



**Evropská venkovská sídla v 21. století
Europese kastelen en huizen in de 21e eeuw
Az európai kastélyok a XXI. Században
Európske kaštiele, kúrie a zámky v 21. storočí
The European country house in the 21st century**

**ECHo
Final
Report**

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ECHo Project Executive Summary

The mission of the ECHo Project was to find sustainable social and economic roles for Europe's country houses in the 21st Century which encourage the support of society as a whole and of local communities in particular.

The Objectives of the ECHo Project:

- To explore methods of involving local communities in the future use, management and decision-making of European country houses and their surroundings; putting this methodology into practice at a number of sites across Europe thereby engaging people with their local heritage; and developing and cascading a toolkit for future workshops.
- To build capacity amongst young heritage professionals by researching the socio-economic roles of successful uses of the European country house and the regenerative effects these bring to the local community; and developing and disseminating best practice.
- To develop an interactive travelling exhibition (roadshow) that will present the findings of the project to public, whilst facilitating further exploration of the role of the country house where the exhibition is displayed.

The Achievements of the ECHo Project:

The ECHo project has achieved a great deal on a number of fronts.

1. It has successfully deepened partnership capability amongst the European heritage organisations that participated.
2. The project has broadened the understanding and skills sets of the young professionals involved both through the structured research of houses in the UK and the Netherlands and through their participation in all aspects of the project.
3. ECHo offers other country house owners and managers across Europe a methodology for encouraging the participation of diverse parts of the community through workshops and roadshows. Organisations that were exposed to the project now have a mechanism for involving local people more in the decisions they take about country houses, parks and gardens
4. The project identifies pan-European themes in heritage management, highlighting the importance of volunteering, tourism and joined up thinking, amongst others. The exact nature of these, their varying importance between the countries and how some significant themes are more relevant to one country also came out of the project. It is perhaps the common themes that are the most exciting as they provide the areas where learning can be developed and shared.
5. A number of European country houses used as case studies within the project have reaped real benefits from this focussed attention. In Hungary, the workshop at Tata acted as the catalyst to bring together key stakeholders in the future of the Esterházy House and created a network, which if maintained will play a vital part in finding a holistic solution for the future use of the site.

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6. Finally, whilst there have been important gains in awareness raising amongst the heritage community as well as the public, perhaps the most significant outcome is that European citizens have been involved in shaping the future of their heritage.

Meeting the ECHo Objectives:

- a) Methods for involving local communities

By developing, piloting and testing the hypothesis in different European countries, the ECHo Project has developed a successful formula for engaging interested parties in a particular property. The workshop is a widely applicable tool for engaging local communities in the future of the European country house.

- b) Building capacity among young heritage professionals

Young heritage professionals from each partner country gained an enormous amount of experience not just from the research itself but also from the cultural aspects of working in a foreign country and being immersed for one week with an international group from very different backgrounds.

- c) Develop an international travelling exhibition

We were successful in reaching out to communities and gathering their thoughts and as a result of the roadshows, the views of local people will begin to inform decisions being taken about the future management and interpretation of European country houses.

The European Context:

The project brought together heritage practitioners from across Europe to pool resources, experience and expertise, to undertake joint research, and to provide a wide European forum for discussion. It also created European level links between local communities.

Throughout the various strands of the ECHo project – the research, the workshops and roadshows, the European perspective was essential.

1. European heritage practitioners worked together towards the common goal of finding a solution for European country houses in the 21st Century.
2. Good practice was developed at a European level.
3. Young professionals undertook joint research and by sharing their experiences they were able to prepare a methodology with wide pan-European applicability.
4. As an EU-funded project, ECHo acted as a catalyst for action. The presence of European partners also stimulated new thinking at sites.
5. The project has resulted in organisational learning and knowledge sharing. It has also built capacity and brought about personal development for the individuals involved.

In all, this project has delivered significant results. Mechanisms have been made available to involve people in decisions made about country houses and good practice has been developed and shared. Skills have been honed and capacity built within the partner organisations and above all, European citizens are better informed about heritage debates and the views of different communities have been captured, enabling heritage providers to broaden their understanding of the meaning and value of heritage.

ECHo Project Report

1. Background

Every country in Europe has country houses.

Built by the social elite of their day, these buildings and their estates contain some of the best architecture and landscape design we possess. They also act as physical records of the political, cultural and private lives of their communities and owners, many of whom shaped national and international history.

After the Second World War, many of Europe's country houses were abandoned or converted to uses that caused the buildings to deteriorate. Some were protected and restored by owners or heritage trusts, but in many cases this was not possible and they remain empty and at risk.

2. ECHo Mission

The ECHo project started from the idea that local people are the key to saving these places.

The key to sustainable preservation and conservation of these historic sites through re-establishing their function at the heart of the community is finding viable new uses in partnership with local communities, ensuring access both to the building itself and to the decisions taken about it.

This could give impetus for the revival of the country house, making these exquisite assets of our built heritage once more the local centres of European cultural and social life.

3. ECHo Partners

The European Commission provided 50% of the budget. Six partners each financed 5% and the National Trust contributed 20%. There were also two non financing partners.

The financing partners were:

- Národní památkový ústav, územní odborné pracoviště správa státního zámku Sychrov (Czech Republic)
- Kulturális Örökségvédelmi Hivatal Műemlékek Állami Gondnoksága (Hungary)
- An Taisce (Ireland)
- Geldersche Kasteelen (The Netherlands)
- Národný Trust Slovenska (Slovakia)
- English Heritage and The National Trust (United Kingdom)

The non-financing partners were:

- The Victorian Society (United Kingdom)
- Irish Georgian Society (Ireland)

Support was also kindly given by the Heritage Council (Ireland)

4. ECHo Objectives

The objectives of the ECHo Project were:

- a) To explore methods of involving local communities in the future use, management and decision-making of European country houses and their surroundings, putting this methodology into practice at a number of sites across Europe thereby engaging people with their local heritage; and developing and cascading a toolkit for future workshops.
- b) To build capacity amongst young heritage professionals by researching the socio-economic roles of successful uses of the European country house and the regenerative effects these bring to the local community; and developing and disseminating best practice.
- c) To develop an interactive travelling exhibition (roadshow) that will present the findings of the project to public, whilst facilitating further exploration of the role of the country house where the exhibition is displayed.

5. Summary of Achievements

ECHo has achieved a great deal on a number of fronts.

Firstly, it has successfully deepened partnership capability amongst the European heritage organisations that took part in the project.

Secondly, it has broadened the understanding and skills set of the young professionals involved both through the structured research of houses in the UK and the Netherlands and through their participation in all aspects of the project.

Thirdly, it offers other country house owners and managers across Europe a methodology for encouraging the participation of diverse parts of the community by undertaking workshops and roadshows. European organisations involved in heritage conservation and management that were exposed to the project now have a mechanism to increase the involvement of local people in decisions taken about country houses, parks and gardens

Fourthly, the project identifies pan-European themes in heritage management, highlighting the importance of volunteering, tourism and joined up thinking, amongst others. The exact nature of these, their varying importance between the countries and how some significant themes are more relevant to one country also came out of the project.

It is perhaps the common themes that are the most exciting as they provide the areas where learning can be developed and shared.

Fifthly, a number of European country houses used as case studies within the project have reaped real benefits from this focussed attention. The workshop at Rusovce in Slovakia has been the start of real co-operation with the local community which could eventually lead to the future successful reuse of Rusovce Manor house.

Finally, whilst there have been important gains in awareness raising amongst the heritage community as well as the public, perhaps the most significant outcome is that European citizens have been involved in shaping the future of their heritage. People who have interacted with the ECHo project – either directly or through the workshops and roadshows – are better informed about the social, cultural and economic benefits that preservation and

reuse can bring, and better equipped to engage as active citizens in debates concerning our built environment.

Lessons Identified

By acting as project co-ordinator of this well-thought out and successful project, the National Trust has confirmed its role as the leading heritage conservation organisation in Europe and all the participants have learned significant lessons in project management, including the need to adequately budget for project setup costs and to move quickly in the early months with such a short timeframe.

Each partner has developed its potential for international partnership and each has also benefited from the cultural learning of both the young professionals and the Steering group members.

Much has been learnt in the area of international communication, especially in Eastern Europe with the extensive use of teleconferencing. It would be beneficial to look at video conferencing in future as an extension of this communication tool.

6. European Context

The ECHo Project brought together heritage practitioners from across Europe to pool resources, experience and expertise, to undertake joint research, and to provide a wide European forum for discussion. It also created European level links between local communities.

Throughout the various strands of the project – the research, the workshops and roadshows – the European perspective was fundamental.

Sharing experience: The National Trust's approach at Tyntesfield was considered by many an excellent model for involving and engaging people in the very process of conservation. In Slovakia, it is hoped that Tyntesfield will inspire the Rusovce locality and the National Trust of Slovakia is keen to co-operate more closely as part of a follow-up project.

Developing good practice on a European level: One of the aims of the ECHo project was to explore the usefulness of workshops as a means of searching for solutions to the difficulties faced by country houses today and of involving a wide range of stakeholders in the process. The experience of the workshops held in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland and the Slovak Republic was very positive. The themes that emerged were generally quite similar but there were differences of emphasis from place to place. The form of each workshop also differed but they each brought about a healthy and useful discussion. A toolkit was developed as a result of the pilots to be a guide to those wishing to use a similar process elsewhere.

Joint research: Another aim of the ECHo Project was to collect and analyse evidence on the social and economic impact of the repair and reuse of a country house. The research was used to test out the methodology in a range of situations and to allow the development of a revised methodology as part of the research manual. It focussed on a number of themes which then also informed the workshops. As each country was different, not every theme applied to all the houses, but it was helpful to see individual properties in the context of their European peers.

European project as a catalyst for action: The ECHo Project provided a framework, methodology and financial support to bring together stakeholders interested in the reutilisation

of the sites and created networks which – if maintained – could improve the possibility of finding holistic solutions to country houses in the 21st Century.

European partners as a catalyst: At the workshops in Hungary, the *outsider's* view on a site was noted as particularly helpful in helping local people to reconsider and deepen their own understanding of – sometimes forgotten – values.

Personal experience and organisational learning: The value of interaction with contemporaries on a European level cannot be quantified. The benefits of international interaction on both staff and organisations have long been accepted. The ECHo Project has resulted in considerable organisational learning and knowledge sharing but has also built capacity and brought about personal development for the individuals involved. Staff who have participated in a European project work SMARTer, creativity is jumpstarted and perspective is recouped. Organisations benefit too from a more committed worker who is motivated and therefore achieves highly and accepts more challenges, but also through organisational learning.

7. ECHo Activity

Young heritage professionals from Ireland, the UK, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary researched successful examples of new uses of country houses in the UK and the Netherlands.

The information was used at workshops in Ireland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, where heritage bodies, local government and communities discussed the challenges facing their country houses.

The findings from these two strands of the project were then developed into an exhibition or roadshow, which visited further sites in the six countries. The roadshow examined the challenges and benefits that involving local communities can bring and the opportunities to use the European country house as a catalyst for social and economic regeneration.

It also stimulated thought and asked participants for their own ideas about the future of the country house. The roadshow inspired people across Europe to discover more about our heritage and realise the enormous potential of country houses.

8. Meeting the ECHo Objectives

a) Methods for involving local communities

The method of using a workshop to engage interested parties in a particular property was not new. Earlier work in the Czech Republic and Hungary with the two main partners in the UK (National Trust and English Heritage) had shown the potential of this method and had prompted the idea of the ECHo project.

However, the ECHo project has produced a more structured and repeatable approach and by piloting and testing the hypothesis in different countries, the diversity of issues across Europe were identified.

Setting the methodology in a European context was also extremely helpful. Local people were intrigued by the ECHo Project and the fact that similar issues were facing European country houses across the continent. It also provided the right catalyst for action.

The Slovak National Trust considered the workshop an essential tool in bringing together the community at Dolná Krupá and hope that through the ECHo project they can start the process

of the 'new history' of this property. They are also planning a countrywide programme of workshops in the spring of 2006.

In Ireland the workshops have proved so popular amongst owners and managers of country houses, that the programme has already been extended, demonstrating the wider applicability of the ECHO methodology. However, the audience in Ireland was again different and largely consisted of heritage professionals. The challenge for future roadshows and workshops will be to engage more with local people right from the outset.

Lessons Identified

If the workshop is to be a success then a wide range of participation is vital. However, the workshop is limited by its physical form and the way the discussion is structured and led. Therefore ideal participant numbers are likely to be somewhere between 10 and 20 participants to ensure a balance between involving representatives of all stakeholders and encouraging everybody to participate in the discussion.

We were more successful in attracting our target audience to the workshops than to the roadshows, which has led us to agree that workshops are a more successful way of involving local people – and roadshows a way of disseminating information.

Presentations need to be kept fairly short, no more than 20-30 minutes, and be given in a way that opens up questions for discussion. Adequate time must be allowed after each talk to enable and encourage participants to ask questions and to make comments.

At the end of the workshop it is important that the main themes, which have emerged from discussion, are summarised and that participants have a final opportunity to comment on that summary. It may not be possible to agree exactly what future action needs to be taken but there should be agreement on the issues that need to be taken forward.

Experience from the ECHO project shows that costs will vary considerably depending on the particular circumstances of the chosen site. It is important that organisations, house owners and managers are not put off by cost, however. Workshops can be very simple.

(More information on running a workshop is contained in the ECHO Toolkit.)

b) Building capacity among young heritage professionals

Each ECHO partner put forward a young heritage professional to undertake the research element of the programme and participate in other aspects of the project. The young professionals came from very different backgrounds and included a researcher, a country house guide, a curator, a planning officer and a community officer. They also had varying levels of common language and whilst the Czechs and the Slovaks were able to understand each other's language, generally everyone spoke in English.

Each young professional either travelled to England or the Netherlands to undertake the Research Programme. Their accounts show that they gained an enormous amount of experience not just from the research itself but also from the cultural aspects of working in a foreign country and being immersed for one week with an international group from very different backgrounds.

The young professionals were also involved in the workshops in their own countries, an international workshop and their country's roadshow. Their knowledge and enthusiasm for the project meant that as the project reached the third Steering Group meeting it became important to have as many of the young professionals present as was financially possible.

This enabled the young professionals to contribute more fully to the international nature of the project and to learn more from each other and the project. One young professional was so valued for her knowledge that she was a key speaker at one of the workshops in Ireland.

As well as their contribution to the results of the project the young professionals were also significantly involved in the dissemination of the results both through the roadshows and through disseminating the project outcomes, Toolkit and website details to interested parties.

Their accounts and feedback from the roadshows illustrate that these were a positive experience in bringing together communities in their broadest sense and in influencing the attitude toward the houses where the roadshows took place. Initially the roadshow was seen as a daunting task for a project that already had a great deal of action in a short space of time. However, in the end it was judged a valuable way of both disseminating the results of the project and expanding the influence of the project objectives to a new group of houses and communities.

The roadshows facilitated by the Young Professionals were more successful in their objective of involving people. In Slovakia, for example, the staff of the National Trust of Slovakia spent quite a bit of time talking to people and discussing their opinions, and in Hungary the Young Professional gave a running commentary to the PowerPoint – with personal interjections – which enabled a greater level of interaction.

Lessons Identified

Many of the young professionals worked for different organisations than the Steering Group member, worked in a part-time capacity or were less fluent than others in English. This sometimes made communication challenging. To help with these issues one of the young professionals was appointed as co-ordinator and for each piece of joint work a leader was appointed to ensure that the work was completed on time and that everyone had the opportunity to contribute equally.

The primary form of communication was by email or telephone. Undoubtedly the more communicative benefited most but with a mixture of the regular meetings (to which all were invited), ad hoc meetings and conference phone facilities the effects of distance were largely overcome. The group worked very well together and would certainly be an efficient team for any further activity in this area.

Lack of time meant that it was not possible to produce the DVD for the roadshow in all languages. By the time the English version was available, the Hungarian Heritage Open Days were nearly complete. Partners were very innovative in the approaches they took however and the young professionals were able to provide their own voiceovers or simply to talk to people about the project one-to-one. It was felt that where participants were able to interact, they were more willing to spend time answering the questionnaire in full.

c) Development of an international travelling exhibition

Due to the timescale this was the most challenging part of the programme. In many countries it was felt that the young professional needed to be able to interpret the ECHo results at each venue. This was indeed desirable but the budget was very tight to allow the amount of travelling and subsistence that would have been needed.

The roadshow presentation contained information about all the country houses which participated in the ECHo Project – in both the research and workshops. This provided an essential European context.

The questionnaires were seen as good way to capture people's feedback and as seen from the examples given here the roadshows produced a momentum that would only have been possible with the organisation of a workshop in each venue.

Participants were also very interested in the pan-European nature of the project. In Hungary for example, participants were impressed by the policy of the Gelderland Trust to open only a handful of houses to the public and to rent the remainder out and thought that a similar strategy could work in Hungary. While in Slovakia, people were interested in the situation in other countries and were happy to see that there are successful models of using country houses in other European countries – in England, the Netherlands but also in Ireland, Czech Republic and Hungary. There was scepticism as to how this methodology might be implemented in Slovakia, but there was a willingness to engage and persist.

In most countries we were successful in reaching out to communities and gathering their thoughts. As a result of the roadshows, and indeed the whole ECHo Project, the views of local people will begin to inform decisions being taken about the future management and interpretation of European country houses.

In Slovakia, for example, the roadshow has proved such a useful tool that the National Trust of Slovakia plans to organise a programme of new roadshows beginning in the Spring of 2006.

The roadshows (and workshops) have acted as a catalyst for action in communities where sites are less well-managed and it has been encouraging to see how local people have taken heart from the project and have been inspired and enthused by learning about what happens in other countries. Some have also resolved to become more involved in the future of their local country house.

Lessons Identified

One of the difficult hurdles for the roadshow concept was how to engage with communities who traditionally feel excluded from notions of heritage or had no prior disposition to visit. However by holding the roadshows in country houses, we found ourselves talking to an audience which already understood the importance of heritage. Organisers of future roadshows would do well to consider the practicalities of taking their country house 'on the road' and meeting communities on their home turf.

Quotes from visitors in the UK, such as 'the past should be appreciated so the future can be as well' and 'we can only understand today by understanding history' showed that the country house visiting public is well-informed about the debates concerning the future of the built environment.

In Hungary, the roadshows were timed to fit in with the European Heritage Open Days which meant that a much broader audience was attracted to the sites, although interestingly very few visitors were local or villagers.

In Ireland, the roadshow audience largely consisted of heritage professionals. The challenge for future roadshows and workshops will be to engage more with local people right from the outset.

In Slovakia on the other hand, 64% of roadshow questionnaire respondents were local people.

The roadshows created European level links between local communities which we hope will continue to develop and grow as the future of our European country houses is secured.

9. Measures of Success

Overall, the ECHo project has achieved the following:

- European citizens better informed and ready to engage in debates about our built environment
- Inclusion of views from a broad section of society
- Mechanism for involving communities developed and disseminated
- Mechanism for sharing good practice developed
- Development of learning and training opportunities
- Appreciable effect on ‘workshop’ houses and ‘roadshow’ houses

And the following objectives have been identified for the six months following the end of the ECHo Project:

- Use of research methodology by heritage professionals and institutions
- Use of Workshop Toolkit in other country houses
- Dissemination of results outside partner organisations

10. Conclusion

The ECHo Project has developed a widely applicable formula for engaging local communities in the future of the European country house. Skills have been developed and capacity built within the partner organisations, particularly through the involvement of young heritage professionals. And as a result of the roadshows, the results of the project have been disseminated and further interaction and debate were facilitated.

It has not all been plain sailing and the partners have shared and learned at every stage – from practical project management techniques to more philosophical debates about the role of our shared heritage.

