinctive, different, and interesting about that individual building. The wider social issues which are represented by these features, religious conflict in particular, are also not explored to any depth. It has been argued that the ‘Living History’ approach has commodified the past, and resulted in people experiencing interpretations of it rather than gaining an understanding of the variety of issues which surround the study of the past, and the alternative ways in which it could be presented (Brisbane and Wood 1996, 27).

Historic building reconstructions are only one of the many different ways in which people experience interpretations of the English past. Novels, factual texts, magazines, websites, films, television and events such as medieval banquets and re-enacted battles all contribute to the creation of notions about the past. The images created in this period do not necessarily reflect stereotypical views of the English past. When history has been popularised through films and television series, the tendency has again been to concentrate on big names and big events such as the wives of Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, Shakespeare, and major battles. There are still only a few attempts to present the everyday life of ordinary people in the medieval or Tudor periods, or the transitions which they faced, to a wide audience. Of all the medieval and Tudor buildings owned by the National Trust, only one, Buckland Abbey, is used to interpret the lives of the “below stairs” staff. In recent years archaeology programmes have become more popular than history programmes, and *Time Team* certainly inspires interest in archaeology, the landscape and historic buildings. Until recently historic buildings have been an aside, and *House Detectives* was always a smaller and less bold programme than *Time Team*. The BBC series *Restoration*, aired in 2003 and 2004, highlighted, in a way that had not been done effectively since the 1970s, the number of buildings under threat, and the extent to which funding is needed to repair and restore them.
English Heritage have worked throughout the 1990s and 2000s to identify the buildings most at threat and place them on the Buildings At Risk Register. These buildings have also continued to gain funding for conservation and reconstruction work. A sample register of buildings at risk was completed in 1992, and the first edition of the full register was published in 1998. This contained details of all Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings which were then considered at risk. The next year the register was updated, and then included 1,428 entries. The latest Buildings At Risk Register, published 2002, contains 1,373 buildings. This equates to 3.6% of the stock of Grade I and II* listed buildings in England (English Heritage 2003). Restoration approached this problem with a game-show style format at the end of which only one building could be restored. In this context the term was used to suggest conservation rather than reconstruction or restoration in the Victorian sense. Buildings were put forward by their owners, often building preservation trusts or other local groups. This may have the long-term effect of raising the general public’s awareness of the number of local enthusiasts working to maintain the heritage. The one building which gained the funding in 2003 was the Victoria Baths in Manchester, voted for by the audience. The “restoration” work there is now under way and the series has raised awareness of other buildings, some of which have received funding from elsewhere. The public chose a building which is perhaps surprisingly recent, which required a limited amount of work to make it structurally sound, and therefore one which would be opened to the public directly as a result of this funding, and did not require further money for other works. The building chosen is, interestingly, one which has always been a public building, rather than a private one. Ironically, the Victoria Baths’ closest competing neighbour geographically, Bank Hall in Lancashire, is now faced with the possibility of demolition.

There is also a growing number of factual publications, popular books, magazines, and websites, which provide information about the past, which feed the public interest in historic buildings. One magazine such magazine is Country Life, Marcus Binney, the editor of Country Life magazine between 1984 and 1986, became chairman of SAVE Britain’s Heritage in 1975, and Chairman of Heritage Link, an umbrella organisation for all non-governmental heritage organisations, in 2002. As seen in previous chapters, Country Life has always had links with heritage preservation societies, such as the SPAB, and the
architectural editor of *Country Life*, Clive Aslet, was also the president of the Thirties Society through the late 1980s (Hewison 1987, 58). *Country Life* magazine and the SPAB have also long had close relationships with the National Trust. The evolution of principles behind reconstruction and conservation were governed in this period by a closely-linked group of organizations, spurred on and made possible by public knowledge, interest and concern. More recently the *BBC History Magazine* has become popular and influential in raising awareness of lesser-known aspects of history, with current circulation figures at over 52,000 annually (Audit Bureau of Circulation 2004).

**Summary**

Many different types of approach have been seen through this period of historic building reconstruction. One of the new developments seen in this chapter is the emphasis on interpretation, especially with the development of interpretation centres at buildings like Blakesley Hall, and the intertwining of reconstruction and interpretation as seen at the Tudor House in Southampton.

One of the types of organisation involved in reconstruction in this period, which has been discussed in detail, is the building preservation trust, which is often set up to reconstruct and open just one building to the public as a charitable organisation. Securing funding has been one of the greatest challenges in this period, and has often depended on evidence of popularity. Building preservation trusts are often given prefential treatment in funding decisions from organisations such as the Architectural Heritage Fund.

Historic buildings are seen, through this chapter, as having continued relevance to people, and this has been stimulated by the media. This has led to good visitor numbers for many buildings, while a few like Ordsall Hall and the Merchant’s House in Plymouth suffered a decline and were even threatened with closure as a result of lack of funding and poor attendance. Proof of popularity was not, of course, proof of good reconstruction or conservation work, or accurate or innovative presentation techniques.
Academic understanding of historic houses dating between 1400 and 1600 has developed considerably in the last twenty years, but with a few honourable exceptions historic buildings have not been presented to the public using many of these ideas or new approaches. Sutton House has been seen as an exception, where the different eras of the house are all presented within the structure, allowing the changes and development to the building to be explored by visitors.

Some works to historic buildings are, of course, necessary for their structural stability and long-term survival. This conservation work is discussed in relation to reconstruction, and in some cases, such as Ightham Mote, it is seen that decisions about the historic appearance of the building have had to be made in the process of conservation, creating a confusing conflation of the two separate types of work.

In these more recent works to reconstruct historic buildings it has not been found that creating an image of Englishness is a chief consideration; in fact many buildings reconstructed in this period are urban examples, and buildings which do not conform to a romantic ideal. Decisions not to concentrate on typically English buildings in this period may reflect something of the aim to widen access to historic buildings, and make them more relevant to a wide range of people, but these considerations must be tempered with the fact that many of the buildings which epitomise Englishness are the most-visited.

The growth in visiting, and the increased interest in finance for historic building has led to discussions of the heritage ‘industry’. Against that background authenticity has been an issue, to ensure that the visitor’s experience is rich. It has also been seen that in some cases authenticity has not been an aim when the works were carried out, even when the term has been used in writing about a building or a project. Legislation through the period has assisted the quest for authenticity by promoting both maintenance and good heritage management, from training of new managers through to government policy toward historic buildings. In this situation steps are clearly currently being taken to ensure that there will be people qualified to manage the past, and through English Heritage the value of the historic environment is being promoted by the government.
Chapter Nine: Data Analysis and Graphic Representations of Reconstruction Work

Broad-Scale Influences in Historic Building Reconstruction – Regional Variation – Reconstructors – Building Material – Number of Reconstructions – Recording and Interpreting Multiple Reconstructions: Toward a Model – Case Study One: Blakesley Hall – Case Study Two: Dragon Hall – Case Study Three: Great Dixter – Case Study Four: Hall i’ th’ Wood – Case Study Five: Sutton House – Detailed Histories – Detailed Visual Modelling – Past Reconstruction and Future Works – Will Visitors Care?

This thesis has approached the question, “How have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings?” This chapter will approach the second half of that research question through the creation of graphic representations of historic building reconstruction which could form a model for understanding the history of building reconstruction, and considering how that could aid future works to historic buildings. I will therefore be answering the final subsidiary research question, “Can understanding the history of reconstruction provide a model which could aid the future works to historic buildings?”

The previous five chapters have traced some of the key changes in approaches to historic buildings which have been identified since c1877. It has been shown that there have been many different organisations involved in works to historic buildings, including the National Trust, the SPAB, English Heritage, local authorities and museums services, private owners and historic building trusts. These groups have had different priorities and aims throughout the period since c1877, and the ways in which they have approached the reconstruction of buildings have evolved through that time. Despite significant divergences of practice it is possible to see some wider patterns in the approaches and aims at different times, and these have been identified in Chapters Four to Eight. Chapter Four saw the birth of historic building reconstruction, and the growth of conservation organisations such as the SPAB and the National Trust. In Chapter Five, covering the interwar period, the interest is seen to move towards the use of smaller historic buildings as local museums and folk museums. After the Second World War, the National Trust Country Houses Scheme came to guide their acquisition policy, and interpretation of larger houses became more common, as
discussed in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven covers some key movements in historic building reconstruction in the 1960s and 1970s. A boom in physical reconstruction of historic buildings, including the establishment of open-air museums, have been highlighted. Through the last twenty-five years there has been a growth in smaller building preservation trusts working on historic houses, and a wider range of types of building and types of reconstruction have started to be employed. It is these latest developments that form the subject of Chapter Eight.

This chapter aims to analyse reconstruction patterns further to identify possible additional influential factors (eg. regionality, building material etc.) to see if there are other underlying patterns. This analysis will be followed by consideration of the holistic history of a few case studies which will then lead to the creation of a model for the understanding of historic building reconstruction. Applications of the model are then considered in relation to possible future interpretation and reconstruction work.

**Broad-Scale Influences in Historic Building Reconstruction**

This section aims to understand the effect of some macro-scale influences on the patterns of reconstruction through time. Numerous factors beyond those already discussed in Chapters Four to Eight could have an effect on the dates and ways in which buildings have undergone reconstruction work. In order to answer the overriding research question: “how have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings?” it is important to understand what impacts a range of additional factors might have had on building reconstruction. Some of these have received mention in Chapters Four to Eight, but this section serves to highlight such themes, and connect evidence discussed in different chapters relating to different periods.

A series of factors has been considered to reveal whether patterns of reconstruction have reflected particular large-scale influences (eg. location, building material etc.). The initial reconstruction of a historic house, the first time it was used as a heritage site rather than or as well as a home, has been selected for these analyses. This is useful in considering the length of time over which contact between reconstructors
and the structure has occurred, and the perceived value of the building as a heritage site, tourism venue and educational site.

A sample of 111 buildings is used in the following diagrams; four buildings have been excluded from all these analyses, because the exact dates of first reconstruction cannot be accurately identified. The subsequent graphs (Figures 9.1 to 9.3) show the proportions of buildings reconstructed in each of the five key periods, 1877-1914; 1914-1939; 1939-1959; 1959-1979 and 1979-present in relation to region, reconstructors, and building material. It is acknowledged that the sample sizes for each period are small, so cannot be significant statistically, but this is a near complete sample of the buildings of the period 1400-1600 open to the public, and these graphs are included as the clearest way to show patterns. The y-axis of all the graphs below uses percentage rather than frequency as this illustrates graphically the relative proportions. The total figures are included as labels to each dataset.

**Regional Variation**

Firstly, does the location within England have any impact on the date when a building was reconstructed for the first time? For example: did reconstruction spread temporally from South to North? The graph shows the proportions of buildings from each region: north west; north east; midlands; south west; and south east, reconstructed in each period, and an average of all periods. Regions are defined loosely based on county and following the English Tourist Board classifications (English Tourist Board 2004).
Figure 9.1. Regional distribution of historic buildings reconstructed

Any possible regional variation, perhaps based on threat to historic buildings, and finance available for reconstruction, might be identified in this type of analysis. Although the numbers of buildings being reconstructed varies considerably, a comparison between an average of all buildings and those reconstructed in different regions in different periods shows no discernable variation, with relative proportions seemingly comparable through time.

