

**SURVEY OF
MUD WALLS
IN
WHITTLESEY
AND
EASTREA**

2016 / 2017



**Whittlesey
Mud Walls
Group**



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All comments by the Group are purely on a visual basis.

**This survey was compiled and produced by the
Whittlesey Mud Walls Group © 6/12/2017**

Foreword

Whittlesey's mud walls are an essential element of the town's heritage, and within Cambridgeshire, Whittlesey Parish is the only place that boasts this specific type of wall construction. The walls are historic, and were built between the mid 18th century and late 19th century. The rarity of the mud walls adds to their significance, and Whittlesey is enriched by having these distinctive boundary features as an aspect of the town's character. Unfortunately, over the last twenty years, a number of mud walls have been lost through decay and as a consequence of development. Indeed, the town has lost approximately 570 metres of its mud walls since 1980, and now only 28 sections of walls survive.

This mud wall survey has been put together by the Whittlesey Mud Walls Group for the purpose of documenting the locations of surviving mud walls, and providing a detailed account of their construction and condition. This is the first mud wall survey to comprehensively document all known surviving sections of mud walls through measured survey, material evaluation and photographic record. This information is intended to improve understanding of the construction of these vernacular structures, and promote better public appreciation of Whittlesey's mud walls. It is also intended to provide a positive basis to help conserve the surviving mud walls into the future.

Anthony Goode
Conservation **B**uilder and SPAB Technical Panel Member.
(Society for the **P**rotection of Ancient Buildings)

INTRODUCTION

Whittlesey Mud Walls Group

Survey 2016/7

Over the winter and spring of 2016/7 in Whittlesey and Eastrea, all of the surviving walls were photographed and measured, and the data recorded for future generations.

This survey, therefore, should be considered as up to date for the 2016 / 2017 time span.

There have been previous surveys; -
by Mr David Hancock in 1981, and
by Qube on behalf of Fenland District Council in 2006.

A Short History of Mud Walls

When our ancestors stopped roaming, and settled into more permanent homes in the Neolithic period, one of the most obvious building materials for these houses was mud. There was a constant supply, and it is easy to mould. The first settlements would have probably been made up of roundhouses consisting of a single room, the basic bricks being made out of mud. Evidence for these buildings have been found around the world. In Europe, these buildings would, over time, be made stronger by making wooden battens, making the 'wattle and daub' homes we are taught about in history lessons. The mud was mixed with clay, sand, animal dung and straw. To make the walls even more durable, plaster would have been applied over the mud.

Much later, into the 1500's, we see the practice still being used in Britain, the mud now often referred to as 'cob'. To make buildings that would be more robust than the simple small, one room dwellings, the type of material used was important. Cob was mainly dry-based and so durable. Various things were added to this mud depending on the location. Straw, animal hair and sand were also used to add strength. For example, in places like Haddenham near Aylesbury, a chalk subsoil is found, and locally it became known as 'wychert' or 'witchert', a word derived from white earth.

The mixture would be mixed with water to make it workable, so each course would have to be left to dry before the next could be added. Thus, it was a time-consuming method and relied on the skill of the workers to know when it was strong enough to be able to withstand the next level.

Of course, the use of straw within the mixture, increased its risk to fire. The builder had to decide to use straw for extra strength, or without, especially where the fireplace and chimney would be. Structures used as forges were built out of mud, so there must have been those willing to take the chance on the walls being strong enough to be viable.

The thickness required to make mud into a stable structure meant that it had the added benefit of its ability to keep the inside warm in winter and cool in summer. The foundations required to support the weight of these thick walls were a major part of the reason why some of these houses built 500 years ago are still being used today. The second absolute requirement was a proper roof. The overhang needed to be sufficient for the run-off of the rain to clear both the wall and the base, to stop the water seeping continually into the mud and eroding it away. Many of the older buildings still standing have thatched roofs, which also help with the insulation of the homes. Latterly, slate or tiles have replaced the thatch, in the same way that modern bricks have been used to repair sections of damaged walls.

Many would perhaps believe that as this appears to be a cheap building material, that only the poor had cottages made from cob. However, from the size of the houses still in use today, especially in parts of the country such as Devon and Buckinghamshire, we can see that they were built with skill and were properly maintained.

However, as bricks became mass produced during the nineteenth century, it was regarded as an old-fashioned and outmoded form of material. Houses were needed quickly as the population grew, and there was little patience for the drying out of cob when bricks were available. Therefore, few houses made from mud were built after this time. However, as the interest in traditional building methods at the end of the twentieth century grew, new properties are now once again in fashion.

Of course, this material was not only used for homes, but also for boundary walls. Examples of these can still be seen in areas such as churchyards and private gardens. Such is the interest in preserving these as heritage sites, that listed status is applied to many across the country, and professional advice on the care of walls is becoming increasingly more available.

In the 1780's, a great influence on the use of clay subsoil as a substitute for brick, especially for building boundary walls, was the introduction of the Brick Tax.

What was Brick Tax?

The brick tax was a property tax introduced in Great Britain in 1784, during the reign of King George III, to help pay for the British soldiers involvement in the American War of Independence. Bricks were initially taxed at 4s. per thousand. In 1801 it rose to 5s.10pence per thousand. Pan tiles and ridge tiles were included in the taxation. An allowance of 10% was made for 'wasters', (rejects). The tax was repealed in 1850.