As a result of the ECHo Project, we hope that European citizens have a better understanding of the meaning and value of their heritage and that their views will begin to inform decisions being taken about the future management and interpretation of European country houses.



Final Steering Group Meeting in United Kingdom

The ECHO project partners wish to thank the European Commission for its generous support and all the organisations and individuals involved in the project across many countries.

Above all, thanks should be given to the European citizens who participated in the workshops and roadshows, without whose concern, support and enthusiasm the project would not have succeeded.

For more information on running a workshop and further details of the research programme, please visit www.ennho.org (European Network of National Heritage Organisations)





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**ECHo
Roadshow
Report**

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Roadshow Summary Report

1. Background

- 1.1 Every country in Europe has country houses. Built by the social elite of their day, these buildings and their estates contain some of the best architecture and landscape design we possess. They also act as physical records of the political, cultural and private lives of their communities and owners, many of whom shaped national and international history.
- 1.2 After the Second World War, many of Europe's country houses were abandoned or converted to uses that caused the buildings to deteriorate. Some were protected and restored by owners and heritage trusts, but in many cases this was not possible and they remain empty and at risk.
- 1.3 The ECHo project started from the idea that local people are the key to saving country houses.

2. Activity

- 2.1 Young heritage professionals from Ireland, the UK, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary researched successful examples of new uses of country houses in the UK and the Netherlands.
- 2.2 The information was used at workshops in Ireland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, where heritage bodies, local government and communities discussed the challenges facing their country houses.
- 2.3 The findings from these two strands of the project were then developed into an exhibition or roadshow, which visited further sites in the six countries. The roadshow examined the challenges and benefits that involving local communities can bring and the opportunities to use the European country house as a catalyst for social and economic regeneration.
- 2.4 It also stimulated thought and to asked participants for their own ideas about the future of the country house. The roadshows inspired people across Europe to discover more about our heritage and realise the enormous potential of country houses.

3. Summary of ECHo Project Findings (included in the Roadshow presentation)

- 3.1 Country houses and their estates can be important for all sorts of reasons to all sorts of people. For example, they may be valued for their

- historical associations (with individuals or events)
- architectural richness
- garden and landscape design
- collections (such as pictures and furniture)
- role in the social and economic history of a community

and for being

- a place of beauty
- a place for recreation and enjoyment

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- 3.2 At Schaffelaar (Netherlands) the park has been open to the public for many years. For local people it is most important as a place to walk and enjoy the fresh air. Now the house and park have been brought into the hands of the Gelderland Trust and the site hosts weddings, events, offices and a range of uses.
 - 3.3 At Dolna Krupá (Slovakia) the association with the composer Ludwig van Beethoven has led to the establishment of a music museum and a regular programme of concerts and events. The country house is also connected with a rose planting tradition created by Mrs Henrieta Chotekova at the end of the 19th century. The site had one of the most famous rosariums and exported roses all over the world.
 - 3.4 Any building needs a use if it is to be maintained for future generations. Country houses can be suitable for a range of uses but these uses need to fit with what people think important about the place.
 - 3.5 Country houses need not always be in a single use – they may host a wide range of complementary activities. Mixes of uses are often essential to ensure economic sustainability.
 - 3.6 At Tata (Hungary) the ECHo project workshop identified a range of uses which are sympathetic with the architecture and traditions of the house, fulfil local needs, provide year-round activity and use a range of sources of funding to create a self-supporting operation. This will involve local people, enhance businesses in the area and ensure more people in the region know about the country house.
 - 3.7 The future of the Rusovce country house (in the border region of Slovakia, Austria & Hungary) is in multi-functional use as a social and cultural centre for local people and visitors to the region. For example, it is hoped to use the house for a gallery, museum, wedding venue, heritage training centre and an interpretation centre for the region. Following the ECHo project workshop the National Trust of Slovakia and local authorities are preparing detailed plans.
 - 3.8 Country houses can be a catalyst for economic and social regeneration. When Thoresby Hall (UK) was bought by a hotel company in the late 1990s it was on the English Heritage 'at risk' list. Thoresby has now been converted to a successful hotel. The project brought many new jobs and large investment into the area and the courtyard shopping centre contains thriving local businesses which would not have been established without the hotel.
 - 3.9 In finding an appropriate use or mix of uses for a country house and its landscape there needs to be a balance between the aspirations of different users, financial realities and conservation.
 - 3.10 Local needs and expectations need to be considered in any change of use. At Tiszadob (Hungary) there are commercial opportunities for conversion which would have a greater economic benefit than the current children's home and school. Local people recognise this but are afraid that this would exclude them from the country house. Other examples from the ECHo project show that economic and social benefits are not mutually exclusive but this can be a difficult message to get across.
 - 3.11 The country house often plays a large part in the local economy by supporting businesses. For example, local restaurants on the square in Nove Město nad Metují (Czech Republic) recognise that 3 out of 5 of them would go out of business if the country house was not open to the public.

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- 3.12 Working together is at the heart of successful regeneration of country houses and their surroundings. Local businesses, communities, state and local government, and voluntary organisations all have a part to play. Many people in the local community will be interested in volunteering to find a solution or help in practical ways.
- 3.13 Two hundred volunteers helped in more than 30 different roles at the National Trust's Tyntesfield house (UK). Through consultation, the community plays a large role in projects while volunteers have active involvement through placement opportunities and learn new skills.
- 3.14 Of course, sorting out the finances is essential, whether this involves initial capital for a scheme which will eventually make a profit, or long-term state or charity support for maintaining a house in public ownership. Inventive ways of bringing in an income can often be found.
- 3.15 Sychrov Castle (Czech Republic) has an international 'friends' organisation which raises money for specific projects but, perhaps more importantly, gives moral support to the conservation effort.
- 3.16 At Strokestown Park (Ireland) the estate archives provided the basis for a successful museum highlighting the local community experiences during the devastating famine in Ireland during the 1840s. The museum draws visitors to the house and provides extra income.
- 3.17 The ECHo project showed that it is crucial to get people to work together at an early stage, to develop a vision for the house and find imaginative opportunities. At Strokestown Park (Ireland), An Taisce and the Irish Georgian Society organised a meeting of interested people from the local community and national and local organisations. The workshop allowed everyone to understand the mutual benefits of working together and to discuss practical ideas like joint ticketing with other tourist attractions.
- 3.18 State and government bodies need to be flexible and responsive to local needs and to fit proposals into the bigger picture of regional and national policy. At the country house at Rusovce (Slovakia) local people are highly committed and are keen to be involved in restoration and development of the site. Unfortunately, the current owner (the State Office of Government) is not willing to listen and co-operate. The country house is important to local identity but local people cannot use the site which is surrounded by a high fence and has been closed for 10 years.
- 3.19 At Tata (Hungary), a country house in the centre of the town, a consortium is being set up by the County Council, Tata Town Council and MAG (the state manager of the house) to prepare an Integrated Development Project as part of the Hungarian National Development Plan. This links the Castle, the Esterhazy House and the lakeside with the old town.
- 3.20 Through successful partnership a local heritage group has opened Ardgillan (Ireland) for public access in association with the local government owners.
- 3.21 The ECHo project showed the potential for voluntary organisations or state bodies to support individual country house owners giving advice on marketing, making grant applications, lobbying and technical conservation.

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- 3.22 Working with other sites and tourism organisations can be important. At Doorwerth (Netherlands) the country house, museums and hotels in the area work together to arrange visits for a weekend or a few days.

4. Summary of Roadshow Results

- 4.1 In most countries we were successful in reaching out to communities and gathering their thoughts. As a result of the roadshows, and indeed the whole ECHo Project, the views of local people will begin to inform decisions being taken about the future management and interpretation of European country houses.
- 4.2 In Slovakia, for example, the roadshow has proved such a useful tool that the National Trust of Slovakia plans to organise a programme of new roadshows beginning in the Spring of 2006.
- 4.3 The workshops and roadshows have acted as a catalyst for action in communities where sites are less well-managed and it has been encouraging to see how local people have taken heart from the project and have been inspired and enthused by learning about what happens in other countries from the roadshows. Some have also resolved to become more involved in the future of their local country house.
- 4.4 One of the difficult hurdles for the roadshow concept was how to engage with communities who traditionally feel excluded from notions of heritage. By holding the roadshows in country houses, we found ourselves talking to an audience which already understood the importance of heritage. Quotes from visitors in the UK, such as 'the past should be appreciated so the future can be as well' and 'we can only understand today by understanding history' showed that the country house visiting public is well-informed about the debates concerning the future of the built environment.
- 4.5 In Hungary, the roadshows were timed to fit in with the European Heritage Open Days which meant that a much broader audience was attracted to the sites, although interestingly very few visitors were local or villagers.
- 4.6 The workshops proved so popular amongst owners and managers of country houses in Ireland, that the programme has already been extended, demonstrating the wider applicability of the ECHo methodology. However, the audience in Ireland was again different and largely consisted of heritage professionals. The challenge for future roadshows and workshops will be to engage more with local people right from the outset.
- 4.7 In Slovakia on the other hand, 64% of roadshow respondents were local people.

5. Lessons Learned

- 5.1 Due to the timescale the Roadshow was the most challenging part of the ECHo programme. However, good progress was made and important lessons learned for the future.
- 5.2 A brief summary of the results of the Roadshows follows along with a copy of the questionnaire that was used to capture people's feedback. As seen from the examples given here the roadshows produced a momentum which could only have been prompted by a common European approach.

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- 5.3 The ECHo Project brought together heritage practitioners from across Europe to pool resources, experience and expertise, to undertake joint research and to provide a European forum for the development of good practice.
 - 5.4 The Roadshows created European level links between local communities which we hope will continue to develop and grow as the future of our European country houses is secured.

Roadshow Reports

1. United Kingdom

The UK Roadshows took place at the following historic houses:

House	Ownership	Location with-in	Format	Location of House	Date/duration of roadshow
Tyntesfield	The National Trust	Exhibition spaces	DVD Presentation on loop and on visitor route	South West England	4 days, September
Ashton Court	Bristol City Council	Café (before pay barrier)	DVD presentation on loop	South West England	2 days, September
Petworth House	The National Trust	Exhibition hall	DVD presentation on loop and on main visitor route	South East England	3 days, September
Burghley House	Lady Victoria Leatham	Visitor entrance hall	DVD presentation on loop	Mid-north East	3 days, September

The choice of roadshow locations aimed to engage visitors across National Trust, independent and council-run historic properties. The presentations all took the form of a DVD that ran on a loop. This enables a far higher number of people to see the roadshow (approximately 9,100 visitors across the sites would have had the opportunity to see the presentation) though perhaps lost the advantages of a personal address. These people would have been largely traditional visitors to historic properties (i.e. large proportion over 45 and ABC1 socio-economic group).

The events were publicised at the location through use of posters at visitor reception points.

Visitors

On average it was found that visitors travelled 28 miles to the site of their visit. However, this was much higher for Tyntesfield which is a recently opened house and has appeared much in the media.

76% of visitors travelled from home with 21% from either friends/family or a hotel. At the National Trust properties half the visitors had come through membership literature. At Tyntesfield the press also played an important factor in attracting people to come.

Nearly 60% of visitors stated that they had 'some information' on the property prior to the visit. 29% said that they 'not very much', but very few people stated to have either 'a lot' or nothing before their visit.

Support

Support for Country houses was unanimous - 100% of those asked whether they think country houses should be conserved stated 'yes'. Reasons given were:

"They are an important part of our heritage"

"They are a link with a way of life gone forever"

"The past should be appreciated so the future can be as well."

"We can only understand today by understanding history"

“Sites like Tyntesfield bring history to life, providing unique educational opportunities for all. Demonstration of traditional skills eg food preparation, textiles, coppicing, wood carving, stone masonry would enhance this learning experience better.”

“Part of our heritage - gives insight to history. A good day out.”

Use

75% of respondents thought that country houses should be conserved as heritage attractions. 51% thought that they would make suitable concert venues. 40% thought that they should be put to use as education centres and 32% as exhibition centres. Only 10% thought that country houses should be retained as private residences (these options were not mutually exclusive on the questionnaire).

90% thought that local people should be involved in the running of country houses with most respondents saying that this could be achieved through volunteering.

Most people answering the questionnaire stated that they would be interested in receiving information on historic houses near to where they live with newsletters and a website being the most popular choice for how to communicate this.

95% of people thought that country houses brought economic benefits to the local community and that this would benefit local residents, local businesses, conservation groups and schools/universities (in order of preference).

‘History’ was the most popular choice for the most important aspect of the property leading to the visit. This was followed by gardens and parkland, architecture and interiors.

The huge majority of those responding thought that it was very important to find a use which respects the history and heritage of a site.

81% stated that they would be prepared to assist with the upkeep of a country house and that this would be mainly achieved by joining a heritage organisation.

Summary

In summary the results of the questionnaire demonstrated an extremely supportive response with people not only stating that they were hugely in favour of conservation and appropriate re-use but would also be willing to assist personally through the contribution of time or money (albeit through membership schemes). However, all these findings must be balanced with the fact that all respondents were questioned on-site and thus are likely to have a prior disposition to visiting and supporting.

Lessons Learned

- The roadshows would have been more beneficial had they gone to places where the audience were not already visiting and supportive. To a large extent the presentation was preaching to the converted. However, this would have been far more time consuming and costly and the budget would need to be taken into account.
- The presentation itself would have benefited from being a video as opposed to the flashing of photographs with a voiceover which would have made it more engaging. This need would be intensified if the audience were somewhere other than a country house and would need to attract the audiences attention.

2. Hungary

Report on the ECHo road show in Hungary, 17-18 September 2005

We planned the road show for the European Heritage Days because we wanted to make sure that there would be audience at all the venues, as the visitors' numbers are unpredictable at the houses at ordinary weekends.

All the presentations and slide shows happened in the houses. We used the posters as the main tool for advertising, however at some places the programmes were mentioned in the local media as well. Further advertisement is ensured by the leaflets.

Around 2300 people saw the road show in Hungary.

On the 17th I went to Dég, where the Hungarian Trust has a famous neo-classical country house. It has been empty for almost ten years so the Trust and the locals are looking forward to the revitalization of the buildings and the surroundings.

Most of the invited local people turned up (local businessmen, members of the village council, owners of houses closer to the house), but others from the vicinity of Dég did not come. Around a dozen people saw the slide show in the afternoon (unfortunately it was quite a rainy day), and two dozen people came to see the presentation later on. We invited people by post or called them in person.

I showed them the PowerPoint presentation and read up the texts as it had no voice (a presentation with audio function would have been more successful where I was not present). I also commented on several things during the presentation as they had enough time to enjoy the pictures. After the CD presentation I talked about our experience at the workshops and about the most important things I learned during the research phase (eg. financing country houses abroad). Some people from the audience were very impressed by the policy of the Gelderland Trust (opening a couple of houses for visitors and renting out the rest), and would be happy with the same strategy in Hungary. They would be happy to take part in similar workshops as the ones in Tata and Tiszadob.

At the end of the programme general problems in the Hungarian heritage field and certain things about the future of Dég came up and were discussed. The success of the Tata workshop gave hope for a better future. As the Hungarian Trust and a foundation are planning to apply for a grant together in two years, an 'ECHo type' workshop seems to be a good start for the project.

I spent Sunday the 18th in Nádasdladány at the Nádasdy mansion, a Tudor style romantic house, where the CD presentation was shown at the end of every tour of the house. All the visitors (82 people, all age groups with different social backgrounds) saw the programme and they were asked to ask about ECHo and comment on it. Some people from every group stayed longer in the library and we talked about the importance of foreign experience (which does not always seem that important for leaders in the heritage field), the involvement of locals in heritage projects, and the importance of a country house in a municipality. Some of the people who saw the presentation (knowing the centralized Hungarian bureaucracy) were sceptical about implementing a new approach to revitalize historic buildings, others were happy that something new might start this time.

The general questions about the local house and the Trust came up here as well.

Six more CDs were sent to different country houses throughout Hungary, including the houses in Tiszadob and Tata where we had workshops. The others were Füzérradvány, Károlyi mansion, the fortress in Komárom, Ráday palace in Pécel, and the country house in Letenye.

(In Tata the plan of the revitalization is being outlined. The company that is working on it knows everything about the results of the local workshop, and is trying to make use of the results.)

Attendance at the rest of the Hungarian Trust houses:

Füzérradvány:	350 people
Tata:	300 people
Pécel:	173 people

The road show at other venues

Komárom, Fortress, 17-18 September 2005

The European Heritage Days were launched/opened here this year. The opening ceremony was attended by members of the Government.

The EHD was connected to other cultural programmes, such as the ECHo road show.
Attendance: 350 people

Tiszadob, Andrassy Mansion from 18 September 2005

The road show was organized together with other programmes for a whole week. Around 800 people attended the programmes.

Letenye, Szapáry-Andrassy House, 17-18 September 2005

Marketing: together with EHD, plus ECHo poster, advertising the children's programme

Number of grown-up visitors: 50, mostly locals

Number of young (teen-age) visitors: 30, mostly locals

Assessment: The children's programme was led by a landscape-architect student. The children were guided by her round in the park and during the walk the guide talked about the history of the house and the park, the Szapáry and Andrassy families, the life on the estate and the flora and value of the park.

After the walk the children were taken to the Library, which is a new building in the park and they had to fill in the Children's Questionnaire. It was compiled by the guide, according to the skills of the age-group. A part of the questions playfully asked about the park, house, life of the estate, assessing how much information they remembered from the walk. Other questions asked personal opinions. Very nice and creative answers were written by the children. It was also a contest for the kids. The ones who answered the most questions well got little presents.

For grown-ups the guide gave a presentation on the history and value of the Park.

After that the ECHo presentation was screened. Then the audience was asked to fill in the regular ECHo Questionnaire. Grown-ups' answers were much less creative and they answered either short or non text-answers (just ticked boxes).

Analysis of the questionnaire

People seemed happy to answer the questions of the questionnaire. Most of them ticked the little circles but only around twenty percent of them wrote answers where there was empty space to write about different things.

The results will be very useful for the Hungarian Trust. I hope the ECHo Project can also use them.

Very few of our visitors are local people (villagers), less than five percent.

Most of them came from more than 50 kilometres during the Cultural Heritage Weekend (more than 70 percent), but also a nice portion from between 10 and 50 kilometres.

Although more people knew about the houses before the CHW than not, less than half of them knew what they are famous for. The visitors did not know the history and the most important values and treasures of the houses.

All our visitors would like to see that the locals have a word on the future of the houses in the village, municipality.

Everybody thought that the houses should be involved in the tourism industry with cultural functions. A lot of them think that a museum or at least a memorial room is needed inside the walls, and that a hotel would help to finance the whole house. (The fact that most people would be happy with country house museums – or furnished historic houses – suggests that the restoration of the state owned houses is seen – at least partly – as a responsibility of the state.)

People think that ordinary locals, the local council and entrepreneurs would also benefit financially from the revitalization.

Our visitors are interested in looking at the houses even if they are empty or under restoration – as the weekend showed.

Most of the people who completed the questionnaire say that they would do some voluntary work. Around seventy percent of them would do white-collar work, twenty percent would do blue-collar work. Most of them would work one weekend a year, only a few say they would do more than a day a month.

3. Ireland

Report on the ECHo roadshows in Ireland

The workshops proved so popular amongst owners and managers of country houses, that we extended our programme of roadshows to include a number of other sites (outside the ECHo Project but demonstrating the wider applicability of the methodology).

Our roadshow site visits have been held in Ireland with audiences for each varying according to the site. The response to these events was generally very positive though the primary audience was comprised mainly of heritage professionals. The following is a brief description of each visit describing the setting of the site, the circumstances of the building, the audience engaged and the outcomes. As we did not have any success in reaching out to the general public, we were not able to gain any feedback through the Questionnaire.

