
Buildings at Risk Survey 2016-2018

February 2019



Elmbridge
Borough Council

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Please note that Appendices 2-6 are not publicly available. However, information on individual buildings can be provided on request. Please contact us on www.elmbridge.gov.uk, email tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk or phone 01372 474474.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Listed Buildings/Structures help to create our unique historic environment and add architectural, historic, artistic and archaeological value. They contribute significantly to Elmbridge's attractive environment as well as its economic and social vitality. However, they are irreplaceable resources which are vulnerable to change and can become at risk from decay, neglect and other threats.
- 1.2 A Building at Risk (BAR) is a statutorily listed building identified as 'at risk' through neglect, decay, vandalism or vulnerable to becoming so.
- 1.3 The national Heritage at Risk register, which just contains listed buildings of the higher grades, grade I and II* (outside of London), is published by Historic England.
- 1.4 This is the third survey of listed buildings, of all grades (Grade I, II* and II), at risk within the borough of Elmbridge. It was carried out between April 2016 and December 2018 using officers from within Planning Services.
- 1.5 This report identifies the Listed Buildings which can be considered "at risk" and why. It has been compared with the data from the previous 2005 BAR survey, to identify the reasons for any changes, to analyse the results for trends and then identify potential actions. It will provide a database to monitor changes in condition, future trends, the effectiveness of any actions taken and examples of good practice.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The first survey was undertaken in 1994 as a joint exercise between Surrey County Council and Elmbridge Borough Council. It was part of a national Buildings at Risk Survey initiated by English Heritage in an effort to identify the nature and scale of listed buildings in poor repair.
- 2.2 A second survey was then carried out in 2005/6 by an external consultant, who had previously worked within the council's heritage section. It identified 72 buildings which were no longer at risk or had significantly improved since the first survey.
- 2.3 As a local authority the Council has certain duties to care for its historic environment, the assets it contains and to find the right priorities for future work.
- 2.4 The NPPF (para 185) states that 'Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.'
- 2.5 The Elmbridge Heritage Strategy which provides the framework for how we understand, preserve, manage, integrate, interpret and promote our heritage both in the immediate and long-term future, was endorsed by the Council in December 2015. This identified a new BAR survey as a key priority. The project was therefore set up in early 2016.

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 Prior to the survey, there was no electronic database of all the listed buildings in the borough and their condition. Therefore, the first step was to set up a database with all the statutorily listed buildings within the borough in order to plot the results and help monitor condition in the future, it also included findings

from the previous surveys. This was also used to split the buildings by wards and assign surveyors.

- 3.2 A survey form was created for surveyors to complete on site. This included date of survey and surveyor, details of grade, occupancy and materials and an assessment of condition of various external features in four categories – Good, Fair, Poor or Very Bad. There was also space allowed for additional comments. This was based on the methodology used by Historic England.
- 3.3 Many of the buildings on the statutory list are listed as a group and do not have their own individual record. For this survey those that are in separate ownership or use have been surveyed separately in order to gain a better picture of the condition of all the buildings. However, the survey does not include any buildings or structures that may be considered as curtilage listed.
- 3.4 Buildings which are currently in use for public workshop were also excluded. These buildings are exempt (known as ecclesiastical exemption) from certain provisions of the planning acts and have their own arrangements for handling changes to listed buildings.
- 3.5 For those buildings which could not be easily visited and surveyed without an appointment. A letter was sent out to the owner prior to the area being visited on order to arrange an appointment to gain access.
- 3.6 Each elevation of the building was photographed, as well as any particular architectural details and parts of the building which were causing concern. Only the exterior of the building was surveyed unless the owners/occupiers felt that an internal survey was needed because they had concerns with regards to the condition of the building.
- 3.7 Each survey was then moderated by the council's Listed Building Advisor. Depending on its condition and occupancy, each building was placed in one of the following six categories of risk. These differ from the four categories of condition on the survey forms, however, they were used in the previous two surveys and their use enables easy comparisons to be made and trends identified:

Buildings at serious risk (Risk Category 1): A structure which is seriously neglected with structural problems which could result in collapse. The survival of the building is threatened and urgent action is required. This category also includes missing buildings.