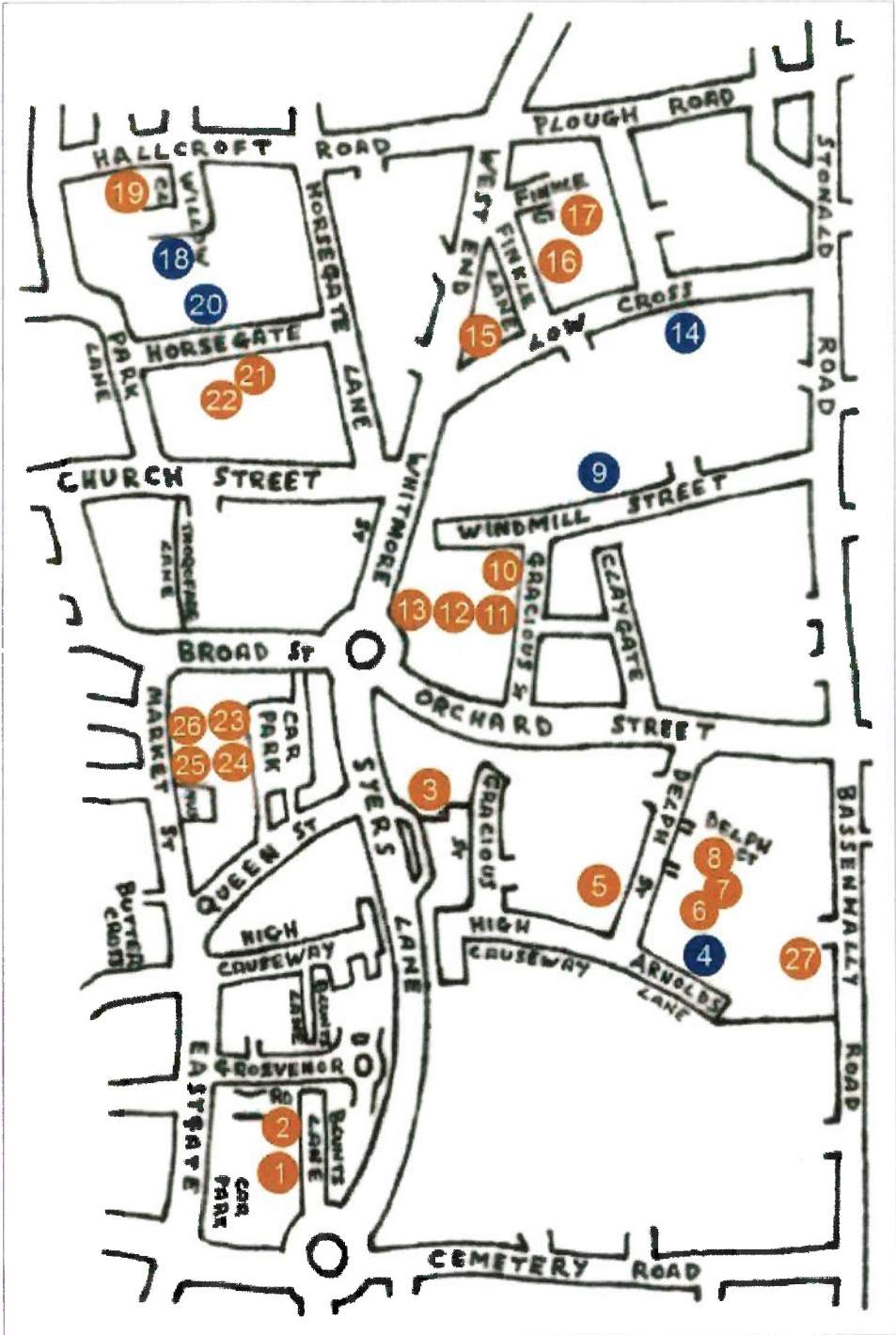
WMWG Wall List

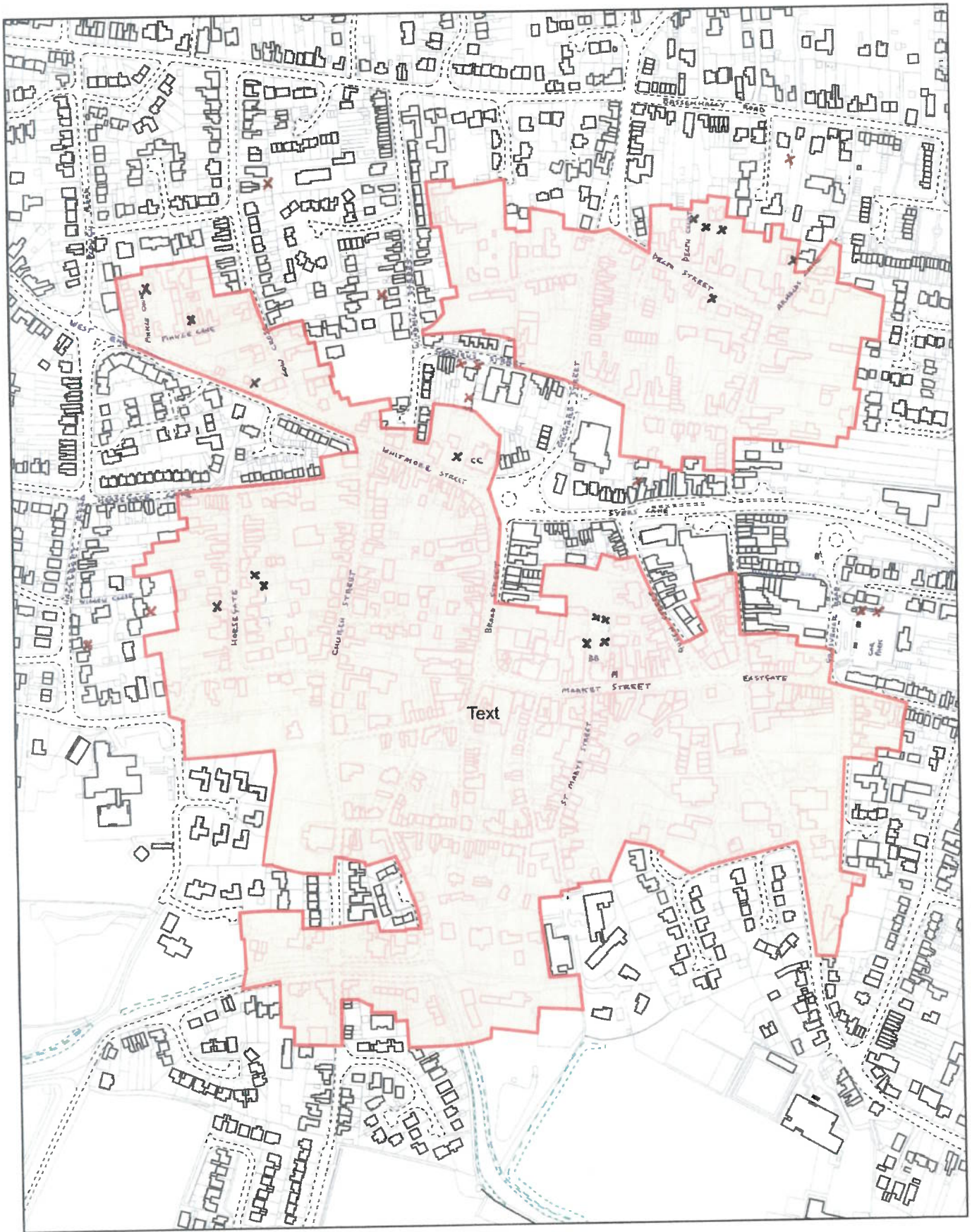
Wall

- | | | |
|-----------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Grosvenor Rd | (Red – visible from the footpath) |
| 2 | Grosvenor Rd | |
| 3 | Old Crown Lane | |
| 4 | Arnolds Lane | (Not visible from the footpath) |
| 5 | Delph St | |
| 6 | Delph St | |
| 7 | Delph St | |
| 8 | Delph Court | |
| 27 | Bassenhally Rd | |
| 9 | Windmill St | (Not visible from the footpath) |
| 10 | Gracious St | |
| 11 | Gracious St | |
| 12 | Conservative Club | |
| 13 | Conservative Club | |
| 14 | Low Cross | (Not visible from the footpath) |
| 15 | West End | |
| 16 | Finkle Lane | |
| 17 | Finkle Court | |
| 18 | Willow Close | (Not visible from the footpath) |
| 19 | Hallcroft Rd | |
| 20 | Horsegate | (Not visible from the footpath) |
| 21 | Horsegate | |
| 22 | Horsegate | |
| 23 | Black Bull | |
| 24 | Black Bull | |
| 25 | Black Bull | |
| 26 | Black Bull | |
| 28 | There is also 1 wall in Mayfield Rd , the last surviving wall in Eastrea. | |

Twelve of these walls are outside the Conservation Areas.
Eleven in Whittlesey and the Eastrea wall.

WMWG Wall Location Map





Created on: 16/11/2016

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Conservation areas

Scale = 1:4,500



Location	Grosvenor Rd Eastgate car park
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Left L/H end of wall



Right R/H end of wall

Identifier	WMWG 1					
Location	Grosvenor Rd Eastgate car park					
Footing	Stone and Brick					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	None, but was originally Pan tiles and Blue Ridge tiles					
Length (ft) (m)	44ft 6in 13m 57cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 6in 46cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 1m 53cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 30cm	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	Nil

Left Picture

Condition	Coping missing completely, moss and ivy prevalent.
Comments	Wall in poor condition, but could be rebuilt to a decent standard.

Right Picture

Condition	Coping missing completely, moss and ivy prevalent.
Comments	Wall in poor condition, but could be rebuilt to a decent standard.

This wall has been fenced off on both sides.
Therefore it is only possible to view the wall from one side.

Location	Blunts Lane / Grosvenor Rd bus stop
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Left	Blunts Lane	Right	Grosvenor Rd
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Identifier	WMWG 2					
Location	Blunts Lane / Grosvenor Rd bus stop					
Footing	Stone and Brick					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Pan tiles and Blue Ridge tiles					
Length (ft) (m)	5ft 6in 1m 68cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 1in 1m 55cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in 15cm	Mud Work	3ft 9in 1m 15cm	Coping	10in 25cm

Left Picture

Condition	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles missing, causing erosion of wall.
Comments	Elder bush caused damage to tiles, and should be removed.

Right Picture

Condition	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles missing. Some erosion.
Comments	Evidence of bee activity.