Roadshows	Dates
NUI Maynooth, Co. Kildare	11/09/2009
King House, Boyle, Co. Roscommon	15/09/2009
Fota House, Co. Cork	22/09/2009
Tailors' Hall, Dublin 2	13/10/2009
Rathfarnham Castle, Dublin	24/11/2009

Presentations

ENNHO Conference, Lithuania

World Monuments Fund, USA

National University of Ireland, Maynooth

David Owen and Donough Cahill made a joint presentation to the delegates of the Third Annual Historic Houses of Ireland Conference. The conference aims to generate an interest in country house and their estates through providing inter-disciplinary lectures on a range of subjects including visitor management, historic landscapes and general management experience. Historic house owners and managers, heritage professionals and academics as well as general members of the public were in attendance. The ECHo presentation was added at the last moment to the conference schedule but in spite of this we received a very positive response with requests for further information and a number of house managers expressing a keen interest in holding Workshops in their houses in the future.

King House, Boyle, Co. Roscommon

King House is very fine early 18th century town house located in the Irish midlands. During the 1990's Roscommon County Council undertook a major restoration initiative providing new exhibition spaces, a heritage centre, a home for the Boyle Arts Festival collections and for the county library. It was intended to hold the roadshow to engage with both tourist and school visitors, however, on the day this did not prove practical. Instead, a dual approach was adopted: firstly, we accompanied a group of schoolchildren around the house and, secondly, a PowerPoint presentation was given to the house management illustrating the processes and

outcomes of the ECHo project. Arising from this, it is hoped to hold a Workshop in the house in the spring of next year.

Fota House, Carrigtwhohill, Co. Cork

Fota is a very fine late 18th century country house with wonderful neo-Classical interiors. For a variety of reasons, it experienced a period of rapid decline during the 1980's leading to the loss of a very fine collection of Irish art and the subsequent deterioration of the building's fabric. However, the house has now found a new lease of life and is managed by a Trust Foundation which opens it to the public. Given the time of year, very few visitors came to the house on the day of our visit so, once again, the primary audience for the PowerPoint presentation was the house management. They were very keen on the project and wish to hold a Workshop in the house in January or February of 2006.

Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 2

Tailors' Hall is an important early 18th century guild hall that comprises the sole survivor of its type and period in the city of Dublin. It was restored in the 1960's and 70's and now serves as the Headquarters of An Taisce, the National Trust for Ireland. There was no direct presentation given on this location with the Roadshow instead comprising a stand-alone PowerPoint presentation illustrating the processes and outcomes of the ECHo Project.

Rathfarnham Castle, Co. Dublin

Rathfarnham Castle is very good example of the classic Irish fortified house of the late 16th century. Having experienced a period of great uncertainty in the 1980's, the house is now in the ownership of the Office of Public Works and is undergoing extensive conservation works. It is intended to bring the Roadshow to Rathfarnham at the end of November but, as it will then be closed to the public, we will focus on house management and employees. It is hoped that through this meeting we will be able to roll out Workshops in other country house properties managed by the State.

ENNHO Conference Lithuania

David Owen gave a presentation on the ECHo Project at this conference

World Monuments Fund, New York

Donough Cahill gave a presentation about the ECHo Project to staff at the WMF offices receiving a very positive response. The Fund is very keen to learn more about the project and will be kept informed of its progress.

4. Slovakia

The roadshow of ECHo project in Slovakia till now took place on four selected heritage localities in September 2005.

- a) First of our roadshow took place in **Banská Štiavnica** in the middle Slovakia – the city on UNESCO list of world cultural heritage. We organized our roadshow in a late baroque manor house **Antol** which at the moment is hosting the unique expositions of the hunting museum. Here the ECHo project roadshow took place from **4th to 11th of September 2005**.

During these days we got around 140 visitors! A lot of them were local people with the big interest in heritage issues.

We spent there a very good time discussing with local people their opinions on the roles and development of European Country Houses in 21st century. However some of our visitors found the text of our Power Point presentation a little bit difficult for them. We had to spend more time with the explanation and interpretation of the texts in order to have a better discussion. Afterwards people were more willing to fill in the questionnaire.

- b) The second roadshow took place in **Strážky Manor House** which belongs to the Slovak National Gallery. This unique historical country house is situated in Eastern Slovakia near Kežmarok city. The roadshow here took place from **12th to 19th of September 2005**. The majority of visitors were tourists as in the Manor house is today the Gallery with the exposition of the famous painter Ladislav Mednyánszky and the Manor house is situated very close to the most tourist region in Slovakia – The High Tatras. However we also got many visitors – school groups to which we have explained the situation of manor houses in Slovakia and we tried to encourage them to visit more of them. Here we had about 120 visitors!
- c) The third of our roadshows took place in **Manor house in Betliar** in South-Eastern Slovakia. This classicistic building belongs to the Slovak National Museum and is hosting the exposition of the furniture of the nobleman. The ECHo roadshow took place here from **20th to 23rd of September 2005**. This building belongs to the most visited heritage localities in Slovakia. Our power point presentation attracted around 200 visitors! We had a very useful discussion with them once they saw our presentation. Many people – visitors in Betliar were interested in getting more information about conservation structures and organisations working in the heritage field within Slovakia. Here we had also the opportunity to introduce more detailed information about our organisation – The National Trust of Slovakia and its activities related to protection of historical houses and surrounding historical parks and gardens (The Betliar historical garden is the only one from Slovakia which is listed on ICOMOS /IFLA world heritage list of historical parks and gardens!). People – visitors were encouraged to fill in the questionnaire also by our partners from the locality. The visitors were also attracted to see our roadshow by the performance of the musicians playing the traditional Celtic but also Slovak music the Keltig Band which is very closely co-operating with other heritage NGOs from the informal heritage platform – DOMOVINA.
- c) The last of our roadshows was organized in **Manor house Červený Kameň from 24th to 30th of September 2005**. This Manor house is situated very close to the Capital of Slovakia – Bratislava and also belongs to the Slovak National Museum. It is a unique historical locality which is visited mainly because of its valuable architecture and beautiful surrounding countryside of Small Carpathians Mountains. Here we also had some foreign visitors to whom we had to translate some parts of our presentation to

English. All visitors appreciated the ECHo project leaflets and also all other materials we gave them (our journal OKNO about historical environment, some postcards and leaflets dealing with problematic of cultural and natural heritage). People were interested in the work of NGOs in Slovakia and many of them did not have any ideas about their possible potential to protect the historic environment of our country. Our exhibition and power point presentation gave us the opportunity to attract the attention of the people on their possibilities to help to save and protect the country houses and other heritage localities within Slovakia. People were very interested in the situation in other countries and they were happy to see that there are some successful models of using country houses in other European countries – in England, the Netherlands but also in Ireland, Czech Republic and also Hungary. However some of the people were too sceptical about implementing these models within our country – Slovakia.

Here the visitors were also attracted by performance of the musicians from the Keltig Band.

All our roadshows were prepared in close co-operation of managers or directors from the particular heritage place and with the help of local authorities which encourage the local people to take part in those interesting events. Without their help and co-operation the realisation of the roadshow would not have been possible. In the spring 2006 we plan to continue with the organisation of the roadshow on some more localities in Slovakia. We plan to organise them in co-operation and support from the Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic, State Institute for Monument Protection, Slovak National Museum and Slovak National Gallery.

Analysis of the Questionnaires

All the questionnaires were filled in during the roadshows. Altogether we got back 264 questionnaires.

The visitors had to be sometimes helped by our project partners from localities to understand the individual questions.

Not all visitors were willing to give us their time and to work on them, however our experience was more positive as many of the visitors wanted to share with us their opinions. Some of the questionnaires were not answered because the lack of knowledge or interest.

In general people had more problems to fill in the open questions, where they were invited to write their opinions and ideas and where they were asked to be more creative. However some of the answers were for us very inspiring and we think we will be able to use the results of this “survey” in our next work and activities in Slovakia.

From the collected questionnaires we can derive the following conclusions:

1. Majority of our visitors were local people 64%.
2. The most of them came to visit the locality from the distance up to 50 km – 47%.
3. Around 60 % of the people got the information about the particular historical objects from their friends and relatives or because they are living close to that object/locality.
4. More than 65% of them came to visit the locality already with some knowledge and information about its history and significance.
5. People think that following issues are important for the protection and sensible use of this kind of historical environment: financial resources, authenticity, national pride and education of the people, enthusiasm of the people, good management and leadership structures, effective support of the state, suitable presentation and interpretation to the broad audience etc.

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6. 83% of the visitors think that it is very useful to involve local people into decision making processes about historical localities although there is in our opinion a quite high number of people which think this is not necessary and relevant (about 15% of the people which had that opinion!).
 7. According to our visitors' opinions, the work with volunteers, brigade-works, public beneficial works, creation of the feeling of the common responsibility, public discussions etc. are the ways how the local people could be involved.
 8. The majority of the people (61%) would like to be informed about the development of the site and all events which took place here by the written forms – leaflets, posters, e-mails etc. The least preferable way was by the oral forms – personal meetings with the employees from the locality etc. People also like to get the information via media (TV, News, Radio).
 9. Concerning the use of the historical locality the most of people – 69% have selected the combination of the uses and on the second position was the use for tourism purposes. Commercial activities were the least preferable.
 10. Between the other uses which people were thinking about we can mention: some regular cultural events – concerts, festivals, international exhibitions, period performances, weddings, film festivals etc.
 11. Almost all people think that historical objects can bring the economic benefits to the localities – 95 %!
 12. Majority of them think that these benefits can be the most important for local people, than to local businessman, than to local cultural institutions and finally to local offices.
 13. Also almost all people think that all forms of using the historical site have to respect its historical character – 87%.
 14. Our questionnaires has shown us that many people are willing to pay more for the admission fee if there are provided the relevant and quality service to them. There were also opinions that the access to the historical localities should be free.
 15. 80% of our visitors think that it is useful to open the locality to the broad audience already during the process of its renovation and reconstruction.
 16. The majority of people would like to help us by volunteering their mental capacity – 41% and 32% by physical work. There were also a low number of people who would not like to help at all.
 17. From those who would like to help the majority would prefer 1 week help – 40%.

5. ECHo Roadshows in The Netherlands

Conference of the Nederlandse Kastelen Stichting (Dutch Castle Foundation)

28th of September 2005

2005 was appointed Year of the Dutch Castle. At the 28th of September a national conference was organized on the subject *Dutch Castles and Country House in development* at Groeneveld Castle. The conference was organised for heritage organisations and private house owners and visited by approximately 200 people.

In advance of this conference the organising committee consulted prof. Dr. J.C Bierens de Haan, vice director of the Gelderland Trust, and S. Coene, the Dutch ECHo young professional, because of the close relationship between the main subject of the conference and the ECHo goals. This was the result of an earlier presentation on the ECHo results held by S. Coene at the University of Amsterdam. The University of Amsterdam participated in the organising committee.

At the conference itself several workshops were organized. The workshops closes related to the ECHo subjects were visited by J.C. Bierens de Haan and S. Coene in which both participated actively. The results of the ECHo project were mentioned several times.

By presenting the ECHo project at the conference, we tried to involve private house owners, a group that is hardly ever together on one occasion. Several of them showed interest in the ECHo results. At the moment we are trying to send the ECHo information (brochure and toolkit) to all the conference participants.

The ECHo-DVD was not yet available at the day of the conference

By presenting the ECHo results at the University and the conference we have reached a large group of heritage professionals. The spin-off effects on the long run are not yet completely clear.

Dutch Museum Association

3th of November 2005

Conference Historic House Interiors

At the 3th of November 85 historic house /museum professionals gathered for an annual conference at Keukenhof Castle. Subject was trends in historic houses open to the public. By handing out the ECHo leaflet we tried to make the participants aware of the ECHo project and ECHo results. The toolkit will be sent to all participants when ready in the near future.

Other roadshows

We try to present the ECHo-DVD at Museum Nairac at Barneveld. House Schaffelaar, one of the Dutch examples in the ECHo project, is situated in Barneveld as well. The same roadshow we hope to present at the town hall of Renkum. Doorwerth Castle, the other Dutch ECHo example, is located in Renkum. By presenting the ECHo results on these locations we hope to reach the public without a heritage or museums background.

6. Czech Republic

September 12 – September 28, 2005, Sychrov and Frýdlant castle, both sites where ECHo workshop took the place.

Sychrov Castle

September 12 – September 21, 2005

(September is busiest time for castle, total number of Czech and foreign visitors is about 4000)

Frýdlant Castle

September 21 – September 28, 2005

(This castle has much lower number of visitors – approx. 50% in comparison with Sychrov castle)

Roadshow exhibition was placed in entrance area of both castles, contents from:

- several big framed panels with ECHo project explanation and picks about sites
- the screen with Powerpoint presentation about ECHo project
- questionnaire with ECHo project explanation and questions

All visitors during this period have got together with entrance tickets the leaflet with the questionnaire.

In entrance area we placed the box to collect all questionnaires.

Marketing

- several posters in entrance area of the castle
- involvement of local radio in Liberec town
- opening evening with the representatives of local community on September 12, 2005

Number of people:

Sychrov Castle – almost 2 000 questionnaires have been distributed to all Czech visitors

Frýdlant Castle – approx. 1 000 questionnaires have been distributed to all Czech visitors

Returned questionnaires:

Sychrov Castle - about 250 returned questioners

Frýdlant Castle – about 80 returned questioners

This very low number of returned questionnaire is caused by:

- low visitors knowledge about the ECHo project topics (once you ask them they say “We have NO idea...”)
- low number of Czech visitors
- usually people are coming in couples and return only 1 questionnaire

Result same for both castles:

Basically visitors appreciated the care about historical monuments as well as European commission support for such project as ECHo.

But because such theme as care about historical monument is not topic our current life in Czech Republic, there is almost NO knowledge about such problem as future of country houses in 21st century in this country.

It shows that educational part of the preservation of historical monuments in Czech Republic need big support!

Almost NO local visitors (if we talk about the distance 10km from the castle – Sychrov and Frydlant).

About 20% of visitors from close towns (Turnov, Liberec – more than 20km from the castle). Rest of visitors is traveling more than 20 km to get Sychrov castle.

Lesson identified if we have to do it again:

Our thought is that we have to concentrate next time more on LOCAL people, not that much on CASTLE VISITORS, as we did this time.

We may use local authority to touch local people – or during local authority meeting or with help of post office in the place etc.

Also we have to clarify next time better what LOCAL means! Do we mean really only Sychrov (village with 1000 inhabitants) or bigger area?

The EUROPEAN COUNTRY HOUSE in the 21st century

EURÓPSKE KAŠTIELE, KÚRIE A ZÁMKY v 21. storočí

Az EURÓPAI KASTÉLYOK a XXI. században

EVROPSKÁ VENKOVSKÁ SÍDLA v 21. století

EUROPESE KASTELEN EN HUIZEN in de 21e eeuw



THE EUROPEAN COUNTRY HOUSE IN THE 21ST CENTURY (ECHO)

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO ANSWER THIS SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. **How far did you travel to visit this site?** Please state the approximate number of miles:
.....miles

2. **Where did you travel from?**

☐ Home

☐ Friends/relations homes

☐ Hotel

☐ Holiday Cottage

☐ Other (please state)

3. **How did you hear about this country house?**

☐ Friends

☐ Press coverage

☐ Tourist Information

☐ Historical study

☐ Other

4. **How much did you know about the history and significance of this property before you visited it?**

☐ A lot

☐ Some information

☐ Not very much

☐ Nothing

5. **Do you think country houses should be conserved?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your answer?

.....

.....

.....

6. What types of re-use do you think country houses should be put to? (***Please tick as many as you like***)

- ☐ Heritage attractions open to the public ☐ Community centres ☐ Education centres
- ☐ Concert venues ☐ Exhibition centres ☐ Private Residences i.e. flats
- ☐ Other

7. Do you think local people could be involved in the running of historic properties like this one?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, how?

.....

.....

.....

8. Would you be interested to receive information about country houses near where you live?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, how would you prefer to be informed about them?

- ☐ Newsletters
- ☐ Information in the local press
- ☐ Community meetings
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Television / radio
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*).....

9. Do you think country houses like this could bring economic benefits for their local communities?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, for whom? (***Please tick as many as appropriate***)

- ☐ Local residents ☐ Councils ☐ Local businesses
- ☐ Schools and universities ☐ Conservation groups
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*).....

10. What are the most important aspects of this property for you? (***Please tick as many as appropriate***)

☐ Its history

☐ Its architecture

☐ Its artwork

☐ Its interiors

☐ Its gardens /parkland

☐ Its

exhibitions

☐ Other(***Please specify***).....

11. How important is it to find a use which respects the history and heritage of this property?

☐ Very

☐ Quite

☐ Not at all

12. How much would you be prepared to pay to visit a country house like this?

☐ Nothing

☐ Up to £5

☐ Up to £15

☐ Over £15

13. Would you be prepared to contribute to the upkeep of country houses like this?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If so, how?

☐ By volunteering

☐ By donating to an appeal

☐ By attending events

☐ By joining a heritage organisation such as the National Trust or Victorian Society

☐ Other (***Please specify***)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

The information you give will be used to help us understand how best to manage country houses in the future.



Road-show in Slovakia

The ECHo project partners wish to thank the European Commission for its generous support and all the organisations and individuals involved in the project across many countries.

Above all, thanks should be given to the European citizens who participated in the workshops and roadshows, without whose concern, support and enthusiasm the project would not have succeeded.

For more information on running a workshop and further details of the research programme, please visit www.ennho.org (European Network of National Heritage Organisations)



Národní
památkový ústav,
územní odborné
pracoviště Správa
státního zámku
Sychrov



**Evropská venkovská sídla v 21. století
Europese kastelen en huizen in de 21e eeuw
Az európai kastélyok a XXI. Században
Európske kaštiele, kúrie a zámky v 21. storočí
The European country house in the 21st century**

ECHo

**Toolkit
Praktický návod
Útmutató**

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THE PURPOSE OF THE ECHo PROJECT

In the 18th and 19th Centuries the European Country houses played a particular social and economic role. They were buildings whose existence depended on ownership of the surrounding productive land generally used for agriculture, forestry, hunting and sometimes mineral extraction.

They were the centre of estates where the system of land tenure embodied a clearly hierarchical social system. From the late 19th and early 20th Century pressures for a more equal society began to remove the stability of the country house. This undermining of

their economic base took different forms, more or less severe, more or less abrupt, in different places. In Ireland, where the movement for social justice was closely linked to a movement for national independence, there were direct physical attacks on country houses.



Mnichovo Hradiště, Czech Republic



Hafundos, United Kingdom

In Britain the process of change was pushed by increasingly high levels of tax on income. In central and eastern Europe, after the 2nd World War, change was forced by direct expropriation. In all cases the effect on the country house was similar – a rapid decline in resources for maintenance leading to physical decay. The social and economic systems which lead to the development of the country house and which sustained them are unlikely to return. It is clear that the large numbers of them which survive, and which form part of a common European heritage, cannot all be supported by state

funding. It is also evident that any part of the historic environment will only be protected if it is seen as significant and relevant by a reasonable proportion of society.

What the ECHo project therefore set out to do is to find social and economic roles for these buildings in the 21st Century which are sustainable in the long term and which encourage the support of society as a whole and of local communities in particular.



Stokesdown, Ireland

THE WORKSHOP AS A TOOL



Tata, Hungary

One of the aims of the ECHo project was to explore the usefulness of workshops as a means of searching for solutions to the difficulties faced by country houses today and of involving a wide range of stakeholders in the process. The experience of the workshops held in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland and the Slovak Republic was very positive. In most cases all the relevant stakeholders were present and participated significantly in the workshop discussions. The themes that emerged were generally quite similar but there were differences of emphasis from place to place. The form of each workshop also differed but in general they were well structured and had a small

enough number of participants to ensure a healthy and useful discussion. What follows is a distillation of the lessons learnt from the pilots as a guide to those wishing to use a similar process elsewhere.

