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# A GUIDE TO LOBBYING GOVERNMENT

Our campaign for owners

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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?

Listed buildings and the regulations that govern them are politically controlled by policies made at all levels of government. These policies have a major impact on owners and their buildings. Over the past decade the cost of owning and maintaining a listed building has a significantly increased as a result of complex regulations, reduce planning resources and the elimination of grant support. If we want to have a say on these issues that directly impact our homes then we need to be politically active.

There are more people affected by listed building policy than live in Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield combined. This makes listed buildings a major issue that is too often neglected by those in power. There are over 1.5 million people who live in listed buildings in the UK, and thousands more who live in conservation areas.

Listed building owners need to stand together and campaign on the issues that matter to them.

*The Listed Property Owners' Club is the only organisation that is focused on the needs of owners; the only group that can give you a voice.*



## 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.

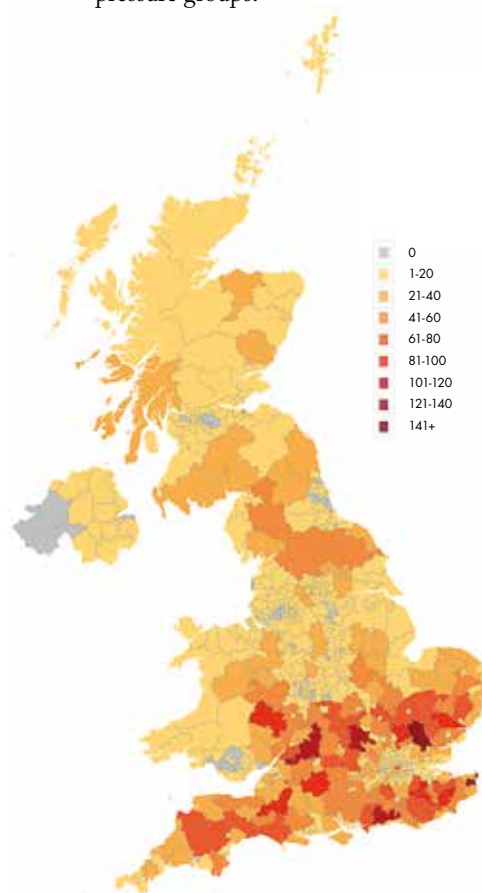
We successfully lobbied for the creation of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Listed Properties, where owners can come directly to parliamentarians with their issues.

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.



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

### MARCH 2012

Government announces the zero rate of VAT on all approved alterations to listed buildings will be removed.

### APRIL 2012

The Club begins campaigning against this decision by rallying support of their members who will be affected by this change.

### MAY 2012

The Club begins to gather evidence from its members to understand the true financial impact reinstating VAT will have.

### JUNE 2012

The Club writes to George Osborne asking him to review his decision and to reinstate the VAT concession. Mr Osborne responds stating he is 'satisfied with the rationale for the measure which removes the anomaly that alterations to listed buildings are zero rated.'

### JULY 2012

Bill is passed and VAT on all works to listed buildings will be 20% from 1st October 2012.

### AUGUST 2012

Ministers repeatedly tell MPs and the public that the VAT increase was about stopping millionaires installing swimming pools tax free. A Freedom of Information request by the Club subsequently revealed that only 105 cases were sampled. The Club checks 12,049 recent applications for listed building consent from across the UK and finds only 34 applications for swimming pools, of which only half would have been eligible to claim zero rated VAT.

### OCTOBER 2014

The Club holds a Parliamentary Reception, which is attended by many MPs including Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Media and Sport. Peter Anslow gives a presentation highlighting the Club's concerns that the loss of the VAT concession has resulted in a decline in listed building consent applications.

### JUNE 2014

The Club begins a number of activities to lobby the government to reduce VAT for all work on listed buildings to 5%. It writes to the MPs in the top 50 marginal seats with the largest number of listed buildings in their constituency. For many of the MPs approached, the number of listed building owners in their constituency equates to enough votes to either gain or lose them their seats.

### APRIL 2014

The Club designs a strategy to draw attention to the issues surrounding listed property ownership and announces its aim to campaign to create an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), which would see a selection of MPs and Lords meet regularly to discuss listed properties and provide listed building owners a voice in Parliament.