Another possible variable factor relating to geographical context is the difference between buildings reconstructed in rural and urban locations. It could be that one type would take precedence over another. The majority of surviving buildings from 1400-1600 remain rural; some having been built rural and are now swamped with urban development; and fewer survive in urban centres. This is symptomatic of the pressure for land and larger buildings in towns and cities. The buildings which have been selected for reconstruction reflect this pattern, but there is no discernable pattern which suggests that there is any change over time in the type of building (rural or urban) chosen for reconstruction. The urban buildings which have been reconstructed are fairly equally scattered among all the different periods since the late nineteenth century.
**Reconstructors**

It has been identified in the preceding chapters that a series of different institutions and individuals has been involved in historic building reconstruction. Not only have they had differing approaches from one another, but also individually they have changed in approaches and effectiveness at different times since the late nineteenth century. The next factor considered is therefore whether the institution undertaking reconstruction had an effect on the date at which the building was first reconstructed, shown in Figure 9.2. Some patterns can be identified here. In the pre-war and interwar periods the relative proportion of buildings being reconstructed as museums and by local authorities was large, reflecting the interest in local museums and folk museums at this time, and the money fed into this type of work (Figure 9.2). The National Trust were the organisation acquiring the largest number of buildings in the interwar and post-war periods, reflecting the large scale of their philosophical and financial commitment to the Country Houses Scheme (Figure 9.2). From the 1960s onwards open-air museums start to be a means of displaying historic buildings in England, and the three which contain buildings constructed between 1400 and 1600, and are discussed in Chapter Seven are represented in Figures 9.2 (Gailey 1999, 7-21).

For the purposes of this analysis the National Trust and English Heritage have been grouped as English Heritage have worked on very few buildings, and like the National Trust have broadly followed SPAB and contemporary conservation philosophy.
Building Material

One of the clearly identifiable differences between the example buildings is the building material. This defines the structure, often relates to the size of the building, and clearly affects the image of the place.

It can be seen in Figure 9.3 that the building materials of the buildings reconstructed at different times do not form a common pattern. There is an increase in the number and proportion of timber framed buildings being reconstructed in the interwar period, perhaps suggesting an interest in creating idealised images of an English past, what Hewison calls the National Trust's "medievalising" aims. In the post war period (1939-1959) there is a greater number of stone buildings being reconstructed, perhaps reflecting the contemporary interest in larger and higher status buildings as part of the National Trust Country Houses Scheme.
Figure 9.3. Building material of historic buildings reconstructed

Number of Reconstructions

All the above analyses consider only a building’s first phase of reconstruction, and it has been demonstrated that most of the example buildings have been through more than a single reconstruction epoch. It is the multiple phases of reconstruction which are seldom presented as part of the history of a house, but which have a significant impact on the way it now appears. Figure 9.4 below represents the number of phases of reconstruction which the example buildings have been through. For around a third of the buildings (43 examples of the sample of 111) only one phase can be identified; for another thirty-seven there are two clear phases of reconstruction; and for the final thirty more than three phases have been identified. As with previous diagrams, the same four buildings have been excluded because dates of reconstructions cannot be accurately ascertained, these buildings are noted in Appendix One.
Figure 9.4. Number of reconstructions buildings have undergone

The number of phases of reconstruction will plausibly relate to the date of first reconstruction, as a building first reconstructed in the 1980s or 1990s is unlikely to have gone through more than one or two phases. Multiple small reconstruction works within one epoch have been grouped for clarity. The reasons for ongoing and repeated interventions with a historic building will vary, and in some cases may indicate the ways in which reconstructions reflect the period when they were undertaken, and therefore start to look ‘out of date’ within a few years. Other reconstructions have been seen to be necessary when previous work decays, as at Hall i’ th’ Wood, discussed in Chapter Eight.

Not all buildings have undergone repeated reconstructions, even if they were first reconstructed at an early date. The diagram in Appendix Three collates all the data about the number of reconstructions, dates of reconstructions, and reconstructing organisations for the 111 buildings for which analysis is possible. This summary diagram demonstrates that a majority of buildings have been through more than one phase of reconstruction, and many have undergone many reconstructions, which will have affected the ways in which they appear and can be interpreted and understood by visitors.
Recording and Interpreting Multiple Reconstructions: Toward a Model

Histories of individual buildings are unique, it has been demonstrated through this thesis that the recent histories of buildings are frequently overlooked, ignored, or concealed. This section aims to respond to the research question, “Can understanding of the history of reconstruction provide a model which could aid future works to historic buildings”, by creating graphic representations of past reconstruction work, which could aid interpretation of the recent history of a building and inform future reconstruction work.

Theoretical approaches to the ways in which heritage presentation could and should develop in the near future suggest that it is these individual histories, and interpretations that reveal more distinctive histories. The analysis of the recent reconstruction history of a building within the context of broader approaches to reconstruction will be able to inform future reconstruction and conservation work, and may also attract visitor’s interest:

For the next [Twenty-First] century museums will need to broaden out again. They will have to earn wider public support, and to do so they will need to make themselves more interesting to more people. They will have to combine their skills as educators and entertainers to transform themselves into places of exploration and enjoyment, where people of all ages can develop their interests and learn not just about the past but the present as well. Civilisations are built on the interaction between past and present, the past is swallowed by the real world present. Why lump all the past together in one institution? Push for more smaller places, where people can understand one era rather than being overwhelmed by many at one time.

(Spalding n.d., 2)

Spalding’s discussion is about museums, but historic houses face some of the same issues. For better or for worse many are already smaller institutions which concentrate on one particular aspect of the past, either the development of one building, the history of its most famous owner, or a single period in its past, showing how it might have been used then. Historic houses, like museums, are places of interest, education and entertainment. They too can seek to appeal to wider audiences. Like museums, they need to earn wider public support, and to ensure wide access and understanding, as well as relevance to the modern world, for educational, ethical and financial reasons.
This research has provided clearer insights into the ways in which our predecessors have chosen to display and interpret historic houses. This is a neglected aspect of history, but one which can show a great deal about the interests and approaches of people in the recent past towards historic buildings. The table in Figure 9.6 shows some of the key movements, and these will be used in the process of creating a model which describes some of the changes in historic building reconstruction witnessed throughout this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reconstruction Period</th>
<th>Some Key Drivers in Reconstruction Work Undertaken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1877 – 1914</td>
<td>• Birth of conservation movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Victorian Medievalisation undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chapter Four)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1939</td>
<td>• Historic Houses used as Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Growth of Folk Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Englishness under threat through war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chapter Five)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939 – 1959</td>
<td>• National Trust Country Houses Scheme launched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wartime and post-war reconstruction undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chapter Six)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959-1979</td>
<td>• Boom in Historic Building Reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Founding of Open-Air Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chapter Seven)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-present</td>
<td>• Formation of Building Preservation Trusts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use of Interpretation Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chapter Eight)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9.6. Simplified generalization of key drivers in reconstruction work undertaken for purpose of model

There has been regular reference to the ongoing interest in historic buildings, evidenced by the number of examples of works to historic houses in each chapter, and the visiting of such buildings by the public in each era. The issue of authenticity has also been revisited in several chapters, and has been seen as an ongoing influence in the presentation of historic sites to the public (Reynolds 1999, 112-113).

In many of the buildings presented throughout this thesis multiple phases of reconstruction have been discussed. These phases are often evident in the structure, and visitors will therefore see them, but without explanation they may be misinterpreted or overlooked. It is for this reason that the model (Figure 9.7) has been developed to allow both reconstructors and, if appropriately modified, visitors, to
understanding the number of reconstructions a building has undergone, and the level of change evident within the structure.

**WORK**

- Reconstruction Phase I
- Reconstruction Phase II
- Reconstruction Phase III
- Reconstruction Phase IV
- Reconstruction Phase V

**CONTEXT**

- Start of conservation movement.
- Victorian Medievalisation.
- Folk Museums.
- Englishness presented because under threat from war.
- Wartime and post-war reconstruction.
- National Trust Country Houses Scheme.
- Boom in reconstruction.
- Open-air museums.
- Building preservation trusts.
- Interpretation centres and access.

**SUMMARY IMPPLICATIONS**

*Simplified overview of phases of reconstruction, and how contextual influences are manifest in physical forms*

*Implications current / future preservation / presentation philosophies*

*Figure 9.7. Model of phases of reconstruction*
The ongoing impacts of one phase of reconstruction on another are represented in the Figure 9.7. The direct impacts from one phase to another will also be carried over to further phases: Phase I will impact Phase II as indicated, but will also have an impact on Phases III, IV and V. It is evident from the diagram above that the different layers of reconstruction could become confusing and easy to misunderstand. It would be possible to map the layers of reconstruction seen at most of the example buildings in this way, but in this chapter a few key case studies which exemplify the different patterns of reconstruction seen have been selected for detailed discussion.

**Case Study One: Blakesley Hall**

When reconstructors undertake work which supersedes previous reconstruction they can mask previous incarnations of the building. This is evident, for example, at Blakesley Hall, Birmingham (Building ID 49). The 1970s screen (discussed in Chapter Seven, pages 208-210) was originally constructed in oak, and left unstained, so it was visible to the visitor, who could easily distinguish between the new lighter-coloured wood and the historic black-stained wood. In the 2000s the screen was whitewashed along with the rest of the interior of the building, thus concealing the nature of the screen as a reconstructed feature to all but the most observant visitor or specialist. One period of reconstruction is therefore masked by another.

Blakesley Hall is an example of a building which has undergone several phases of reconstruction, starting in the 1930s, with further programmes in the 1950s and 1970s and most recently in the 2000s (discussed in Chapters Five, Seven and Eight). These phases of reconstruction have seen the building change in use from a house (before reconstruction) to a museum of local manorial history, and then to a historic house heritage site. As discussed in Chapter Five (page 101), even the work aimed at turning the building into a museum removed some later additions to try to take the structure back to an earlier form. Most recently the addition of an interpretation centre restored a local history element with a series of temporary exhibitions featuring local historic photographs and work by local artists (Mason 2003, 4, 20).
The fascinating history of the building, and the ongoing work of a series of reconstructors, has created a building history which is both individual and reflective of the wider context and similar works undertaken at other buildings at a similar time. Its reconstruction history also reflects the influences and impacts of the local authority which has run it, and the local people and curators who have been involved in it since the 1930s (Sayle and De Boo 1998, 13-15). The wider patterns of the building being used as a local museum, being boldly reconstructed in the 1970s, and having an interpretation centre built in the 2000s, is very familiar amongst the example buildings, and reflects wider patterns of recent reconstruction history. Buildings used as local museums include Anne of Cleves’ House, Lewes, Thetford Ancient House,
and Izaak Walton’s Cottage. Buildings which have associated interpretation centres include those at the Weald and Downland Museum and Shakespeare’s Globe.

Figure 9.10, below, is an application of Figure 9.7 to represent some of the key changes seen at Blakesley Hall since it was acquired for use as a heritage site in the 1930s. It shows the series of reconstructions the building has undergone.

Figure 9.10. Reconstruction phases identified at Blakesley Hall

- **1938 B. H. as Folk Museum. Long Gallery dividing wall removed**
- **1958 B. H. bomb damage repair, and wall paintings revealed, which were conserved and displayed**
- **1970s B. H. screen and service area reconstructed**
- **2002 interpretation centre built. Hall redecorated, masking screen reconstruction**

**Impacts**

- **Folk Museum movement** (see Chapter Five)
- **Wartime damage, repair funding** (see Chapter Seven)
- **Boom in building reconstruction** (see Chapter Seven)
- **Interpretation and access issues** (see Chapter Eight)

**Series of phases of reconstruction impact, the image of the building. Masking and not interpreting change could mislead visitors**
In Figure 9.10, the boxes have been marked in blue to indicate that all these phases of reconstruction are still visible in the structure, indicating the ongoing impact of the reconstruction. Although it is noted in the diagram that all the phases of reconstruction are evidenced in the structure today, the level of visibility varies, and some requires detailed observation and a little understanding of buildings to identify, while elsewhere it will be plainly evident to all visitors. The screen was recreated in the 1970s to reflect the historical layout of the building, but was painted over in 2002 as part of complete redecoration. This whitewashing had a similarly concealing effect on evidence of other alterations, such as the removal of the wall in the screens passage. Because interpretation can never show a complete picture decisions have to be made about what aspects of the buildings history are going to be displayed. Deciding not to interpret change will mean that although reconstruction work is clear to specialists, it will be much less obvious to a non-specialist visitor.