The workshops outlined in this toolkit provided a means of helping stakeholders find solutions to the challenges faced by country houses today. The toolkit is intended to inform owners, managers and others on how best to organise a workshop.



Doorwerth and Schaffelaar, Netherlands

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

It is important that background material is prepared and circulated to invitees in advance of the workshop. All participants would benefit from receiving a short written explanation of the purpose of the workshop sometime before it takes place. Such an explanation should set out the purpose of the workshop and what is expected of participants as well as some brief information about the site in question.

In the ECHo project, young professionals took on some of the background research and document preparation prior to the workshop. They also played a key role on the day.

Prior to attendance at a workshop, the following information is likely to be of use to participants:

- An introduction to the house, its outbuildings, gardens and the wider estate and its location
- An initial assessment of the cultural significance of the house and its estate but making it clear that workshop participants may bring to the workshop – or develop through it – a different or wider understanding of significance
- A description of the ownership and management structure
- A description of the present use
- The numbers and types of people currently employed
- The present condition of the house and estate, the degree of legislative protection and any plans for repair or restoration
- If the house is open to the public:

- Visitor numbers
- Visitor income
- Current marketing methods
- Events held at the property
- Use of volunteers
- Type and extent of access currently available
- Facilities for visitors

- If possible an assessment of current benefit to the local community through direct employment or provision of services to visitors but also social benefits such as use of the house and garden by the local community
- Background to the economy of the locality and tourism in the region



ECHo young professional researchers

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?



Tyntesfield, United Kingdom

If the workshop is to be a success then a wide range of participation is vital. For some, who clearly understand the importance of the workshop to their interests, a simple letter of invitation may be sufficient but for many, who might see the success of the workshop as peripheral to their main concerns, it will probably be necessary to explain the purpose of the workshop in detail. This is most likely to be successful if done in person or at least through an extended telephone conversation.

There is a wide range of types of people who have a stake in the successful use or re-use of a country house. Understanding the needs and views of all potential

stakeholders is at the heart of finding new social and economic roles for country houses.

Additionally a balance has to be struck between the wishes of the owner, conservation needs and social and economic benefits which might accrue to the local community. The exact selection of participants in a workshop will obviously vary from place to place depending on particular circumstances but the following list is an indication of the sorts of people who might be involved.



Nove Mesto, Czech Republic

- The owner of the property, private or institutional
- The current user of the property where this is different from the owner
- Those responsible for management of the house, other buildings and the surrounding estate
- Conservation authorities for both cultural and natural heritage, national, regional and local
- Non-governmental cultural and natural heritage organisations which might be national or local
- Representatives of local and regional government particularly those concerned with economic and social development, spatial planning, cultural and environmental affairs
- Regional and local tourism organisations
- Representatives of the local community such as citizens, organisations
- The local mayor if there is one or the relevant elected member of local government
- Representatives of local business such as the local chamber of commerce
- Representatives of local and regional cultural organisations
- Representatives of organisations engaged with ecological/environmental issues
- Teachers or other representatives of local schools and educational establishments
- Representatives of local minority groups

AT THE WORKSHOP



Road-show in Slovakia

A workshop will need to do three things if it is to be successful. Introduce the issues in such a way that they are clearly understood by all participants, encourage meaningful participation by all attending the workshop and clearly capture the thoughts of participants and agreed outcomes so that these can be followed up and acted upon.

Careful preparation of background material before the workshop should mean that most participants would have a fairly clear idea of the background to the issues to be discussed before the workshop begins but experience shows that further verbal explanation at the beginning of the workshop is likely to result in more active discussion.



Thoresby Hall, UK

It is likely that the following topics need to be covered:

- The current situation of the house and estate
 - Use
 - Conservation issues
 - Financial background
 - Management structure
- The economic and social situation in the locality
- Tourism in the region
- Attitudes of the local community

Each talk needs to be fairly short, no more than 20-30 minutes, and be given in a way that opens up questions for discussion. Adequate time must be allowed after each talk to allow participants to ask questions and to make comments.

It is useful early in the workshop for participants to make a brief informative visit to the house and significant parts of the estate. The purpose of this visit is not to be a guided tour but rather to see the issues that need to be dealt with and to get a general feeling for the nature of the place. For this reason the visit is probably best undertaken after the preliminary talks have been given. This also gives participants the opportunity to have informal discussions on the issues they will need to discuss more formally later in the workshop.



ECHO Workshop

Experience shows that the success of the workshop is affected by the number of participants, by the physical form the workshop takes and by the way in which discussion is structured and lead. Somewhere between 10 and 20 participants is likely to ensure a balance between involving representatives of all stakeholders and encouraging everybody to participate in discussion. It is worth considering whether some topics might be better discussed in smaller groups bearing in mind that this may mean that not all participants will have understood and discussed all the issues. A compromise, which worked well at one of the pilot workshops, was for all participants to be in one room for one discussion but to sit in smaller groups.



Doorwerth, Netherlands

The qualities of the person leading and moderating the discussion are important to a successful outcome. Such a person should ideally have the following skills:

- Good at drawing out contributions from all participants
- Open to ideas
- Well informed about the issues to be discussed
- Independent of local issues and conflicts
- Able to guide the discussion to the issues to be discussed without inhibiting open discussion
- Able to use tensions in the discussion creatively
- Able to simply and clearly summarise what has been discussed



Rusovce, Slovak Republic



Tata, Hungary

At the end of the workshop it is important that the main themes, which have emerged from discussion, are summarised and that participants have a final choice to comment on that summary. It may not be possible to agree exactly what future action needs to be taken but there should be agreement on the issues that need to be taken forward.

THEMES AND TOPICS TO BE COVERED AT THE WORKSHOP

Once again these will vary from place to place but experience shows that there are certain key topics that will need to be covered:



Doorwerth, Netherlands

- The significance and value of the house and the estate
- The visitor experience, interpretation, authenticity and conservation issues
- Management of the property, the benefits and risks of management autonomy
- Potential for local community involvement and possible benefits to the local community and local business
- Possible new uses, diversification of use, intensification of use

- Mutually beneficial partnerships:
 - Local business
 - Local community organisations
 - Tourism organisations
 - Use of volunteers
 - Possibility of mutual support from other similar properties
- The wider context and need for change:
 - Government and local government policies
 - Tax and grant regimes
 - Potential for shared services and support
 - Possible conflicts of interest with local businesses
 - Educational opportunities
 - Tourism policy and promotion
 - Integration with local planning policies, preventing degradation of the surroundings
 - Signage systems
 - Capacity of local people
 - Potential adverse effects of change on the local community



Tiszadob, Hungary

FINANCING THE ORGANISATION OF A WORKSHOP

Experience from the ECHo project shows that costs will vary considerably depending on the particular circumstances of the chosen site. For instance three of the four ECHo workshops needed interpretation because of their international character, which will not be needed at most workshops.

The following is a list of the sorts of things for which costs may be incurred but it is worth bearing in mind that many of the participants will be gaining knowledge of value to them from

participating in the workshop, that speakers may see the workshop as an opportunity to promote their own services and that the owners of the country house will benefit from the knowledge, experience and thought processes that the workshop brings to them.

- Hire of suitable premises for the workshop
- Speakers fees
- Travel and subsistence expenses for participants
- Equipment hire
- Organiser's time in preparation
- Pre-workshop publicity, invitations and preparation of documentation
- Photocopying, telephone, fax, email
- Dissemination of workshop results



Dolna Krupá, Slovak Republic

USING OUTCOMES

What can participants expect a workshop to achieve? It is not realistic to expect a short workshop to produce a detailed prescription for the future use and management of the country house. It is not even likely that a specific solution to its problems will be found. It is more realistic to expect some general principles to emerge, some themes and issues which need more detailed discussion and research to be identified and embryonic partnerships to be formed. Written recommendations addressed to the owner, management body and local authority could be set out as basic issues to be taken into consideration in considering any change to the site.



Participants at a workshop

In order that the momentum and enthusiasm engendered by the workshop is not lost it is sensible to set out the steps needed to follow up the workshop discussions and decisions, an approximate timescale for these and a clear indicator of who is to take responsibility for future actions. There also needs to be a clear commitment from those responsible for the follow-up to keep workshop participants and other stakeholders informed and involved.

If involvement is to continue then there needs to be some means of measuring the results of change. At the end of the workshop it would be useful to set out the sorts of things that would indicate improvement from the current situation. In order to be able to measure improvement, information about the present condition needs to be recorded and a note made of the way in which positive change could be measured.

Each house will be different but the sorts of things, which might be measured, are:

- Improvements to the conditions of the house and estate
- Increased income to the property
- Increased employment in the locality
- New businesses set up in the locality related to the use of the country house
- Collaboration in joint marketing with other related enterprises
- Increase in the use of volunteers
- Changed attitudes to the country house in the locality
- Use of the property for educational visits and by local educational establishments
- Successful partnerships established which support the long-term well-being of the property

The ECHo project partners wish to thank the European Commission for its generous support and all the organisations and individuals involved in the project across many countries.

Above all, thanks should be given to the European citizens who participated in the workshops and roadshows, without whose concern, support and enthusiasm the project would not have succeeded.

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ECHo

Workshop

Reports

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The Workshop as a Tool

One of the aims of the ECHo project was to explore the usefulness of workshops as a means of searching for solutions to the difficulties faced by country houses today and of involving a wide range of stakeholders in the process. The experience of the workshops held in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland and the Slovak Republic was very positive. In most cases all the relevant stakeholders were present and participated significantly in the workshop discussions. The themes that emerged were generally quite similar but there were differences of emphasis from place to place. The form of each workshop also differed but in general they were well structured and had a small enough number of participants to ensure a healthy and useful discussion. What follows is a distillation of the lessons learnt from the pilots as a guide to those wishing to use a similar process elsewhere.

The following reports were used to develop a toolkit which we hope will provide a means of helping stakeholders find solutions to the challenges faced by country houses today.

For more information about the ECHo Toolkit, please visit www.ennho.org.

Workshop Summary Report

Ardgillan Castle, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin, Ireland, 2nd June 2005

Strokestown Park, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon, Ireland, 9th June 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives of workshops

To gather professionals, owners and managers, to two venues, to participate in collective discussions on the future of the Country House in the 21st Century. During the process, specialists would outline specific facts relating to The Country House, providing for informed discussion on the present and possible threats and opportunities, and methods of harnessing the intrinsic values inherent in Country Houses in Ireland.

1.2. Structure of Workshops

In order to achieve the objectives of the ECHo project, An Taisce and The Irish Georgian Society (IGS) decided that the workshops would be structured as follows:

- a) To maximise the level of engagement by delegates, speakers would only talk for 20 minutes, leaving 10 minutes for discussion. After these talks we intended to split the delegates into 3-4 groups where discussion would centre on issues raised and others not covered but included on the list of 'Themes'.
- b) It was only deemed possible to attract delegates for one day workshops. This raised two fundamental issues; discussion had to be specific, targeted and concise, and we could only invite those who could contribute. Therefore we decided to concentrate on capturing three socio-economic values, specifically; community participation, tourism and education.
- c) A brochure for the ECHo project was posted out to all potential delegates. The target list included; County Council Heritage Officers, Environmental Staff, Planning staff, Country House owners and managers, The Department of Environment, Failte Ireland (responsible for promoting and researching the tourism development of Ireland), local schools, hotels, The Heritage Council of Ireland, and local groups relevant to Country Houses. A number of these were then followed up by phone.
- d) The decision was made to select a country house which represented public ownership and another representing private ownership. An Taisce does not own such a property and the Irish Georgian Society does not participate in property ownership or management.
- e) List of Attendees at Ardgillan Castle Workshop, Balbriggan, County Dublin, Thursday 2nd June 2005

Bates, Peadar, Donabate Historical Society
Clabby, Gerry Heritage Officer, Fingal
D'Arcy, Bartie, Belevedere House
Dunne, Bridget, Newbridge House
Flannery, Gerry, DOEHLG Howth Peninsula Heritage Society
Friel, Paddy, Kilkenny Castle
Gill, Denise, Rathfarnham Castle

Lawler, Ruth, Arbor Genealogy & Local History
Loughlin, Bridget, Heritage Officer, Kildare County Council
Lynch, Geraldine, Malahide Castle
Mulvaney, Suzanne, The Irish Landmark Trust
O'Hare, Pauline, Balbriggan Historical Society
O'Sullivan, Elaine. Fingal Tourism – afternoon only

- f) Speakers at Ardgillan Castle Workshop
Cahill, Donough IGS
Dooley, Terence, NUIM
Garland, Stuart, Volunteering Ireland
Lynch, Michael, Parks Superintendent, Fingal County Council
McElligot, Michael, Manager, Ardgillan Castle
O'Brien, Damian, Failte Ireland
Owen, David, An Taisce

- g) List of Attendees at Strokestown Park Workshop, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon, Thursday 9th June 2005

Armstrong, Neil, (Manager) King House, Boyle
Brady, John, County Roscommon Historical & Archaeology Society
Clapison, John (Ed. Officer), King House
Egan, Edward, Drum Heritage Centre
Fallon, John, Church Street, Strokestown
Finnerty, Kevin, Castlecoote
Golden, Patricia, Una Bhan Tourism, Boyle
Guilbride, Tom, Rush Hill, Hillstreet, Co. Roscommon
Kellett, Susan, Enniscoe House, Ballina
Lynskey, Shane, Elphin Street, Strokestown
McDaniel, Lisa, Longford HO
McKeown, Nollaig, Heritage Officer Roscommon
Meade, Jane, Architect
O'Carroll, Brian F., O'Carroll Associates Architects
O'Carroll, Mary O'Carroll Associates Architects
O'Donnell, Nora, Assistant Conservation Officer,
O'Hara, Brian, Coopershill, Sligo
O'Hara, Lindy, Coopershill, Sligo

- h) Speakers at Strokestown Park Workshop
Banyai, Balazs, Czech Republic
Cahill, Donough IGS
Dooley, Terence, NUIM
Finnegan, Lucy, Strokestown Park
Nmastek, Jaromir, Czech Republic
O'Brien, Damian, Failte Ireland
O'Driscoll, John, Strokestown Park
Owen, David, An Taisce
Sell, John, Echo Project

2. RESULTS

2.1 Overall outcomes of workshops

- a) The impact of the workshops has not made an immediate impact but has been viewed as a very positive first step in ongoing workshops and the development of coordinated support for Country Houses. From a publicity perspective, it was extremely advantageous to see the state agencies, NGOs and local groups coming together with a common objective. It is intended to build on this in the future.
- b) It is intended to notify all the participants about the roadshows in advance.
- c) An Taisce and The Irish Georgian Society have been asked to give a short presentation to the delegates at this year's conference on Historic Irish Houses & Estates at NUIM in September.
- d) Several Country Houses, on hear about the Echo Project, are interested in hosting workshops. An Taisce and IGS intend to put the 'toolkit' into practice in 2006.
- e) In order to impress on decision makers the needs of Country Houses it became very apparent that studies are needed that;
 - Identify the role and potential of the Country House to the local economy, community and the nation as a conserved entity
 - The types of support schemes needed and weaknesses of current schemes.
 - i) Training for volunteers and their management
 - ii) Conservation grants review
 - iii) Marketing
 - iv) Training for guides
 - v) National Trust legislation
 - Identify the opportunities in collective decision making
 - Such as groups of houses; working groups that include local and regional tourism, schools, local business, county councils, etc

2.2 Specific Outcomes from the Workshops by theme

(WS1) = Ardgillan Castle (WS2) = Strokestown Park

2.2.1 Community Participation, Perception and Ownership

Community participation was acknowledged is a key ingredient for long-term success but currently there is limited evidence of it outside major cities. This was due to perceptions and limited engagement with the local community to develop a sense of ownership. Community involvement vital to long-term success:

- Other houses owned by Fingal County Council emphasised the importance of community participation in the successful running of their operations.(WS1)
- Community ownership can be developed through holding events within the house and demesne. In Strokestown the potential to further develop this is illustrated through the annual agricultural show. This is of benefit not only to the house but also to the community at large through the spending of visitors. If the resources were made

available, the organisation of additional similar events would further enhance the sense of community ownership.

- A project identified at Strokestown that would involve the local community was the restoration of the parkland surrounding the house. If the resources were available, this work could be done in association with the local community as well as involving volunteers from the immediate area. Through enhancing the setting of the house and creating a greater amenity for the area, a sense of community ownership and shared identity could be developed. (see volunteering).

2.2.2 Community Perceptions

- There is a broad range of views expressed by the community ranging from those who help to those who think that Westward is as bad as the previous owners, the Mahons. However, by and large they are supportive. (WS2).
- There is a perception amongst the local community that tour buses do not stay in the area and that money is not spent outside of the house. In Strokestown, less than 50% of business is from coaches though in town the perception is that the percentage is much greater. (WS2)
- It is considered that the house is generally of financial benefit to the area; local crafts are sold in house and employment is derived locally. (WS2)
- The manager of a country house owned by a different local authority (Belvedere House, Co. Westmeath) stated that there were no provisions made for community participation in this house. All the staff were employed on a professional basis with charges being in place for both the house and the parkland. (WS1)
- Entrance fees to houses can be justified though it was a general opinion that entrance fees to parklands deters repeat visits. This, in turn, limits the potential development of a sense of community ownership. This sense of ownership and participation is recognised as being of considerable importance in Ardgillan Castle. (WS1)

2.2.3 Acquisition of Country Houses

- The general consensus amongst participants was one of disappointment that other local authorities had not adopted a similar approach to country house estates acquisition as that of Fingal County Council. (WS1) This policy is based on acquisition for public space. (WS1)
- Strokestown has never paid back the money invested in it. Until recently, the running costs were covered by ticket sales, however, in the last two years visitor numbers have dropped with a fall from 78,000 to 50,000 since 2001. This has meant that running costs no longer cover; wages, electricity, insurance. Is it right to expect a small private firm to underwrite a heritage project such as this? (WS2)

2.2.4 Volunteers

Within the National Trust as a whole, there are more than 40,000 volunteers across 600 properties (includes countryside sites). These tend to be middle class ABC1s with 67% being over 55. There is a best practice management policy for engaging volunteers. A series of reasons were highlighted as to why the National Trust involves volunteers.

- The Trust's need to fulfil its purpose for 'the benefit of the nation'.
- Through engaging volunteers they provide a means of developing a sense of ownership for all members of the community.
- It also serves as a means of providing education through developing new skills and in doing so can be cost effective for the organisation.

-
- The role of volunteers in promoting the Trust and in attracting funds is also considered important.

Why do people volunteer? To:

- Get personal satisfaction in doing something useful;
- Give something back to society;
- Belong to an organisation which they admire;
- Meet people and gain new experiences;
- Acquire new skills and access training/qualifications;
- Gain work experience and references, and;
- Have the opportunity to try something new for free.

What barriers prevent people volunteering?

- Feelings that there is no time to give;
- It may cost money;
- They don't fit the volunteering mould,
- They have never been asked.

What barriers prevent organisations taking on volunteers?

- Fears over a lack of resources to effectively manage them;
- Fears that standards may be compromised;
- Perceptions that volunteers are unreliable;
- Fears of getting stuck with a bad volunteer;
- There may be a reluctance to change and fear of the unknown;
- There may be a lack of knowledge of the potential of volunteers;
- There may be fears that Volunteers would take the roles of paid staff.
- (in the National Trust, 9 out of 10 staff agree that volunteers add something different to the Trust's Work)

The commitment and level of volunteerism in privately owned country houses varies hugely from site to site and is reliant on the views of the property manager. Volunteers are largely middle class and over 50. The policies adopted towards volunteers varies across sites and tends to be very little in way of recognised policy/procedure (training, management, reward).