Location **Old Crown Lane / 24 Syers Lane**



Left **Old Crown Lane**



Right **24 Syers Lane**

Identifier	WMWG 3
Location	Old Crown Lane / 24 Syers Lane
Footing	Brick
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	Wood

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	25ft 3in 7m 70cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 7in 50cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 7in 2m 01cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in 15cm	Mud Work	5ft 4in 1m 63cm	Coping	9in 23cm
Condition	Erosion of mud at footing level. Cotoneaster causing rotting of wooden coping.					
Comments	Cotoneaster should be removed and coping replacing.					

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	25ft 3in 7m 70cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 7in 50cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 10in 2m 08cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	9in 23cm	Mud Work	5ft 4in 1m 63cm	Coping	9in 23cm
Condition	One vertical crack in mud, wall and coping covered in Cotoneaster.					
Comments	Footing repaired with cement. Evidence of bee activity.					

Location

7 Arnolds Lane / 25 Arnolds Lane



Left

7 Arnolds Lane



Right

25 Arnolds Lane

Identifier	WMWG 4					
Location	7 Arnolds Lane / 25 Arnolds Lane					
Footing	Stone and Brick					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Wood					
Length (ft) (m)	34ft 8in 10m 53cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 4in 40cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 2in 1m 57cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	7in 18cm	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	7in 18cm

Left Picture

Condition	Soil level above footing level.
Comments	Wooden coping should have more overhang. Soil level requires lowering.

Right Picture

Condition	Mud erosion caused by wooden coping too short.
Comments	Paving slabs causing damp in base of wall.

Location **5 Delph St**



Left **Roadside**



Right **Inside Garden**

Identifier	WMWG 5		
Location	5 Delph St		
Footing	Stone and Brick	Restored in 2002	
Mud Work	Rendered both sides, tapered slightly.	Restored in 2002	
Coping	Thatched - enclosed in chicken wire.	Re-thatched in 2002	

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	22ft 10in 6m 94cm	Width (ft) (m)	2ft 2in - 1ft 7in 66cm - 48cm	Height (ft) (m)	9ft 5in 2m 87cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	2ft 2in 66cm	Mud Work	5ft 3in 1m 60cm	Coping 2ft 61cm
Condition	Very good.				
Comments	Small hole in render should be repaired.				

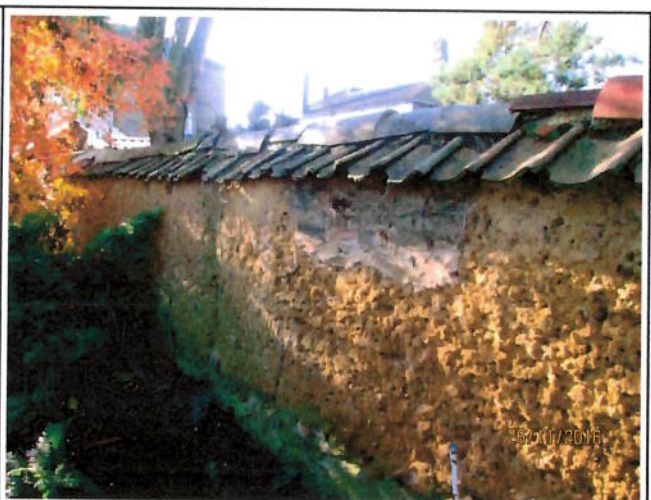
Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	22ft 10in 6m 94cm	Width (ft) (m)	2ft 2in - 1ft 7in 66cm - 48cm	Height (ft) (m)	8ft 7in 2m 62cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 4in 41cm	Mud Work	5ft 3in 1m 60cm	Coping 2ft 61cm
Condition	Very good.				
Comments	Laburnum tree could cause future problems.				

Location **6c Delph St / 4 Delph St**



Left **6c Delph St**



Right **4 Delph St**

Identifier	WMWG 6					
Location	6c Delph St / 4 Delph St					
Footing	Stone and Brick					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles					
Length (ft) (m)	56ft 18m 08cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 1in 1m 86cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 3in 38cm	Mud Work	3ft 11in 1m 20cm	Coping	11in 28cm

Left Picture

Condition	Generally good.
Comments	Attention required to tiled coping. Ivy and vegetation should be removed. Soil level requires lowering.

Right Picture

Condition	Generally good.
Comments	Attention required to tiled coping. Evidence of bee activity.

Location **6b Delph St / 8 Delph St**



Left **6b Delph St**



Right **8 Delph St**

Identifier	WMWG 7					
Location	6b Delph St / 8 Delph St					
Footing	Stone					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Wood					
Length (ft) (m)	55ft 2in 16m 77cm	Width (ft) (m)	1 ft 30cm	Height (ft) (m)	4ft 6in 1m 37cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	5in 13cm	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	8in 20cm

Left Picture

Condition	Very poor. Coping damaged or missing. Mud erosion caused by leaking gutter.
Comments	Paving slabs higher than footing level.

Right Picture

Condition	Very poor. Coping damaged or missing.
Comments	Conifers have been cut back and roots should rot away.

Location **Delph Court / 8 Delph St**



Left **Delph Court**



Right **8 Delph St**

Identifier	WMWG 8					
Location	Delph Court / 8 Delph St					
Footing	Stone					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles					
Length (ft) (m)	51ft 15m 30cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 30cm	Height (ft) (m)	7ft 2m 13cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	2ft 9in 84cm	Mud Work	3ft 5in 1m 04cm	Coping	10in 25cm

Left Picture

Condition	Average but with major damage.
Comments	Gap caused by tree damage. Broken tiles should be replaced. Evidence of bee activity.