Blakesley Hall has undergone numerous phases of alteration, and this is true at many other example buildings discussed throughout this thesis, as is seen in Figure 9.6. Some buildings have only recently been interpreted for display to the public and become heritage attractions, one such building is Dragon Hall, Norwich, first opened to the public in the 1970s. Whether these buildings will develop similar profiles through numerous future phases of reconstruction is yet to be seen.

**Case Study Two: Dragon Hall**

Dragon Hall, Norwich underwent its reconstruction as part of a building preservation trust from the 1970s onwards, the work having been started by the City Council. This work included alterations both to the internal arrangement and to the external appearance which have removed the evidence of the building’s use as tenements in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries (see Chapter Seven, pages 199-202, Building ID 125; Knights 1991). Interpretation at the building discusses this history, but relates less information about the work undertaken to transform the building from that to what is seen today. The blue boxes, again, signify that evidence of that work is still visible in the structure.
The image, access and layout of the building are all altered by reconstruction. Visitors could be misled about the historic structure.

Figure 9.11. Reconstruction phases identified at Dragon Hall

Dragon Hall has had few interventions to reconstruct it because it has only comparatively recently become a heritage site. Other buildings have a limited number of intensive reconstructions but at earlier dates, and those become long-lasting. This is true, for example, at Packwood House in Warwickshire, reconstructed in the interwar period, but little altered in more recent years (Chapter Five, Building ID 174) (Haworth 2000), and at Great Dixter in Sussex, which will be considered next.

**Case Study Three: Great Dixter**

At Great Dixter the reconstruction undertaken by Lutyens in 1910-12 was on a grand scale, but there have been very few and very minor alterations to the building since, and none which has significantly affected the image of the building. In this major phase of reconstruction the building at Great Dixter was ‘restored’, and to it was added the
Benenden Barn, also much reconstructed and moved to this new location (Chapter Five, Building ID 139) (National Trust Archive at Great Dixter, notes and memos).

Victorian Medievalization (still present in first decade of twentieth century) (see Chapter Five)

Boom in historic building reconstruction creates impetus to look again at previously restored buildings (see Chapter Seven)

Two Reconstructions: one still evident, one invisible in the structure. The impact of one could be misinterpreted. The knowledge of the other could be lost

Figure 9.12. Reconstruction phases identified at Great Dixter

Figure 9.12 highlights the 1910-12 phase of reconstruction in blue to indicate that it is visible in the structure. The 1960s conservation work, however, is evident only from the documentary record and is not identifiable in the structure, highlighting how difficult it can be for recent interventions to be interpreted purely from the visible fabric of a building.

Case Study Four: Hall i’ th’ Wood

Some buildings have had similarly intensive work undertaken on them, some of which has lasted a great time, but some later interventions have become necessary because of the nature of the original reconstruction work. This was true at Alfriston Clergy House, where recent work has replaced earlier reconstructors’ cement rendering with more
traditional lime plaster (see Chapter Four, Building ID 26). At Hall i' th' Wood the replacement of timbers in the late nineteenth century was carried out using unsuitable timber (see Chapter Five, Building ID 220) (Mills 1995, 25-28). The building was restored in the late nineteenth century, and was opened as a folk museum in 1915. It recorded the history of its most famous inhabitant, Samuel Crompton, and served the local community (Mills 1995, 22). In the 1990s it became evident that some of the nineteenth-century timber was decaying, and on closer inspection it was revealed that all the unsuitable pine timber would need to be replaced. Other Victorian work included the use of non-traditional materials for panel infills, which had held water against the timbers, requiring replacement of both Victorian and older timbers in the 1990s (Mills 1995, 23).

![Diagram of reconstruction phases identified at Hall i' th' Wood]
Case Study Five: Sutton House

The patterns of different types of reconstruction at different times described in the previous chapters can be seen through many of the individual example buildings, as discussed above. There are, however, a few buildings which have not followed any such patterns, and their recent histories are truly individual and convey something of their uniqueness. Sutton House in Hackney, London is such an example (Building ID 193). As described in Chapter Eight the building was acquired by the National Trust in the 1930s but was not presented by them until the 1980s. This is a building where recent alteration has been piecemeal. The recent history of this building is one of use by a range of groups as office and residential accommodation, even including squatters, so the history of the building since it was acquired by the National Trust is one of active use rather than reconstruction to make it look as it did in the past. There remains evidence of different phases of use, but very few records have been kept. It is very difficult to map such buildings in the ways which have been devised for other examples above. Sutton House was adopted for preservation by the National Trust, but there are few records of any work to it until a local group, which organised itself as The Sutton House Society, worked with them in the late 1980s to open it to the public. This does not, however, make the recent history of the building immaterial, and the way in which the interpretation at this site incorporates aspects from much of the building’s history, right up to the 1980s aptly reflects its interesting and individual route to becoming a heritage site.

Detailed Histories

The broad records of interventions to historic buildings presented above clearly outline the periods when buildings have undergone reconstruction, and link that to broader patterns identified through this thesis. It may be useful for some buildings, especially when there have been multiple and complex reconstructions, to unpick this in some detail as a precursor to the reconstruction process.

This could be done in a range of ways, depending on the type of evidence now available, the building type, and the analysis type required. Just two are presented here. Discussed above, Blakesley Hall has been through numerous phases of reconstruction, and there is still considerable and detailed evidence of much of this work. This could be presented in a detailed flowchart.
In Figure 9.14 numerous small interventions and changes to the building are noted, each of which will have had an impact on the image of the building. The alterations are laid out in loose groups, relating to their location in the building, and merged boxes represent alterations to the same part of the building in the same period. The date of reconstruction is approximately the top of the box (aligned to the timescale on the right hand side). The arrows represent that that alteration has an impact on future works.

There are some buildings for which this type of diagram could not be created due to lack of evidence, or where only a single phase of reconstruction has been undertaken. Other techniques may be more suitable in these cases. The significance of reconstruction in interpretation for visitors is discussed below. Visitors may never see the types of diagrams being discussed and presented here, and they may be of more value for reconstructors. If visitors were ever to be presented with this information as part of interpretation, it may be more valuable as part of the complete history of the building.

At Stoneacre in Kent (Chapter Five, Pages 116-119, Building ID 36) much of the early history of the two buildings now combined has been lost, but there are some useful plans of Stoneacre before and after reconstruction work in the 1920s. These could be used to create 'before and after' access analysis diagrams to demonstrate how the way people move around the building(s) has been affected by the reconstruction.

*Figures 9.15 and 9.16: Access Analysis of Stoneacre before and after reconstruction in the 1920s*
Figures 9.15 and 9.16 show the layout of the building immediately before and after reconstruction work in the 1920s. The red dots represent the sections of the current building which were added at that time from North Bore Place (The National Trust 2001b, 7).

By the time reconstruction work started, however, the building has already been significantly altered, and extended. Figure 9.17 suggests a possible form for the building when it was first constructed in the 1480s.

![Figure 9.17. Access Analysis of Stoneacre suggesting how it might have been laid out in the fifteenth century.](image)

Access analysis is a technique which can show changes in the layout of spaces within a building at different stages in time, and is particularly useful when the broad picture of alteration is evident, but there is little detail about specific features (Hillier and Hanson 1984, 1-25). This type of analysis cannot, however, show any of the specifics which are known, or represent change to any aspect of the structure other than layout. The changes in layout represented at Stoneacre are very significant, and the differences in the association between spaces will have considerable impacts on the ways in which visitors will understand the building (ibid., 163-169).

**Detailed Visual Modelling**

Diagrams like Figures 9.10 – 9.13 can be used to chart the changes in the buildings in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries in a broad way, but for buildings which have
undergone a great deal of reconstruction work it may be more instructive to express these through a more detailed visual model. Blakesley Hall may be taken as an example. The plans below (Figures 9.18 and 9.19) show the ground and first floors of Blakesley Hall, and describe the changes to the building and the displays within it which are evidenced in the structure and in the archive. This more detailed model is useful as a greater number of small alterations to the building can be noted, and the relationship between the alterations and the space in which they occurred is represented. The use of colour to indicate different phases of reconstruction can also highlight phases when more or less work was done in specific areas of the building. Because Figures 9.18 and 9.19 are text-based it does not necessarily link directly to the physical changes affecting the image of the building at different times. To use these diagrams effectively, time would have to be spent at the building reading the diagram and identifying the features in the structure.

**Figure 9.18.** Blakesley Hall ground floor plan, annotated to describe phases of reconstruction

Plan diagrams like those suggested in Figures 9.18 – 9.19 are valuable because they contain considerable evidence and information of use to reconstructors, but they could also convey changes in a broader sense.

The value of collating information, including the detailed records of addition and removal of features, is that it would prevent misinterpretation of features in the building by modern interpreters and visitors or future reconstructors. The creation and collation of such records may seem obvious and is undertaken in some Conservation Plans, but many buildings have very limited archives, which do not record in any detail alterations which are visible in the structure. The use of a range of different types of evidence to
produce a reconstruction history would make this evidence available for use in interpretation and future reconstruction works.

Reconstruction always involves including and excluding aspects of a building’s history. This is often aimed to make one or more aspects of a building’s history more transparent. The exact reasons for reconstruction work is not usually recorded. The writing of overt rationale for building reconstruction, to be included in the building archive is, again, an obvious requirement, but one which is not always undertaken, and historically has seldom been undertaken. It is important that decisions be made in light of all the evidence.

The type of drawing shown below in Figure 9.20 provides one overview of many additions to buildings, but it is harder to record both insertions and removals in this form, as it could become confusing, and multiple phase drawings which separate out aspects of a building’s history would have to be developed. This diagram could be read in relation to the features now seen in the house which are recent reconstructions or additions. It is also evident from these detailed drawings that, although the wider patterns at Blakesley Hall fit into the divisions used for the chapters, and the types of work are characteristic of their periods, the phases of reconstruction at each building are individual so will have to be reflected in such detailed models. Although patterns have been identified it often remains difficult to assess why reconstruction work took place at a particular time.

Many of the works at Blakesley Hall had practical implications, but assessing the direct drivers for them at a particular time is highly problematic. The evidence that much similar work was being undertaken simultaneously elsewhere implies that external factors across England were having an impact on individual buildings.
At Blakesley Hall research has been done at various stages into the recent history of the building (Kaines-Smith 1935; Price 1978; Sayle and De Boo 1998), and this has informed the reconstructions. Even in the recent conservation, records of the recent works and their effects on the present structure have not been collated in an easily comprehensible manner, perhaps because the nature of the data makes that difficult.
Past Reconstruction and Future Works

Future works to historic buildings could take a number of different forms. But all interpretation and physical works to historic buildings needs to be informed by the history of that structure. It is for that reason that a visual model of the style of one of those discussed above would be advocated to increased understanding of the recent history of the building before future work is undertaken.

