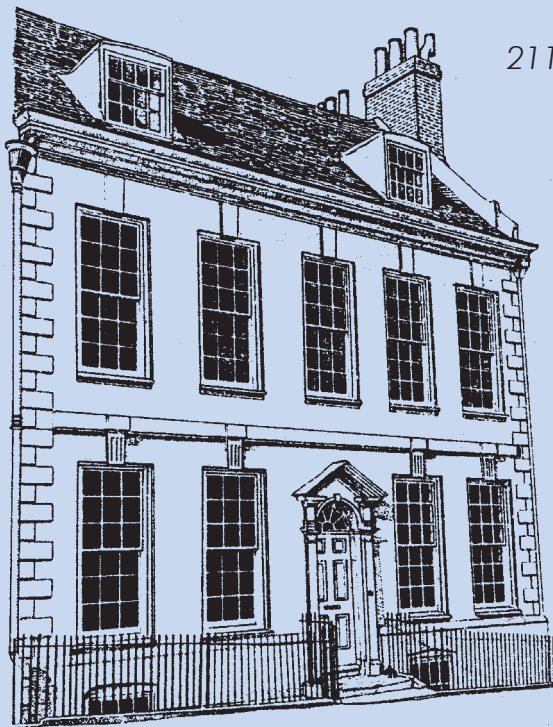


LISTED BUILDINGS

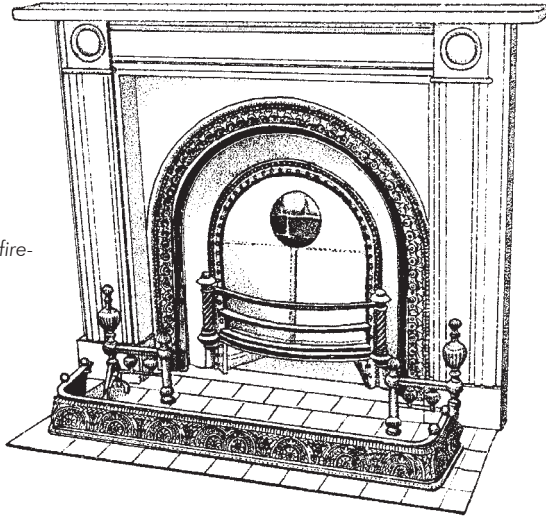
An Owner's guide to
Alterations and Repairs



*211 High Street, Lewes
Listed Grade II*

Who should read this leaflet?

This leaflet is written for owners of listed buildings and for people who are considering buying a listed building. It will also be of interest to estate agents, solicitors, surveyors and architects and indeed any professional person who deals at some time with listed buildings. Its purpose is to outline briefly the responsibilities of owning a listed building and to provide some guidance on alterations and repairs which may require "Listed Building Consent" from the Council.



Early Victorian fireplace in Grade II* building

What requires Listed Building Consent?

Buildings are listed for special architectural or historical character and are graded I, II* and II. All listed buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the listing covers both the interior and the exterior of the building and also any structure within its curtilage dating from before 1st July 1948. "Listed Building Consent" is required for any alterations which affect the character of the listed building and work requiring consent can range from removing a fireplace to adding a large extension.

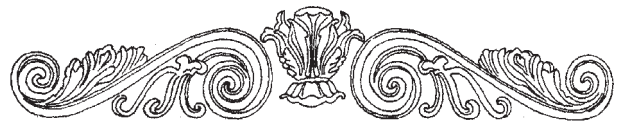
The importance of internal features

Listing therefore includes not only the main external features such as the walls and roof, but also the internal features which are fixed to the building and which make up so much of its historic character. Therefore, internal joinery such as doors, fitted cupboards and panelling are all part of the "listed" building as are other features like fireplaces and plasterwork, and Listed Building Consent must be sought before altering or removing such features. Some owners believe that the listing description in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's statutory list contains all of the 'listed' features but these descriptions are for identification purposes only.