Right Picture

Condition	Unsure of condition as overgrown with vegetation.
Comments	Vegetation should be cleared to assess wall condition.

Location **27c Windmill St / 20 Low Cross**



Left **27c Windmill St**



Right **20 Low Cross**

Identifier	WMWG 9
Location	27C Windmill St / 20 Low Cross
Footing	Stone
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	None, but was originally wood

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	77ft 6in 23m 64cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 11in 1m 80cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 8in 20cm	Mud Work	5ft 3in 1m 60cm	Coping	Nil
Condition	Poor, with some subsidence. Coping missing. Soil level too high.				
Comments	Vegetation should be cut back. Soil level should be lowered.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	9ft 2m 75cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 7in 1m 70cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 8in 20cm	Mud Work	4ft 11in 1m 52cm	Coping	Nil
Condition	Coping missing. Wall obscured by vegetation.				
Comments	Vegetation should be cut back.				

This site has been developed around the mud wall. The end boundary fence has been placed so that most of the wall is in the garden of 27c, but the remainder is in the garden of 20. The other side of the wall has had a fence erected close to it, along its length, meaning it cannot be viewed from that side.

Location **87 Gracious St / 89 Gracious St**



Left **87 Gracious St**



Right **89 Gracious St**

Identifier	WMWG 10					
Location	87 Gracious St / 89 Gracious St					
Footing	Stone and Brick					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Metal					
Length (ft) (m)	50ft 15m 25cm	Width (ft) (m)	1 ft 6in 46cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	10in 25cm	Mud Work	4ft 4in 1m 32cm	Coping	1 ft 4in 41cm

Left Picture

Condition	Reasonable.
Comments	Vegetation should be controlled.

Right Picture

Condition	Reasonable.
Comments	Some erosion above footing.

The previous owner of the wall was an engineer and made the metal coping in the late '80's.

Location **87 Gracious St / St Mary's House**



Left **87 Gracious St**



Right **St Mary's House**

Identifier	WMWG 11
Location	87 Gracious St / St Mary's House
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Exposed 1 side, Rendered 1 side
Coping	Wood

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	36ft 10in 11m 23cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 4in 41cm	Height (ft) (m)	7ft 5in 2m 26cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 2ft 3in 69cm	Mud Work (Exposed)	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	1ft 2in 36cm
Condition	Good.				
Comments	Holes in footings could be pointed with lime mortar.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	36ft 10in 11m 23cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 4in 41cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 3in 1m 90cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 1ft 1in 33cm	Mud Work (Rendered)	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	1ft 2in 36cm
Condition	Fairly good.				
Comments	Holes in render require attention.				

Location	St Mary's House / 87 Gracious St
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Left **St Mary's House**



Right **87 Gracious St**

Identifier	WMWG 12 (Pt 1)
Location	St Mary's House / 87 Gracious St
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Rendered 1 side, Exposed 1 side
Coping	Wood

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	40ft 6in 12m 35cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 30cm	Height (ft) (m)	7ft 5in 2m 26cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 4in 41cm	Mud Work (Rendered)	4ft 6in 1m 37cm	Coping	1ft 7in 48cm
Condition	Good.					
Comments	Vegetation should be controlled.					

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	72ft 21m 96cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 30cm	Height (ft) (m)	7ft 5in 2m 26cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 4in 41cm	Mud Work (Exposed)	4ft 6in 1m 37cm	Coping	1ft 7in 48cm
Condition	Good.					
Comments	Vegetation should be controlled.					

The total length of the wall is 77ft (23m 48cm), and borders 4 addresses -
 The left side of the wall borders St Mary's House and the Conservative Club.
 The right side of the wall borders 87 Gracious St and 36 Whitmore St.

Location **Conservative Club / 36 Whitmore St**



Left **Conservative Club**



Right **36 Whitmore St**

Identifier	WMWG 12 (Pt 2)
Location	Conservative Club / 36 Whitmore St
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Rendered 1 side, Exposed 1 side
Coping	Wood

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	36ft 6in 11m 13cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 30cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 10in 2m 09cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 7in 48cm	Mud Work (Rendered)	3ft 11in 1m 21cm	Coping	1ft 4in 41cm
Condition	Gaps in joints on coping causing water ingress.					
Comments	Render requires repair.					

Right Picture

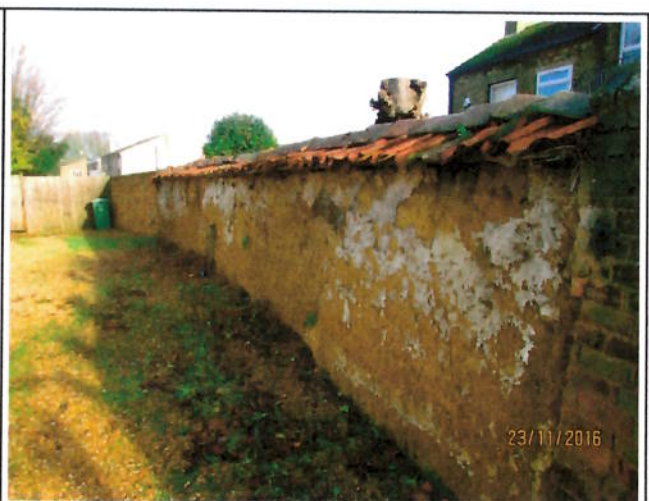
Length (ft) (m)	5ft 1m 53cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 30cm	Height (ft) (m)	4ft 4in 1m 32cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work (Exposed)	3ft 91cm	Coping	1ft 4in 41cm
Condition	Reasonable. This section has been limewashed.					
Comments	Vegetation should be removed, and soil level requires lowering.					

