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# YOUR VOICE IN PARLIAMENT

Our campaign to reduce the cost of ownership

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LPOC acts as secretariat to



THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

on Listed  
Properties

[www.lpoc.co.uk](http://www.lpoc.co.uk)

“Thank you for the excellent work the Club undertakes on behalf of listed property owners. The forthcoming Evidence Session is yet another impressive example of how you punch well above your weight!”

William H, LPOC Member

## WHY DO WE NEED A CAMPAIGN?

The Listed Property Owners' Club are campaigning to reduce the cost of ownership by reducing VAT on repairs and approved alterations, and simplifying the planning process.

These are huge issues that impact all owners across the UK and they make living in a listed property more expensive and more stressful. The Club started our campaign because no-one else was willing to speak up. The Club are the only organisation who focus on the needs of owners and the only group who are giving you a voice in Parliament.

Listed buildings are a political issue. The policies and regulations that owners have to follow are made in government, so if we want a say in how our homes are governed then we have to be politically active. If owners don't speak up about the issues that impact us we will never see real change.

It has never been harder to own a listed property. The past decade has seen a major tax increase for owners, when VAT was added to approved works. There have also been major cuts to the planning system, which has led to increased costs as well as long waits and inconsistent decision making.

These issues impact more than 1.5 million people in the UK. More people live in listed buildings today than in Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield combined and yet owners are routinely ignored at all levels of government. Our campaign is changing that by taking your concerns directly to the government.

If we want to see action then we need to stand together as a real political force. That's why we need a campaign; to unite owners behind our common goals and to speak with one voice that the government cannot ignore.

## WHAT IS OUR CAMPAIGN DOING FOR YOU?

We have been running our campaign since 2012, working tirelessly to support our members and ensure that their voice is heard. From the start we took our concerns about VAT and planning directly to MPs to ask for action.

We have led a national petition on VAT which garnered over 10,000 signatures. We presented it to parliament to demonstrate the need for change.

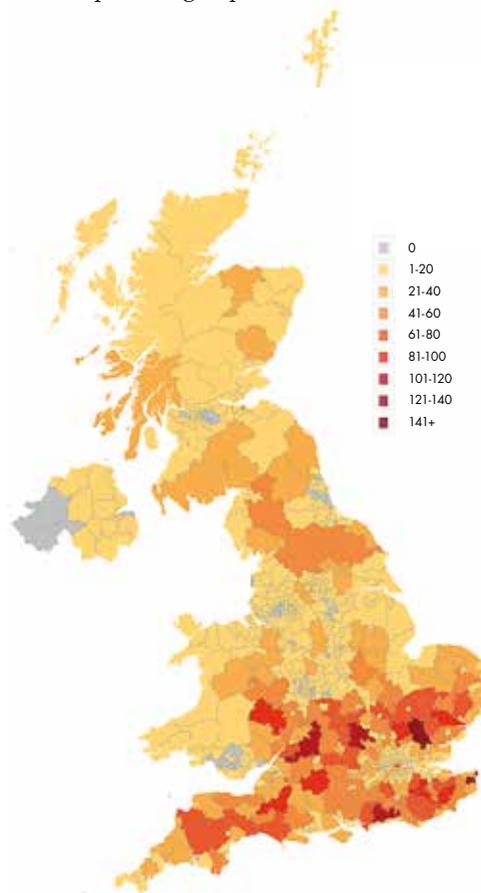
We successfully lobbied for the creation of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Listed Properties, where owners can come directly to parliamentarians with their issues.

We have delivered expert advice to parliament regarding listed buildings and the challenges owners face.

We provide support and advice to our members to help them lobby their representatives and to run local pressure groups.

### Petition Map UK Government and Parliament

Our VAT petition gained over **10,000 signatures** and demonstrated the importance of listed buildings to people across the UK



Craig Mackinlay MP addresses Club members at our reception on the Parliament Terrace

# Our Political Campaign for Owners – Timeline of Events

## START

### JUNE 2017

The Club creates the first Owners' Manifesto using evidence gathered at the Owners'Voice sessions and presents it to MPs to put listed building on the agenda.