Buildings at medium risk (Risk Categories 2 and 3): A structure in poor condition where continued lack of attention will lead to structural problems which could threaten the future of this building.

Buildings at low risk (Risk Categories 4 and 5): A structure which shows the first signs of neglect or lack of maintenance. There is no immediate threat to the building, but prudent action could prevent more serious problems.

Buildings at very little or no risk (Risk Category 6): A structure which appears to be in good/very good condition

- 3.8 As the survey was undertaken using the existing resources of the Council, the surveys had to fit within other work priorities. However, the majority of the surveys were undertaken between April and September 2016.
- 3.9 Using the collated information, the buildings most at risk were identified and letters sent to the owners requesting that they undertake the necessary repairs.

- 3.10 The buildings most at risk were added to the council's internal GIS system in order for them to be easily identified if a planning application or listed building consent is submitted.
- 3.11 During the course of the survey some listed buildings were re-surveyed this was due to either being notified of repairs, deterioration, new owners, or the wrong building/structure was surveyed initially.

4.0 Results and analysis

- 4.1 574 surveys were undertaken out of a possible 581. 17 new buildings have been listed since the previous survey and 2 have been de-listed.
- 4.2 The survey has found the majority of listed buildings (60%) within the Borough to be in good condition, well maintained and appreciated by the owners. This is up from the previous BAR survey where 55% were found to be in good condition. However, it did identify a number which either could not be located, or which for a variety of reasons, are not being properly maintained.

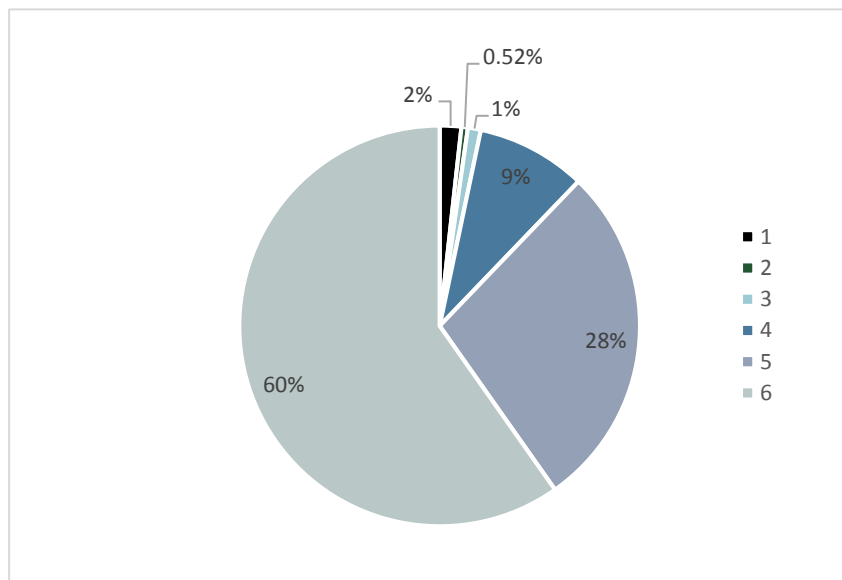


Chart 1: Percentage of buildings in each risk level category

- 4.3 Out of the 4 buildings identified to be at serious risk in 2005, the lamp post at Whitley Village and the Coal Tax Post at Stokesheath Farm remain missing and in risk category 1. The other two, the AA Box and K3 Telephone Kiosks at Cobham Bus Museum, were de-listed in May 2010 as they no longer existed on the spot of original listing and their location was unknown.
- 4.4 A further 8 buildings are now identified within this category. Out of these, 4 had not been surveyed previously, one of them because it is a more recent listing (which was listed in full knowledge of its poor condition). Overall, half of those in category 1 are missing structures or structures which are non-habitable and therefore unlikely to be of economic benefit.