Extensions to Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are particularly interesting because they show how the design and layout of buildings changed over the centuries and

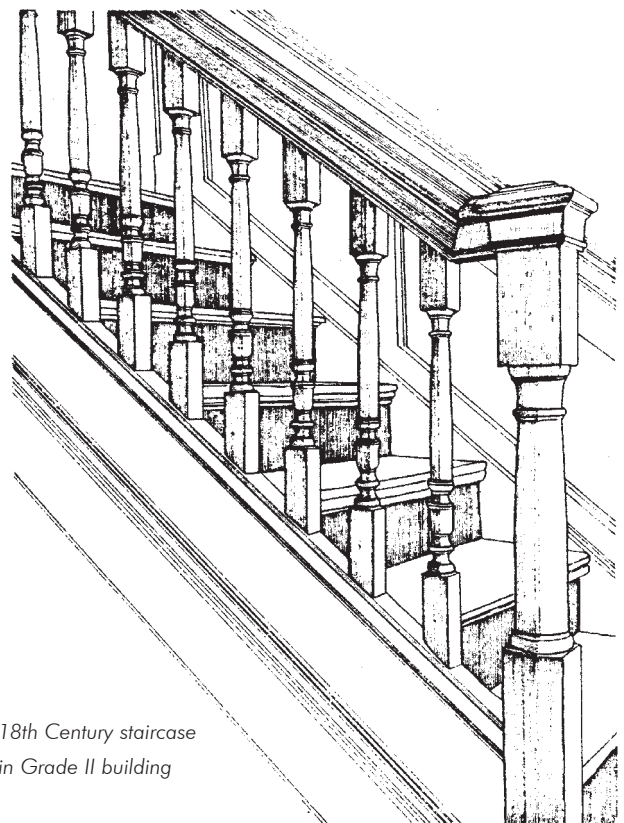
even the most modest listed cottage can illustrate how such buildings were planned and detailed at one particular time. For this reason the Council will nominally resist applications which propose unsympathetic sub-division or extension of the listed building. With timber-frame buildings, for instance, modest extensions which respect the original bay width and scale of the original building may be allowed but in some cases extensions may not be considered acceptable. Many listed buildings have already been substantially extended in the past and the Council may decide that further extensions would so damage the character of the original building that consent should not be given. Potential purchasers of listed buildings are therefore advised to consider the suitability of the existing building for their purposes before they buy it, or alternatively consider submitting an application for their required alterations before they purchase to avoid disappointment if their proposals are rejected.



Late Georgian door scroll on Grade II building

Repairs to Listed Buildings

Repairs to listed buildings using traditional materials and building techniques on a "like-for-like" basis will not usually require Listed Building Consent, but it is always wise to check with the Planning & Environmental Services Department before commencing work. You may be required to submit a detailed specification for the repairs, and it is always advisable to appoint a professionally qualified person with experience in listed buildings to act on your behalf and to supervise the work. If Listed Building Consent is required, you will also need someone to prepare your application drawings which should consist of existing and proposed plans, sections and elevations, with details of specific items such as new joinery as necessary.



18th Century staircase in Grade II building

What work requires Listed Building Consent?

The type of work which normally requires Listed Building Consent includes:

- extensions and demolitions
- repairs not carried out in matching materials (eg. changing from a hand-made clay tile to a machine-made tile)
- demolition and rebuilding of important features like chimney stacks
- sand-blasting stonework, brickwork and timbers (internal and external)
- exposing timbers and brickwork previously hidden beneath plaster or limewash
- stripping out internal plasterwork (where it is not being replaced as original)
- removal or alteration of internal features such as doors, cupboards, panelling, and fireplaces
- changes to the plan form of internal rooms (eg. blocking-up door openings, removing partitions or staircases)
- timber treatment where this involves destructive techniques
- new plumbing (where this has an impact on the listed building)
- replacement windows including double glazing
- insertion of suspended ceilings
- fitting of new ovens and stoves which require new flues.

This list is by no means comprehensive and is included for guidance purposes only. If you are in any doubt as to whether you need Listed Building Consent, please contact the Planning & Environmental Services Department *before you start work*. Don't forget that it is a criminal offence to alter a building without Listed Building Consent and conviction could result in a fine or even a prison sentence for both the owner and the builder.

Ignorance of the law is no defence. The fact that the building is listed will usually show on the solicitor's searches so new owners should be told that the building is listed at the time of purchase. Alternatively, copies of the statutory list are held in the Planning & Environmental Services Department at Lewes. Compliance with other controls such as Building Regulations or Public Health does not mean that the work is acceptable from the listed building point of view and although the Council may be involved in your building from another viewpoint, you should always check with the Planning & Environmental Services Department as well.

Further Information

If you require further information please contact the Design & Conservation Officer at:

Planning & Environmental Services
Lewes District Council
P O Box 2707
Southover House
Southover Road
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 1DW

Tel: (01273) 484413

email: planning@lewes.gov.uk