### JULY 2017

The Club holds a reception on the House of Commons Terrace, hosted by Craig Mackinlay MP. Members meet with a group of MPs to share their first-hand experiences and ask for action on VAT and planning.

### SEPT 2017

APPG on Listed Properties officially relaunched, with newly elected MPs joining from all parties. The APPG agenda focuses on tax and the drastic fall in conservation resources within local councils.

### NOVEMBER 2017

The Club announces a series of Owners' Forums, which allow owners to meet their MP and discuss local challenges.

### MARCH 2018

Listed Property Owners' Forum held in Helensburgh with Brendan O'Hara MP.

### APRIL 2018

The Club attends Q&A session with Shadow Minister for Arts and Heritage Kevin Brennan MP.

Listed Property Owners' Forum held in Ludlow with Philip Dunne MP.

### OCTOBER 2018

The Club launches the Campaign for Scottish Owners at the inaugural Scottish Listed Property Show.

### AUGUST 2018

Evidence session to support the VAT campaign.

### JULY 2018

The Club launches an official UK Government petition for the reduction of VAT on listed buildings.

### JUNE 2018

Listed Property Owners' Forum held in Witney with Robert Courts MP.

Listed Property Owners' Forum held in Leominster with Bill Wiggin MP.

Listed Property Owners' Forum held in Tiverton with Neil Parish MP.

### MAY 2018

The Club is invited to attend an evidence session with Heritage Minister, Michael Ellis. Members attend to voice their challenges with inconsistent decision making.

Heritage Minister, Michael Ellis, writes to APPG chair, Craig Mackinlay MP, voicing his support for action on VAT and a desire to open a discussion at the treasury.

The Club is invited to join the Heritage Alliance Tax Working Group to help develop broader tax policy, covering both VAT and other forms of public support.

### JAN 2019

The Club appoints a full time campaign officer to develop policy, engage with parliament and capitalise on previous successes.

### FEB 2019

The Club's campaign officer meets with owners at the Listed Property Show to discuss campaign goals and specific challenges they face.

The Club launches a Campaign for Welsh Owners, making our campaign truly national.

The Club embarks on a Freedom of Information campaign, demanding full statistics on listed buildings from all UK councils.

### MARCH 2019

The Club completes an updated and comprehensive Owners' Manifesto covering tax, planning, energy efficiency and a package of local council reforms.

The Club attends the Heritage Alliance Tax Working Group, supporting Heritage Action Zones, Future Highstreets and Living Cities as options to reduce the tax burden of ownership.

### APRIL 2019

The Club meets with Kirsty Williams AM, a member of the Welsh government, to discuss the challenges faced by Welsh owners.

The Club take part in the biannual review of Historic England, giving feedback on how they can better support members.

### MAY 2019

The Club are invited to Holyrood to meet with Shadows Housing Minister, Graham Simpson MSP, discussing the specific challenges of Scottish owners.

The Club puts forward parliamentary questions about consent orders to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Club is invited to give evidence to the Welsh culture committee by Bethan Sayed AM.

### JUNE 2019

The Club writes to the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government urging him to include listed buildings in his department's planning green paper.

The Club attends a Welsh regional conservation officers forum to engage with officers and build links for further discussions.

The Club begins building evidence about local council services as the basis for a report on the present state of conservation services.

### JULY 2019

The Club attends the APPG on Apprenticeships to discuss the skills shortage in the heritage sector, and to campaign for more training schemes.

The Club is invited to meet with the Welsh heritage agency, Cadw, to discuss the on-going review of planning processes in Wales.

### OCT 2019

Shadow Housing Minister, Graham Simpson MSP, speaks at the Scottish Listed Property Show and meets with owners and Historic Environment Scotland.