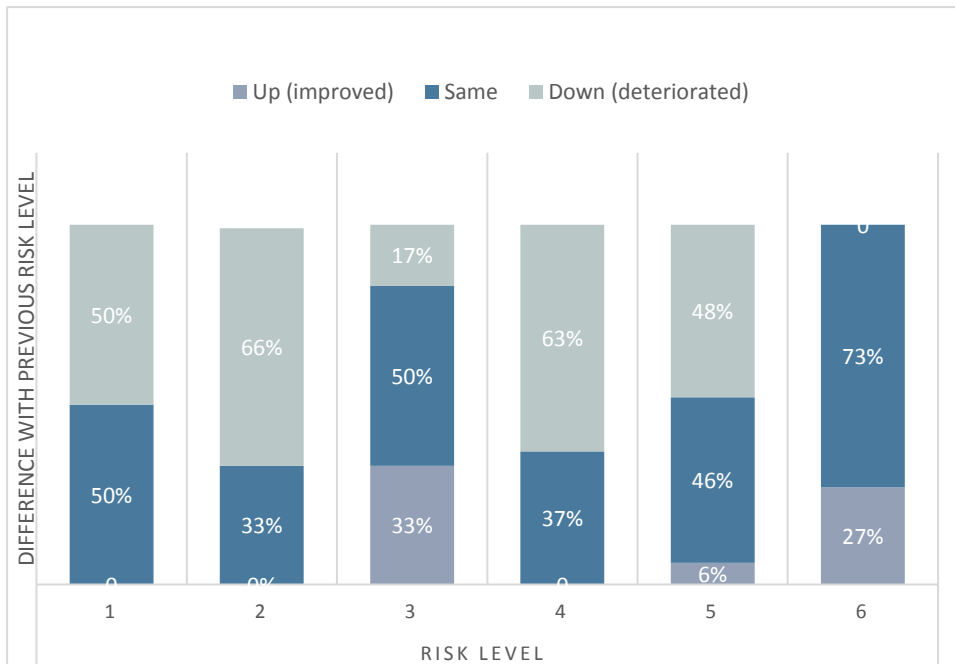


Chart 2: Percentage of listed buildings which have improved, deteriorated or stayed the same, by risk level

- 4.5 For those identified at medium risk (categories 2 and 3), 66% are also non-habitable and are therefore likely to deteriorate further unless they are maintained regularly and funding for their repairs sought. As several of these are tombs this could be difficult due to lack of knowledge of descendants.
- 4.6 Despite this progress, comparison with the previous survey has shown that whilst the condition of 19% of buildings has improved, 20% have deteriorated (where the building has not been previously surveyed either because it's a new listing or was inaccessible it has been presumed that the condition has stayed the same).
- 4.7 Maintenance and occupation/use are essential in preventing a listed building becoming at risk, this is outlined by the statistic that 53% of those which have deteriorated are either non-habitable or vacant. This illustrates the vulnerability of structures which cannot be occupied, they are often not maintained to the same standard as occupied structures.
- 4.8 Maintenance of listed buildings already at risk can prevent them from decaying further. Without maintenance, the cost of repair and consolidation escalates, the challenge for owners and occupiers increases, and the scope for affordable solutions declines. It is therefore particularly concerning to see that 49% of those which have deteriorated and have been identified at low risk (categories 4 & 5) are occupied/in use or partly occupied/in use.

A full breakdown of these results can be found in appendix 1.