In order to create such graphical representations which model changes to a building it is important to have a good overview of the reconstruction history of a building, gathered from a series of archives in various different formats and media. This research could perhaps be structured through the answering of a series of questions, as suggested below, in order to establish a historical biography for a building, which could be included in a conservation plan, and used by reconstructors.

When was it first opened to the public, by whom and why?

• What evidence is there of changes to the structure and decoration between its last use as a house (or other building use) and its first use as a ‘heritage site’?
  o How many phases of alteration are evident?
  o What changes in layout, perhaps evidenced through plans and charted as access analysis, can be identified?
  o What changes in decoration, perhaps evidenced through etchings, paintings, sketches or photographs, can be identified?
  o Has there been addition of new material to the structure, perhaps evidenced through different types of material present in the structure?
• Does its use as a heritage site preclude it from being a house (or being used for another purpose)?
• Does the type of work carried out relate to other works to historic buildings at that date, or is this unique or individual?
• Is there evidence of further subsequent alteration to the building, what date is this, and by whom and why was it carried out?
• Repeat questions about all phases of alteration.
• Can reference to this work, mapping against key periods, provide a context to inform about changes, as seen in Figure 9.6?

A record of alterations created through the answering of this range of questions would form an important part of the written archive. It could also be integrated into the local Sites and Monuments Record, or copied to national bodies such as the National Monuments Record or Archaeological Data Service.
It may be very difficult to answer the questions about why work was carried out at different times, but thinking about the background of the different types of work undertaken, and the individual or organisation undertaking the reconstruction, could provide some useful information. Understanding buildings in the context of when they were built and altered will add greatly to any presentation, interpretation or reconstruction work, even if this more recent evidence is not directly approached.

The graphic representations of the phases of reconstruction that some buildings have undergone, along with the suggested questions form a model for the type of analysis which should be undertaken to understand the recent history of a building before any further reconstruction may be undertaken (Appendix Four). The illustrations above demonstrate how phases of alterations to historic building can be recorded and represented diagrammatically for holistic interpretation. It also shows how those phases of reconstruction can be contextualised with reference to broader issues. As there is little recording of the direct thoughts behind most reconstruction it remains difficult to assess why work is undertaken at a particular time. Although a formal model which could be relevant to all buildings is virtually impossible the outlines above could form the basis of types of recoding which could inform people, reconstructors and visitors, about the history of the building, and initiate discussion about how aspects of the buildings’ recent past could be displayed, and whether this would be suitable.

Will Visitors Care?
Physical changes to a building over recent decades are often not included in the interpretation of the structure for the visitor. Some guidebooks contain plans of a building, and a few date the phases of the building construction, but the researcher has found no examples to date where periods of reconstruction are described in detail. Most guidebooks cover the early history of the building thoroughly, and many contain a short section about its recent history, but few do so in any detail. Descriptive sections about when a building was opened and by whom, and usually alluding to some reconstruction work within a certain period, are common, but no buildings studied in this thesis have any detailed description of reconstruction work in their interpretation, saying what was reconstructed when, or for whom.
It has not been an aim of this thesis to understand visitors or their understanding of historic buildings, rather to trace the works to buildings, and identify any factors influencing those works, and any patterns in types of work undertaken at various times. The understanding gained through this research does, however, have an impact on visitors, and their understanding of the historic buildings which they choose to visit.

Many visitors may not be interested in the detailed history of the reconstruction of a building (Tenniswood 1998, 202-209), and whether a part of the building is original or a conjectural reconstruction may make no difference – it has not been an aim of this thesis to assess this. Whatever the visitors’ interests, however, the reconstructor is misrepresenting the building, and misleading the visitor if phases of reconstruction are not declared, and they are made to look historic. It is not recommended that all buildings should have displays about their twentieth-century history, only that this may be suitable at some sites. Omitting to describe alterations made to historic buildings in order to display them to the public will mislead visitors about the way a building may have appeared in the past, and will deny the processes of change that the building has undergone through its history.

To allow a visitor to gain a more holistic understanding of the history of a building there would have to be greater emphasis on this recent history. This would not be suited to every building or every type of interpretation. The recent history does, however, need to be recorded and interpreted as part of the conservation plan, and collating such information could enhance understanding and inform future reconstruction. This would widen the choices to be presented in the interpretation, and acknowledged reconstruction as a force which has impacted on the form of the building in the present. The figures in this chapter demonstrate in various ways how different phases of reconstruction can impact the present image of a building.

An analysis of changes to historic buildings, of the type presented in this chapter, can greatly inform and influence the way a building is presented and marketed, to the public, not to mention informing any future reconstruction work. Property managers, curators, education officers and reconstructor should be well-informed about the complete history of the building in order that they can maintain, reconstruct and interpret it for the public where possible and suitable. They should be aware that
evidence of past reconstruction work will be part of the historical biography of the building. An aim of modern object conservation is ‘reversibility’ (Pearce 1993, 234). This is almost impossible to apply to much building reconstruction, and once the building is reconstructed in a particular way, that becomes part of the building’s history. Even if decisions are to be made about removing parts of the building this needs to be done in the context of a thorough understanding of the history, and reconstructors need to be aware of their own roles in a longer history of interpretation of the building, and in a wider field of building reconstruction and presentation. Layers of reconstruction can mask earlier features or earlier reconstructions, as seen above at Blakesley Hall, and recent features can be made to look much older, thus potentially misleading visitors.

It is impossible to continue using a building without making changes that will become part of the biography of that building, even if that is just wear and tear and damage repair. Reconstructors, therefore, need to have a good awareness of the history of the building and make records of alterations in order that the past forms are not lost to history when changes are made.

Summary
The evolutionary and detailed models (Figures 9.6, 9.10 – 9.16), illustrated a means of displaying historical analysis graphically in a way which could be applied to any historic building. This was then tested with selected case studies, allowing for simple analysis of the alterations to buildings (in phases) from when they were first opened. It is suggested that this could be used as part of building conservation plans to record periods of reconstruction work undertaken and to evaluate whether or not the work links to wider patterns in reconstruction. The information required for an assessment of recent reconstruction within a conservation plan is collated in a Reconstructors Pack (Appendix Four). This could then be fed back into the interpretation of the building for the public, providing them with information about which sections are old, which are replaced, and the conservation framework within which they were replaced. This reflective approach allows for a better integrated view of the history of the building.

This type of analysis could also help inform approaches to future reconstruction and conservation work. Recent archaeological recording on excavations has started to move towards the utilisation of a range of media including some qualitative records (diaries,
video diaries, notes, sketches etc.), which could help to explain the ways in which the excavators were thinking when future reinterpretation takes place (Hodder 2000). The opportunity to have such an insight into the minds of reconstructors, through a similar multi-media archive of data and more qualitative records, would be invaluable in understanding why decisions were made about how a building should be reconstructed or presented.

The recording of present and future reconstruction work is vital as part of the whole record of the history of a building. For past reconstructions it is difficult to gain a detailed understanding of the philosophy behind reconstruction, and interpreting what was done when is difficult without trying to assess why, and what the thinking was behind such works.

It will be suggested in the next chapter that this research has revealed a great deal about the ways in which buildings have been altered, and it has started to put such alterations into a wider context, and created a model for understanding such works. It will then be suggested that all buildings should have the history of their reconstruction compiled as part of their conservation plan, and that this should inform future works. Future works should also be recorded in great detail, with statements of why works are deemed necessary or suitable as well as factual statements of what work is being undertaken.
Chapter Ten: Conclusions and Future Research


This thesis has explored the history of historic building reconstruction for buildings open to the public. It has investigated the varied forms that reconstruction has taken over the period from the 1870s to the present, and the impacts of some outside influences on reconstruction work. It has also presented a synthesis of key findings which could provide a model that future reconstructors could utilise to guide analysis and interpretation of reconstruction work.

Analysis of examples has revealed a long history of alterations to historic buildings, which shows changing approaches to the past. The period 1400-1600 has proved a rich period for examples of building reconstruction, perhaps because of the long tradition of study of this era, from antiquarian research to the present day, and the changing understanding of and approaches to it through that time.

Some broad patterns in the ways in which reconstruction is carried out at different times have been identified, but the study of 115 examples has also provided evidence that decisions about how a building is used, reconstructed, conserved and interpreted will be individual, based on the building itself, its locality, other heritage attractions in the vicinity, and ongoing variable factors such as funding and the staff involved. Analysis of the example buildings has shown that a majority of them have undergone considerable alteration for use as heritage sites, and these alterations affect the image of the building. Each era’s display and reconstruction can only draw on knowledge available at that time, and the limitations of every phase of the development of academic understanding of buildings can be evaluated only in retrospect (Sommer 1999, 165). Potential meanings originally invested in buildings are only ever interpreted in the light of present society and
ideas. Meanings now invested in historic buildings are different from those of the past since the houses are now presented as heritage sites rather than functioning as homes.

**Answering the Research Question**

This thesis has aimed to answer the key research question: “How have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings?” The evolving changes in approach have included emphasis on different types of buildings, different types of reconstruction and different uses of buildings and forums for presentation of buildings. Care has been taken to avoid a dogmatic or judgemental stance. The changes have not been appraised against one another, and they have not been evaluated as good or bad ways of displaying a building. These histories have, instead, been analysed to allow an exploration of the different types of alteration that buildings have undergone, which now form a part of their histories. The changes seen in these buildings do not, in reality, form a linear ‘evolution’, but simply reflect changes in approach, influenced by a range of factors: practical considerations, institutional approaches etc., some leading from one to another, others developing from new ideas.

In order to answer the overriding research question, a series of smaller questions has been approached throughout this thesis, which related to changing approaches through time, the impact of different reconstructors, and the effects of outside influences. Each of these will be discussed in turn below.

**Changes in Approach towards Reconstruction of Historic Buildings**

The first research question is: “How have approaches, including philosophies and physical practices, towards the reconstruction of historic buildings changed since the late nineteenth century?” In order to answer this research question a series of example buildings had to be located and evidence for their reconstruction to be identified.

Throughout the thesis some key themes emerge about the nature of reconstruction and changes to it. The value and interest of the past was continually recognised, but changes in emphasis and priority have affected treatment of historic buildings. The first period
considered in this thesis, in Chapter Four, was the period between the formation of the SPAB in 1877 and the start of the First World War in 1914. In this period an interest in the medieval past grew, and buildings were presented to the public as examples of that period. Sometimes this was done with the aim of social improvement, and the move to make places like Hampton Court free to visitors had that goal.

In the interwar period buildings continued to be reconstructed, but the aim was more commonly for use as local history or folk museums, as discussed in Chapter Five. This, perhaps, reflected an increased interest in Englishness, and the English past, as a response to the threats posed by the First World War, and the fear of the impending Second World War. Chapter Six considered the period after the Second World War, when the emphasis shifted slightly, as the massive National Trust Country Houses Scheme took over as the biggest driver in historic building reconstruction. This again reflected the interest in preserving an aspect of Englishness, but rather than representing local communities, the aim was to maintain funding for the running of large houses and stately homes.

In the 1960s and 1970s there was a boom in historic building reconstruction, and work showed greater confidence when dealing with historic structures than at any time previously. Examples of this type of work are examined in Chapter Seven. Many historic buildings were under threat at the time, and some were moved to open-air museums. In more recent years, since the 1980s, interpretation and access have become key themes within historic buildings, and examples of different styles of interpretation, including interpretation centres, were considered in Chapter Eight. The Association for Heritage Interpretation was formed in 1975 to spearhead these developments. Many buildings were taken on in this period by building preservation trusts, who are able to gain funding to reconstruct buildings and open them to the public.