The involvement of volunteers is task specific with no intention of expanding on these. Why do Independent Historic Houses Engage Volunteers? TO SAVE MONEY!; where it is perceived that volunteers will not save money, they are not used; other benefits are acknowledged but are not important to decision making. (Based on findings; *Volunteering in Independent Historic Houses 2001*)

- Volunteers are used primarily only as guides though in Ardgillan Castle and Newbridge House they are involved at management level. In the other houses represented, volunteers were not engaged.(WS1)
- A big concern was voiced about security in relation to volunteers. For this reason, they are engaged through friends and contacts rather than allowing for a more open level of involvement.(WS1)
- Organisations that engage volunteers must have the conviction that volunteers are important and that they are not just "added spice but key ingredients".(WS1)

-
- 'The day of the volunteer is gone'. Community employment schemes during the 1980's and early '90's created expectations of payment for work. Also, it is believed that volunteer costs are high requiring bed, board and insurance.(WS2)
 - Volunteers were involved in the restoration of the house and the gardens but are not involved in the day-to-day running of the house. However, student volunteers do undertake research on the famine papers though they require bed and board for this – costs money. The biggest issue is not volunteerism or restoration but covering running costs.(WS2)
 - In privately owned Country Houses there are clear problems of funding to engage professional guides but the option of engaging volunteers should be addressed. (WS2)
 - The Bonfire Project; essential conservation work on the wider estate; 10 sessions in 2004, 17 planned for 2005; engaged with more than 30 different groups including: youth offending teams; local schools; Prince's Trust; Tyntesfield Volunteers and staff from other properties; emphasis on learning new skills.
 - Roscommon Community Forum provide advice to communities on volunteerism. (WS2)

Outcomes

- Volunteering in Ireland is relatively underdeveloped though one third of the population is involved in some form of volunteerism. At a national level, Volunteering Ireland works to place volunteers with organisations and to provide training in volunteer management. Though there are a number of centres around the country, it was accepted that it had great potential for growth and to tap in to a willingness to volunteer.
- A number of the houses represented at WS1 stated that community groups had been primary motivators in the conservation and opening of the country houses to the public. Volunteers from these groups work primarily as guides but the groups are also represented at managerial level. It was recognised that there is potential for involving volunteers outside of these boundaries. House managers felt that they could learn from engaging with Volunteering Ireland to learn about volunteer management and development.
- It was of significant importance to learn of the need to effectively manage volunteers and that they should be considered not just "added spice but a key ingredient".
- At WS2 there was a general perception that volunteerism would not be successful amongst the local community. Work employment schemes in the 1980's and 1990's created expectations that any such work would have a financial incentive and, as such, people would be unwilling to give up their time. A great deal of work must be done to reverse this situation. What was clear was that any local involvement would be an uphill struggle.
- It was felt that if volunteering in Country Houses in Ireland is to succeed, much could be learnt from the National Trust model. In the case of volunteerism in private Country Houses, there is a clear need for the relationship to be mutually beneficial – they must not be considered as just a cheap source of labour.
- The house manager felt that there were projects in the house that could be of benefit to both volunteers and the house itself – work must be mutually beneficial. Strokestown could provide a good template for engaging volunteers as there are projects that may

suit. It was suggested that they look for advice from Volunteering Ireland to pursue this. It was also suggested that he could work with the Irish Georgian Society and An Taisce in this regard. (WS2)

2.2.5 Financial support

Ardgillan Castle

- Not operated for financial return but to providing an amenity for the greater Dublin area.
- Purchased and restored by a Local Authority (LA) in 1980's. LA continues to finance daily running costs and additional works.
- Community responsible for management of the house.
- Accessed state grants for restoration of formal gardens.
- House has been restored with functional elements, e.g. meeting rooms, exhibition rooms.
- Grounds visited by over 700,000 free of charge.
- Grounds used for open-air concerts.

There are opportunities to tap the Irish Diaspora but we should not try to rely on external support for Irish heritage. We need to justify its conservation to the Irish public first.(WS1)

Strokestown Park

- Purchased in 1980's and managed by a private commercial firm.
- Stables restored at its own expense with some assistance from central and local government to establish National Famine Museum, shop and cafe.
- It has never made a return on the money invested in it whilst annual gate sales do not cover its running costs let alone provide finances for further conservation work.
- Up until now, the willingness of the firm to remain involved has been dependent on the will of the firm's founder who has now retired leaving an uncertain future.

The State does not want to take on the house as it already operates other loss making country houses and the local authority can not afford the costs. (WS2)

It is perceived that it is simpler, easier and more cost effective to undertake works without the benefit of grant aid. Westward has found that 9 out of 10 grant applications are refused. (WS2)

Planning applications are costly requiring the expertise of professionals. The restoration costs for the gardens more than doubled after involving the Great Gardens of Ireland project. There is a belief that the government and county council are very good at telling people how to spend their money! (WS2)

In seeking to attract government assistance for the Famine Museum, Strokestown Park emerged disillusioned by the potential for government assistance. In spite of going through a lengthy procedure in applying for assistance, grant aid was not given to assist in the running of the museum for the reason that it is run by a private firm. There is now a belief that the government would let the Famine Museum go into decline rather than invest money in it. (WS2)

There are tax incentives available for conservation costs but these are minimal and restricted because the house is owned by a company rather than an individual. (WS2)

Outcomes

- Belief that there was need for a much greater level of government involvement in privately owned country houses. In particular, it was felt that the efforts being made in Strokestown to keep the doors of a nationally important house open to tourists needed both financial and advisory assistance. Though tax incentives and grant aid are available for conservation works, this was felt to be inadequate for a project with the scale of Strokestown and that a greater level of intervention was required.
- This could be facilitated through an acknowledgement of the financial benefits of Country Houses to surrounding areas. Though it is generally acknowledged that there is financial benefit of such resources, the affect is spread so broadly that it “hits below the radar”. It was suggested that research be done in Ireland to adequately assess the economic impact of country houses.

2.2.6 Legislative support

Many socio-economic values cannot be harnessed by the country house alone. They need the appropriate legislation. e.g. National Trust (WS1)

2.2.7 Maximising heritage value

Need a coordinated approach to maximise these opportunities e.g. integrated total quality tourism management (ITQTM).

2.2.8 Tourism

- The presentations highlighted the worrying changes occurring in visitor habits in recent years with tourists now preferring to stay for short city breaks as opposed to the longer rural holidays that formally characterised visitor stays in the country. This has had an alarming impact on visits to cultural/heritage sites including those to country houses.
- Need for a shared ticketing service where one ticket will serve all destinations in a given area. Though this is being done to a certain level by Dublin Tourism, it is not all-inclusive and has not been adopted outside of the capital.(WS1)
- There is a lot of expertise in heritage tourism but politics is holding this back – people in important decision making positions are not experts in the field of tourism and have been appointed to board positions for political expediency.(WS1)
- It was felt, with some certainty, that the interests of the commercial sector override those of the private and NGO sector with relevant boards filled with commercial political appointees. (WS1)
- Situations arise where there is a conflict of interest on a commercial basis between local authority run heritage centres and local businesses e.g. coffee shops, book shops.(WS1)
- It was acknowledged that the multiplier effect generated through heritage sites needed to be recognised and that this could be used as a tool to promote heritage the conservation issues. Though there is a clear benefit related to heritage, these are shared by so many people on a small scale that they hit “below the radar”.(WS1)

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- There is a need for Failte Ireland to work more closely with local authorities as they develop policies which have a direct impact on heritage sites. Though Failte Ireland is a prescribed body in the Planning Acts, it does not get involved on any more than a superficial level. It was stated that the organisation has been instructed not to get directly involved as planning is seen as being the responsibility of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.(WS1) Failte Ireland have recently appointed an Environmental Planning Officer to fulfil its obligations as a prescribed body.
 - Signage is a very significant issue in relation to visitor access. There is no coordinated national approach. Signage was once the responsibility of Bord Failte (the former national tourism authority now replaced by Failte Ireland), which devolved this to the National Roads Authority who, in turn, foisted the responsibility on to the shoulders of individual Local Authorities.
 - Over-development of the countryside is seen as killing the goose that laid the golden egg. The traditional image of the countryside is being undermined. Also, the general economic growth of the country no longer tallies with the image of a simple rural agricultural economy.
 - Too many Country Houses are being developed into hotels and golf courses. This is rarely an option that retains the contextual setting of the Country House and its landscaped surroundings. It is not the only option to attain economic viability but it is one of the most destructive.
 - The rural tourism economy has gone in to decline due to a change in the type of holiday taken. Visitors now come primarily to the cities taking a weekend “city break”. The type of visitor from the UK in particular, has also changed with Ireland no longer being considered a family destination. (WS2)
 - Regional Tourism Authorities should do more to develop packages geared towards “Country Breaks” with heritage sites developed in clusters. The potential for this was questioned though. A private initiative to develop a promotional package for the Gardens of Mayo was unable to attract financial assistance from either the national, regional or local tourism authorities. It is felt that the government is not willing to give money to tourism initiatives because the benefits are not recognized. (WS2)
 - In order to revitalise the tourism economy there is a need to encourage Irish people to holiday at home rather than abroad. Country Houses can play a role in this. (WS2).
 - The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government was criticised for not marketing the heritage sites it manages. (WS2)
 - If people worked together there would be a greater chance for success. (WS2)
 - Generally agreed that we had an over inflated view of our heritage assets – Newgrange is no comparison to pyramids; English houses more numerous and grander than Irish. However, it was felt that access to archaeological and heritage sites needs to be addressed at a national level. (WS2)
 - When the house was originally opened to the public most business was from car bound Irish people. However, Irish people do not repeat – seen one, seen them all. (WS2)

Outcomes

- The decline in country house tourism was felt more strongly the further the country house lay from the primary population centres and popular tourist destinations. For this reason, the houses lying within the Dublin area that were represented at the Ardgillan Castle Workshop did not raise any specific concerns about declining visitor numbers. However, the figures revealed at the Strokestown Park Workshop, a country house that lies a considerable distance from the primary population and tourist centres, were entirely different. Houses open to the public in this area had experienced a significant decline in visitor numbers.
- A variety of reasons were put forward as to why visitor numbers had dropped so dramatically. In summation, this is due to a change in the type of holidays being taken, changing perception of Ireland as a holiday destination and the social and economic effects of the political climate in the USA. Of greatest concern was the suggestion that inappropriate planning within rural areas and of heritage sites now serves to deter visitors – killing the goose that laid the golden egg.
- The potential for addressing this decline was discussed by Damian O'Brien. He highlighted the role of clustering of heritage destinations in order to promote local tourism attractions. Such a marketing initiative, he suggested, could be done in collaboration with regional tourism authorities that in turn could prepare holiday packages in association with accommodation providers. A "Country Break" concept could be developed to challenge the "City Break" concept.
- However, in Strokestown, there was criticism of this approach following the experience of some attendees in trying to promote local tourism destinations. These had found no support at a national, regional or local level and questioned the viability of clustering. There is a need for closer cooperation at all levels to better develop the market for country house tourism.
- In Ardgillan Castle the issue of a shared ticketing systems was raised. Though such a system is operated in the Dublin area it is not all-inclusive and is a model that has not been adopted outside of the Dublin area. There is a need for the national tourism authority to take the lead on developing a more integrated visitor's ticketing system.
- Of some concern was a growing trend for Irish people to holiday abroad rather than at home. There is a perception that this is a cheaper option. Furthermore, people need to be drawn back to sites following the initial visit.
- Some discussion was had on the issue of the pressures of development on heritage assets. It was felt that commercial interests were generally prioritised over heritage interests and that this was due to official policy. The reasons provided for this are based on a perception that heritage doesn't pay. For this reason, it was felt that there was a need to assess the multiplier effect of heritage tourism and to use this as a conservation tool.
- It was felt that there was a need for the national tourism authority to work more closely with local authorities to address conservation issues.

2.2.9 Heritage Education

- Private owners must be more pro-active in increasing access to their houses.(WS1)
- Funding must be made available to state bodies to encourage educational projects.(WS1)
- Greater co-operation between stakeholders in the development of educational packages.(WS1)
- Guides should be able to adapt tours to suit a variety of groups.(WS1)
- 'An appreciation of historical and cultural heritage values should be promoted through exhibitions of historic houses art, contents and archive collections and conferences, to raise public awareness' (A future for Irish historic houses?).(WS1)
- Funding is required to assist in the preparation of educational packages.(WS1)
- Co-operation is needed between interest groups.(WS1)
- In Belvedere House, schools do visit but it would seem that a new falcon attraction is of comparable interest to the house itself amongst students.(WS1)
- The successful involvement of schools is dependant on the schools themselves.(WS1)
- It is difficult to engage with schools because of the structure of the educational system.(WS1)
- There are no local education co-ordinators. All courses are developed centrally.(WS1)
- The good work done in primary schools in informing students on heritage related issues is undone in secondary school. As students are no longer taught about their heritage a feeling develops that it is no longer of importance.(WS1)
- There needs to be a section in history books that deals with architecture. (WS1)
- Teachers do not have the knowledge to appreciate country houses.(WS1)
- Ghost tours are very popular in Rathfarnham Castle during Halloween break and succeeds in engaging children.(WS1)
- History syllabus deals with the politics and economics of Country Houses and their estates but are limited on the social aspects – this approach fails to provide a context and therefore fails to make it interesting. (WS1)
- Historic House tours do not present a picture of the overall estate. The workers are not addressed, Estate management is not addressed etc. However, it is difficult to get information outside of that about the main family as records are more difficult to find. It was noted that information about life on the estate for the estate workers is often garnered from the descendants of estate workers who are visiting the house. (WS1)

2.2.10 A policy framework for education, community outreach

- Published in 2004 by the Education, Community and Outreach Working Group of Ireland's Council of National Cultural Institutions it identified the following: 'The role of education in preserving and enhancing Ireland's historic environment has never been made so clear to the Irish government and those organisations charged with its care' (Opening Doors) (WS2)
- Commissioned by the Attingham Trust for the study of country houses and collections and published in 2004, the report also deals with the Republic of Ireland. It noted that (i) training provision for guides was weak, a fact that was evident from presentation; (ii) that information was selective (or rather that knowledge was limited to certain aspects of the history of the house); (iii) that information was rarely, if ever, adequately addressed to the level of the group.
- 'unless concerted action is taken, a major component of the country's architectural, historical and cultural heritage is in danger of being lost and that houses should be regarded as an educational asset'. A Future for Irish Historic Houses, Dr. Terence Dooley, 2003 (WS2)
- In State owned sites, the question was asked as to whether a strategy exists to develop education. Is training in local history provided to guides in order to assist in the interpretation process. It was suggested that commercial targets could undermine the importance of sound education.

Outcomes

- There is now a much greater understanding and appreciation of the country house than there was up to even 15 years ago. As Andrew Kavanagh the owner of Borris House, Co. Carlow, was quoted by Dr. Terence Dooley as saying: 'I've lived through public desire to pull the place down, through indifference, through reluctant acceptance that it should stand, to a desire to preserve it, and now at last we are seeing an acceptance that it really is important Irish workmanship.'
- The report published by the Attingham Trust highlighted the need for a greater level of training amongst tour guides in Ireland. Dr. Dooley suggested that this applies to both publicly and privately owned houses. Research published by the Heritage Council indicated that guides are very keen on learning. The Centre for the Study of Irish Historic Houses and Estates could provide the means for providing courses in country house guiding.
- A very considerable level of concern was noted over the failure of the secondary school curriculum to adequately address country houses from either an architectural or social basis –generally they are mentioned only on the context of land rights. Though publicly accessible country houses do try to engage with schools, it is felt that success is dependant on the initiative of schools themselves.

Sychrov Castle and Frýdlant Castle, Czech Republic

WORKSHOP IN SYCHROV CASTLE – MAY 12TH, 2005

1. Short description of the locality

The history of the area, where the castle is situated, dates back to the 15th century. From this time there are records of a fort, which was the property of the Czech royal chamber. In its place a stone mansion house was built in the 16th century, and in the years 1690 – 1693 a smaller Baroque castle was constructed by the knighted Lamotts family of Frintropp. Members of this French aristocratic family can be classified as belonging to the category of officers who were being rewarded with lands confiscated from Czech aristocracy for their services to the Austrian Emperor during the Thirty Years' War. In 1740 this estate was bought by František of Valdštejn of Mnichovo Hradiště family line. Since the Valdštejns resided in Mnichovo Hradiště, the castle of Sychrov ceased to be a permanent residence of lords. For almost 80 years no significant changes took place here, and the compound was used for farming purposes and for the accommodation of servants.

This situation radically changed on August 30th 1820, when Duke Karel Alain Gabriel Rohan became the new owner of Sychrov and the Svijany estate. That year the 125-year era of the Rohans at Sychrov began, as well as the period of the castle's greatest fame. The Rohan family originated in Brittany, where the oldest records relating to them can be traced back to as early as the year 951. Over the centuries their position strengthened until they ranked among the ten most influential aristocratic families in France, and as direct cousins of French kings also acquired the title of „Princes of Royal Blood". The family included several lines whose members held significant offices – military, political or clerical. After the French Revolution they left France and settled into the Austrian Monarchy. Contrary to other aristocratic escapees who were returning to France (during the reign of Napoleon I and mainly in the period of reaction – i.e. under Louis XVII and Charles X), the Rohans stayed in Bohemia, in spite of being later invited to return.

The main residence of the family was Sychrov, however, as a small, dilapidated Baroque castle, it did not satisfy the demands placed on the residence of Dukes and Princes. During the period under Duke Karel Alain Gabriel Rohan, a grand redevelopment in the Empire Style was performed (completed in 1834). Nevertheless, the construction development of the castle continued, particularly under Duke Kamil Joseph Idesbald Philip Rohan, during which time the current neo-Gothic look of Sychrov was being established. Due to the reconstruction in the romantic neo-Gothic style between 1847 – 1862, carried out according to the design of Bernard Grueber, a professor of the Art Academy, Sychrov is included among the most significant monuments of historical styles of the 19th century (as are for example the castles of Hluboká nad Vltavou, Lednice and Hrádek u Nechanic ...).

All works were solely entrusted to domestic artists and craftsmen. Among these, a significant position was held by Petr Bušek, a woodcarver, who with his creative and artistic talent imparted a great artistic value and unrepeatable ambience to all the castle's interiors. His work was complemented by the activities of a number of other great artists and craftsmen (sculptors Emanuel Max and Vincenc Smolík, upholsterer Ludvík Grein, joiner Petr König, blacksmith Jan Novák, ...). Duke Kamil Rohan paid specific attention to the Castle Park, designed in the English style, which during his life experienced an unprecedented boom and became a model for the establishment of many now important arboreta such as Pruhonice and Konopiště. During this period, a rare harmonising of the castle exterior, interior, and the park was accomplished.

The end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s brought to the castle functional adaptations which not only partially changed the castle exterior (various decorative neo-Gothic oriels and attics were removed, as was the plaster from the formerly plastered towers, which was replaced by rubble masonry...) but also its interior. In many rooms, Bušek's lavish carvings (e.g. ceiling panelling in the staircase hall) and French embossed wallpapers made of pigskin were taken down. The neo-Gothic furnishing was being replaced by new, modern items.

After the end of World War II the castle was confiscated pursuant to Decree No. 12/1945 the Collection of Laws and became state property. At first it served as a collection point for confiscated property, and since May 1st 1950 it has been open to the public to a small extent. During the 70s the tour route expanded to the south wing and the corridor of the south annex with the Antonín Dvořák Memorial. Since the beginning of the nineties, an extensive reconstruction and restoration of castle exteriors, interiors, and the park have been under way, the object of which is to make the Castle of Sychrov look as close to its original form at the time of its biggest boom- i.e. its condition in the second half of the 19th century - as possible.