### SEPTEMBER 2012

The Club realises it is the only organisation dedicated to providing support to the owners of listed buildings, and begins many months of research to find out ways it can successfully lobby Parliament for change, speaking with various MPs for support and ideas.

### JANUARY 2015

The Club writes to the Chancellor ahead of the Autumn statement, outlining concerns for the rise in unauthorised works to listed buildings after the removal of zero rated VAT on approved alterations.

### JULY 2015

The Club encourages their members to write to their local MP asking them to support the campaign, as well as arranging meetings with new MPs from a variety of parties to continue to work towards the 20 signatures needed to form the APPG.

### AUGUST 2015

Craig Mackinlay MP for South Thanet agrees to chair the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Listed Properties.

### JULY 2016

The Club writes to 24 MPs who have the highest number of listed buildings in their constituency asking them to join the APPG and encourages members to write to them to highlight the importance of their support.

### OCTOBER 2016

After much campaigning by the Club, the APPG on Listed Properties is officially recognised. A host of MPs attend the launch in Westminster and pledge their support for listed properties and the campaign. The Club will act as Secretariat to the APPG.

The first Listed Property Owners' Forum, organised by the Club, is held in Sandwich. These forums allow listed property owners to meet and discuss their concerns or suggestions surrounding listed property ownership with their local MP.

### NOVEMBER 2016

The Club's Political Campaign for Owners now has 3 key aims.  
1. To reduce VAT to 5% on approved listed building alterations and repairs.  
2. To simplify the planning process.  
3. To ensure greater consistency in planning decisions across the country.

### FEBRUARY 2017

Listed property owners take part in 'Owners' Voice' at The Listed Property Show in London. The Club gathers evidence on the challenges of owning a listed home which will be collated into a report to present to MPs.

### MARCH 2017

Craig Mackinlay writes to Philip Hammond urging him to reduce VAT to 5% for all repairs and alterations to listed properties in his upcoming budget.

### JUNE 2017

The Club creates a Listed Property Owners' manifesto using the evidence gathered at the Owners' Voice and sends to MPs ahead of election.

### JULY 2017

The Club hosts a reception on the House of Commons Terrace where Craig Mackinlay MP and other MPs meet with a group of the Club's members who give first-hand experiences of the issues and frustrations that owners face, particularly concerning VAT and planning.

### SEPTEMBER 2017

APPG re-registered in new Parliament. The Club continues to work closely with MPs and raises concerns in the drastic fall in numbers of local government conservation officers.

### JUNE 2018

Listed Property Owners' Forum takes place in Witney with Robert Courts MP. Listed Property Owners' Forum takes place in Leominster with Bill Wiffin MP. Listed Property Owners' Forum takes place in Tiverton with Neil Parish MP.

### MAY 2018

Members of the Club attend an Evidence Session at Parliament with Heritage Minister Michael Ellis (full report on next page). Inconsistency across local authorities is the key theme of the meeting.

Dave Brown, the Club's VAT Advisor, gains place on Heritage Alliance's Tax Group. He will provide the views of private listed building owners to this group ensuring it understands the challenges faced.

Heritage Minister Michael Ellis writes to Craig Mackinlay MP and states "...I know that tax is an issue shared with the wider heritage sector. I am keen to open a dialogue with Treasury on this matter." In light of this, the Club decides to push forward with their campaign for the reduction of VAT to 5%.

### APRIL 2018

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

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

### MARCH 2018

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

### NOVEMBER 2017

The Club announces a series of planned Owners' Forums for 2018, which will allow owners to meet with their local MP.

### JULY 2018

Official UK Government and Parliament petition is launched by the Club for the reduction of VAT to 5% on repairs and approved alterations to listed buildings. Sign the petition now at [www.lpoc.co.uk/vatpetition](http://www.lpoc.co.uk/vatpetition)

### AUGUST 2018

Evidence session to support the VAT campaign.

### OCTOBER 2018

The Scottish Listed Property Show, Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh 27th October.

### NOVEMBER 2018

Budget announcement.

### JANUARY 2019

The Club appoints a full time Campaign Officer to build on previous successes.

### FEBRUARY 2019

The Listed Property Show, Olympia London, 9th & 10th February.