Historic buildings have been seen to have maintained their popularity throughout the period considered. There has been ample evidence of ongoing preservation and reconstruction of historic buildings, and visitor numbers, recorded in some buildings, and used as evidence occasionally through the thesis (for example pp 114 and 239), show that there has been
sustained interest in historic buildings throughout the 140 years studied. The past has retained its popularity throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in part because of its profile and the image created by the arts and media. As discussed in Chapter Four, in the Victorian era the primary popular vehicles for information about life in the past were historical novels and new magazines such as *Country Life*. These created an idealised image of historic buildings as part of a traditional English rural way of life. Throughout the twentieth century buildings have become part of the evidence about the past presented to the public through popular guidebooks and sometimes novels (Hunt 1931, 74-75; Taylor 1967, 4-7; Jillings 1988, 178-183). In the 1990s and 2000s there has been an upsurge in the presentation of history and archaeology in the media. Television programmes such as *House Detectives* and *Time Team* have been able to foreground buildings, and use them as a main source of evidence about people in the past.

Interest in the past, however, has been seen to result from deeper, fundamental feelings, rather than being the product merely of media manipulation. In the interwar period, and after the Second World War, there was interest in the past and in historic buildings, perhaps as a reassurance following the perceived threats to the nation’s history (Lowenthal 1985, 44-46, 336). At this time many buildings were opened and used for displays about life in the past, as with folk museums, perhaps providing reassurance about the longevity of England in history. Similarly interest was spurred again by the loss of historic buildings in the process of post-war reconstruction in the 1960s and 1970s (Urry 1990, 107-109; Samuel 1994, 149).

Through the period covered in this study, c1877-present, buildings archaeology has developed as a discipline, and pressure groups have maintained their influence, while developing their approaches and ideas in line with evolving academic, technological, and philosophical understanding of buildings.

It has been observed, using many example buildings, that the written and spoken rhetoric about historic buildings, their value, the appropriateness of reconstruction techniques and the need for authenticity, have at no point been closely matched to the physical works
actually undertaken at the historic buildings under consideration. This key conclusion has been verified by Gerrard, who sees "curiously dual standards" operating in relation to the preservation and presentation of medieval archaeological sites through the late nineteenth century (2003, 61). This research has revealed the extent of this dichotomy in relation to historic buildings, and suggested that a lack of links between academic research and presentation as well as a desire to fulfil the expectations of visitors may be an explanation for this. Whatever the reasons for these differences for the past, it is imperative that closer links are forged for the most up to date interpretation to be utilised in the future.

**Influence of Organisations Involved in Reconstruction**

The second research question is: "In what ways have the institutions, organisations or individuals undertaking reconstruction differed in their aims and approaches to historic buildings?" There have been numerous organisations involved in the reconstruction of historic buildings since the 1870s. Each of these has reconstructed buildings following their own aims and philosophies, so the treatment of different buildings has been different depending on their owners. The National Trust have been the largest single owner of historic houses presented as heritage sites. Of the 115 buildings discussed in this thesis 36 are National Trust properties (31%). They are a self-funding charity, but one which has grown rich because of its ownership of lands given as endowments. They have therefore been able to take on huge projects such as the Country Houses Scheme, and since the 1930s their concentration has been primarily on larger houses. They have always taken the advice of the SPAB, who very seldom acquired buildings themselves, but were influential in their role as a pressure group.

At certain periods particular types of organisation or individual have been closely involved in the type of reconstruction works undertaken. For example, Chapter Six has shown that in the post-war period the National Trust Country Houses Scheme was such a large factor in the reconstruction works undertaken that they guided much of the Zeitgeist of the policy of the time. Similarly there was a great number of buildings being converted to local museums and folk museums in the interwar period, and it was at that time that this type of organisation had most effect on the types of work recorded. Open-air museums have a long...
history, but became most common in England in the 1960s and 1970s, epitomising the boom in reconstruction identified through the bold works undertaken to historic buildings at the time, exemplified in Chapter Seven. Building preservation trusts were not a new type of organisation in the 1980s and 1990s, but funding regulations and opportunities made them an increasingly frequent reconstructor in this period.

Some private owners have opened their historic buildings to visitors since the eighteenth century. They are a type of reconstructor that does not necessarily follow national patterns, as they do not rely on conforming with the conventions to gain funding, and they can create unique selling points independently to attract visitors.

The control of the types of works undertaken to historic buildings has, therefore, never rested with one institution, organisation or individual. It may be that the involvement of a series of different institutions with different agendas has impeded the development and application of a coherent policy for historic buildings. The participation of different groups has also had a more positive effect in allowing many different approaches to be employed with different buildings, reflecting the specific histories of individual buildings more closely, and lessening their homogeneity. It would be the role of the government to generate and enforce any policy on historic buildings, and this has been done through legislation, advice, and through English Heritage and its predecessors. The role of the government will be considered separately below.

**Government Involvement in Historic Building Reconstruction**

The Government do not directly control any historic buildings which are opened to the public as heritage sites, but they directly fund English Heritage. English Heritage and their forerunners have acquired some historic houses, but have tended to concentrate on monuments and sites such as castles and abbeys. English Heritage can also guide the approaches of some smaller institutions by selecting for funding projects which follow their philosophies.

The Government are involved in the management of the past, and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) with English Heritage have published *The Historic
Environment: A Force for the Future which outlines how the historic environment could be managed and used more effectively. In their introduction Tessa Jowell MP and Stephen Byers MP state that, “We need to develop new policies to realise economic and educational potential through modernised structures and improved service delivery” (2001, 4). The main argument of the document is that the historic environment is important as an economic asset, an educational resource and a realm for relaxation which could improve quality of life. It is therefore stated that it is necessary that its assets be skilfully harnessed. Currently the possible economic benefits through visiting and tourism are often not reaped because of lack of investment; the educational benefits are not usually maximised because of a narrow-minded view of the ways in which people can learn in and around a historic building; and the value of buildings as places of relaxation is not exploited widely enough because their presentation is too stereotyped and repetitive, and they are not individualised as reflections of their local communities or in response to their needs.

In order to ensure that this situation changes, and the historic environment is used to its full potential, the Government has stated its aims for the future of the management of the historic environment.

The Government looks forward to a future in which:
- Public interest in the historic environment is matched with firm leadership, effective partnerships, and the development of a sound knowledge base from which to develop policies.
- The full potential of the historic environment as a learning resource is realised.
- The historic environment is accessible to everybody and is seen as something with which the whole of society can identify and engage.
- The historic environment is protected and sustained for the benefit of our own and future generations.

(English Heritage 2001, 9)

This type of strategy document and strategic management are becoming increasingly common in the heritage industry, but all too often do little to improve the direct management, presentation and physical reconstruction of individual historic buildings. The aims are so wide-ranging, and so poorly supported with finance, that they cannot be easily transferred to the everyday running of a small historic house trust or an individual building within a museums service or large organisation. Those making bold “mission statements”
are far removed from the people on the front line selling the tickets and guidebooks or giving guided tours of buildings. The immediate official response from the National Trust to *The Historic Environment: A Force for the Future* was broadly supportive, but called for ministers to move "further and faster" to promote cross-departmental liaison, and alter laws in favour of historic buildings (National Trust 2002b, 1-2). The Director-General of the National Trust wrote in *The Times* on the third anniversary of *Force for the Future* in 2004 calling into question the Government's continuing commitment to the historic environment, following real-term cuts to English Heritage funding (Reynolds 2004, 17).

Recent reviews of Government policy towards heritage, especially the *Force for the Future* document, have outlined the value of historic buildings, but have concentrated little on reconstruction philosophy or on deeper educational issues surrounding historic buildings. Instead the emphasis has been on preservation, which focuses on listing strategy and legislation and social inclusion, getting people into the buildings, but not explaining how buildings will become "something with which the whole of society can identify and engage" (English Heritage 2001, 25). The other main area of emphasis is the economic benefits of the historic environment, which relates to the role of regeneration in historic areas, and the subsequent tourism, in the economies of towns.

There have been some very successful projects directed toward certain the keys aims for historic buildings in the modern world. *Force for the Future* quotes the example of Christ Church Old Church in Liverpool, which after a decade of dereliction was to be demolished in the 1990s, when the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and the Churches Conservation Trust intervened, and through financial assistance made possible the renovation of the building as a local community centre.

The National Trust are proud of their Newcastle Inner-City Project, which was established in 1987, and has recently received more funding under the Millennium Volunteers initiative. The scheme initially involved young people from the Tyne-Tees area, and enabled them to be involved in volunteering at National Trust properties. The project was extended to involve people aged over fifty, increasing inter-generational communication.
Under the government-funded project the National Trust are to receive £76,000 to involve a greater number of young people from the Tyne-Tees area (National Trust n.d. a., 1). Many of these people are recruited from the Newcastle Homeless Project, or via local educational authorities, when they have been excluded from school (English Heritage 2002, 14). This type of government funding can facilitate small projects which suit the specific building to which they are related, or the community involved.

Impacts of Outside Influences

The third research question approached throughout this thesis is: “What impacts have the conservation movements, the issue of authenticity, and the notion of Englishness, had on historic building reconstruction?” This will be considered in its three parts below.

Conservation Movements

The requirement to maintain constant but minimal and suitable intervention to historic buildings has been promoted by pressure groups since the late nineteenth century. From their earliest foundations, historic building pressure groups were interested in preservation and presentation to the public. The work of the SPAB exemplifies this best. They followed the ideals of Ruskin and Morris in arguing for minimal intervention. However, it has been seen that works actually carried out often aimed to return historic buildings to their earliest phase, reflecting the Victorian interest in the medieval period. These inconsistencies between philosophy and action are seen from the earliest phases in this study, in the 1870s, through historic building reconstruction in all periods, but most noticeably in the Victorian period. Buildings were marketed to satisfy the popular interest in the past, rather than to present academic knowledge. Some were even marketed with fictional books about them, such as Harrison Ainsworth’s *The Tower of London: A Historical Romance* (Ainsworth, 1900; Mandler 1997, 58). Authors of historical fiction saw their role as being to lighten the intensity of pure historical fact and ‘humanise’ the past, which they often did when writing about historic buildings (Mandler 1997, 34).

The continued interest in the past gradually led to legislation to protect historic buildings and sites. This was, however, a slow process. From the time of the earliest *Ancient
Monuments Act (1882), which gave protection to archaeological sites and ancient monuments, there was a gap before there was any legislation which dealt directly with historic buildings, which eventually came into effect during the interwar period. Protection in England developed contemporaneously with international agreements such as the Athens Charter (1931). There were new government recommendations and legislation during and immediately after the Second World War, aimed at preserving historic buildings. Legislation was a central influence in future approaches to historic buildings. The distinction between archaeological evidence underground and that contained within historic buildings prevented the pressure for preservation of archaeology, evident from the late nineteenth century, from forcing protection of historic buildings until the mid-twentieth century. Buildings will decay through time, and conservation work to ensure their stability and survival will always be necessary. In the years after 1945 a great deal of post-war reconstruction was needed, including that to war-damaged historic buildings. At this time historic buildings were not a top priority – there were more pressing concerns – but some historic buildings were reconstructed as part of post-war reconstruction. Works were funded as necessary, to repair buildings following war damage, but buildings were sometimes also reconstructed to a historical appearance through these works. By the 1980s and 1990s planning laws protected listed buildings and those in conservation areas from unsuitable alterations, but still allowed for suitable conservation work to be undertaken, with consent.