The total length of the wall is 77ft (23m 48cm), and borders 4 addresses -
 The left side of the wall borders St Mary's House and the Conservative Club.
 The right side of the wall borders 87 Gracious St and 36 Whitmore St.

Location **Conservative Club / 36 Whitmore St**



Left **Conservative Club**



Right **36 Whitmore St**

Identifier	WMWG 13	
Location	Conservative Club / 36 Whitmore St	
Footing	Stone	
Mud Work	Exposed	
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles	Restoration planned for 2017

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	20ft 5in 6m 23cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 7in 48cm	Height (ft) (m)	7ft 2m 13cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 2in 36cm	Mud Work	4ft 10in 1m 47cm	Coping 1ft 30cm
Condition	Reasonable, showing original limewash.				
Comments	Evidence of bee activity. We welcome the planned restoration.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	20ft 5in 6m 23cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 7in 48cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 10in 1m 78cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work	4ft 10in 1m 47cm	Coping 1ft 30cm
Condition	Soil level above footings. Erosion of mud caused by usage of water tap.				
Comments	Soil level requires lowering and water pipe should be removed.				

Location **50 Low Cross / 46 Low Cross**



Left **50 Low Cross**



Right **46 Low Cross**

Identifier	WMWG 14					
Location	50 Low Cross / 46 Low Cross					
Footing	Stone					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	None, but was originally tiled					
Length (ft) (m)	46ft 4in 14m 13cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	4ft 8in 1m 42cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	8in 20cm	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	nil

Left Picture

Condition	Very poor. Coping missing.
Comments	Surrounded by shrubs, trees and vegetation.

Right Picture

Condition	Very poor. Coping missing.
Comments	Surrounded by shrubs, trees and vegetation.

This site has been developed around the mud wall. This wall was the boundary wall between properties and an access lane that ran the length of Low Cross. The remaining section runs from 46 to 50 , but is fenced off from 46 & 48, so it cannot be viewed from that side, and the wall and the remains of the lane are now part of the garden of 50.

Location	4 West End
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Left	Roadside	Right	Inside garden
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Identifier	WMWG 15		Grade 2 Listed wall			
Location	4 West End					
Footing	Stone		Footings higher at one end			
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Thatch		Re-thatched in 2016 using Norfolk sedge			
Length (ft) (m)	119ft 8in 36m 93cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 6in 46cm	Height (ft) (m)	8ft 2m 44cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in / 15cm 2ft 2in / 66cm	Mud Work	5ft5in/1m65cm 3ft9in/1m14cm	Coping	2ft 1in 62cm

Left Picture

Condition	Good, with some erosion above footings.
Comments	Erosion of mud caused by road splash. Some stones missing from footings.

Right Picture

Condition	Very good.
Comments	Vegetation at far end should be controlled.

Location

4 Finkle Lane



Left

Driveway



Right

Inside yard

Identifier	WMWG 16
Location	4 Finkle Lane
Footing	Stone
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	25ft 8in 7m 83cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	7ft 6in 2m 29cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 6in 46cm	Mud Work	4ft 4in 1m 32cm	Bricks Coping	4in / 10cm 1ft4in / 41cm
Condition	Fairly good.					
Comments	Crack in mud requires repair. Ivy should be removed. Evidence of bee activity.					

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	12ft 3m 66cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 10in 2m 08cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	10in 25cm	Mud Work	4ft 4in 1m 32cm	Bricks Coping	4in / 10cm 1ft4in / 41cm
Condition	Fairly good.					
Comments	Damage to coping. Crack in mud requires repair. Some footings missing.					

This wall is unusual because half of its length is the supporting wall for a room in the house, and the other half is a boundary wall to the yard. The full length is recorded but all other measurements apply only to the boundary wall. It will be noted that the coping has been raised by bricks to the level of the flat roof of a room extension to enable a roof to be added between the wall and the extension.

Location **Finkle Court car park / 12 Finkle Court**



Left **Finkle Court car park**



Right **12 Finkle Court**

Identifier	WMWG 17 (Pt 1)
Location	Finkle Court car park / 12 Finkle Court
Footing	Stone
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles

