

## **REPORT OF BUILDING CONSERVATION OFFICER**

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### **SUBJECT: HISTORIC BUILDINGS AT RISK UPDATE**

#### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to Inform Members of the increase in the number of listed buildings considered at risk within the National Park.

#### Introduction

The focus of this report is listed buildings. These are buildings of special architectural or historic interest and have their own legislation. There are 1228 listed buildings within the National Park..

#### Background

The listed buildings within the National Park have been kept under regular review since 1998. This was formalised in 2008 when Cadw funded a survey of all 1228 listed buildings by Scott Handley Associates. In 2012, Cadw began an all-Wales survey using the same consultants, a national register is due to be made public in 2017. The survey work for the National Park has recently been completed.

The Buildings at Risk Register categories the historic buildings into 3 categories – (a) at extreme risk – the highest risk category. (b) at grave risk and (c) at risk.

Previously 3.8% ( 47) of listed buildings were on this risk register in the National Park. Following the recent survey, this has risen to 6.5% (the current national average being 8.9%).

The reasons for the increase in the number at risk could be attributed to declining public/private sector funding and consequence decline in maintenance the storm damage of 2014 and redundancy e.g. of traditional farm buildings. 17 buildings are at 'extreme risk', 1 at 'grave risk' and 62 'at risk'. This makes a total of 80 historic buildings on the risk register within the Park.

There are various means available to the Authority to address the problem. Enforcement (via Section 215, repairs/urgent works notices) are usually complex procedures, often involving expenditure and even compulsory purchase. The risks of financial loss to the Authority would be balanced against the certainty of reclaiming eligible costs from the owner and achieving resale of the property. Such cases would be referred initially to Members as and when they arise. There is also the opportunity to ask Cadw to review the listed status of a small number of these buildings where their architectural/historic merit is considered marginal.

Much may also be achieved through negotiation, where a schedule of repairs of either a permanent or temporary nature can be agreed. Where listed buildings at risk are subject to planning applications (e.g. for conversion), the listed status of the building and the costs of works may reasonably be a material consideration.

To date, the owners of 58 buildings at risk have been contacted. As a result, 5 buildings have consented schemes for repairs, three of which are underway. Schemes are being discussed for 15 buildings through pre-application or direct officer contact. Of the remaining 38 buildings, 2 are undergoing repairs and 5 have repairs planned. The rest are being monitored. Where negotiation proves fruitless, then enforcement becomes a reality, with 9 buildings falling within that category.

In terms of the risk factor, it is considered important to monitor all historic buildings in order to prevent them becoming at risk. . Following the recent survey, the owners of the newly identified buildings at risk will be contacted, and the buildings added to the 'working' register.

### Legal Considerations

There are no legal considerations.

### Financial considerations

There are no financial considerations at present. Monitoring of historic buildings is factored into the Building Conservation Officer's work programme. However, each specific case requiring positive intervention would need to be determined on its own individual merits and there could be financial implications.

### Equality and Diversity

No negative implications.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Members **note** the contents of this report.

### Background Documents -

Information on listed buildings from Cadw's consultant's draft report

(For further information please contact Mr Rob Scourfield, Building Conservation Officer)