### SEPT 2019

The Club is invited to consult with MHCLG and contribute policy ideas for their green paper, submitting written evidence and attending the ministry. Our advice is warmly received and will form part of the eventual white paper.

The APPG on Listed Properties holds annual general meeting, discussing their efforts in this Parliament, and considering issues for the future agenda.

The first Listed Property Show South West is attended by Historic England and Cadw. Members from England and Wales come to discuss their challenges.

The Club attends the Heritage Alliance Tax Working Group and supports a major study into VAT relief.

### AUGUST 2019

The Club provides support to a group of local owners whose homes are under threat from external development.

### NOV 2019

The Club holds a reception at the House of Commons, inviting members to share their challenges with MPs. Craig Mackinlay announces that planning policy will be the primary focus of the APPG in the next parliament.

The Club holds a reception in Holyrood hosted by Graham Simpson MSP with Historic Environment Scotland speaking. Scottish owners have their first opportunity to speak directly to their representatives and share their challenges.

## IN 2020

### FEB 2020

Relaunch of APPG on Listed Properties, focusing on planning issues and delivering quick, actionable reforms.

### MARCH/APR 2020

Release of major new study, backed by Historic England, into the costs of VAT relief, and the benefits that it can offer to owners and the heritage sector.

### MAY 2020

The Club to launch a national planning improvement policy to coincide with local elections, challenging councils to adopt a more efficient approach.

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## CAMPAIGN ISSUES

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The campaign was originally started in response to the shock removal of VAT relief on approved alterations. Over the years we have broadened our campaign to focus on the full range of challenges that owners face, both big and small.

### VAT

The surprise removal of VAT relief on approved works was historically unprecedented. It substantially increased the cost of owning and maintaining a listed building which led to a significant drop in applications for building consent.

Our campaign aims to have VAT on approved works lowered to 5%, equal to the rate charged on renovating a non-listed property today.

### LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Almost all owners are required to seek consent to conduct work on their building, but the present system is complex, expensive and time consuming. We are pressing for a streamlined consent system for minor works that would make routine applications faster and cheaper.

### ENHANCED LISTINGS

Many listings cover more than just one building but are unclear about what other structures are included. Enhanced listings can clarify the situation but come at a cost to the owner. We are campaigning to reduce the costs to owners and for enhanced listings to become the standard for all buildings.

### WILDLIFE SURVEYS

Wildlife surveys have become a standard part of applying for consent for a number of common types of work, such as when

repairing thatch or replacing roof tiles. These surveys come at a significant cost, often higher than the value of the work. We are campaigning for a clarified legal position on wildlife surveys to ensure that they are only required when necessary.

### PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Listed buildings come with many restrictions, including the need to seek full planning permission to repair a garden wall or fence. We are asking for listed buildings to receive more freedom with permitted development; to allow for walls and fences to be maintained, as well as garden sheds and green houses to be built, without the need for planning permission.

### LISTED BUILDING CONSENT ORDERS

Local Consent Orders were created in 2014, allowing planning authorities to provide blanket consent for specific minor works. This system has largely been ignored by councils, even though it offers the potential for significant savings. We are asking for consent orders to be reformed to reduce paperwork and costs for owners and councils.

### LOCAL COUNCIL RESOURCES

Local councils have faced major reductions in resources in the past decade which has hurt their ability to deliver a quality planning service. This has had a huge impact on listed building owners, who need to work with their local planning authority more often than any other type of property owner.

We are campaigning for improved council funding, and ring-fenced resources for Conservation Officers and planning services.

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## THE APPG

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The first step in gaining real recognition for listed building owners and the issues that affect us was to create an official channel of communication between owners and parliament.

Starting in 2014 we campaigned for the creation of an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Listed Properties. We were successful and the group was officially recognised in 2016. Since then it has grown to more than 50 members from both Houses of Parliament; a tremendous success for listed building owners.

### WHY HAVE AN APPG?

Our campaign on VAT was widely successful, generating support from thousands of owners across the UK as well as from the wider heritage community. However, we saw that without a strong voice in parliament our concerns could too easily be ignored.