Left Picture

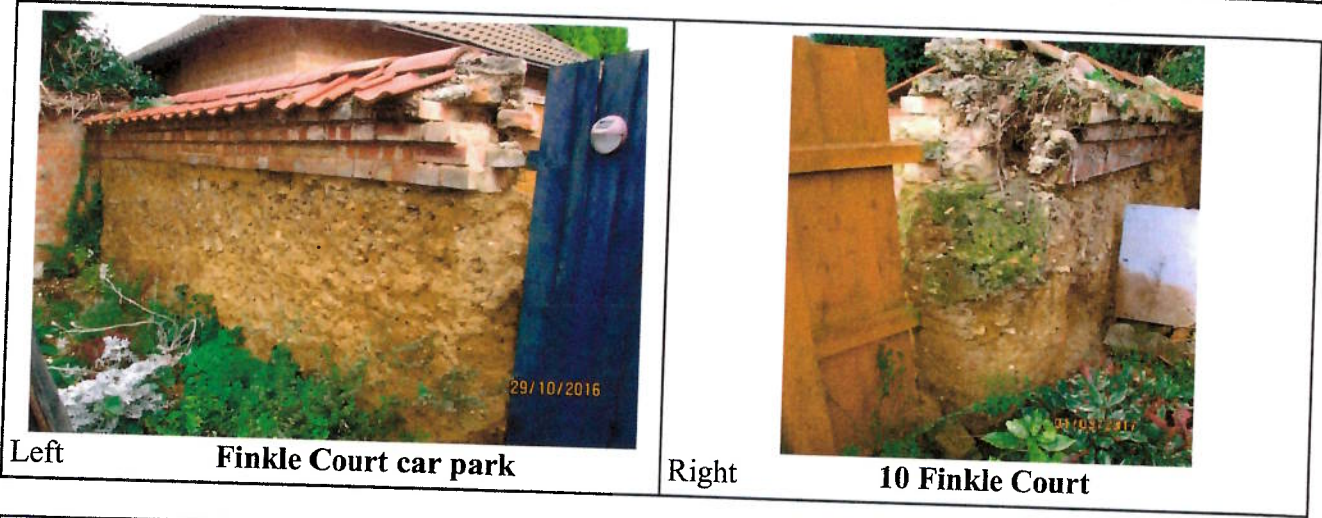
Length (ft) (m)	15ft 4m 57cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in 15cm	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Bricks Coping	1ft / 30cm 1ft / 30cm
Condition	Soil level above footings. Tiles and bricks missing from end of wall.					
Comments	Soil level requires lowering, and vegetation removing. Evidence of bee activity.					

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	11ft 4in 3m 46cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 1m 83cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Bricks Coping	1ft / 30cm 1ft / 30cm
Condition	Soil level too high causing damp. Some tiles missing.					
Comments	Soil level requires lowering, and debris removing.					

This site has been developed around the mud wall. One side of the wall is seen from the car park. On the other side there is a boundary fence which places most of the wall in the garden of 12, and the remainder in 10. The height of the wall has been increased by using bricks to raise the coping.

Location **Finkle Court car park / 10 Finkle Court**



Left **Finkle Court car park**

Right **10 Finkle Court**

Identifier	WMWG 17 (Pt 2)
Location	Finkle Court car park / 10 Finkle Court
Footing	Stone
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	15ft 4m 57cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in 15cm	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Bricks Coping
Condition	Soil level above footings. Tiles and bricks missing from end of wall.				
Comments	Soil level requires lowering, and vegetation removing. Evidence of bee activity.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	3ft 8in 1m 12cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in 15cm	Mud Work	4ft 1m 22cm	Bricks Coping
Condition	Very poor. Bricks and tiles missing. Stone footings missing. Erosion of mud.				
Comments	This wall would benefit from restoration.				

This site has been developed around the mud wall. One side of the wall is seen from the car park. On the other side there is a boundary fence which places most of the wall in the garden of 12, and the remainder in 10. The height of the wall has been increased by using bricks to raise the coping.

Location	2 Willow Close / 3 Willow Close
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Left **2 Willow Close**



Right **3 Willow Close**

Identifier	WMWG 18					
Location	2 Willow Close / 3 Willow Close					
Footing	Brick					
Mud Work	Rendered 1 side, Exposed 1 side			This wall undulates in height		
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge Tiles					
Length (ft) (m)	58ft 17m 69cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 30cm	Height (ft) (m)	4ft - 5ft 1m22cm-1m52cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in 15cm	Mud Work	2ft10in-3ft10in 86cm-1m17cm	Coping	8in 20cm

Left Picture

Condition	Good. Soil level too high.
Comments	Rendered footing and mud. Soil level requires lowering.

Right Picture

Condition	Reasonable. Soil level too high. Tile missing causing wall erosion.
Comments	Exposed mud. Soil level requires lowering.

Location **45 Hallcroft Road**



Left **Outside property**



Right **Inside garden**

Identifier	WMWG 19					
Location	45 Hallcroft Road					
Footing	Brick					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles					
Length (ft) (m)	19ft 8in 6m	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 5in 1m 65cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 30cm	Mud Work	3ft 9in 1m 14cm	Coping	8in 20cm

Left Picture

Condition	Good.
Comments	Recent repairs to base of wall.

Right Picture

Condition	Fairly good.
Comments	Erosion to base of wall caused by damp.

This site has been developed around the mud wall.

Location **9 Horsegate / 13 Horsegate**



Left **9 Horsegate**



Right **13 Horsegate**

Identifier	WMWG 20					
Location	9 Horsegate / 13 Horsegate					
Footing	Stone					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles					
Length (ft) (m)	42ft 6in 12m 96cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 4in 41cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 9in 2m 06cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	4in 10cm	Mud Work	5ft 5in 1m 65cm	Coping	1ft 30cm

Left Picture

Condition	Good. Footings part concrete. Soil level too high.
Comments	Soil level requires lowering. Some tiles require replacing.

Right Picture

Condition	Good.
Comments	Items stored against the wall can cause damp.

Location **Wades Yard / 14 Horsegate**



Left **Wades Yard**



Right **14 Horsegate**

Identifier	WMWG 21					
Location	Wades Yard / 14 Horsegate					
Footing	Brick					
Mud Work	Exposed					
Coping	Wood					
Length (ft) (m)	50ft 15m 25cm	Width (ft) (m)	16in 40cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 1in 1m 85cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	16in 40cm	Mud Work	3ft 3in 99cm	Coping	1ft 6in 46cm

Left Picture

Condition	Fair.
Comments	Wall end requires restoring. Wooden coping requires attention at far end.