2. Attendees:

Professionals – national level (NPU Prague)
Regional level (NPU Usti nad Labem and Liberec)
and local level (Sychrov castle representatives)

- Ph.D. Eva Lukášová – NPU Prague, castle and chateaux department
- Bc. Ksandr (NPU Prague) – Sychrov castle Conservator
- Ph.D. Miloš Kadlec – NPU Liberec + Sychrov castle
- Ph.D. Jana Pavlikova – head of Frydlant castle
- Ing. Aleš Hozdecký – head of tourism department, Mayorhouse of Turnov
- Doc. Ing. Arch. Girsá – architect
- PhDr. Jana Kubu – NPÚ Prague, Castle department
- Ing. Miroslav Kubu, director of Karlštejn castle
- Mgr. Tomáš Wizowský – director of Western Bohemia NPÚ
- Libor Štros – Aspira Invest, investment company
- Sona Švábová – director of Mnichovo Hradiště Castle
- Jaromír Náместek – ECHo young specialist, permanent guide in Sychrov Castle
- Michaela Chalupová – ENHO, Slovakia
- Ivan Chalupa – ECHo young specialist, Slovakia

Local authorities:

- Jana Vachušková - Mayor of Sychrov village
- PhDr. Hana Majerová - Turnov Mayor House, Friends of Sychrov Castle Foundation

3. Workshop mission:

“Different Access of Public to Sychrov Castle, Cooperation with local Community in North Bohemian Region and active Collaboration with international Community (The Friends of Sychrov Castle in UK, USA, France etc.)” & “Sychrov castle and tourism and legal changes in Czech National Heritage”

4. Workshop agenda:

9,30-10,00	Image of the Past and its Authenticity in Presentation of Castles and Country Houses to the Public (speaker Dr. Eva Lukášová – NPU Prague)
10,00-10,30	Discussion
10,30-11,00	Historical and architectural Value of Sychrov Castle in Czech Republic and Europe and Rohan Family as previous Owner of Sychrov Castle and Collaboration with the Family today (speaker Dr. Miloš Kadlec – Sychrov Castle)
11,00-11,30	Discussion
11,30-11,45	<i>Coffee break</i>
11,45-12,15	Rohan Family as previous Owner of Sychrov Castle and Collaboration with the family today (speaker PhD. Hana Maierova - The Friends of Sychrov Castle)
12,15-12,45	Discussion
12,45-14,00	<i>Lunch</i>
14,00-14,30	Sychrov Castle in the context of Czech Tourism (speaker Ing. Aleš Hozdecký – head of tourism department, Mayorhouse of Turnov)
14,30-15,00	Discussion
15,00-15,30	The Significance of the Castle in current Sychrov Life (speaker Sychrov Mayor)
15,30-16,00	Discussion
16,00-16,30	New Development and Investment in Sychrov (speaker from Aspira Gastro, Ltd, Aspira Invest Ltd. – new investors in Sychrov, hotel builders – ing. Libor Štros)
16,30-17,00	Discussion

5. Workshop outcomes:

There were about 20 people for the main workshop held in Sychrov, with smaller numbers for follow up visits to Frydlant and Nove Mesto nad Metuji. The small number of participants and the arrangement of the workshop where we sat around tables of 5 or 6 people really helped to stimulate discussion. Most people felt able to make a contribution and it was generally the question and answer and discussion sessions after presentations that were most productive.

6. The topics the workshop set out to deal with were:

- The Architectural and historical value of Sychrov Castle, the value of the Rohan family as the previous owner and collaboration with the family today.
- Sychrov Castle in the context of Czech tourism
- The Friends of Sychrov Castle and fundraising for Czech historic monuments.
- The image of the past and its authenticity in presentation of country houses to the public.
- The significance of Sychrov Castle to the present life of the local community.
- New development and investment at Sychrov.
- The value of Frydlant Castle, the restoration process and tourism activities.
- Interaction between Frydlant Castle and the local community.
- Private ownership and public access to country houses in the Czech Republic.

7. The mains themes which emerged from the discussions were:

1. The value of the 'friends' organisation and international support.
2. The use of volunteers, barriers to volunteering, risks in using volunteers, management and training of volunteers.
3. Co-operation or lack of it with local communities and local authorities, the value of cooperation with local business and other tourist activities in the region, involving the local community in activities at the property and with the historic environment more generally.
4. The importance of authenticity, authenticity and the visitor experience.
5. Presentation issues including the value or otherwise of myth and legend, opening during conservation work, access to 'secret' places.
6. Management issues, particularly the degree of control allowed for property managers, quality of management and management training.
7. Hotel use, problems and opportunities.

8. Comments:

Of the above I would say that 3, 6 and 7 are topics for considerable further discussion during the three future workshops if we can fit them in. In discussion after the workshop with steering group members we discussed what worked and what did not. We all agreed that the degree of participation in the discussion is what made the workshop a success. As well as the relatively informal arrangement at Sychrov our discussions at Frydlant took place around the table in the castle kitchen and at Nove Mesto nad Metuji over a drink with the owners. We also all agreed that it would have been a good idea to give a specific role in discussions to the three young professionals who were present. We discussed how much it matters that the discussions sometimes wandered from the topic supposedly under discussion and, I think, came to the conclusion that it was not too serious a problem as it was important for people to raise issues that were really troubling them. The most significant of these was around the lack of autonomy of local management. Finally, we recognised that we did not give enough time or consideration to the issues around private ownership.

Workshop Reports

Rusovce Castle, Rusovce, Slovakia

Dolná Krupá Manor house, Dolná Krupá, Slovakia

WORKSHOP IN RUSOVCE CASTLE, RUSOVCE – THURSDAY 9TH OF JUNE 2005

1. Short description of the locality – history and current state

Traces left by the oldest people in the area of present-day Rusovce go as far back as the older Bronze Age (approximately 2200-1600 B.C.).

Around 12-9 B.C., Romans arrived in the territory of present-day Rusovce. The most important monument from this period is the military camp Gerulata, which was once part of border fortifications of Limes Romanus. Roman Gerulata flourished in the period from the 2nd to the 4th century, but perished in the 5th century under the pressure of Germanic tribes. Situated on the ruins of ancient Gerulata is a Slavonic settlement, which was founded in the 9th century. Archaeological findings from the settlement were also found in Rusovce.

The first written reference to present-day Rusovce dates back to the year 1208, during the reign of King Ondrej II, in his deed of donation of the area of “Terra Uruzwar” to the monastery in Lébényi (present-day Hungary). In the first centuries of the Hungarian Kingdom, Rusovce was an important border stronghold – “Castellum”. In the second half of the 14th century, Rusovce gained importance as a trading centre as well.

The beneficial location of Rusovce on the road leading from Hungary to Austria, via Magyaróvár and Hainburg to Vienna, helped in the development of the community during the Middle Ages. Situated on the trade route, Rusovce reaped continuous economic profit throughout the 15th century. In 1439, Rusovce was mentioned as “Oppidum Orozvar” (“small rural town”). It preserved this status till 1908.

In the 15th century, Rusovce was owned by the noble family of Tompek, and later became the property of Stefan Josa. During the period of 1515 to 1575, Rusovce experienced a total of four immigration waves by Croats. In 1613, the church of St. Vitus was rebuilt. The first written record of a local school is from 1659. The church of St. Magdalena was built in 1668-1669.

In 1646, Rusovce became the property of Count Stefan Zichy, the head of the Hungarian House of Nobles. The family became the exclusive owners of Rusovce for the next 200 years, well into the middle of the 18th century. Rusovce became the official country residence of the Zichy family. During that period, Rusovce Manor-house was considered the nicest one in the whole of the Moson province.

In years 1841 – 1846, the Count Emanuel Zichy Ferrari rebuilt the manor-house in the style of the English Tudor Estate as a gesture of respect and compliment to his wife, who was of English origin.

Further development of the manor-house and park in Rusovce started in 1872, when the manor-house and adjacent land was acquired by Count Henckel, who built a stud farm there. In his time, Rusovce became a famous place for horse riding and breeding. Due to the generous support of Count Henckel, the HUGO stud farm became one of the most successful in Central Europe. In 1890, the stud-farm was sold to Baron Rothschild.

In 1906, the land, manor-house and stud-farm were acquired by the Crown Princess Stephania and her husband, a Hungarian nobleman, Elemir Lonay. The garden of the manorhouse was then considered to be one of the finest and best looking in the whole country. Part of the park was a large garden centre called Stephanium, well-known even outside the Moson province. It had 36 greenhouses and was involved in business throughout the whole of Europe, including deliveries by train.

In the year 1920, based on the Treaty of Trianon, Rusovce became part of Hungary and after WWII, part of Czechoslovakia, according to the Paris Treaty of Oct. 17, 1947.

In 50-ies and 60-ies of 20th century, the park and the castle were stable point of every outstanding government visit - Sergej N. Chruscov, Gérard Philip, Valentina Tereskovova, Alexanders' performance.

In 70-ies and 80-ies, a plenty of cultural performances such as yearly Bratislava Culture Summer were taking place here

Today the park with the Castle is in possession of the Office of Government.

The castle and park of Rusovce far exceeds the area of Rusovce with its historical and natural value. It's recreational and leisure potential is of an international significance. However both of them are managed very poorly in the long term. Their owner - the Office of Government doesn't invest enough money neither to the dominant of both the park and Rusovce – the Castle, nor to the park itself. Money provided by the owner is not sufficient for current state preservation, not to mention any progress, so the castle and park are going to worse.

City district Bratislava-Rusovce is interested of having the castle and park with its values preserved for people, and so it became the bearer of the activity of castle and park reconstruction. The co-operation with the National Trust of Slovakia and also ECHO project with its workshops is part of this attempt.

2. Attendees

Dušan Antoš – Mayor of the Rusovce
Michal Tulek – Rusovce Natura civic association
Vlado Mokrán – Rusovce Natura civic association
Patrik Guldán – Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic
Vladislav Chudík – local entrepreneur – hotel company
Zuzana Hudeková – Regional Environmental Centre
Zora Kalka Paulíniová – Facilitator and architect

Peter Tábořský – director of The National Trust of Slovakia
Michaela Chalupová – project manager, NTS
Ivan Chalupa – Young professional, NTS
Zdenka Predajnová – administrative, NTS

Around 15 local people

3. Preparation of the workshop

Because the workshop was focussed on local community we have printed 800 invitations and distributed them in co-operation with local authority inside the local newspapers to all Rusovce inhabitants.

From the same reason we have organized the workshop in the afternoon as we wanted to give the possibility to take part in our event to people who are employed and could not afford the day off from their work. We do not know if the reason was an extremely bad weather or a very low interest but we got only around 15 local residents or visitors.

However those which came were mainly people with the big interest in Rusovce castle and its future – historians, architects, people working in the offices of the Municipality but also some businessmen and representatives of the younger generation – students.

Unfortunately the current owner of the Rusovce Castle – The Government office of Slovak Republic could not participate and sent apologies. We detected a low interest in solving the problems of Rusovce Castle in a way which would be acceptable to local people.

During the process of workshop preparations we closely co-operated with local NGO – Natura Rusovce and also the Municipality of Rusovce. They gave us much useful advice on how to communicate with the local people, how to motivate them to take part in our workshop, how to structure the workshop, etc.

The people from Natura Rusovce already have the experiences from the similar cross-border project dealing with public participation which they realized one year ago with the title “Development of partnership in the field of environment and tourism Rusovce – Bruck”.

4. Realisation of the workshop

The workshop took place in the building of the Municipality in the wedding hall which at the same time serves as a local historical museum.

The whole workshop was facilitated with the professional facilitator Mrs. Zora Kalka Paulíniová.

5. Structure of the workshop

For the last ten years, Rusovce castle has been closed for the public, the only open space is the surrounding park. This is why our organisation decided to choose a slightly different structure for the workshop – compared to our second locality, Dolná Krupá, or indeed some of the ECHO project localities in other countries – Czech Republic, Ireland, Hungary. We were not able to run a workshop involving the property manager as the owners did not show any interest. We could not invite staff working at the Castle, because it is closed and there are only guards and not professional staff. This is why we had to take a different approach.

We chose to organise the workshop in Rusovce despite all these difficulties because we think that Rusovce Castle belongs to the most important European Country Houses located in Slovakia and has big potential for future development especially when the local community would be involved.

For these reasons our organisation – The National Trust of Slovakia – is, together with the Municipality of Rusovce, working on the possibility of getting the Rusovce Manor house into the hands of the Municipality and preparing an alternative proposal of the use of this property. At the workshop in Rusovce we discussed the possibility of developing the property into a socio-cultural centre for the local community. We also considered the possibility of establishing a so-called “Middle European Centre of Cultural Heritage” which could serve local people and visitors of this region or Slovakia as a whole.

We listened to the ideas of the Rusovce inhabitants and through the workshop were able to gauge the level of interest within the local community – their wishes concerning the possible use of their historic environment.

By organising the workshop in Rusovce, we also wanted to involve previously excluded communities and as well as to determine the community capacity – which individuals, groups, agencies are interested and can make a relevant, positive contribution to the future of the Rusovce Country house.

6. Presentations

Ivan Chalupa, The National Trust of Slovakia – ECHO Young heritage professional

Mr. Chalupa in his contribution explained the backgrounds, aims and activities of ECHO project. He described the situation of country houses in the other countries involved in the project and explained why the National Trust of Slovakia had selected sites in Rusovce and Dolná Krupá. He has also informed participants of the results of the socio-economic research in the UK.

Dušan Antoš, Mayor of Rusovce

First of all Mr. Antoš welcomed all participants and thanked the organizers of the workshop for choosing Rusovce.

He explained the importance of co-operation between the Rusovce Municipality and The National Trust of Slovakia in this project but also in the project to find a future use of Rusovce Castle and Park.

Peter Táborský, Director of the National Trust of Slovakia

Mr. Táborský presented the ideas of the common project of NTS and Municipality Rusovce “The Middle European Centre of Cultural Heritage” – the project of revitalisation of the historic environment with public participation. He also outlined the potential benefits for local community.

Vlado Mokrán and Michal Tulek, Natura Rusovce

Messrs. Mokrán and Tulek presented the activities of their civic organisation which is involved in the park area of Rusovce castle and presented the results of their cross-border project to revitalise the park ensuring public participation. They stressed the importance of co-operation between different groups – public-private partnerships – in the protection, maintenance and sensitive use of this very valuable historical locality.

7. Discussions held and themes arising

All the workshop participants expressed their displeasure with the approach of the current owner to this important part of their cultural heritage.

The ownership of the property was a major topic of discussion and people were very interested in the possibility of finding employment opportunities in any redevelopment of Rusovce castle.

There was a lot of discussion about using the property as a potential centre of cultural tourism, as it is situated only a few kilometres from the centre of Bratislava – Capital of Slovakia – and also because Rusovce is situated in the cross-border area between Slovakia, Hungary and Austria.

The issue of volunteers was also mentioned a few times mainly in connection with the surrounding castle park.

Last year the local NGO, Natura Rusovce, involved many locals in the volunteer work in the park as part of its project (the remainder of the property is not accessible/open to the public). Workshop participants agreed that volunteers could also help with the process of renovating the castle and its future maintenance.

A very important part of the discussion centred on the restoration method and how the renovation would be phased. It was felt that it would be necessary to open the gates for the public right from the start. In this way, we could involve as many local people as possible – as well as visitors to Rusovce – and make the whole process transparent and accessible to people.

Participants also discussed the possibility of situating the Presidential apartments within Rusovce Manor House. This is an attractive option, given Rusovce Manor's proximity to Bratislava, and after renovation it will regain its special character. However, it was felt that such a proposal would need a lot of specialist input – particularly on security issues, for example.

The interpretation of the property was discussed to a smaller extent and local people expressed an interest in the establishment of a local historical museum and small gallery within Rusovce Manor house. Others thought that the place should be interpreted as a whole – the whole property considered as a museum together with the park, in which some kind of land-art could be used as interpretation.

The importance of diversified use of the site to ensure its long term success was also an important part of the discussion.

Finally, it was felt that if the NTS was going to embark on the renovation of the property, it was very important that a clear agreement was signed between the Rusovce Municipality and the NTS before any work commenced.

8. Outcomes

Even though the Rusovce workshop had a slightly different structure, it showed us the importance of involving communities in all kinds of local heritage projects – as well as with country houses.

The workshop participants agreed that most important for the future would be the opening of the house to the public – in comparison to how it is today where there is no possibility for people to use this valuable piece of heritage.

We saw how important the support from the local community from the very beginning of the decision making process was. We also learned that if people are involved from the outset they will consider the project as their own project and would like to be involved in it in different ways – economically and socially. They were able to imagine themselves using the site as a natural/cultural centre for spending their free time, as a place to find employment in the locality and that the whole renovated and rejuvenated area could contribute to a higher standard of living and quality of life.

We were very happy to hear one of the comments at the end of the workshop discussion when a local participant said that our ideas about the future use of Rusovce castle and its park – even before their realisation – have a very important and big value!

We consider this workshop as the start of real co-operation with the local community which could eventually lead to the future successful reuse of Rusovce Manor house.

Within the ECHO project we see big similarities with Tyntesfield in UK – mainly in the process of how this property is being renovated and used with the involvement of lots of different groups of people (also for conservation education). We hope that Tyntesfield will inspire the Rusovce locality – and we would be very happy to start the closer co-operation with this site maybe as part of the “ECHO II” project we have discussed with the partners.

The social and economical potential of Rusovce castle and its park is great. This was confirmed by all the workshop participants who felt that if Rusovce Municipality and the NTS could realise a project it would have a big and positive impact on the socio-economic development of the locality – local people could find many working opportunities within the property or spend their leisure time there or it could stimulate many kinds of local business connected to cultural tourism.

Another important outcome of the workshop is that participants were able to agree the importance coherent interpretation of the locality and the co-operation of all partners dealing with the presentation of this locality to a broad public (interpretation trails, museum, park and garden, leaflets, guides etc.). This interpretation should be relevant to the different target groups of visitors and local people. It will be very important to present the house and parks as one entity.

People did not discuss in detail the problematic side to the above ideas but it is evident from Rusovce’s experience that there are serious gaps in the current planning system on a national level in respect to this type of heritage. Country houses are usually not seen as a potential for the future development of localities, regions etc. Even country houses belonging to the most endangered categories of historical monuments are not protected by sound cultural policy at a national level. This legislation to protect and promote country houses and their surrounding historical parks and gardens is still missing.

WORKSHOP IN DOLNÁ KRUPÁ MANOR HOUSE SLOVAKIA – 28TH & 29TH JUNE 2005

1. Short description of the locality

The classical manor house stands out through the stylistic purity of the whole complex. It took on the form we see today in two phases during a reconstruction over the years 1793-1795 according to designs by J. Thaller. The first phase was managed by the Viennese builder J. Hausmann. The reconstruction over the years 1818-1828 was managed by the builder A. P. Rigel. The manor house is surrounded by an extensive English park in which there is also found a Garden Pavilion, commonly named Beethoven's lodge. L. van Beethoven visited the manor house several times, attracted by the sincere friendship of several members of the Brunswick family, and dedicating several of his compositions to them. In the Garden Pavilion there now stands a memorial to L. van Beethoven.

2. Significance

A classicist building which is a typical example of a luxurious feudal residence. It belonged to the Brunsvik family which had it built on older foundations in 1793-94 according to the project by the Viennese architect Hausmann. It was built in one style as a two-storey building with an imposing facade facing a large English park. The mansion house as well as the nearby musical pavilion is known for the visits of the famous composer Ludwig van Beethoven who was a friend of Count Brunswick's family. It is said that he composed the well-known Moonlight Sonata there.

