

HISTORIC HOUSES

The protection and conservation of private properties, including historic buildings and gardens, an important part of Europe's cultural heritage, is a major task for ELO's members. For this purpose, ELO works closely with owners throughout Europe to identify common problems and develop effective solutions, in close partnership with the Union of European Historic Houses Associations (UEHHA).

The Union of European Historic Houses Associations (UEHHA) is a typical umbrella organization dedicated to the conservation of Europe's great artistic and architectural heritage - its private historic houses, their contents, gardens, parklands and estates which represent about 35% of Europe's listed heritage.



Building Care Programme

Preserving and maintaining historic properties in good condition is not an easy task, and in many cases the owners cannot afford the high costs of restoration. In order to help owners preserve this heritage, ELO supported UEHHA in launching a project called "Building Care Programme (BCP)" in 2005, already implemented by the Danish Heritage Council with great success. The European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture co-financed the project within the "Culture 2000" programme framework.

Main Activities of the ELO-UEHHA Partnership:

- Promotion of European co-operation in the conservation of private properties through public and private partnerships with other institutions and organisations such as the Council of Europe, the European Commission and Europa Nostra.
- Dissemination of information to members on environmental, financial and legal aspects of historic houses and their estates.
- Contact with European institutions and national governments to provide support and develop policies for the protection of architectural and environmental private heritage, e.g. through co-financed projects such as: "Fines Garden Programme" (co-financed by the Dutch Government), and the "Building Care Programme" (co-financed by the European Commission).



EUHHA, partner of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008

THE UEHHA is an official partner of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, launched by the European Commission, DG Education and Culture. It is for UEHHA a great opportunity to network, exchange views and cooperate with other cultural sectors. UEHHA is indeed a member of a platform to promote our rich cultural heritage and to highlight the role of built and historic heritage in understanding the diverse cultural traditions and cementing the civil society around a European identity. See www.dialogue2008.eu

The objectives of the ELO-UEHHA are:

- to ensure the continuity, as living entities, of private historic houses, their contents, gardens, parklands and estates;
- to promote European cooperation in the conservation of historic houses and gardens;
- to provide a forum and support for national historic house associations;
- to promote interest in the historical, aesthetic, educational and environmental aspects of historic houses and gardens;
- to promote, where practicable, the extension and improvement of current historic houses, parks, gardens and estates to enable society as a whole to enjoy their attractions and beauty.
- to encourage national governments to provide support in achieving these objectives e.g. through public and private partnerships.



To achieve its objectives, the ELO-UEHHA:

- collects, collates and disseminates information and data to members on taxation, financial and legal aspects of historic houses and their estates;
- assists the European Union and the Council of Europe in their development of policy and practice concerning architectural and environmental private heritage, e.g. through projects subsidized from European sources;
- provides member associations with comparative information to enable them to persuade national governments to adopt constructive approaches in light of conditions and regulations existing elsewhere;
- acts as an advocate of conservation;
- provides sources of information on aesthetic and technical aspects of conservation of historic houses;
- assists member associations in their research projects;
- provides information and advice on cultural tourism relating to historic houses.



The ELO-UEHHA is recognised by the European Commission and Council of Europe as a consultant. It takes part in international conferences and forums, offering its extensive, multi-national knowledge.

At national level, it has achieved substantial success in attaining its objectives.

In particular, its persuasiveness has resulted in progress towards the comprehensive revision of fiscal laws affecting heritage property. However the need to maintain these efforts continues.