

North Tottenham Townscape Heritage Initiative

By Catherine Cavanagh and Adam Stoneman

Photos by Rowan Kumar and Cuttle Construction

Traditional building skills in Tottenham

Did you know that most of the High Road and some of White Hart Lane are in a Conservation Area?

This is due to the many historic buildings, dating particularly to the 18th and 19th centuries. After a period of neglect, these buildings are finally getting the love and attention they deserve.

Haringey Council is restoring a dozen properties and their shopfronts, with the generous support of Heritage Lottery Fund.

The streetscape is seeing an improvement with the removal of satellite dishes and other clutter such as estate agent signs.

The aim is to make North Tottenham a more lively retail area and to promote local businesses.

Find out more:

The project is about people as well as place. Visit the *Memories of the High Road* oral history exhibition at Bruce Castle Museum in Spring 2018.

Updates are posted our blog highroadheritage.org.uk

We will be contacting local businesses about participating in further conservation works in 2018. Property owners only have to pay 15% towards the cost of the works and will benefit from Haringey Council being able to reclaim 20% VAT.

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The Bricklayers Arms and 801 High Road next door received a new façade in about 1910. The harmonious appearance of these buildings is more obvious since the paint was removed from the upper part of the pub.

So, why is it a bad idea to paint brick and stonework? You have to repaint it again and again – a chore every five years or so. Painted masonry rarely looks good and can reduce the value of a property.

Traditional Skills



Can you tell which of the windows are original? New double glazed timber sash windows have been installed at 797-801 High Road. As long as these are properly looked after, they could last at least another 100 years. The previous plastic or uPVC windows are not permitted in Conservation Areas, nor on Listed Buildings. They don't last as long as timber windows and can't easily be redecorated or repaired.

797-799 are listed buildings dating from the early 19th century. Traditional timber shopfronts and an awning have been installed.

Brickwork is being repointed with lime mortar. This is better than cement mortar, which makes the bricks erode because it is harder than they are. Mortar is easier to replace than bricks.

Lime render enables the masonry behind it to breath and dry out. Cement has the opposite effect and can cause water to get trapped against the building.



An imitation cornice has been replaced at 801 to reflect the one above The Bricklayers Arms. We aren't attempting to achieve an exact replica, as it's difficult to match the beauty of the original handmade glazed bricks. We have revealed the original Taylor Walker brewery signage and are looking at solutions to make the sign letters more visible.



Structural Engineer, Al Grant, is advising on repairs to the Georgian buildings. The soft rubbed bricks forming the flat arches above the windows have failed and need to be replaced. Helical bars embedded into the mortar repointing have been used to fix structural cracks.

816-818 High Road N17



Pitch pine portico.



Restoring wrought iron sign bracket.



Restored corbel above shopfront.



Handmade chimney pots – one is to be replaced.



Sign for former Cullens grocery revealed. Lead working.



Carpentry Apprenticeship

It's not just bricks and mortar! Cuttle Construction are giving back to the community through Employment and Skills opportunities.

Jack Bourke is a carpentry apprentice with Cuttle: "They have really taken the time to teach me a broad range of skills to help me progress."

Growing up in neighbouring Wood Green, Jack used to come to Tottenham regularly to watch football but never realised it had so many historic buildings. 22 year old Jack says: "I've been learning lots about sash windows and ironmongery. Heritage restoration skills are important in a city with as many old buildings as London. It's really interesting as they have different quirks and challenges to solve."

Jack's favourite task has been restoring the old sash windows, "stripping off the old paint, slowly and carefully removing the layers of history and trying to make it look as good as it once did." Alongside his site work in North Tottenham, Jack spends one day a week in the classroom at CONEL.

Jack discovered his knack for carpentry in his former job as a groundskeeper at Alexandra Palace. The Haringey Employment and Skills team at Wood Green Library helped him find the break he was looking for.

Jack's ambition is to learn as much as he can during this apprenticeship, and one day, perhaps run his own carpentry business.