3. Condition and current owner

A classicist building with all adjacent areas were reconstructed in the beginning of 80th years of 20th century. Reconstruction activities were not adequate, it disturbed original frame of building. This is the main reason why today all property needs new reconstruction which will be reflected preservation of monuments. The building disposes with areas like exhibitions area, hotel's area, hotel's kitchen, stores, garages, laundry and many more. The manor house with the park is in possession of the state. The Slovak National Museum (SNM) is holder of certificate of ownership. Keeper of property is Slovak Musical Museum (which is the part of SNM).

4. Attendees

Henrich Krc – property manager of Dolná Krupá
Edita Bugalová – director of Dolná Krupá Manor House
Martin Kováč – Director General, Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic, Bratislava
Gabriela Kvetanová – Director of State institute of Monument Protection, Trnava district
Rastislav Petrovic – Architect, State Institute of Monument Protection, Trnava district
Stanislav Petráš – Deputy of Mayor of Dolná Krupá, historian
Eva Kucejová – Municipality of Lednické Rovne
Ivan Kramko - Municipality of Lednické Rovne
Ján Šimko – Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic
Jaroslav Liptay – Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic
Miriam Teluchová – Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic

John Sell, Sell Wade Consultant, UK
Donough Cahill, An Taisce, Ireland
Steven Coene, The Gelderland Trust, The Netherlands

Peter Tábořský – Director of National Trust of Slovakia
Michaela Chalupová – ECHO project manager, The National Trust of Slovakia
Ivan Chalupa – Young professional, The National Trust of Slovakia
Zdenka Predajnová – Administrative, The National Trust of Slovakia

5. Organisation, preparation and structure of the workshop

The two days workshop took place in Manor house in Dolná Krupá from 28th to 29th of June 2005. The content of the workshop was prepared in co-operation with Mr. Henrich Krc – property manager.

Dolná Krupá Manor House belongs between the most important country houses in Slovakia and this locality was chosen as the second locality of ECHO project in Slovakia because we think that there is a big potential for the involvement of local community in the future. However today this potential is not used and this state-owned property has to deal with many difficult problems. Our international workshop (the contributions from both days were translated to English) should serve as the beginning for the future co-operation of different organisations and individuals, which could lead to public participation in the improvement and protection of this important part of our cultural – as well as natural heritage.

The Manor house in Dolná Krupá was chosen on the recommendation of Mr. Martin Kováč from the Ministry of Culture as he knows very well the enthusiastic work of Mrs. Edita Bugalová – the director of Manor house in Dolná Krupá – who wants to develop the site, find the best way to present it and to protect this important historical locality. She is a director of the Musical Museum which is partly situated in the Dolná Krupá (the second part is in Bratislava's castle).

Even at the beginning of the project we met with more negative than positive reaction from the Mayor of the Dolná Krupá. We realised that this was more or less scepticism due to the fact that for many years various individuals have tried to solve the unfavourable situation of Dolná Krupá without success. However we were able to win him round and he would be willing to co-operate in the future.

The participants were accommodated directly in the property and during the evening of the first day of the workshop they also had a chance to see the historical centre of Trnava city, which is about ten kilometres from Dolná Krupá.

The workshop was divided in two parts – and over two days. On the first day, participants had a chance to listen to the presentations of the locality which were given by people working for this site and also conservationists from the Trnava district where the property belongs. They also had a chance to learn about the challenges from a national perspective as we had a representative of the Ministry of Culture who presented the work of this institution on country houses in Slovakia.

During the first day, a very important contribution was given by the representative of the local municipality who gave participants information about the relationships between the local community and the Dolná Krupá Manor house and its park. Also during this first day there was a time for discussions. However the most important debates took place during the second day, which started with the presentation of the European experiences of our guests from the UK, the Netherlands and Ireland.

Part of the workshop also involved a short tour of the property – inside the building and park.

The workshop was moderated by Michaela Chalupová – ECHO Steering group member and NTS employee.

6. Presentations – 28th June 2005

John Sell, Trustee of the National Trust, UK

Mr. John Sell, as one of the main initiators of the ECHo project, explained why this kind of project had been established and why it was necessary on a European level. He also described the situation of country houses in his country, the historical development of these kind of properties – which also had to solve many problems concerning their use or maintenance (tax reforms, ownerships etc.). He explained what motivated him personally about the ECHo project.

Mr. Ivan Chalupa – The National Trust of Slovakia, Young professional

Mr. Chalupa presented the aims, activities and aspirations of ECHo project. He also mentioned the other ECHo project partners and some of the project locations in the project partners' countries. He stressed the importance of solving the situation in an international context and explained that the ECHo project – by comparing the situation of country houses in different countries – can be a successful beginning to the revitalisation of country houses in individual countries. He explained the role of the young professionals in the project.

Henrich Krc – the property manager of Dolná Krupá

Mr. Krc gave a very detailed explanation of the historical development of the property and the people which were behind the creation of this place. He mentioned the two most important families: the Brunswicks from Germany and Choteks from Czech Republic. He also presented Dolná Krupá as the village of music and roses which is connected with the Beethoven tradition and has one of the biggest and most important rosariums in Slovakia. His presentation was particularly important for the European participants of the workshop to introduce them this site as one of very important cultural and natural heritage potential.

Gabriela Kvetanová – The State Institute for Monument Protection – Trnava district

In her presentation, Mrs. Kvetanová focussed on the current situation and use of manor houses in Trnava district where Dolná Krupá Manor house is situated. From her presentation it was evident that the majority of manor houses in the Trnava district have very similar problems such as unclear ownership structures, changes of ownership, lack of financial resources for the restoration and renovation work and lack of traditional skills. Many historical buildings have lost their valuable connections with the countryside and in many cases the manor houses have been separated from their surroundings with historical parks and gardens being built upon – usually in a not very sympathetic way. New owners miscalculated their budgets and did not have the right knowledge to renovate such complex entities as historical buildings, which resulted in many country houses not being used or being used in inappropriate ways.

She also described the ownership structure of the country houses in Slovakia. The three major owners are – state institutions, local governments and (after restitution) private owners. During her presentation Mrs. Kvetanová took the participants for the excursion around Senica, Galanta, Dunajská Streda, Klacany, Gabčíkovo, Šaštín – Stráže, Smolenice etc. and participants had the chance to compare the condition of other country houses with the situation of Dolná Krupá.

Rastislav Petrovic - The State Institute for Monument Protection – Trnava district

In his presentation, Mr. Petrovic concentrated on the architectural development of Dolná Krupá manor house, but he also gave us the conservationist's view of the property, The

expressing his ideas about which elements should be restored, protected or reconstructed. He mentioned the three most important building phases of Dolná Krupá and the names of the architects were Johan Baptista Martinelli – the first architect of Hungarian chambre from Vienna in 1749, Ján Jozef Tallherr 1793 – 1797 and finally the last building phase was done by Italian architect Anton Pius Rigel. Mr. Petrovic also mentioned the work of the gardener and landscape architect of Belgian origin, Henrich Nebbien, who gave the park its current character of an English landscape park.

Edita Bugalová – The director of Musical Museum in Dolná Krupá

From her position as director of the Musical Museum – one of the specialized museums of the Slovak National Museum – Mrs. Bugalová explained the methods and possibilities of her work under the auspices of the Slovak National Museum. She focussed mainly on the problems connected with the central budgeting system and explained why there is almost no motivation to improve the services they are providing to visitors. However she added the Musical Museum in Dolná Krupá Manor house is looking for the ways to work effectively and attract more and more visitors. She also explained how the museum is involving local communities – through its co-operation with local NGOs and the municipality by involving unemployed people through the Slovak system of public benefit work – mainly in the activities and works in the garden or park. This seems to be very beneficial as the museum has at the moment only four full time employees.

Mrs. Bugalová also outlined some of the challenges facing local businesses. In her opinion, the state system for the indicating cultural monuments is ineffectual. This means that visitors have a problem to find Dolná Krupá manor house. At the moment, publicity is very weak and there are almost no leaflets, booklets or other media to inform people about the possibilities at Dolná Krupá. Interpretation of the site is – apart from the museum exhibition of historical instruments and the so-called Beethoven's house – at a very low level.

She has also mentioned the efforts of the museum in completing application forms seeking financial support from European Union funds. However, at the time these had not been successful.

At the end of her presentation, the director said that in the past there was very important communication between the European Country houses and that the ECHo project could help to renew this kind of communication and this is why she thinks that this sort of project is very important.

Stanislav Petráš – The deputy of Mayor of Dolná Krupá and historian

Mr. Petráš presented the view of the local authority, whilst at the same time being one of the inhabitants of Dolná Krupá. He spoke about the importance of this historical monument to the local community.

He said that the Manor house is the natural cultural centre for local people, but that Dolná Krupá has been waiting sixty years to be re-established as such! He said that there were many plans but that they usually stayed only on paper and from the time (sixty years ago) when the manor house lost its real owners, the situation is only getting worse. Mr Petráš explained the development of the locality during the Communist era in which things did not move in a good direction. He said that the majority of problems are connected to the financial difficulties of the owners and managers of the property. According to Mr. Petráš, local people have become used to bad state of the manor house and do not have much interest in improving its situation as they have seen all the proposed plans come and go with no-one ever doing anything. They have a very sceptical attitude to the valuable historical potential of Dolná Krupá manor house.

One of the main reasons for this is also that everything happens behind closed doors and local people have never been invited to participate in the decision-making process – not even to see which kind of things should happen.

Recently, the property has been used by local inhabitants for weddings, family celebrations etc. But if there were some exhibitions there was usually only minimal promotion of this kind of activity. Because the property was – and still is – in the hands of the state, the village and its representative have almost no or only minimal influence on the future of the manor house. The village has usually only played the role observer of the happenings in the manor house. The vision of the future development of the manor house, involving all stakeholders, is still missing.

Martin Kováč – Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic

In his presentation, Mr. Kováč introduced the role of country houses in the cultural policy of the Ministry of Culture. He appreciated the efforts of the project partners and expressed willingness to co-operate and support of the project. He also focussed on GIS – Geographical Information System – which is being developed for the use of conservationists and also for broader public use in the future. He considered this software application, which will be accessible via the internet, one of the tools which can help improve the system of monitoring and control of the current state of country houses in Slovakia, which in turn will lead to their protection and sensible use.

7. Presentations – 29th June 2005

During the second day of the workshop, the European participants and young professionals informed the remaining workshop participants about the results of the socio-economic research in the UK and the Netherlands. They have also presented their organisations and their activities.

The majority of the second day was devoted to the discussions and recommendations of the participants.

8. Discussions held and themes arising

During the first but mainly during the second day there was a lot of discussion about the problems of Dolná Krupá.

Participants discussed many important topics: the current bad state of country houses in general, ownership structures, other sources of financial support (apart from the state), weak motivation and lack of independence from the state, interpretation and education issues etc. A big debate was held about the role of the state in the protection of such country houses, about unsuitable interventions to historical sites, about the interiors of country houses which had to a large extent been demolished – or in some cases sacked by local people (this was also the case of Dolná Krupá – after the Second World War).

Participants also compared the ownership structures and its historical development in different countries. A lot was said about the taxation system in the UK and the role of the National Trust in protecting country houses. The Slovak situation was compared to the historical development of the nation of Ireland.

The problems of multicultural history and dependence of the Slovak nation on other nations (only independent for the first time at the beginning of the 20th century) and the ensuing consequences were also discussed. The participants also considered why it is so difficult in

Slovakia to attract the attention of visitors even in the capital, Bratislava, why museums have so few visitors, etc.

During the second day, participants gave some recommendations for the future development of the locality.

Many of them see that the biggest plusses for Dolná Krupá are its musical tradition and history of roses planting. It was felt important to find ways to build on these traditions by, for example, organising some big musical events, such as operas, which could attract a lot of people and eventually earn some money for property maintenance. It is also important to solve the issues of a „centralised“ income budget.

Another big advantage is the proximity of Dolná Krupá to Bratislava and visitors could be attracted to the village from the capital with the help of good promotion. Dolná Krupá also has the possibility providing accommodation within its own grounds for such musical events, for example, which could become an important part of the property's income stream.

One of the park's main advantages is that it has not been changed substantially during the last few decades and could be restored almost to its original form.

As far as the historical character of the property is concerned, participants thought that it is a pity only one room in the property has an historical atmosphere and they thought that it could be interesting to think about restoring and reconstructing more rooms to regain that essential historical character (following to pictures or descriptions). Many of the participants also see the potential for the successful development of Dolná Krupá property through working with volunteers including co-operation with local schools, and/or the older inhabitants of Dolná Krupá. There is also potential for greater involvement existing local NGOs (such as the Rose Club). Much more time should be devoted to educational and interpretation activities. It is necessary to involve the younger generation and build relationship between them and the property as soon as it is possible (and in a suitable way).

It would be also very useful to put the dilemmas of Dolná Krupá into the school curriculum – at least on regional level. Education should also improve in the area of property management, presentation and interpretation. The owners should train their own guides as they are very important to the image of the whole site and it is mainly down to them that people will come back to Dolná Krupá again in the future.

It would be useful to think about involving the local community in some way – such as a neighbourhood rose planting competition.

Local people and visitors should have the access to the strategic management plan of the property so they have a chance to see the intentions of the owner and maybe help him to realise this plan – financial support, voluntary work etc. It could be also in the form of pictures to hang on the walls of the property.

The co-operation with some other similar properties on a national – and also international – level was also proposed. Finally participants agreed that the solving of the problems of Dolná Krupá does not depend only on access to financial resources but mainly on human resources, their enthusiasm and creativity. It is necessary to involve more and more people and to try and achieve success by taking small steps. Participants shared the idea that something similar to what had been done in UK or Scotland could also happen at this site in Dolná Krupá. The so-called genius loci could be saved, protected and enhanced.

9. Outcomes

It is evident that despite all its problems, the Manor house and park in Dolná Krupá is the biggest attraction of the locality and something the local inhabitants can be proud of.

It is a very good that the new management of the property has an interest in continuing the tradition of the original owners and would like to improve the way the building and surrounding park area are used.

It is also very positive that they communicate with the representative of the local authority and that they are trying to involve the local community in their activities as evidenced by their willingness to host an ECHo workshop.

However, if we want to improve the current situation we have to go back in time and see that the owners and founders of the property had a very important role in the local community. The results of their activities are still visible today and their contribution to the improvement of the material and spiritual life of the people of Dolná Krupá is very important. Thanks to them, Dolná Krupá has today a unique cultural heritage. With the ECHo project we could help to bring people together again and start the process of the new history of this property.

Workshop Reports

Esterházy House, Tata

former Andrásy House, Tiszadob, Hungary

WORKSHOP PREPARATION

- **Meeting with the ECHo partner-organisations** within Hungary to provide information and collect, exchange ideas on the workshop-design and to set up a **group of workshop-organisers and supporters**, (that was the SG member, the Young Professional and their colleagues). All further work is carried out by the organisers.
- Working out the **Workshop Design**, according to the one agreed during the first SG meeting and tailored to the two selected sites and the overall situation in Hungary.

Basic issues:

- duration,
 - location,
 - determining the key activities and their logical order during the workshop
 - identification of the groups of participants,
 - identification of the speakers by their profession, position in the administration, - position in the society,
 - identification of the scopes and themes and logical order of the presentations,
 - identification of chief moderator and moderators
 - outlining the main issues to be discussed
- **Budgeting**, with careful attention to the budget items of the project. Some alterations stemming from the realistic draft-budget had to be done on the initial Design – e.g. only one day was possible with interpretation, which limited the experience of attendees from other ECHo partner countries.
 - Making initial **contact** with the main actors of the workshop.
 - Organisers **visit** the workshop site, the relevant local authority and sort out the necessary local logistics. It brings forward the workshop in the following way:
 - The workshop design gets finalised, strengthened with local relevance
 - Local people become strong partners in local organisation
 - The list of participants and speakers gets finalised with concrete persons
 - The content of the presentations gets finalised when agreeing with the speakers
 - Actors of logistics get fixed.
 - Compiling **mailing list** with all contact data of moderator(s), speakers and participants.
 - **Informative invitation letter** to and **personal discussion** with the moderator(s) and speakers so as to inform them about the aim of the ECHo Project, and to orientate them to give the right presentation with the right information and to achieve a realistic outcome at the end of the workshop.
 - Compiling the **final programme**, sending out with an invitation letter to the participants. Sending the final programme also to the moderator(s) and speakers.

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- Compiling an **information-package** for the participants with plans, photos and descriptions on the country house-site to be handed out at the time of the site visit.
 - Fixing all the **logistics**.

REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP AT TATA

Date: 20-21 May 2005

Venue: Esterházy House
Tata Town Council

Participants: About 40 on the first day, about 20 on the second

Cultural heritage, nature conservation, museum and tourism professionals, politician from County Council, local decision-makers as Mayor, Vice-mayor, Chief architect of Tata, Town Council members, Local Government officers, representative of the small region's association, and regional development agency, members of local cultural institutions, local cultural civic societies and a local entrepreneur.

Chief moderator: Director of the County Museums and Museum of Tata

Speakers: 13 Hungarian presenters

KEY ACTIVITIES

1. Thorough site-visit

The visit was led by guides (manager, researcher and restorer of the site), who knew all relevant information. The workshop-participants visited every building and park-area belonging to the site. Beyond the guides' introductory speeches many questions were also asked so a lot of information have been provided (also from local people) on site relating the buildings, parks, the Esterházy family, the events that took place in the houses, historical, economical and social facts, traditions and developments of Tata and its region.

2. Presentations

The aim of the presentations was to understand the site and its context as well as to explore local and regional capacity and lacks, development concepts and financial resources.

- The historic value of the Esterházy House and Park (researcher)
- The physical condition of the buildings (manager)
- The historic value and possibilities of reconstruction of the park-areas (researcher)
- Capacity and lacks; urban development concept of Tata, based on its historic heritage: the Castle (where the Museum is situated), the Esterházy House, the Stables, the Old Lake area, the historic core and outstanding individual buildings of Baroque style; remodelling the mistakes of urban and architectural design of the 1970's (Chief Architect of Tata)
- Nature-conservation values of Tata (lakes, creeks, bird-life, fauna), as basis for the reutilization of the House and Park (nature-conservation specialist)
- Regional development concepts and financial resources (representative of regional development agency)
- Cultural concept of the County Council and major cultural festivals in Tata (Vice president of the County Council)
- Cultural life, artists and art education in Tata (Chairman of Cultural and Education Committee of Tata Town Council)
- The Museum of Tata, hidden collections (no enough space for their exposition) that would represent important features of the Esterházy family and the history of development of Tata (Chief Museologist of Museum of Tata)

- Tourism in Tata and its region, development concepts (Tourism and Communication Officer of Tata Local Government)
- The value of the Esterházy House for the local community (representative of Friends of Tata civic association)
- A good Hungarian example for heritage-reutilization and management: The Fort Monostor in Komárom: centre of military traditions, with permanent and temporary exhibitions, guided tours, conference centre, boat harbour, military and art festivals, during continuous repair, fundraising and nomination for World Heritage status
- (head of the public charity managing organisation)
- International outlook: the experience of the ECHo research in The Netherlands (Hungarian ECHo YP)

3. Discussions - main issues and themes arisen

- a) Capturing heritage values and coherent interpretation / refreshing heritage presentation
 - The site is an outstanding complex of the Baroque style in Hungary, with much interior remains, that show high quality of rare building techniques.
 - Research just started, no enough data yet, unexpected findings (e.g. wall paintings) are still possible.
 - Physical condition needs urgent repair in some parts.
 - Non-professionals requested professionals to give guidance on what features of the buildings and park should be kept and where is possibility for change.
 - What has to be kept:
 - In the buildings: the original room-outlay, remains of interior architecture (doors, windows, fireplaces, etc.), wall-paintings, fittings and decoration
 - In the park: behind the Small Palace the remains of the latest park design
 - The Esterházy site is integral part of the town's fabric, so organic approach is needed when thinking about its development and reutilization.
 - The basic functions of the site must be determined in accordance with other development-considerations of the town.
 - The park-area of the Esterházy site must be re-designed in accordance with the design of the green area of the whole town.
- b) Local and national perceptions of the Esterházy house site / involving previously excluded communities
 - National perception of Tata: nationally listed historic site, the design of the outstanding Hungarian architect (Jakab Fellner) of the late Baroque style.
 - Local, recent perception: closed, no entrance for common people, because of its recent use for 40 years as a hospital of mentally ill people.
 - Local, present perception: The site (temporarily and occasionally) is open to the public, due to a routine of the management organisation MÁG. It attracted a lot of locals and visitors. Occasional exhibitions, events took also place there but because there was no progress in the repair works during the last four years, the public interest has diminished.
- c) Implications of opening to the public before, during and after restoration / education / technical conservation skills
 - The site is already open before restoration. MÁG has the practice with also other buildings in its care to keep houses and parks open, even organising different events during repair, so they are willing to do it in the same way in Tata.
 - MÁG is open to hold even educational visits at the park and house.

