

Scottish Stone Liaison Group

NEWSLETTER

Indigenous Materials Project Team

Issue No. 11 Summer 2005

Conference

Stirling Council Chamber 4th November 2005

**10.30–4.30pm
(in association with of Stirling City Heritage
Trust)**

Prior to the arrival of railways, the majority of significant buildings in Scotland were constructed with indigenous stone and this conference will seek to highlight the value of these buildings as visitor attractions and also the difficulties confronting those seeking to undertake the appropriate repairs.

Research Report, undertaken by Historic Scotland and entitled “The Performance of Replacement Sandstone in the New Town of Edinburgh”) clearly demonstrates the effects of using the wrong stone during repair work and how this subsequently damages the very buildings that were being repaired. The consequence of such errors will, at best, be more costly in the longer run or, at worst, demolition of more of our heritage.

The Conference draft agenda is as follows:

Value of the built heritage

As a tourist attraction, Scotland’s built heritage will become increasingly valuable.

Maintenance & the use of inappropriate stone

Research by Dr Ewan Hyslop into the damage that results from the use of inappropriate stone during repair work was commissioned by Historic Scotland and published in 2004.

County mineral maps

The lack of County Mineral Maps here in Scotland has been trailed in previous Newsletters and the British Geological Survey will address this issue at the Conference.

Energy use and sustainability

Embodied energy in modern manufactured materials or stone transported from the other sides of the world, as opposed to that embedded in indigenous materials, will be addressed.

Glasgow project

The Glasgow Project will be outlined by the SSLG as will the threat of material falls from buildings. This will also address the problems arising from the extensive use of “plastic repairs”.

City of Edinburgh

- Scotland's Built Heritage – tourist attraction.
- Repair and Maintenance of buildings.
- Damage arising from the use of inappropriate materials.
- County Mineral Maps – material sourcing.
- Embodied Energy, Life Cycle Costings, Sustainability.
- Glasgow Project – material and skills needs.
- Public Safety, City Wide Audit, specification & material sourcing.

The following organisations will provide speakers - VisitScotland, Historic Scotland, British Geological Survey (2), Building Research Establishment, Scottish Stone Liaison Group (a charity), the City of Edinburgh Council.

The Conference is directed to:

- Local Authorities – Planning Departments, Architects, Conservation Officers
- Tourist bodies – local and national.
- Other bodies – Historic Scotland, NTS, BEFS, HEACS, Scottish Civic Trust etc.
- Conservation Professionals – Architects, Surveyors etc.

Background

The SSLG has previously raised the issue of indigenous stone reserves and recognises that, in the 1980s, the former Scottish Development Department undertook a series of studies into the location of mineral resources but none of these, as far as the SSLG can establish, relates to dimensional stone. Traced to date are studies on sand, gravel, fire clay, clay and mudstone for bricks, hard rock aggregate, silica sand and limestone but nothing apparently on the Scotland's dimensional stone reserve.

The steps taken by the City of Edinburgh to get to grips with the requirements of its built heritage has been outlined to a number of bodies.

Conclusion

It is essential that this generation maintains its inheritance in the most appropriate manner to enable our children, and their children, appreciate the efforts of previous generations.

Glasgow project

Within several weeks of the start of the contract, it became apparent that the timescale initially envisaged was too tight. However, through negotiations, it was possible to extend the period of the project with the final report now planned for Summer 2006.

British Geological Survey, having won the contract, is undertaking the visual inspections of some 230 buildings with the coring exercise

Slate - Hill of Foudland

The SSLG has been operating from page xii of the Historic Scotland Technical Advice Note (TAN) No.21 entitled "Scottish Slate Quarries" which lists the quarries considered to be worthy of "further investigation". The material analysed from the first two named areas (Ballachulish and Foudland) suggested that both sources merited further examination. A coring exercise has been completed at the former and plans are currently afoot to do likewise at Foudland.

concentrating on about 100 buildings. This particular element of the contract should provide a database that will be available for Glasgow in perpetuity. Such knowledge could subsequently be expanded if all future grant aided projects required similar coring exercises. In this way, the database could be augmented and provide data on the appropriate materials for repairs NOW and into the FUTURE.

The identification of the best possible site involved considerable exercise and in July Dr Walsh will further examine the Hill of Foudland with a view to defining the area where the coring should be undertaken.

A Carmyllie quarry

Angus Council is disposing of a disused quarry, named the Guynd Quarry, which is quite close to the more famous Carmyllie Quarries, and again the SSLG is seeking to identify a contractor who may be prepared to progress this matter further.

The Quarry was subject to a compulsory purchase order and, now it is being disposed of, must be offered to the original owner. It is understood the previous owner may well buy back the old quarry.

For information: - Currently there are no sandstone paving quarries operational in Scotland and such materials come from Yorkshire or even further afield. This possible development presents both an opportunity and a challenge.

Falling masonry

The SSLG, through time and effort, has regularly attended and supported a Working Party pursuing this important matter and regular readers will be able to trace the progress, or lack of it, that has been made over the last year. It is a matter of regret that we report that any such progress has again ground to a standstill.

Fortunately the manner in which Local Authorities record and report on these material falls is being pursued elsewhere. Currently a standard reporting procedure is being devised and this will ensure that the data collected has a common base.

At the June meeting of the SSLG, its Chief Executive reported that he considers the manner in which this issue is being handled is not dissimilar to "pass the parcel". The lack of progress on this serious problem will next manifest itself only when there is yet another tragic accident arising from material falling from buildings. It is to be hoped that progress will be achieved sooner, rather than later, if the SSLG is to continue its involvement in this important Working Party.

SSLG AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the SSLG was held on the 9th June '05 with the Board receiving copies of the SSLG accounts and reports from the Convener and the Chief Executive. Mrs Pat Gibbons, formerly Chief executive of the Scottish Lime Centre, also informed the meeting that she wished to retire from the Board and the election of a new Director, Mrs Roz Artis-Young – now Chief Executive of the SLCT – was agreed. The Board expressed its sincere thanks to Mrs Gibbons for her support over the years.

Scottish Stone Show

The SSLG has been invited to have its stand at the first SCOTTISH STONE SHOW (29th/30th November, Ingliston, Edinburgh). It is understood that the organisers have already been in contact with the Scottish industry but if any reader wishes more information then please contact the office.

STOP PRESS - Arndean Quarry

The appeal by Block Stone Ltd against the decision of the Perth & Kinross Council for the opening of a quarry at Arndean, near Blairingone, has failed. The reasons are not yet fully understood but this decision underlines the challenges faced by those seeking to open a new quarry.

Editor: Alan McKinney
Scottish Stone Liaison Group
Room 133, Pentlandfield Business Park, The Bush, Roslin EH25 9RE
Tel: 0131 448 0313 Fax: 0131 440 4032