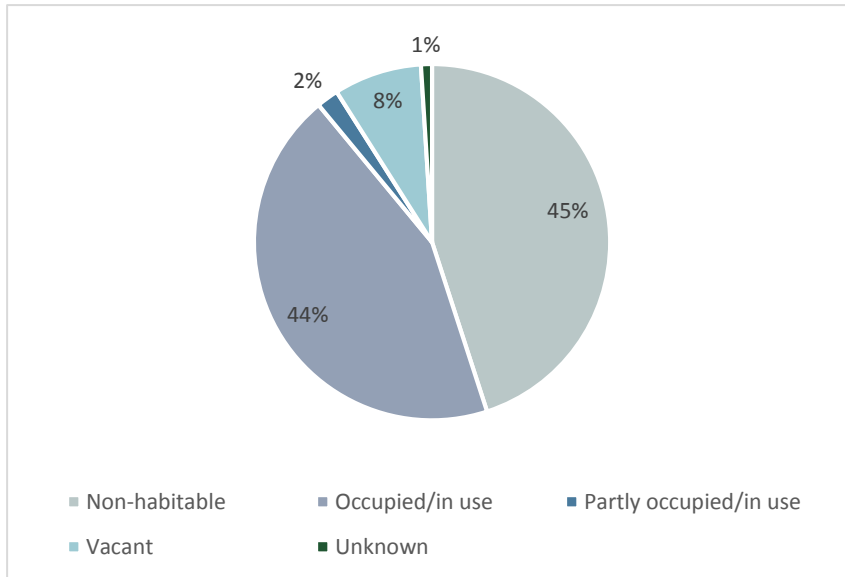


Chart 3: Listed buildings which have deteriorated since 2005 Bar survey, by occupancy

4.9 Out of the 72 listed buildings identified as no longer at risk or significantly improved at the last BAR survey, 40% have deteriorated. However, the vast majority of these are coal tax posts which are non-habitable.

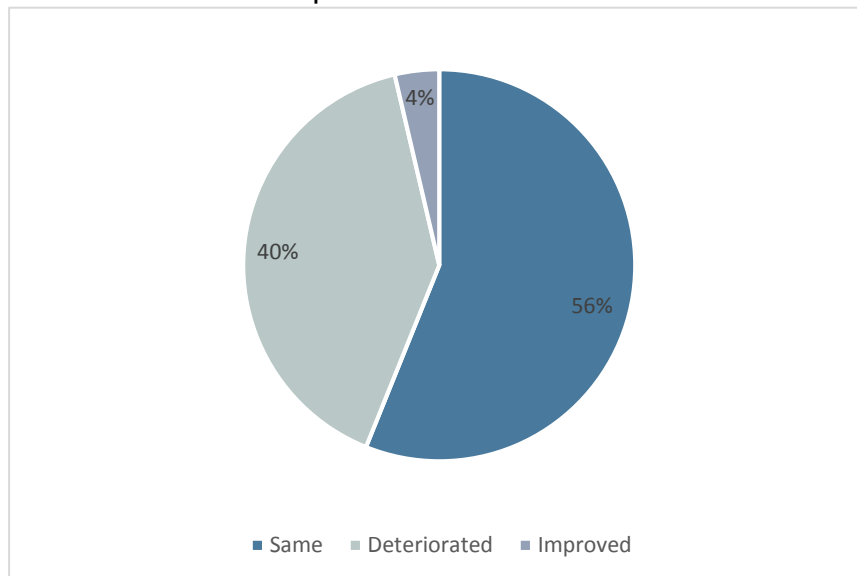


Chart 4: Condition of buildings identified in 2005 as no longer at risk or significantly improved

4.10 The survey has also highlighted that some listed structures have been incorrectly plotted on Historic England’s mapping and/or the council’s own GIS. Therefore, in a small number of cases, some were incorrectly identified in the previous surveys. In two cases listed structures were incorrectly identified in the original survey and have continued to be incorrectly surveyed.

4.11 As highlighted in paragraph 3.11, during the survey a number of the listed buildings were revisited, for numerous reasons – some due to other duties of

the council rather than the survey. In some case these re-visits have shown the disadvantages with only conducting an exterior/distant survey.