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- If the Museum will be able to open a restoration workshop and store at the site, they would gladly operate it as an open-workshop, for educational purposes.

d) Community ‘ownership’

The representatives of the local civic associations and a local survey on people’s opinion on Tata (commissioned by the County Council) unanimously emphasised that Tata people are proud of their cultural and natural heritage: they consider Tata as a Baroque Town, also as a Town of Water. The Castle, the Esterházy House, the mills and the two lakes play a key role in this perception. Locals would like to see their town and its cultural heritage in a better care and reutilised for public and local benefit.

e) Tourism and marketing

- The diminishing interest in the Esterházy House should be revived with creatively designed events – protection of very valuable exhibitions and objects is not possible at the time being.
- Historic facts could give base for reutilization, e.g. the site could provide for diplomatic meetings. This sort of permanent use would limit public access, so it could be only one type of the occasional events.
- The Esterházy House could help Tata find its identity, as a mainly cultural asset in the tourism-industry.
- Tourism in the region must be designed in partnership with other settlements, not to weaken but to strengthen each other’s identity and attractions.
- Training, motivation of local people, strengthening local patriotism, agreement between public and private sector and well-designed development concept may help to achieve aims.

f) Identifying local capacity and shortages

- Capacity:
- cultural and natural heritage
 - exhibitions in stores
 - local artists
 - schools and art education
 - local cultural associations
 - lively local music-life
 - busy tourism – cultural, nature, equestrian, and further opportunities to develop tourism and services
 - festivals
 - tradition in arts and crafts (possibility of revitalization)
 - living folk tradition (dance, music, pottery, etc.)
 - bird-watching venue in town (Old Lake) of international significance
 - reviving wine-culture in the region
 - strong sporting traditions
 - good location in the country
 - entrepreneurs’ interest in the town
 - Town Council’s will to base Tata’s development concept on the most important heritage sites (Castle, Esterházy House, the historic core, the Old Lake surroundings, etc.) to be integrated into the National Development Plan
 - opportunity of developing/reinterpreting the Esterházy-site in different phases (both time- and area-wise)
- Lacks:
- no clear identity of Tata
 - no “winning” concept in the competition of neighbouring regions
 - no holistic coordination of local capacity

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- no will to introduce higher education in Tata
 - there is no conference-facility /conference-hotel
 - there is no concert-room with good acoustics
 - there is no representative room for public and private events
 - there is no exhibition room for local and contemporary arts
 - open-air stage is in lack of up-to-date technical equipments
 - library has no enough space (neither for reading nor for storing function)
 - lack of industrial development in the recent decades
 - no real production-activity in town
 - no enough job in the town, many commuters to other towns

4. Summing up a realistic solution for the site

The Esterházy House should fulfil a basically cultural public function.

The new functions in detail:

- The most important building – “The Palace” - should be used as space for museum/exhibits, but in a way that the rooms may give floor to varied public and private events (concerts, balls, diplomatic events, weddings, etc.). This would enhance greater attendance, better involvement in the town’s life, greater appreciation and more income.
 - The exhibits would represent the history of the family, the history of the site and the economic and social development of Tata. Temporary exhibitions, beyond national and international focus could promote local artists.
 - The “Small Palace”, which is separate from the main building could have an independent function, that fulfils the need of the local community for higher education and more training in arts, also brings different groups of people to the site as well as more income: a master training centre for music and arts. Retail and catering functions also for the museum/exhibits unit is also possible here.
 - The outbuildings, along the fence-wall, opening also from the town, should be used for functions that would serve more for the locals than for only the visitors of the site. Shops also with open workshops, accommodation, other functions are possible.
 - The gates of the park should be open, even new opening on the wall is possible. This way another intimate green area would serve the town as well as better link would be provided between the different parts of Tata. This could be the first step of re-interpretation of the site.
 - The park area behind the “Small Palace” wing should be reconstructed according to its latest “sentimental” style, from 19th century.
 - The park area between the two “palaces” could give way of contemporary landscape design and art as this part of park was a plain, neutral area (with no significant design).
 - The park area between the House and the Old Lake must be repaired and maintained by the town together with the Castle-surrounding.
- Managing structure:
 - The commissioned site-manager of this state-owned property is MÁG /National Trust of State-owned Historic Properties.
 - MÁG has the practice and is open in this case as well to agree with sub-contractors to run the master training centre and visitors’ facilities, retail and catering units.
 - Agreement with Museum of Tata is also possible on borrowing exhibitions and running restoration workshop and store.

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- Financing structure:
 - Hungarian state grants are available due to the MÁG commission.
 - MÁG has won a state-grant to prepare an application for EC resources.
 - Further state-money will be available if the project is involved into the National Development Plan.
 - Throughout the NDP EC Structural Funds become available as well.
 - County and local authority would also contribute to the NDP project.
 - National development funds (e.g. Regional Operative Programmes) are also available.
 - Private developers and investors should be attracted also as possible sponsors for smaller-scale events and programmes.
 - Implementation:

Long-term planning combined with the idea of taking small-steps (for initial success with small investment) and running complex action-plans.

- Steps to be taken:
 - MÁG ensures the basic weather-proof condition of the houses.
 - MÁG works out the actual grant-application to EC.
 - MÁG and KÖH starts negotiations with the Town Council to establish a long-term project for the National Development Plan, based on the reutilization and development of the Castle, the Esterházy House and the historic city-core.
 - MÁG and Town Council explores and applies to other possible financial resources as well.
 - MÁG, within the NDP project, works out the action-plan of repair and reutilization of the Esterházy House.
 - MÁG works out initial, low-budget steps that may be implemented as initial steps.
 - MÁG provides continuous information to public and goes on with inviting visitors to the house and to low-budget programmes.

OUTCOMES, EXPERIENCES OF THE TATA WORKSHOP

- The workshop brought together all stakeholders interested in the reutilization of the Esterházy House. Public and private actors, professionals could express, hear and react on each other's opinions.
- The workshop created/strengthened network of stakeholders, which – if maintained – enhance finding holistic solution for the balanced benefits of actors, throughout their cooperation.
- The good atmosphere of the workshop helped people think creatively and tell their hidden thoughts and desires. It brought many ideas that may well complement each other.
- Outsiders view on a site/town always helps locals to re-reveal, re-estimate and strengthen their consciousness of their own – sometimes forgotten – values.
- On the basis of the presentations and lively discussions it was possible to outline a realistically eligible reutilization programme, - that is based on the capacity and lacks of the local community and town
 - that can be implemented step by step in different phases
 - where the functions are capable of providing incomes
 - where the functions ensure the attendance of the site throughout the whole year
 - where the new functions can strengthen the town's identity and coherence

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- where the functions can strengthen local cultural and community life as well as local patriotism, heritage and environmental awareness
 - where the functions may support local tourism and economical life, can create new jobs.
 - where the reutilised site may strengthen Tata's position in the county and region, can enhance the small region's position in the Trans-Danubian Region.

The workshop at Tata was attended by the written and audiovisual media, interviews were made with organisers and presenters as well as with other participants.

As an indicator of the outcomes, a motto was created at the end of the Tata workshop:

“Opening the gates of a site strengthens people's feeling that the place is their.”

REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP AT TISZADOB

Date: 26-27 May 2005

Venue: the former Andrassy House, today the Child Care Institute

Participants: about 55 on the first day, about 25 on the second

Cultural heritage, nature conservation, environmental and tourism professionals, politicians from County Council, officers of County Government, Mayor of Tiszadob and majors of nearby settlements, representative of the River Tisza Association and regional development agency, staff-members of the Child Care Institute, architect of a former reutilization plan, development advisors of the County Council, local cultural civic societies, representative of local Roma community and local inhabitants. The manager of another Andrassy House from Slovakia has visited the workshop on the second day for a while.

Chief moderator: a conservation architect, head of a private practice with efficient knowledge about the site and its context.

Speakers: 13 Hungarian presenters
1 UK presenter – member of ECHo SG

KEY ACTIVITIES:

1. Thorough site-visit

The visit was led by the Director of the Child Care Institute who has been directing the institute and managing the site (with buildings, park and riverside) for more than ten years. The workshop-participants visited every building and park-area belonging to the site. This way participants gained information on all activities of the multi-functional institute, on the physical condition of the property as well as on the outside and inside spatial arrangement of the Andrassy House with the very limited original remains.

2. Presentations:

The aim of the presentations was to understand the site and its context, the impacts of the present use as well as to explore local and regional capacity and lacks, development concepts and financial resources.

Hungarian presentations:

- The historic value of the Andrassy House - new concept of significance with analogies, destroyed values of interior design and household belongings (researcher),
- The historic value of the park-areas (landscape architect, researcher)
- The shrub-maze and other important features of the landscape-design (landscape architect)
- Capacity and lacks, opportunities and risks, economical and social context, financial abilities at Tiszadob (Major)
- Tiszadob, as one element of a huge natural and ecological unit, the River Tisza Area. Therefore a holistic approach is required to handle all local problems and development concepts with regard to the whole Tisza Area endeavouring for sustainability (environmentalist)

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- Concepts for tourism development in the region, good practices in the county (regional tourism agency)
 - Property-management of historic buildings in County Government ownership, opportunities and risks of finding new use for the Andrassy House, (Vice-president of County General Assembly)
 - The aims and successes of the River Tisza Association, providing support in the field of environment, employment, infrastructure and tourism for the Tisza Region (representative of River Tisza Association)
 - Regional development concepts and financial resources (representative of regional development agency)
 - The situation of the Roma community in Tiszadob, their attitude to the present use of the House (President of Roma Local Government))
 - The soul, the power of Tiszadob for the locals and their desires for their future (member of Tiszadob Council, representative of local civic society)
 - A good Hungarian example for heritage management: The Helicon Palace Museum in Keszthely (head of the public charity managing organisation)
 - International outlook: the experience of the ECHo research in The Netherlands (Hungarian ECHo YP)

UK presentation:

Situation of country houses in the UK after the World War II, the reasons of neglect and demolitions.

Public awareness on heritage got stronger in the 60's, this is the beginning of different ways of reutilization.

Examples and assessment of different type of country house reutilization as

- hotel
- conference centre
- corporate retreat
- health and spa facilities
- hunting lodge
- mixture of uses (e.g. school with public access and events organisation)

Accessibility and use of green areas, events organisation at country houses.

Financial contexts of reutilization.

3. Discussions - main issues and themes arising:

a) Capturing heritage values and coherent interpretation refreshing heritage presentation

- The House belonged to the Andrassy family which played a very important role in Hungarian history.
- The House's significance lays in its spatial design, as a montage-composition of Hungarian castles of the time of design (1880).
- Pieces of outstanding interior design and household might be explored and purchased or produced as replica.
- The Park's significance lays in its setting into the ancient oak flood forest. The shrub-maze is a significant feature of the park.
- Only very superficial research has been carried out till date.
- The outbuildings built together with the House should be kept and transformed into their original look.
- The reutilization or demolition of buildings built during the 60-70's must be considered.

b) Local and national perceptions of the Andrassy house site / conflict between interests at local and national level / including previously excluded communities

- National perception of Tata: nationally listed historic site, important piece of Romantic style, related to an important family of Hungarian history.
- The perception of the owner, the County Government: The House could be a very good tourism asset, producing income, its present function should be moved out and located elsewhere. At the same time it creates employment problems to be solved.
- Local perception.
 - *the local council thinks:* with a new function a new impetus could be given to Tiszadob and to the whole area. Economic and social decline could be shifted towards positive trends.
 - *the local people think:* even if the site will be reutilized, there must be a memorial (exhibition or else) to the Andrassy family. There is a good memory of the Andrassy's, who gave job, sometimes social support and education to local people. New use should benefit also for the locals, they would like to be involved in decisions, they don't want to be excluded from the site or live in their village as in a "skansen".
 - *the environmentalists think:* the reutilization of the House and Park must be considered together with the whole River Tisza Region, aiming sustainable development
 - *the Child Care Institute thinks:* uncertainty is the worst situation, they rather move out than stay in the House for another couple of years without knowing what is going to happen with them
 - the Roma community thinks: the present use is very beneficial as many Roma youngsters are trained and educated in the Institute. If reutilization takes place, they offer their work and skills throughout the construction work and running of the site.

c) Implications of opening to the public before, during and after restoration / education / technical conservation skills

- In spite of the relatively closed function as Child Care Institute (dealing also with problematic youngsters) the site is open. Many school-groups visit and stay at the site throughout the school-year as well as during summer.
- The House may be visited every day beyond school-period.
- The House may be rented for special private and public events.
- Children, educated at the Institute for hospitality skills, are involved into providing service at the time of events.
- The annual Summer Piano Festival at the Andrassy House is an outstanding event of the year, making Tiszadob a cultural centre of the region for a short period.
- The Child Institute has income from the events that help paying the cost of running and maintaining the property.
- This present state of openness or accessibility should not be decreased, but increased.

d) Community ownership

- The life of the local community is still very much tied to the House. The House and the Andrassy family ensured a sort of an order, economical, social and moral stability for the village, as well as the presence of the Child Institute. People hardly stand the uncertainty about the future of the House, as the moving out of the

Institute is on the agenda for ten years already. They would like to see a final decision that gets implemented.

- Many people who found job at the Child Care Institute, settled down in Tiszadob. If the Institute moves out, they are likely to lose their job or they have to move out as well. New function will engage other people with other skills that may raise tension in the village if local people will be employed. If not, unemployment will increase.
- The present function, the Child Care Institute and the way as children are treated here (considerably due to the personality of the Director) has a positive human radiation. This positive radiation together with the feeling of security from the past should not be decreased but increased.
- People don't move out also because of the beauty of the nature of the River Tisza area. Tisza is a very important, nearly symbolic asset of Hungary.

e) **Tourism and marketing**

- The River Tisza region as a whole could be a very flourishing asset of eco-tourism and education, recreation and sport.
- The location of Tiszadob is beneficial for inviting tourist from the counties East and North of Hungary – new market-potential.
- The Tokaj (wine) – Hortobágy (the Hungarian Lowland) – Tiszadob (River Tisza, thermal water springs and the Andrassy House) triangle offers diverse assets and opportunities for gastro-eco-nature-recreational-spa-cultural tourism (Tokaj and Hortobágy are declared World Heritage Sites).
- The first step of raising tourism is the Piano Festival, which brings much people staying for more days. It provides income for the local entrepreneurs, but the short period of time makes them eager to earn enough income at once – prices rise too high. Media attention enhances political support.
- Tiszadob people don't want to be dependent on seasonal tourism, some-day festivals would not solve the settlement's problems.
- Better transport, road infrastructure should be provided as basic condition.

4. Facts and considerations for determining the new use of the site

- The Andrassy House will not be sold, stays in County Government's ownership.
- The Child Care Institution will be moved out. One or more unit of it should/could stay in Tiszadob and in the neighbourhood. The well-operating relation between the events in the House and the Institute (children take part in the events organisations) should be maintained.
- Moving out should not be urged to prevent the House from standing empty even for a short period.
- The new function should be determined with the involvement of people of Tiszadob. Open County Council meetings are promised.
- The new use, beyond the owner and the manager/investor of the site should benefit also the local population (economically and in other terms).
- When thinking about the new use of the site, environmental issues of the River Tisza region and other issues of nature-conservation must be taken into consideration.
- As agriculture and fishing was the basic activity of locals, efforts must be taken to find economically viable and area-friendly new ways of production and products.
- There are formerly prepared studies of different scopes on the site and the region that should be utilised when preparing new utilization plans.
- The new function should not be exclusive neither for local people nor for bigger audience.

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- The less profitable public/cultural function should be mixed with more profitable uses, located according to heritage and nature conservation principals and capacity bearing of the historic House and Park.
 - Practical (“hardware”) aims for profitable operation should be harmonised with also spiritual (“software”) needs of place and people.
 - Local people’s skills must be used during and after the construction works, including the Roma population.
 - The successfully operating River Tisza Association should be used as a strong partner in working out the site’s development concept. The good cooperation of local authorities within this organisation can be a strategic basis for ensuring the local community’s participation. The Major of Tiszadob could also rely on the Association when representing the village’s interests at the County Council.
 - The possibility of working out project-applications for the National Development Plan must be grabbed.
 - Applying to possible Hungarian State funds and EU funds is a must.
 - Private money should be mobilised as well.
 - Infrastructural development must be involved in any development plan – waste and sewage treatment, road construction.
 - Human education, training for local people is required to prepare them to be able to take the advantage of new challenges.

OUTCOMES, EXPERIENCES OF THE TISZADOB WORKSHOP

- The workshop brought together all stakeholders interested in the reutilization of the Andrassy House. Public and private actors, professionals could express, hear and react on each other’s opinions.
- The workshop helped to reveal conflicts and tensions. Locals need more information and involvement into decisions.
- Lack of information gives way to rumour and gossip that worsens relations and communication.
- All stakeholders need better communication and negotiation skills in order to express their interests and to find consensus/compromise.
- The workshop raised the need for further discussions among the stakeholders.
- Different meanings/types of “value” was revealed. It may help the stakeholders to better understand each other’s point of views, to think more broadly and to make more careful decisions.

The workshop at Tiszadob was attended by the written and audiovisual media, interviews were made with organisers and presenters as well as with other participants.

AN IMPORTANT OBSERVATION

The chief moderators of the Hungarian workshops were professionals engaged with particular profession; a museologist (at the Tata workshop) and a conservation architect (at the Tiszadob workshop).

They were selected due to their skills they showed when leading/moderating former workshops and meetings.

They fulfilled their difficult duty and performed as facilitators for the ECHo workshops very well.

This helped us to make the following observations and requirements:

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- The success of a workshop or similar discussion, aiming at bringing different stakeholders together and getting out constructive opinions from the participants in order to achieve concrete goals at the end, depends considerably on the personality and skills of the moderator/facilitator, who must be:
 - independent from the local issues,
 - but well informed
 - broad-minded and positive-thinking
 - a good psychologist, who makes people speak
 - smart in canalising people's thinking to be effective and creative
 - smart to identify inter-related and conflicting messages
 - smart in healing tensions
 - and a good speaker who can simply summarize the most important ideas, "producing" an output of the event.
 - Training of moderators/facilitators is not advanced in Hungary – international experience could be "imported" to enhance it.
 - The above-mentioned skills are very useful in all fields of work and life for any professionals. Training for broad audience also in this field would be necessary.



Participants at the Tiszadob workshop in Hungary

The ECHO project partners wish to thank the European Commission for its generous support and all the organisations and individuals involved in the project across many countries.

Above all, thanks should be given to the European citizens who participated in the workshops and roadshows, without whose concern, support and enthusiasm the project would not have succeeded.

For more information on running a workshop and further details of the research programme, please visit www.ennho.org (European Network of National Heritage Organisations)



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