We approached a number of senior parliamentarians and were successful in spurring their creation of an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Listed Properties (APPG) to be a forum where MPs, The Club and the wider community of owners could come together. The APPG provides a direct route of communication with sympathetic MPs.

The members of the APPG share our concerns and have been active in asking relevant questions, approaching ministers and gathering evidence to support owners. As a result of this, members of the APPG were approached by the Heritage Minister to start a dialogue on VAT.

### WHAT IS AN APPG?

All-Party Parliamentary Groups are established and run by Members of Parliament from all political parties who share an interest in particular subjects to campaign for change or reform.

APPGs are an effective way of bringing parliamentarians and campaign groups together to examine issues and influence the Government to change policy or introduce legislation.

As well the annual general meeting at which the chair and officers are elected, APPGs hold meetings and invite campaign groups such as LPOC, charities, and other non-governmental organisations to discuss challenges and make proposals to the Government.



## THE APPG continued

APPGs are not party-political bodies; they draw their members from all parties and strive to avoid favouring one over another. The goal of an APPG is to bring together members from both houses and from across the political spectrum to focus on a particular issue.

In the UK APPGs must be registered every parliamentary year and must hold an annual general meeting where the Chair and Officers are elected.

### WHO IS THE CHAIR OF THE APPG ON LISTED PROPERTIES?

Craig Mackinlay, the MP for South Thanet, agreed to chair the Group because he has a passion for the nation's heritage and understands the challenges faced by owners of listed properties. His own constituency is a listed property hot spot with 1500

individual properties, many within the town of Sandwich which has the highest number of listed buildings per capita in the UK. Craig has been a strong advocate for reform, taking the concerns of owners directly to the government.

### WHAT PLANS DOES THE APPG ON LISTED PROPERTIES HAVE?

The APPG will continue to be a voice for the concerns of listed property owners. Its members will be working alongside the Club, our members and the wider heritage community to raise issues with HM Revenue and Customs; the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport; and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. We look forward to seeing more parliamentary questions put to ministers, and to see their responses.



Listed Property Forum in Helensburgh with Brendan O'Hara MP



Clockwise from top: Club members give evidence in Parliament, APPG Chairman Craig Mackinley and Heritage Minister Michael Ellis at the evidence session, Club founder Peter Anslow and Editor-in-Chief Martin Anslow arrive at an APPG meeting, APPG member Bill Wiggin MP shows his support for listed building owners in his constituency.

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## THE LOCAL CAMPAIGN

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While central government holds a great deal of power over listed buildings, Westminster is not the only place where policy is made. Planning policy and development plans are the responsibility of local councils, not of central government.

These are policies that are made as part of the political process, based on campaign promises made by local councillors. This makes councils just as valid a place to campaign as central government. It's important that we put listed buildings on the agenda on a local level.

No council has the power to deliver wide-scale change, but they do have the discretion to use instruments like heritage agreements and local consent orders. Both of these are already available to councils and offer the potential to save owners significant sums by removing the need to individually apply for consent.

Local political decisions also determine how a planning authority will interpret guidelines about listed buildings. Councils can place

greater emphasis on elements such as energy efficiency or heritage value, leading to different decisions being made in different areas.

As they are part of the local democratic process, these policies can be changed. Local residents can and should hold their council to account over how decisions are made - especially at election time.

The Club are actively lobbying strategically chosen councils, seeking partnerships to shape policy and develop trial schemes, as well as to advise them how better to serve listed building owners.

We ask all our members to contact their councillors to discuss their local policies and ensure that listed buildings are included in their thinking. While winning over a single council may seem like a small achievement, any changes won can still affect thousands of local people and demonstrate the need for national change.

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## DEVOLVED PARLIAMENTS

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Scotland and Wales each have their own devolved legislatures that set their national laws on issues like planning, heritage and culture. As a result, Holyrood and the Senedd control their nation's respective listing systems and have full control over the regulations owners have to follow.