Conservation has been considered, in this study, as a series of phases or movements, with ever developing theories and ethics, which have been discussed in relation to specific example buildings. It has been seen that the aims and approaches of conservationists have differed considerably at different periods in the past, and the influence they had on historic building reconstruction therefore varied. The differences between different conservation movements is, perhaps, most clearly exemplified when contrasting Victorian conservation, such as the SPAB and 1970s conservation, such as SAVE Britain’s Heritage. The former was an amalgamation of artists and architects, and viewed buildings as works of art, while the latter was driven by journalists and planners, as well as architects, and viewed buildings as parts of history, and representative of the way people lived in the past. The former
campaigned against restoration, which they described as the creation of "forgeries", while the latter looked to find means of getting buildings conserved for future use, to save them from decay and demolition, and instead to retain them as attractive parts of the built environment. It could be argued that there is one seamless conservation movement, which evolves and who's views develop through time, but for the purposes of this thesis it has proved useful to view conservation as a series of interrelated but different movements, reflecting different viewpoints at different times, and acting within the contemporary legislative framework.

As the modern mass media increasingly affect our lives and our views of the world, popular interest in history has become more media-driven. At the same time there has also been a surge in buildings archaeology as a distinct discipline, which has resulted in different interpretations of historic buildings, and in increased access to them, for example through the Civic Trust's Heritage Open Day events nationwide. In the last two decades buildings archaeology has developed a distinct character, and with it a set of over-riding aims and approaches, and there has been a substantial increase in the number of people working in the field (Grenville 1997, 1-22). Some of the early antiquarian archaeologists showed interest in historic buildings, and they were written about in the Victorian archaeology journals, but archaeology moved gradually away from historic buildings in the mid-twentieth century, with little concentration on it in the major journals. Some buildings archaeologists persevered, however, and a few seminal works were published (Pantin 1962-3; Wood 1965). Histories of twentieth-century archaeology concentrate on prehistoric research (Trigger 1989). Only one recent publication has broken that mould to concentrate on the history of medieval archaeology (Gerrard 2003). Gerrard outlines the gradual development of archaeological research, the application of modern techniques and scientific procedures and development of new theoretical approaches (2003, 149-164). Recent research into historic buildings and the resultant increase in knowledge about them, along with ever-improving research methods, should feed back into reconstruction and allow reconstructors to approach their work from a better-informed viewpoint. In some cases this can already be seen to be true, and some institutions have changed policies and approaches in the light of newer knowledge. The Weald and Downland Museum would not
now treat a building as it did the Winkhurst Farmhouse (Richard Harris, Weald and Downland Museum, pers. comm.), and English Heritage look back to some of the works on Fiddleford Manor with the recognition that they could now be approached with more subtlety (Jenny Chesher, English Heritage, pers. comm.).

**Authenticity**

Through the history of archaeology and the history of building reconstruction the notion of authenticity has been identified as an influential, changing and developing theme. This term has been used with different meanings, as has been discussed through the chapters. Authenticity started to be seen as important around the turn of the century, when there was a reaction against Victorian restoration and towards work which related more directly to the known history of the building. The idea of authenticity has been discussed in relation to many different example buildings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The aim to represent a period accurately through the use of reconstruction work to historic buildings was common in the 1960s and 1970s, and continues to the present. It has been seen that many historic buildings have been interpreted through a mixture of historical material, modern insertions in the structure and historic furnishing. This approach has been seen to be successful where different eras of a building’s history are displayed thematically through the building to allow a complete understanding of its developing history. It can, however, be unsuccessful if poorly interpreted, and may become unclear and ultimately confusing. The ongoing interest in a form of authenticity has highlighted the primacy of the building and its historic fabric for buildings archaeologists (Reynolds 1999, 112, 121-122; Sommer 1999, 162-167). The preservation of the whole structure or its recording before alteration or destruction are both considered worthy forms of archaeological preservation. As with other aspects of building reconstruction, the rhetoric of preservation of the fabric and the actions evidenced in the structures of buildings are often at odds with each other, and records of alterations are commonly scanty or completely missing.

In recent years authenticity has been discussed in relation to some of the example buildings. In many, however, it has not been a key factor in the works undertaken. There have been examples more recently where the building has been approached more holistically,
representing more closely the academic understanding of historic buildings. This has been seen to be the case at Sutton House, Hackney and the Longport Farmhouse, Weald and Downland Museum. One of the recent academic developments has been to understand the nationwide pattern of sixteenth-century closure of buildings, exemplified in some of the changes to buildings in this period (Johnson 1993). It is hoped that such advances will lead to more confidence in presenting reconstruction as part of a building’s history rather than its being disguised, concealed or glossed-over. It is vital to the public understanding of historic buildings that people are able to interpret which parts of a building are of which periods, enabling them to envisage how it would have been used and altered through time.

**Englishness**

Englishness, and its preservation and presentation, have been seen to be factors in the choice of buildings acquired for reconstruction. It may also have influenced decisions on what aspects of the buildings have been emphasised during reconstruction.

Englishness has been noted in the earlier stages of this thesis as a stronger issue in the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century (Chapters Four and Five) than at any time over the last fifty years (Chapters Six, Seven and Eight). Buildings reconstructed then were displayed to emphasise an idyllic view of England, and tend to represent a romanticised view of medieval or Tudor England (Tinniswood 1998, 134-135). The buildings which were acquired in the earlier period, and are displayed in ways which fulfil a romanticised image of England are, in many cases, still displayed with many similar qualities promoted, although they will have continued to undergo physical alterations. These buildings are also some of the most popular and best-known buildings, and visitor figures at Little Moreton Hall, Penshurst Place, Knole and Haddon Hall are high enough to put them in the English Tourist Board Heritage Monitor lists of popular sites (English Tourist Board 1981).

Organisations like the National Trust are now tempering that image by acquiring more recent, urban and lower-class associated buildings, such as the Birmingham back-to-backs and the Southwell Workhouse. Previously, commentators had noted that they had been a
notoriously elitist organisation, a theme which Newby (1995) picks up in his discussion of their history and future. He defends the Trust's elitist approach to quality: "in terms of a commitment to quality the Trust should be proud of its elitism"; but he balances this with the admission that elitism is no longer acceptable for the National Trust as an organisation. He says the Trust, "can ill afford even to hint at a broader form of social elitism which could damage its wider public legitimacy" (Newby 1995, 154). Ironically this statement in The National Trust: the Next One Hundred Years is written just a couple of paragraphs after a discussion of access which justifies poor marketing of properties as a strategy to limit visiting, and asks whether the Trust can depend on the public to respect its valued heritage sites (Newby 1995, 153). Such an approach is still evident at a few sites, but the accusation of elitism is one to which the National Trust are sensitive and have responded over recent years. They have been keen to present different aspects of life in historic houses, especially rectifying the social balance by exploring the lives of servants in country houses, most recently under the theme 'Below Stairs' (National Trust 2002c, cover, 20-21). The Tudor house Buckland Abbey is used by the National Trust to interpret the working of a Tudor kitchen (National Trust n.d.b., 2). One of the key founding principles of the National Trust was that places were to be preserved not for their own sake, but for the education and enjoyment of people, with special emphasis on the urban poor, following Octavia Hill and Robert Hunter’s philanthropic ideas (Waterson 1994, 20-21, 29).

The three influences; Conservation Movements, Authenticity and Englishness were identified as recurring themes in the documentary evidence. However, there are many further variables which could have had an impact, but which were not clearly evidenced, so have not been approached through this thesis. Some of these were considered in Chapter Nine, such as building material and geographical location. Others, which would be much harder to assess would be the impact of individuals, and the links between individuals working on different buildings, and the impact of changing finance. Though sometimes recorded, the reasons for changes in financial circumstance are rarely evidenced.
Modelling

The final part of the main research question, "How have past practices in historic building reconstruction evolved, and how might an understanding of this history inform current and future works to historic buildings?" and the subquestion "Can understanding the history of reconstruction provide a model which could aid future works to historic buildings?" involves the application of some of the knowledge gained to future reconstruction work, and it has been considered useful to develop forms of graphical representation of the phases of reconstruction seen at some of the example buildings. Such representations shore the number and impact of reconstruction on the image of the building, as seen today. Such forms of representation could form a model for the type of analysis which could be undertaken for all example buildings, and may also prove applicable to buildings of other periods. Such analysis should be undertaken before any future reconstruction work is done to a historic building.

An understanding of the history of building reconstruction was vital in gaining an overview of the types of works undertaken, and the interests and approaches at different times. These changes in approach have impacted on the buildings, as has been discussed through Chapters Four to Eight. The ongoing impact of the changes made to historic buildings are again highlighted in Chapter Nine, when selected buildings are considered in detail. Their recent history has been considered closely, and represented graphically to suggest a model for charting and understanding historic building reconstruction. This has been done in order that future reconstruction work could be informed by some of the patterns identified in this research.

The creation of graphic representations which model the phases of historic building reconstruction suggest the type of research and analysis which reconstructors should undertake before plans for reconstruction work are developed. Most buildings are now managed and reconstructed following a Conservation Plan. It is advocated that a historical biography of a building up to an including the most recent interventions to reconstruct the building should form part of a conservation plan. Current advice suggest the use of two types of evidence "background research – pulling together documentary information
including published or unpublished research, previous reports, oral histories, maps ...” and “fieldwork – a survey of the landscape, wildlife, geology, soils, buildings, archaeology, collections, townscape character ...” (Clark 1998). This research has shown that all this can be undertaken and the reconstruction history of the building will still not necessarily be clearly revealed. A specific consideration of the reconstruction history, any works which have changed a building in order to make it appear as it did at some time in the past, is vital if reconstruction is not going to become a misleading amalgamation of the cumulative impact of many different reconstructions.

Recent alterations should be identified and considered in the design of any reconstruction. If suitable they may also be included in interpretation. This would provide the opportunity for the interpretation of the recent changes to a building. This will not suit every building, but many may be interpreted to show change through time, and those recent changes made for reconstruction purposes can, as has been seen, reflect the period of history in which they were undertaken, and therefore tell the visitor something new about the history of the building within the context of the history of England.

The types of information which could be collated and analysed are exemplified through Chapter Nine, and in Appendix Four, a pack which collates some of the guidance which might be required for reconstructors to utilise the model, and use it in practice.

**What does the Future Hold? Reconstruction, Access and Ongoing Relevance**

Following possible future dissemination, this research could be used as a basis for reconstructors to start to re-assess historic building reconstruction, and its impact as part of the history of buildings. Once established, knowledge of historic building reconstruction could be used to inform future interpretations and even physical works to a building. One recurring issue which has arisen from the historical overview of building reconstruction is the time-lapse between academic research being done and its presentation to the public. Greater communication is needed between researchers and presenters, to allow cutting-edge ideas to be presented to the public within buildings without a lengthy delay. Frontline interpreters can be as involved in questioning the extent of our understanding as
researchers, and they are also in a position to inspire interest, encouraging visitors to look around them and think about what they are experiencing, and provide valuable feedback to curators.

The ways in which buildings have been physically altered with a particular form of interpretation in mind can explain aspects of the structure which would otherwise seem out of place or irrelevant. A knowledge of the complete history of a building can tell us about the way in which it has been held in esteem or left to decay in recent years, reflecting different interpretations of its value at different times.

Without doubt there will be changes in the future, as there have been in the past, to the ways historic buildings are to be interpreted, reconstructed and visited. It is impossible to predict the exact nature of these changes, but some possible impacts can be discussed here.