The Club launched its national lobbying campaign, targeting councils, the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.

### MARCH 2019

The Club published a complete listed property manifesto detailing policies to benefit all owners.

## UPCOMING PLANS

### APRIL/MAY 2019

Strategically targeting councils to put listed buildings on the agenda at the local elections.

### JULY/AUGUST 2019

Holding forums across the UK, bringing together owners with their representatives.

### SEPT/OCT 2019

Launch of the Listed Property Show South West, with MPs from across the region in attendance.

The Scottish Listed Property Show to focus on owners' issues in Scotland.



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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 ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

on Listed  
Properties

## 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 both have devolved legislatures with the power to make laws within their own nations. This includes laws relating to tax, planning and heritage matters. This means that the devolved legislatures have a great deal of power over listed buildings within their respective nations.

Each Parliament has its own unique framework, but both Holyrood and the Senedd have passed legislation in the past few years specifically on the subject of listed buildings. This shows that both Parliaments understand that listed buildings are a matter of importance, and that they are willing to legislate about them.

This makes the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliaments critical inclusions in our lobbying campaigning in the coming years. They have the power to enact many of the reforms that we want to see, as well as the willingness to create targeted legislation.



Having the Club's policies adopted in Scotland or Wales would be a massive success for listed building owners. Not only would these policies immediately begin to benefit the thousands of listed building owners who live in Wales and Scotland, they would also help us prove that our policies are positive and practical.

The Club is engaging with Assembly Members and members of the Scottish Parliament, presenting our policies directly to them and working towards creating legislation on the issues that affect listed building owners.

We are also asking our members to contact their AMs or MSPs, to make them aware about the issues you face as a listed building owner. Unlike in England, Welsh and Scottish citizens have more than one member representing their area, which makes it more likely you can find at least one of your representatives who is sympathetic to your concerns.



## LETTER WRITING

Writing to your MP, MSP, AM or local council is your right as a local citizen and is a critical way for all representatives to stay in touch with the concerns of their constituents. Simply taking the time to write a letter or e-mail shows that you care about an issue.

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

[hwww.parliament.scot/mspfinder/index.html](http://hwww.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.



## WHY SUPPORT THE CLUB

The Club is the only organisation that gives owners a real voice in the regulations that impact you. Our campaign is bringing listed property owners together to create change.

Our campaign is working to ensure that the issues that affect you are taken seriously. Your support is what enables us to contribute to policy discussions, conduct research and hold the government to account.

Our campaign efforts are entirely supported by our members, so there has never been a more vital time to join. The more members we have the greater weight we carry with MPs and ministers, and the more resources that we can put into the campaign.

As a member you will get the full news and analysis from our campaign in our bi-monthly magazine *Listed Heritage*, as well as the chance to shape our campaign strategy and bring up the issues that have affected you.

If you support our goals, tell your friends and neighbours about our campaign and recommend they join us. Our campaign is working to help all listed building owners across the whole UK, and every new member shows how important reforms are.

Another way to support the club is give some thought to moving your home insurance to the Club's providers they will pass an introductory fee back to us and it is this fee that will finance our efforts. As the policies they offer provide an exceptional combination of reasonable cost and comprehensive cover, it's a true win/win situation.

If you would like to talk to our insurance team, call us on 01795 844939, or let us know your current policy's renewal date by calling or emailing: [kirstie@lpoc.co.uk](mailto:kirstie@lpoc.co.uk) and we'll contact you at the appropriate time.

### ABOUT THE CLUB

Established in 1993, the Listed Property Owners' Club is the authoritative source of information about owning a listed property. We offer independent advice on maintenance and the responsibilities of ownership. As secretariat to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Listed Properties we are providing a voice in parliament and are actively campaigning for change.

“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)





The Listed Property Owners' Club

Lower Dane, Hartlip, Kent ME9 7TE  
T. 01795 844939

E. [campaign@lpoc.co.uk](mailto:campaign@lpoc.co.uk)  
[www.lpoc.co.uk](http://www.lpoc.co.uk)

 [@TheListedPropertyOwnersClub](https://www.facebook.com/TheListedPropertyOwnersClub)

 [@Listed\\_Property](https://twitter.com/Listed_Property)