In the years since devolution the listing systems in Wales and Scotland have diverged quite significantly from the English system they were originally aligned with. Both parliaments have passed legislation regarding listed buildings in the past few years, so clearly there is an interest in looking at the issues around listing.

As a result of these different legal landscapes Welsh and Scottish owners face some unique challenges and the Club operates separate campaigns to focus on these. Our campaign covers all listed building owners, and we are committed to creating reforms for all of them.

The devolved parliaments also offer a great opportunity for the Club, as they give us more opportunities to see our policies adopted. Both Holyrood and the Senedd



are regarded as more willing to legislate. Seeing our reforms put in place in Wales or Scotland would help us demonstrate that they are successful and boost our calls for reform elsewhere.

The Club is actively engaging with Assembly Members and Members of the Scottish Parliament to bring listed buildings up the agenda. We have also started to run events in these areas and to grow the grassroots support for our policies.

For owners who have a building in Wales or Scotland, you have a great opportunity to help our campaign. The regional structure of both assemblies means that each constituent has numerous representatives to take their case to, and all of them are equally able to their government and campaign for reform.

You may have as many as ten representatives, and we recommend you write to all of them about the challenges you face. Raising awareness and finding sympathetic representatives can really help our campaign, and if you get a positive response tell the club so we can celebrate parliamentarians who help local owners.

## LETTER WRITING

Writing to your representative is a great way to support our campaign. Just explaining your challenges and asking your MP joins the APPG on Listed Properties can have a huge impact on our campaign work. Whether they are an AM, an MSP, an MP or a local councillor; they can only help if you tell them there is a problem.

All representatives receive a lot of correspondence, but they pay particular attention to letters written by their constituents. Form letters and templated letters are often weeded out because they obviously all contain the same information. They won't be ignored, but they don't carry the same weight. That's why we don't provide a template for letters; so that your representatives can see that your letter is unique and from a concerned individual.

### HOW TO WRITE YOUR LETTER

The only information you must include is your name and contact details, but you should also include that you are a constituent and at least provide an approximate location. Constituents always get priority so it's important to establish that you live within their constituency.

Your letter doesn't need to be long, and in fact it is a good idea to keep it fairly short, but you should include your personal experiences and a good explanation of why listed buildings matter to you. You should always write personally, engaging them as a private citizen not as part of an organisation.

It's important that you make it clear you expect an answer. While all correspondence

will be read, if an answer isn't needed then often one won't be given, simply to save time. Asking for their position on the issues you've discussed is a good way to ensure you will get an answer and be taken seriously. Answers might not always be positive, but even a negative response ensures that listed buildings stay on the political agenda.

When you do receive an answer, tell the Club what happened. It's a great help to us to know which representatives were sympathetic to your concerns, which had never thought about listed buildings and which were not interested. Your feedback helps us to focus our efforts, so always tell us when you receive an answer.

To summarize:

- Introduce yourself, including that you are from their constituency.
- Tell them the reason you are contacting them.
- Give details of how the issues have affected you personally.
- Explain why they need to take action.
- Ask for a response.
- Feedback to the Club.

### LINKS

[www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com) – Find your MP

[www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors](http://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors) – Find your local councillors

[www.parliament.scot/mspfinder/index.html](http://www.parliament.scot/mspfinder/index.html) – Find your MSP

[www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgFindMember.aspx](http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgFindMember.aspx) – Find your AM



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## WHAT CAN I DO?

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One of the most common questions we get from our members is how they can help with our campaign. Your support makes a great deal of difference to us and we would love to see all our members play an active part. There is a wide range of ways for you to get involved and contribute to our growing efforts.

### WRITE LETTERS

The Club has an on-going letter writing campaign to MPs, MSPs, AMs and councillors. Just taking the time to write a letter or e-mail shows your support for the owners of listed buildings. All elected representatives pay attention to correspondence from their constituents, especially when they receive multiple on the same issue.

