

Feedback from Working Groups

Bridge Street
Fire Exercise

Bridge Street Exercise

- What Caused The Fire?
- What factors led to the rapid spread of the fire?
- What were the outcomes for the city?
- What similarities exist between the Chiado circumstances and the syndicate members' area?
- Produce a list of measures you would like to see taken in your heritage areas to umprove fire protection?

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Causes

- Accidental :- Electrical (Iron Heating Lighting)
- Arson:- Opportunist, Intentional (fraud)

Rapid fire spread

- Internal Structure (voids)
- Accelerants?
- Construction (Early collapse)

Outcomes

- Partnerships developed (Interested organisations :_ English Heritage, Local authority, property owners occupiers
- £3,000,000 cost

Similarities

- Marlborough
- Local council created fire forum
- Getting Right people in partnership

Areas for Improvement in Fire Protection

- AFD
- Sprinklers
- Compartmentation / separation
- Data Collection (Fire Tracking)
- Partnerships (New culture)
- Legal back-up

Chiado Fire

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Using all the floors in heritage buildings

- The upper floors in heritage buildings are frequently left vacant.
- Discuss the reasons for this and the implications these have on the long term future of these buildings
- Produce an action plan for the full utilisation of the upper floors in heritage buildings which would satisfy all concerned parties.

Using all The Floors

- Reasons for Empty Floors
- Taxation
- Access
- Security
- Cost of Conversion
- Reluctance of owner to convert and let
- Provision of Services
- Finance
- Planning/Listed building consents/building control issues
- Floor loading
- Lack of Front Office

Implications of leaving empty

- General Deterioration
- Vandalsim (Slide to Ashes)
- Fire risk to Building and adjoining buildings
- Loss of revenue to Council and owner
- Loss of accommodation in town centre
- Pigeons and health issues
- Loss of Crime Watch over town centre

Action Plan

- Identify empty properties
- Identify owners of empty properties
- Discuss issues with stakeholders
- Discuss types of use that may be acceptable (affordable housing, student accommodation, offices)
- Establish an acceptable level of standards
- Partnerships
- City Council needs to own the issue, appoint staff and have a budget

- Fire separation
- Full survey necessary before development can be considered to determine weakness of the building fabric
- Consideration of horizontal and vertical separation
- Programme of works to improve compartmentation

Chiado

- Cause of fire
- Arson,
- hot works,
- poor management

Reason for Rapid spread

- Poor access
- Unauthorised street traders and clutter delayed arrival of brigade
- High fire loads
- No suppression
- No compartmentation
- Complexity of buildings
- Lack of fire protection to elements of construction
- Lack of fire service site knowledge
- No fire service protection to adjacent buildings

Outcomes

- Loss of cultural heritage
- Economic, trade and tourism loss
- Rebuilding costs
- Political fallout
- Philosophical

Similarities

- Ownerships
- Multi Occupancy
- Historic building materials
- Proximity of adjoining buildings
- Lack of legislative provision
- Poor enforcement

What we would like to see

- Change in legislation to protect buildings
- Detection & Monitoring
- Maximise the effect of current legislation
- Risk assessment by fire brigade to include historic buildings
- Devise fire fighting strategies
- Establish multi-disciplinary forums
- Data gathering and management
- National guidance
- Financial Incentives
- Are they buildings at risk eligible for grant?

