



# Preserving Surrey's Heritage

## Surrey Heritage Awards 2019 – The Winners

Surrey's best historic building conservation projects were showcased at the Surrey Heritage Awards 2019, held at West Horsley Place.

The winners of this year's Surrey Heritage Awards were announced by Mr Matthew Slocombe, Director of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), and the trophy for the overall winner was presented by Mr Michael More-Molyneux, Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey and the Patron of the Surrey Historic Buildings Trust.

Scooping the top prize was the Parklands Farm Granary in Ockley, an unusual agricultural building dating back over three hundred years which had been at risk of collapsing when new owners took over and began a major programme of repairs and conservation.

All of the buildings on this year's Awards shortlist are between three hundred and five hundred years old, several of them timber-framed buildings from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. "Highly Commended" by the award judging panel were Sunt Farmhouse in Oxted and the Lythe Hill Hotel in Chiddingfold. Runners-up were Manor Cottage in Shere, Yew Tree Cottage in Wrecclesham and Oatlands Park in Weybridge.

The biennial Surrey Heritage Awards were established by the Surrey Historic Buildings Trust to recognise "Best Practice" in historic building conservation in Surrey. *Surrey Life* Magazine is the Trust's official Media Partner for these awards and gave extensive coverage to this year's event.



The 2019 award ceremony was held at West Horsley Place by kind permission of Mr Bamber Gascoigne and the Mary Roxburghe Trust. This imposing building in West Horsley, substantial parts of which are medieval, is currently undergoing a major conservation programme of its own.

### Winner – Parklands Farm Granary, Ockley

Parklands Farm Granary is a Grade II listed late seventeenth or early eighteenth-century granary, located over a cart shed. Much of the granary's original fabric had been retained, including its corn bins, and its modest scale and relationship with the cart shed makes it an unusual piece of surviving Surrey vernacular architecture.

The granary was in a particularly poor condition following years of neglect. The main structural posts in the building had moved, resulting in one corner subsiding and pulling the butt rafters out of the purlin. The roof was also in a poor condition causing significant rot throughout the structure.

The work carried out included stripping the roof and jacking the building up to re-engage the rafter-to-purlin joints and allow the leaning timbers to be set near upright. The tiles were reinstated and the internal plasterwork repaired with traditional lath and plaster to the affected areas. The ground floor of the building was part enclosed by walls made from traditional plank bark-edge offcuts.

In their comments, the judging panel noted that "the granary was on the point of collapse when the owners bought the property. Although it had minimal economic value, the owners appreciated it for its historic character, and the contribution it makes to the setting of the listed farmhouse. The contractor was able to stabilise the granary without dismantling it and has done an excellent job of carrying out sympathetic repairs using traditional materials and techniques."

### **Highly Commended – Sunt Farmhouse, Oxted**

Sunt Farmhouse is a late sixteenth-century two-storey timber-framed house. It has large back-to-back hearths on each floor built with earth mortar rather than lime. Other unusual features include historic sliding shutters and Yorkshire sliding sash windows and a solid tread staircase. Repairs were carried out to the unusual Yorkshire sash windows as part of the project. Black paint, which is not a historic feature of timber-framed buildings, was removed from many of the timbers inside the house. The most notable work was the reinstatement of the fireplaces to their original designs, using historic methods.

The judges said they were “impressed with the use of sympathetic craftsmanship, traditional materials and reversing unwelcome works previously undertaken”, adding: “Modern services have been introduced to the building but the carefully preserved elements show the building has retained its historic character and the patina of age.”

### **Highly Commended – Lythe Hill Hotel, Chiddingfold**

Lythe Hill Hotel is a Grade II\* listed building which comprises a fifteenth-century Wealden hall-house with a late sixteenth-century wing. This wing has notable decorative timber framing, which is a particularly rare feature in Surrey.

Despite its outward appearance, much of the decorative framing was in a very poor condition having suffered from rot or beetle infestation. To ensure works were carried out with minimal intervention, drawings were produced showing which timbers needed to be repaired or, in many cases, reinstated. In particular, most of the gable needed to be rebuilt. Much of the lathe and plaster infill had been replaced inappropriately in brick and concrete in the past. New panels were constructed with wood, wool and lime render to allow the building to breathe.



Judges noted the scale of the project and commended efforts “to retain as much decorative timber as possible. The detailed records kept of the project were also remarked on as this would help inform any future repair projects.”

### **Runner-up – Manor Cottage, Shere**

Manor Cottage is a fifteenth to sixteenth century timber-framed house in the centre of Shere, with a modern extension to the rear. The project sought to repair the building using traditional materials and techniques. Manor Cottage was in a poor condition as a cement and sand render on the property was causing rot by not allowing historic materials to breathe.

As part of the project, the owner carried out much of the work himself, taking the opportunity to learn about traditional techniques. This included removing the harmful render, repointing the existing brickwork and carrying out repairs to the timber framing.

The judging panel felt this was “a well-conceived and executed conservation project led by a hands-on owner who was keen to understand and learn how to use traditional materials. In the long term the works should improve the condition of the building by preventing damp and rot.”

### **Runner-up – Old Yew Tree Cottage, Wrecclesham**

Old Yew Tree Cottage is a sixteenth-century smoke bay house, one end of which was rebuilt as a chimney parlour wing. The oldest part of the house has been dendro-dated to 1551 as part of the repairs.

This building had little work done in the last 100 years and therefore represented a rare opportunity for the Farnham Trust to take it on as a project to learn more about its history.