In Chapter One it was noted that two key aspects of the management of the past have been identified: physical presence and intellectual presence (Fowler 1992, 81-82). In the future both of these may be affected by changes. One of the key issues in museums and historic houses currently is access. Both physical and the intellectual access to historic buildings may become key issues in the near future.

**Physical Access**

Physical access involves encouraging people to visit buildings, getting them into the building, and enabling to look around it. Work is being done to ensure that everyone can get into buildings and have access to the information on display about them. This raises particular issues when discussing children, the elderly and visitors with disabilities. Educationalists and some specific projects are directed toward ensuring that the needs of children and the elderly are included in the design of presentation of historic houses. Disabled access is a greater issue since the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995* (DDA), which states that “from 2004, employers / service providers have to overcome physical features which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to use a
service by removing or altering these features.” This is especially difficult in the case of listed buildings, and the Act states that:

the DDA does not override other legislation. Any alterations to premises are still subject to Part M of the Building Regulations, The Construction Design and Maintenance Regulations and the Planning Acts. If premises are Listed Buildings then any alterations would have to be agreed by the Local Authority conservation team or by English Heritage. Listed Buildings are going to be a particularly difficult area for implementation of the DDA

(Disability Discrimination Act 1995)

The DDA states that, “it is unlawful for a provider of services to discriminate against a disabled person in refusing to provide, or deliberately not providing, to the disabled person any service which he provides, or is prepared to provide, to members of the public”. The DDA does not over-ride listed building considerations, but does place pressure on building reconstructors of the future, and heritage managers of the present, to make their buildings and the information about them available to everyone.

The DDA has provoked a mixture of responses in the heritage industry, and has led to some ill feeling amongst both heritage professionals and disabled people. Neil Burton’s comments in British Archaeology reflect some of the strongest anti-DDA views held by some archaeologists:

This bill is a time bomb for the national heritage, and its impact could be devastating. It makes no mention of the constraints of listing or scheduling, and the Government has made it clear that there will be no blanket exemption for historic structures. Anyone who has dealt with the disabled access officers employed by many councils will know they are often extraordinarily doctrinaire about the needs of the disabled, and dismissive of the special interest of historic monuments and buildings. Entrance for all must be by the front door, they insist, whatever the consequences in external ramps and handrails; internal circulation must be unrestricted, whatever it takes in terms of widening doors and inserting lifts. ‘Disabled’ is always taken to mean wheelchair users, despite the fact that the requirements of the majority of disabled people can be met with a minimum of alteration to buildings.

(Burton 1995)
Burton discusses some earlier attempts to make historic buildings more accessible for disabled people: "the pity is that the Government has already issued a perfectly sensible statement on the subject in its planning guidance note PPG15, issued last year [1994]. If... a flexible and pragmatic approach is taken, it should normally be possible to plan suitable access for disabled people without compromising a building's special interest. Alternative routes or re-organising the use of spaces may achieve the desired result without the need for damaging alterations." Burton suggests that "this clause was not included in the new bill. It should have been."

Many disabled people see the DDA as a rather late development in relation to other countries' earlier legislation admitting the discrimination suffered by physically impaired people. Many also feel that it does not go far enough to ensure the removal of the barriers which disadvantage them, because the clause "reasonable" will be interpreted in different ways. All other acts of law also take precedence over the DDA. Health and Safety and Listed Building Acts, therefore, have more power in the decisions about how buildings should be presented than the DDA. Another important legal consideration is the Human Rights Act 1998, which came into force as law in October 2000. This Act over-rides common law, and is binding on public authorities. It ensures that people are not treated inhumanely, and have the right not to be discriminated against. Under the Human Rights Act people also have a right to education, which is one of the important roles of historic houses.

The main institutions involved in historic building reconstruction and presentation have responded to these new laws, and the National Trust have an 'Access to All' Adviser, and produce an access guide (National Trust 2003-2004). They also ensure that Braille and/or large print is available at many sites, along with a touch list of objects which can be enjoyed by touch. The members' magazine is available on tape for visually impaired people. The Trust have a sympathetic hearing scheme, and over 50 properties have powered four-wheeled vehicles available for use around the site. English Heritage estimate that 8-9% of their visitors have a disability. Their statement about the DDA establishes that the organization, "will explore all methods of providing and improving access to its
properties for people with limited mobility, while respecting the historic integrity and quality of those buildings. Where physical access remains difficult or impossible, it will introduce alternative forms of interpretation in order to extend access as far as is practicable. Interpretative resources will also be used to meet the needs of visitors with cognitive and sensory impairments" (English Heritage 2004, 1). In 1994 English Heritage published a *Guide for Visitors with Disabilities*, listing all the facilities and services they provide. The updated guide is now available in tape, Braille and large-print formats. Forty English Heritage sites offer audio tours, with scripts for the profoundly deaf, and there are also twenty tape tours designed for visually impaired visitors. Touchable models are also available at many sites. Special tours have been devised for wheelchair users and English Heritage are also engaged in a programme of introducing wider entrances, special routes, ramps and handrails.

Historic buildings now undergoing reconstruction work are often keen to ensure that these issues are addressed. Eastbury Manor in Barking, London has undergone reconstruction work, and was reopened in February 2003. Works there include the installation of a platform lift from the ground floor to the first floor and attic, new toilet facilities, and the creation of a sixteenth-century style garden with raised beds. Works have also included refurbishment of the sixteenth-century section of the building, with the installation of alarms and electrical re-wiring. Facilities have also been improved in ways which will bring in visitors and increase educational potential, and which will allow more revenue to be earned, such as the café facilities.

These sorts of improvement can only be carried out only if there is money available for them, and the issues surrounding the costs of maintenance of historic houses are still topics of political debate. In 2002 there were further appeals from within the Labour Government for tax-breaks for owners of historic houses to allow for necessary repairs to their buildings. It is proposed that buildings could gain tax concessions if they open to the public, which may lead to a new surge of buildings opening for the first time, as happened under the National Trust Country Houses Scheme in the 1950s, and in the 1970s when private owners and smaller trusts started to open buildings. To qualify for the concessions the buildings
must be open for a minimum of twenty-eight days a year, and in return tax relief would be provided to help with maintenance costs. It is thought that this policy could increase the number of houses open to the public by around sixty buildings (Historic Houses Association 2004).

The ways in which buildings are reconstructed will, therefore, be affected by considerations related to DDA and finance. In order that the approaches to historic buildings are understood in the future it is important that these considerations be evidenced in the buildings' archives. The approaches of this thesis, which has studied the recent history of a large number of buildings could also impact future works undertaken to enable access and comply with DDA, and study of recent changes to historic buildings could potentially provide access solutions, while also revealing different phases of a building's history. Each reconstruction and interpretation will have to be undertaken individually, as the histories of buildings are often complex.

**Intellectual Access**

The second issue which has to be faced in a discussion of access to a building is intellectual access, ensuring that people can gain a good understanding of a building. There needs to be physical access to any display panels, information areas or guide tapes or books, as discussed above, but also the content of those information sources has to be suitable for a range of different people with different backgrounds, different interests, and different requirements. Visitors need to be presented with opportunities to use the site in a number of different ways, to learn about different aspects of it through different styles of interpretation and from different points of view, and to see that there are multiple readings of the history of a building, rather than just one story to be told.

We are increasingly coming to understand that conveying a message about the past, or more realistically a series of linked messages, is a complex process which cannot be achieved for visitors in all their diversity through just one medium. Buildings will be understood differently by different visitors depending on their background knowledge, their
level of interest, the people they are with and the different pieces of information they have acquired as part of a visit.

History museums strive to ‘recreate’ the past in an idiom accessible to the present; but accessibility itself is a matter of interpretation. Today it is understood effectively and empathetically, as well as cognitively and physically, and is meant to extend democratically to all segments of the public. But museums cannot reach all publics in the same manner. There is no guarantee that a message sent is the same as a message delivered, and even the most rigorous attempts to control the public’s experience are likely to fall differently on different eyes and ears, since a diversity of past historical experience compounds the diversity of the present.

(Hein 2000, 31)

In the buildings which have been discussed in this thesis one issue which has seldom been explicit in interpretations is the social stratification of the medieval and Tudor periods, which would have defined where an earlier visitor could and should have gone in a house. This concept is now rather alien to us, but is arguably one of the most interesting considerations which could be communicated through interpretation and presentation of a period house. The use of access analysis in this thesis (for example in Chapter Five [page 132] and Chapter Seven [page 207]) has presented some properties where the layout of the building and the ways in which people can move around it have been affected by reconstruction. Explaining some of the differences between the ways people would have moved around the building in the past, and the ways they move around it now, could demonstrate the privacy of some rooms, and the accessibility of others.

In many of the buildings discussed throughout this thesis there have been numerous informative and diverse uses of the building in the past, such as Gainsborough Old Hall, which was used as a pub, an auction room, a ballroom, and a corn exchange in the hundred years before it was opened to the public as a historic building. With this fascinating history it is disappointing that the building is presented purely as a Tudor house, its later history masked by reconstruction works. Reconstructors tend to select for presentation the grandest period of a building’s history, glorifying the building and its locality in the past, perhaps because historic buildings have so often taken on the role of bolstering local identity. In many cases the least affluent periods of a building’s history inspire as much
popular interest as the most. Presenting these periods could be more representative of the history of an individual building and its surroundings than the more familiar presentation of the way of life of people in a typical medieval or Tudor house.

It is in the nature of the issues discussed above that they are not susceptible of simple, quick or definitive solutions. The presentation of historic buildings to the public will continue to be a long, gradual, developing process, and there are likely to be no huge or fundamental changes in the near future. The alterations discussed in this thesis, whether positively or negatively critiqued, are here to stay. Removal of alterations is itself anachronistic, and this thesis has shown how evidence of alterations to historic buildings can be used to understand more about the total history of buildings and the country (Price et al. 1996, 198). Working with the structures as they are and conserving them for the future is one of the key challenges facing heritage managers. Some of the larger and more successful modern projects on medieval and Tudor buildings have been discussed above, and the works at Blakesley Hall in recent years, for example, show a positive approach to making the building understandable as of one era, with a particular style of decoration. There are some historic buildings which may be seen as a glimpse into the future of historic building interpretation, which are inspired and enjoyable, thought-provoking, and fascinating. If we look abroad, a modern example of the potential that can be explored is the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. The building is a characteristic Amsterdam canal house, with an extensive modern wing. It is the site of the attic hideout of the Jewish Frank family during the Second World War.

This house has a heart-wrenching story to tell, much of which most visitors know as they arrive. They may have read Anne Frank’s diary, or seen a film of it, and from this they know the layout of the building. The Anne Frank House therefore has to offer something new and different to extend their understanding. It displays the rooms empty, a potentially disappointing view, since all visitors see is an empty room which they had imagined more vividly from the diary. Perhaps that is the point: the diary takes priority, the building is of interest in backing up what visitors know from it. Rather than contradicting images created in their heads the house provides a blank canvas on which they can project them.
At the end of the house visit is a chilling exhibition about the Holocaust, and a room dedicated to the diary, and the hundreds of editions of it, in many languages. Then the visitor moves into an interactive interpretation area where numerous computer terminals are available for viewing an interactive computer virtual tour of a furnished house, reconstructed to the 1940s. Every room is visible, decorated as it is described in detail in the diary, and there are hotlinks to details about the objects, much of the information taken from the diary itself, with some background information about the Second World War. There are details about all the characters from the book, as well as timelines of the War related to the stories in the diary. On a practical level having unfurnished rooms enables the Anne Frank House to allow in a very large number of visitors. They are free to wander at will, and can see the views from the windows, and get a feel for the area in which the family were living. The computer programme also allows people to learn about the house and its history at their own pace, and is very well designed for that. There is another interactive room at the end of the museum which uses ethical debates in the modern day with discussions about recent issues. Visitors are encouraged to engage actively through a voting forum to vote on hypothetical historical and modern ethical and moral issues.