- 4.12 From a general view, when surveyed in July 2016, the gates to Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge were considered to be in good condition and placed in category 6. But 14 months later essential repairs were recommended by a Building Surveyor due to its poor condition as result of water ingress and pollutants. The repairs were carried out in 2018, with help of grants from the Council and the Surrey Historic Buildings Trust, the structure can therefore remain in category 6.
- 4.13 Another example is the Semaphore Tower on Chatley Heath. When surveyed externally in 2016, despite being occupied, the building was showing signs neglect and lack of maintenance and was placed in category 5. However, an internal inspection in February 2019 showed the building needs essential repair works as a result of water ingress through the roof and severely rotted window cills. The owners are currently in talks with a potential new leaseholder and the council is hopeful that a viable use will can be found that will enable repair and maintenance. The Council will continue to monitor the situation and can remain in category 5 whilst there is potential that the situation will be resolved.
- 4.14 A summary of all of the buildings at risk within each risk category has been provided in the appendices. It should be noted that the circumstances of some buildings changed during the course of the survey, some of these were revisited and where known the most up to date information is listed. All other listed buildings which are not listed in these appendices were not considered to be at risk at the time of the survey and have been placed in risk category 6.

5.0 Successes

- 5.1 When well cared for, heritage helps create vibrant and successful places, however, not all buildings are straightforward to repair or convert to a new use. It is therefore encouraging to see that 18% of those buildings identified 'at risk' in the previous survey have been rescued and are no longer at risk or have significantly improved.
- 5.2 Finding solutions for buildings at risk is often the result of cooperative work between the Council, owners, developers, architects and others in order to get successful repair and reuse. Four examples of buildings that are no longer at risk have been outlined below:

5.3 13 Church Street, Walton-on-Thames

When surveyed in July 2016 the building was for sale and was put into category 3 due to the likely ingress of water and poor condition of the 1st and 2nd floor windows. Following sale of the property the exterior and residential elements of the interior were repaired, for which listed building consent was not required. The building was resurveyed in April 2018 and placed in Category 6.



Above: 13- 15 Church Street in July 2016
 Right: 13 Church Street in April 2018 following repairs.



5.4 Home of Compassion, 58 High Street, Thames Ditton

This building was in category 5 when surveyed in 2005. Unfortunately, as a result of the need for substantial works and the recession, by 2010 the building was unoccupied, suffering from vandalism, theft and ingress of water causing internal damage. This was perpetuated later in the year through the building being occupied by squatters. The building was therefore considered to be 'at risk'. However, after gaining planning permission and listed building consent the owners were able to proceed with alterations and repairs in 2014 which were completed in 2016, consequently the building is now is category 6 and in use as a care home. The project was also nominated for the Surrey Heritage Awards 2017 for which it was shortlisted.



Left: August 2014 the main cantilever staircase in the Home of Compassion propped up
 Right: The staircase in 2016 following repairs and stabilisation

5.5 The Hand and Spear Hotel, Heath Road, Weybridge

When surveyed in 2005 this building had a very neglected appearance, this included missing downpipes, slate roof in poor state of repair and broken timber balustrade. It was considered to be at medium risk and therefore put into category 3. In 2006, it was taken over by new management and was refurbished together with extensions which required planning permission and

listed building consent. At the time of the survey in 2016 it was in a good state of repair and is therefore now considered not 'at risk' and in category 6. This is a good example of how a viable use and good management can keep the building in good condition.



Left: The Hand & Spear in 2005

Right: The Hand & Spear in 2016 following refurbishment and continued maintenance

5.6 Bellman Hangar, Brooklands Museum

When listed in 1999 the hangar was already in poor condition and was consequently placed in category 4 in the 2005 survey. In February 2015 the museum was awarded a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for its 'Brooklands Aircraft Factory & Race Track Revival Project', which included moving the Hangar off the Finishing Straight and restoring it nearby. This required planning permission, listed building consent and Scheduled Monument consent. In 2016, the Hangar was yet to be relocated so remained in category 4 for the survey however, by the end of the year it was dismantled. It has since been rebuilt and holds a permanent exhibition and has been placed in category 4 with the hope that a continued, viable use will ensure the building remains in good condition. In 2018 the exhibition won the Museums + Heritage for best permanent exhibition.