Where additional strength was required in the timber frame, new timbers were added alongside the old so that the original fabric could be retained. Where rebuilding of brickwork was necessary, lime mortar was used alongside

lime plaster, finished with clay paint to ensure the historic fabric remained breathable. Historic elm floorboards were also retained as part of the project and carefully re-laid where rooms required more structural support.

The judges noted that in addition to refurbishing a vulnerable listed building and retaining much historic fabric, significant recording work was undertaken during the project and this has been deposited in a public archive.

### **Runner-up – Oatlands Park Gates, Weybridge**

Oatlands Park Gates are set at the edge of the Oatlands Hotel, formerly the site of Oatlands House. Research conducted as a result of the repairs established that the gates were based on a design by notable landscape gardener William Kent and constructed during the mid to late eighteenth century.

Following a piece of masonry coming loose, it was established that rusting iron cramps in the masonry were causing damage and had to be removed. Steam cleaning was carried out to identify further repairs and ensure that new stone inserts would blend with the existing masonry. Rusting iron cramps were replaced with stainless steel and loose masonry pinned and resin-bonded where necessary. To ensure that best conservation practice was followed, historic repairs were retained and paint analysis carried out on the railings. A total of 150 repairs were carried out as part of the project.

Judges were “impressed by the retention of historic repairs and paint analysis, the latter of which revealed the origins of the gates. The photographic record of the gates was also commendable and will help inform periodic repairs in the future.”

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## **Commemorating “The Fallen”**



This photograph shows one of the memorial tablets at Dorking United Reformed Church, recording the names of the town's Fallen from the First World War. The tablets have recently been repaired and cleaned thanks to a grant from Surrey Historic Buildings Trust.

Dorking URC is running a major fundraising appeal for a long-term project to improve community facilities and renovate the fabric of the church building, which is Grade II Listed and is over 185 years old. The imposing building on West Street plays host to over 20 community and faith-based groups that attract over 1,000 weekly users.

Pastor David Bedford said: “The response from the whole community to our appeal has been fantastic. Things like church roof appeals are not that fashionable these days, but I think their generosity reflects the recognition of the vital role the church plays in the local community.”

As well as donations from the congregation and members of the public, grants have been received from SHBT, Gatwick Airport Community Trust, Garfield Weston and the All Churches Trust. The works have been match funded by borrowing from church reserves. Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) was the largest contributor, with a grant of £25,000.

SHBT secretary Andy Smith said: “We were delighted to be able to make a contribution to the work being carried out at Dorking United

Reformed Church. By funding the repair and cleaning of the Great War memorial tablets, SHBT is helping to preserve for future generations a small but poignant piece of local history.”

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## **Conservation Grants**

Here are some of the other recent grant applications approved by SHBT Trustees:

**St Mark's Church, Hale, Farnham:** The chancel of the late-Victorian church is decorated with an impressive wall mural of “The Song of Creation” painted by local artist Kitty Milroy between 1911 and 1920. There has been significant deterioration and a programme of repairs is now required, including restoration of lost plasterwork.

Trustees of SHBT have agreed to provide £5,000 towards these repairs. This is an especially interesting project and a photographic record will be made of the work in progress.

**Claremont Garden Walls, Esher:** We have made several grants to fund repairs to Grade II Listed walls at Claremont dating from 1723. These walls were originally part of a walled kitchen garden designed by Sir John Vanbrugh but are now very decayed and are on the "Heritage at Risk" Register. As well as funding repairs to brickwork, SHBT has grant-aided the construction of new buttresses to support sections of wall which are in danger of collapsing.

**Orpheus Barn, Godstone:** The Trust has given £3,000 to patch and repair the thatched roof of this Grade II Listed 17th-century barn which is used as a theatre and performance space for disabled youngsters and local community organisations.

**War Memorial Lychgate, St Bartholomew's Church, Horley:** We have agreed to give £1,500 towards the cost of repairing this interesting lychgate, which was built in the early 1900s as a memorial to three parishioners who lost their lives in the Boer War.

**Warlingham War Memorial, Warlingham:** The Trust has also given £500 to repair part of the statue of a soldier protecting a woman and child on this Grade II Listed war memorial on Warlingham Green.

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## SHBT Annual General Meeting 2019

The **Annual General Meeting of Surrey Historic Buildings Trust** will be held at 3.00pm on Wednesday 9th October 2019 at The Orpheus Centre, Godstone, Surrey RH9 8ND ([www.orpheus.org.uk](http://www.orpheus.org.uk)). The meeting will take place in The Barn Theatre. Tea/coffee and cake will be served on arrival. The meeting will be asked to approve the Trust's annual report and accounts, and to appoint our Board of Trustees for the ensuing year. This is an opportunity for members of SHBT to see this outstanding example of a traditional thatched barn (very rare in Surrey). Please call Trust administrator Mr Andy Smith on 07737 271676 to confirm your attendance or to send apologies if you are unable to attend.



Current Trustees of SHBT are: Mrs Angela Fraser (Chairman), Mr David Davis, Mrs Hazel Morris, Mrs Jennifer Powell, Mr Nick Skellett, Ms Julie Summers and Mr Colin Taylor. New Trustees seeking appointment at this AGM are: Mrs Amanda Lewis, Mrs Christine Manly, Mrs Sarah Sullivan and Mr Michael Sydney. The Trust's Secretary/Administrator is Mr Andy Smith. Our conservation advisers are Mr Martin Higgins and Mr Chris Reynolds.



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## Surrey Historic Buildings Trust

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