In the UK interactive computer presentation is becoming an increasingly popular tool for historic houses and museums, for use in galleries, and to be taken away and used at home and in schools. The National Trust have developed an interactive virtual tour of one of their more recent properties, the workhouse in Southwell, Nottinghamshire. This building is an example of the modern approach of the National Trust, presenting a more rounded history of Britain through their buildings, and moving away from simply collecting country houses which the owners can no longer maintain. They have also recently acquired a row of back-to-backs in Birmingham, the housing of the urban poor rather than the rural élite, which opened in 2004. As historic building reconstruction continues it will develop and reflect modern and future interests. All alterations form part of the histories of buildings and people. Choices about the futures of historic buildings should always be made with an awareness of their total history, and a plan for their future.
Hackney Borough has been at the forefront of developing new approaches to the built environment within an inner-city area. Chapter Eight discussed the reconstruction of Sutton House, a Tudor building, which is presented by the National Trust to display many different phases of its construction and history, right up to the period of dereliction when it was inhabited by squatters in the 1980s. Nearby, the Building Exploratory is the only centre in Britain which examines the history of building construction and design from the medieval to modern planning, emphasising the built environment in its widest sense, with interactive exhibitions about the geology of the area and the stone from which buildings are constructed, the construction techniques, the effect of the Second World War bombing in the area and the problems of modern planning (The Building Exploratory 2003). This site does not include any historic buildings, but model reconstructions are used to teach about building construction and phasing. This type of exhibition may indicate some of the new directions in which historic buildings could develop their educational potential.

Historic buildings are archaeological artefacts which are used to interpret life in the past. They are also presented for their architectural, artistic and aesthetic values. In order that visitors gain an understanding of life in a house in the past, if that is indeed an aim, the interpretation of the building has to enable them to see how things have changed, and tracing developments over time, right up to the present, could be one way of undertaking this. One impact of this thesis could be to make presentation of alterations which make buildings different from their past form more overtly evident for visitors to interpret.

Limitations of this Research and Future Potential for Research in this Field
There have, naturally, been limitations in the ways in which the research questions could be answered through this study. The areas covered in the thesis are described in Chapter One. This section considers some of the issues faced during the research process. The example buildings have provided considerable evidence which has been interpreted to understand the works undertaken to historic buildings. This has been supported with archival research. The completeness and accessibility of archives has varied considerably at different buildings. In general there has been surprisingly little information available about the
numbers of visitors, and their demographics and interests are not recorded at all until the 1980s and 1990s.

The example buildings selected date roughly from the Age of Transition. It has proved instructive to use a few examples from slightly earlier than 1400, and in practice the buildings studied are the earliest surviving houses available to be displayed to the public. The buildings are often presented to the earliest period of their construction, but usually little emphasis is placed on the wider social, religious or political changes which people were undergoing through this period, indeed the notion of the Age of Transition itself has somewhat lost favour in recent months (Dyer 2005). Therefore it has not been the aim to contribute significantly to the understanding of the Age of Transition, but rather to the understanding of the presentation of that period through time.

Despite these limitations this research has been able to approach many wider issues using the data from the example buildings and archives, including: the development of various conservation movements; the relationship between the presentation of the past and academic archaeology; changing notions of authenticity; changing perceptions of Englishness; and the role of the media in public interest in the past. Further research could be undertaken to understand the impact of other wider factors on the patterns identified throughout this research. The impact of wider social history and the ways in which different media, such as film, reflect parallel patterns could be an interesting development on this research.

This research has revealed a great deal about the history of building reconstruction. It has recognised key developments in the approaches to historic building reconstruction since the late nineteenth century, with particular emphasis on types of building, types of reconstruction, and types of use of buildings at different times. Placing building reconstruction in the context of the period when it was carried out has revealed some important relationships between economic and political factors and the treatment of historic buildings. A key finding has been the ongoing disjunction between the reconstruction rhetoric and the contemporary works actually carried out to example buildings. This sometimes relates to another factor, the interval between academic developments in the
understanding of historic buildings and the presentation of these ideas to the public. It may be possible that future research will identify similar gaps between the stated aims and actual works in other media, including museums and educational books about the past.

It has been possible to record much reconstruction work, though it has proved impossible to date every work. It has been similarly difficult to gain a detailed understanding of why different works were undertaken at different times, and the influencing factors. Contextualising reconstruction work in the wider social history of period in which it was undertaken was beyond the scope of this thesis, which focussed on the buildings, and associated documentation and literature, but could add to the understanding of the works discussed.

The modelling undertaken in Chapter Nine has distilled much of the information about the history of building reconstruction, and suggestions are made about how this could be presented in some buildings, and how it could inform future works to historic structures. A detailed understanding of the history of a building, including twentieth-century alterations, could bring a new aspect to many interpretations of historic houses.

The interdisciplinary nature of this thesis is one of its more original features, as it has been designed to draw on the buildings themselves, the archives behind them, including historical guidebooks, the histories of the periods under consideration, information about popular history and other forms of the presentation of history in each period, and other research about heritage, authenticity, and the presentation of the past. It is certainly to be hoped that future research in this area will use such a range of resources, as many of the outcomes of this research would have been impossible without a wide range of reference.

There remains a great deal more to be known, and research will doubtless continue within this field. This research has outlined the potential for the study of the history of archaeological presentation. Some of the conclusions drawn in this thesis could be applied to historic buildings more broadly. The early history of building visiting, the changing public interest in buildings related to popular history, the role of historic houses in the
changing social climate during and after the two World Wars, the boom in building reconstruction through the 1960s and 1970s and the changes in organisation of local government and the growth of historic building trusts are all themes which may be equally applicable to Georgian or Victorian houses, and research into the history of the presentation of such buildings would form similarly informative topics of research.

The approach of visitors to historic houses, the understanding which they bring to them, and the understanding with which they leave have not been researched. This thesis has described how buildings have changed through time, but it would be very difficult to understand how visitors, their reasons for visiting, and their interests have changed. There is evidence that visitors are starting to see historic sites and museums in a new and different light. Urry suggests that the modern tourist, whom he calls the ‘post-tourist’, is “aware that tourism is a game with multiple texts and there is no single authentic tourist experience” (1994, 236). Historic house visitors accept that they will never see the building exactly as it was in the past, though the levels of recent alterations to many buildings, as documented in this thesis, would probably come as a surprise. Psychological or qualitative analysis of visitor experiences and perceptions, the nature of their interest and their understanding would make for very interesting research. Whether historic house visitors are seeking an authentic experience is unknown. Whether they are aware that buildings have altered, despite statements to the contrary, and whether they take claims such as Shakespeare having performed in a building with a pinch of salt, has not been researched. It is uncertain the extent to which historic house visitors are aware that their interpretation of the past through a building is being modified both by their own backgrounds of knowledge and interests, and by the methods of interpretation within the building. Some of the most interesting potential future research could involve a combined psychological and archaeological approach, looking at the ways in which people perceive buildings, and their expectations of them. This would perhaps answer some of the questions raised here. Similarly, a combined research project to understand how visitors move around buildings, which areas and artefacts they find most engaging and what parts are ignored or misunderstood could inform future reconstruction to a significant extent.
There will be numerous influences on our historic buildings and the ways in which they are reconstructed in the future. It is hoped that this research will make a worthwhile contribution to our understanding of historic building reconstruction. It is also hoped that it will lead into further research which will, as a body, be able to inform the ways in which buildings are reconstructed and presented to the public in the future in order to make them as enjoyable, interesting, informative and relevant as they can be.
Appendix One

Example Buildings Database
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>In / Nearest Town</th>
<th>region</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Owned By</th>
<th>Construction Date</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Alfriston Clergy House</td>
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<td>south east</td>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>c1350</td>
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<td>90</td>
<td>Ancient High House</td>
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<td>midlands</td>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>Stafford Borough Council</td>
<td>1595</td>
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<td>Anne of Cleves' House</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>south east</td>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>Sussex Archaeological Soc</td>
<td>Sixteenth Century</td>
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<td>Astley Hall</td>
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<td>Chorley Corporation</td>
<td>1580s</td>
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<td>south west</td>
<td>Dorset</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1485</td>
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<td>Avoncroft Museum</td>
<td>Stoke Heath, Broms</td>
<td>midlands</td>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>Avoncroft Museum</td>
<td>various</td>
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<td>Clinton, Knowle</td>
<td>midlands</td>
<td>Warks</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Fifteenth Century</td>
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<td>C16th</td>
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<td>Sixteenth Century</td>
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Some buildings have not been included in the analysis due to insufficient information about the dates for reconstruction.

These buildings are Yaldham Manor (Building ID 209), Ingatestone Hall (Building ID 147), and Sh...
Appendix Two

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Bibliography and Notes on Separate Sheet
Recorded by Liz Worth on ...............
Appendix Three

Analysis of Phases of Reconstruction
Appendix Four

Reconstructors’ Pack
Section One:
Simplified Generalisation of Key Drivers and Reconstruction work Undertaken

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reconstruction Period</th>
<th>Some Key Drivers in Reconstruction Work Undertaken</th>
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| 1877 – 1914 (Chapter Four) | • Birth of conservation movement  
                             • Victorian Medievalisation undertaken |
| 1914-1939 (Chapter Five) | • Historic Houses used as Museums  
                             • Growth of Folk Museums  
                             • Englishness under threat through war |
| 1939 – 1959 (Chapter Six) | • National Trust Country Houses Scheme launched  
                             • Wartime and post-war reconstruction undertaken |
| 1959-1979 (Chapter Seven) | • Boom in Historic Building Reconstruction  
                             • Founding of Open-Air Museums |
| 1979-present (Chapter Eight) | • Formation of Building Preservation Trusts  
                             • Use of Interpretation Centres |

It would be informative to understand whether the reconstruction history of a building complies with this wider history, identified through this research. If it does not there may be local influences which have had a considerable effect.

Section Two:
Example Questions about Building Reconstruction

When was it first opened to the public, by whom and why?
- What evidence is there of changes to the structure and decoration between its last use as a house (or other building use) and its first use as a ‘heritage site’?
  - How many phases of alteration are evident?
  - What changes in layout, perhaps evidenced through plans and charted as access analysis, can be identified?
  - What changes in decoration, perhaps evidenced through etchings, paintings, sketches or photographs, can be identified?
  - Has there been addition of new material to the structure, perhaps evidenced through different types of material present in the structure?
- Does its use as a heritage site preclude it from being a house (or being used for another purpose)?
- Does the type of work carried out relate to other works to historic buildings at that date, or is this unique or individual?
- Is there evidence of further subsequent alteration to the building, what date is this, and by whom and why was it carried out?
- Repeat questions about all phases of alteration.
- Can reference to this work, mapping against key periods (Section One, above), provide a context to inform about changes?

Answering these questions could provide a history of historic building reconstruction. This could form a section of a Conservation Plan about the recent reconstruction of a building.
Feeding data about the reconstruction history of a building into one of the formats discussed in Chapter Nine would allow for an overall analysis of the cumulative impact of several phases of reconstruction work on a building, and, perhaps, suggest whether any reconstructed sections have had an impact which could or should be interpreted within the structure.
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