### SHOW UP

Showing up to events like surgeries and council meetings gives you the opportunity to voice your concerns directly to your representatives. Public consultations are held on many issues, but they can only consider your opinion if you attend to give it. Showing up proves that you take the campaign seriously and requires an immediate response about the issue.

### FORM A LOCAL GROUP

Forming a group to lobby your council can bring people together from across your community. Creating groups helps our message to spread, and allows us to bring more pressure to bear on representatives.

### SHARE YOUR STORIES

Your experiences help us to shape our policies and focus our efforts. Telling us how the present regulatory regime has impacted you, and the challenges that you have encountered makes a real difference to our campaign. For many in government, the individual effect of policies is hidden behind statistics. Your stories help us to show them how individual owners are affected.

### ATTEND OUR EVENTS

Every exhibition we hold is a great opportunity to connect with the Club and tell us which issues matter the most to you. We also hold events such as Listed Property Forums and parliamentary receptions for our members, where you can meet with MPs and council representatives specifically to discuss listed buildings.



## SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN

The Club is the only organisation that gives owners a real voice in the regulations that impact you. We need your help to ensure our message reaches across the whole UK, and the very top of government.

Our campaign is entirely funded by our members. It's your support that enables us to contribute to policy discussions, conduct research and hold the government to account. Our campaign has vastly grown in the past year, with a dedicated staff and broader remit. All of this is because of owners like you have supported our efforts.

There's never been a more important time to be a member. The larger our membership, the greater weight we carry with MPs and ministers and the more resources that we can put into the campaign. If you support our efforts, becoming a member is a great way to show that.

The best way to support the campaign is to use the Club's insurance providers for your home. Our insurance service offers comprehensive cover at a reasonable price, and the proceeds directly fund our campaign work. This supports our efforts while giving you peace of mind, so call our insurance team any time on 01795 844939, or visit [www.lpoc.co.uk/insurance](http://www.lpoc.co.uk/insurance)

There's always more you can do to help our campaign grow. You can tell your friends

and neighbours about our work and recommend they join us. You can form or attend a local group and discuss your challenges with fellow owners. You can write to your MP, MSP or AM, as well as to your local council to tell them what you need.

Our campaign is working to help all owners across the whole UK. If you want to see ownership become cheaper, easier and more enjoyable then you need to support our work.

“During our 20 years of living in a listed, thatched cottage we have found the help and advice we have received from LPOC extremely valuable. The magazine alone is worth the membership fee and I would recommend that anyone owning a listed building should become a member.”

Jane D, LPOC Member

## CLUB BENEFITS

### FREE TELEPHONE HELPLINE

Call on our expertise on the responsibilities of owning, buying, surveyance, VAT, maintenance, energy efficiency, insurance and legal issues.

### FREE PLANNING ADVICE

Our in-house Conservation Advisor is here to help with all aspects of the planning process and to advise on unauthorised work by previous owners.

### SUPPLIERS DIRECTORY

Hundreds of nationwide specialist companies which members can approach with confidence, from architects to lime plastering, and surveyors to window restorers.

### LISTED HERITAGE MAGAZINE

Our 150 page bi-monthly publication providing practical information, news and guidance on listed property ownership.

### OWNERS LOGBOOK

Technical guidance on all aspects of ownership to keep your knowledge up to date. Includes a copy of your own home's listing.



### SPECIALIST INSURANCE

Particularly personal services, specialist advice and access to dedicated cover for listed buildings including those undergoing renovation or conversion.

### THE LISTED PROPERTY SHOWS

Free invites to our dedicated events in London, Bristol and Edinburgh.

### LISTED PROPERTY PLAQUES

Our unique lead plaques are just £120 for members, and our personalised oak plaques are £265.

### TO JOIN

Join the Club from £48 per year.

Call us on 01795 844939

Email us at [membership@lpoc.co.uk](mailto:membership@lpoc.co.uk)

Or visit our website: [www.lpoc.co.uk](http://www.lpoc.co.uk)





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