Left: Bellman Hangar prior to be dismantled in 2016

Right: Bellman Hanger in 2018 following relocation and repairs

6.0 Actions and Outcomes

- 6.1 The survey has identified the buildings/structures most at risk and those which are vulnerable to risk. This means that the Council can prioritise future projects, direct grant aid and identify those which need monitoring.
- 6.2 Identification as a Building at Risk implies no criticism of the owners of the structures concerned, many of whom are actively seeking ways to secure their future. It does, however, allow the Council to provide support and advice.
- 6.3 Following the survey, the Council communicated with owners of those buildings identified most at risk to make them aware of their responsibilities and what financial assistance and specialist advice may be available. In some cases, this has resulted in repair or works to prevent further deterioration.
- 6.4 There are several grant schemes which can support owners with the cost of repairs and maintenance. This includes the council's own small discretionary [grants scheme](#) and one operated by the [Surrey Historic Buildings Trust](#). Other potential sources of grant aid include [Historic England](#) and the [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#).
- 6.5 Sadly, some owners do not take responsibility for the condition of their sites. In these cases, the Council can exercise its statutory powers to prompt action. This includes the use of an Urgent Works notice or Repairs notice.
- 6.6 There have been several other outcomes of the survey, these include:
 - The initiation of a rolling programme by Streetsmart to maintain the Coal Tax Posts - There are 21 listed coal tax posts within the borough. In 1994, due to the poor condition of the Coal Tax Posts, the survey recommended a maintenance programme. This was carried out by the Council in 1997 and involved stripping back the cast iron posts, sand blasting the rust, and re-painting them. But inevitably they are now showing signs of weathering with water ingress, rust, dirt and flaking paint plus being obscured by vegetation in some cases. As a result, a rolling programme by Streetsmart to clean up and re-paint the cast iron posts was recommended. In late 2018 they started with a trial post at Desborough Island which involved rubbing off flaking paint, washing down and repainting with suitable paint in the same livery. It also includes cutting back vegetation as required and monitoring on a 6 monthly basis. The priority would be those posts which are publicly visible and accessible and as this is only involves maintenance works it does not need Listed Building Consent.
 - Production of identification sheets for future surveys - The survey highlighted that some listed structures were difficult to locate (particularly chest tombs), which had resulted in some being incorrectly plotted on Historic England's mapping and/or the council's own GIS. As a result, site visits have been undertaken to clarify the correct locations and identification sheets produced for future surveys. In addition, corrections have been made by Historic England and the Council.
- 6.7 Looking to the future, the Council will continue to support heritage at risk, ensuring that valuable and irreplaceable heritage can make its fullest possible contribution to society now and for many years to come. The following actions are recommended:

- Locate and reinstate the two missing structures at risk level 1. Where this proves impossible, Historic England should be approached with a view to removing the building from the Statutory List.
- Support and advise owners of buildings identified 'at risk'. This may include the production of owners guides and grant aid.
- Identify opportunities as part of a planning application, this may include enabling development.
- Encourage and support volunteers who wish to help repair and maintain buildings/structures which are not capable of being used and lack the economic incentive for owners to care for them.
- Regular inspections of listed buildings are carried out, not only to identify new buildings which may have become at risk but also to monitor the progress of those already identified. Major problems are often the result of prolonged neglect and, if tackled earlier, could have been avoided or at least reduced in scale and severity

Appendix 1

Breakdown of results by risk level

		Risk Level					TOTAL	
		1	2	3	4	5		6
Difference with previous risk level	Up (improved)	n/a	0	2	0	10	94	106
	Same	5	1	3	19	74	249	351
	Down (deteriorated)	5	2	1	32	77	n/a	117
TOTAL		10	3	6	51	161	343	574

Table 1: Difference with risk level in 2005 BAR survey

		Risk Level					TOTAL
		1	2	3	4	5	
Occupancy	Non-habitable	4	1	1	20	27	53
	Occupied/in use	0	0	0	11	41	52
	Partly occupied/in use	0	0	0	0	2	2
	Vacant	1	1	0	1	6	9
	Unknown	0	0	0	0	1	1
TOTAL		5	2	1	32	77	117

Table 2: Occupancy of buildings/structures which have deteriorated since 2005 BAR survey, by risk level.