Right Picture

Condition	Fair.
Comments	Wall end requires restoring. Wooden coping requires attention at far end.

Location **8 Horsegate / 14 Horsegate**



Left **8 Horsegate**



Right **14 Horsegate**

Identifier	WMWG 22 (Pt 1)
Location	8 Horsegate / 14 Horsegate
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	38ft 11m 59cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm
Height (ft)	Footing 6in 15cm	Mud Work	4ft 10in 1m 48cm	Coping	1ft 2in 36cm
Condition	Good. Some tiles require replacing.				
Comments	Vegetation should be removed.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	11ft 6in 3m 51cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm
Height (ft)	Footing 6in 15cm	Mud Work	4ft 10in 1m 48cm	Coping	1ft 2in 36cm
Condition	Good. Some tiles require replacing.				
Comments	Vegetation should be removed. End of wall requires restoration.				

Location **8 Horsegate / Wades Yard parking area**



Left **8 Horsegate**



Right **Wades Yard parking area**

Identifier	WMWG 22 (Pt 2)
Location	8 Horsegate / Wades Yard parking area
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	Pan tiles and Ridge tiles

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	38ft 11m 59cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	6in 15cm	Mud Work	4ft 10in 1m 48cm	Coping	1ft 2in 36cm
Condition	Good. Some tiles require replacing.					
Comments	Vegetation should be removed.					

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	26ft 6in 8m 08cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	4ft 10in 1m 48cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work	3ft 8in(visible) 1m 12cm	Coping	1ft 2in 36cm
Condition	Fair. Vegetation covering most of wall.					
Comments	Soil level next to wall requires lowering. Vegetation should be removed. The parking area is higher than the gardens of 8 and 14, so the lower part of the wall and footings, a depth of 20in / 50cm, is not visible on this site.					

Location **Black Bull Public House / Queen St car park**



Left **Black Bull Public House**



Right **Queen St car park**

Identifier	WMWG 23 (Attached to wall 24)	Grade 2 Listed wall
Location	Black Bull Public House / Queen St car park	
Footing	Stone and Brick	
Mud Work	Rendered	Restoration planned for 2017
Coping	Wood	Restoration planned for 2017

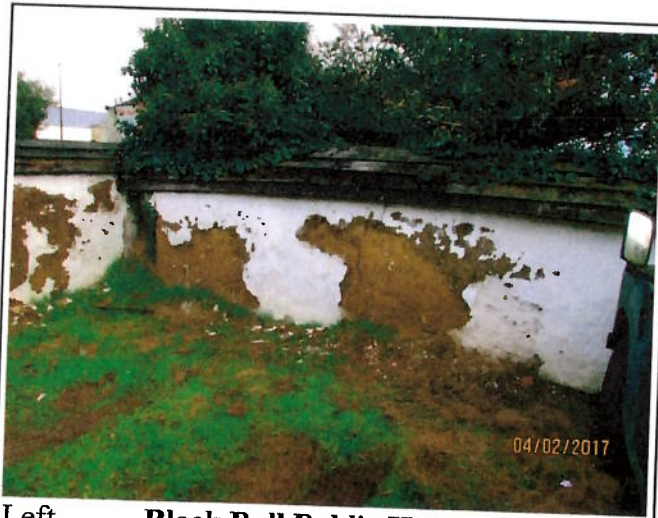
Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	58ft 11in 18m 14cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 8in 51cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 10in 1m 78cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	8in 20cm	Mud Work	3ft 10in 1m 17cm	Coping	1ft 4in 41cm
Condition	Rendering and coping poor.					
Comments	We welcome the planned restoration.					

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	60ft 18m 47cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 8in 51cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 2in 1m 88cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 30cm	Mud Work	3ft 10in 1m 17cm	Coping	1ft 4in 41cm
Condition	Rendering and coping poor.					
Comments	We welcome the planned restoration.					

Location **Black Bull Public House / 7c Queen St**



Left **Black Bull Public House**



Right **7c Queen St**

Identifier	WMWG 24 (Attached to wall 23)	Grade 2 Listed wall
Location	Black Bull Public House / 7c Queen St	
Footing	Stone	
Mud Work	Rendered	Restoration planned for 2017
Coping	Wood	Restoration planned for 2017

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	29ft 6in 6m	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 1in 33cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 5in 1m 65cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work	4ft 3in 1m 30cm	Coping 1ft 1in 33cm
Condition	Rendering poor. Soil level too high.				
Comments	Soil level requires lowering. We welcome the planned restoration.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	29ft 6in 6m	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 1in 33cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 3in 1m 90cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	8in 20cm	Mud Work (Exposed)	4ft 3in 1m 30cm	Coping 1ft 1in 33cm
Condition	Fair.				
Comments	Vegetation should be removed.				

Wall 24 is at 90degrees to wall 23, but is measured separately because of its length.

Location **Black Bull Public House / 7c Queen St**



Left **Black Bull Public House** Right **7c Queen St**

Identifier	WMWG 25	Grade 2 Listed wall
Location	Black Bull Public House / 7c Queen St	
Footing	Stone	Restored in 2009
Mud Work	Limewashed 1 side, Exposed 1 side	Restored in 2009
Coping	Wood	Restored in 2009

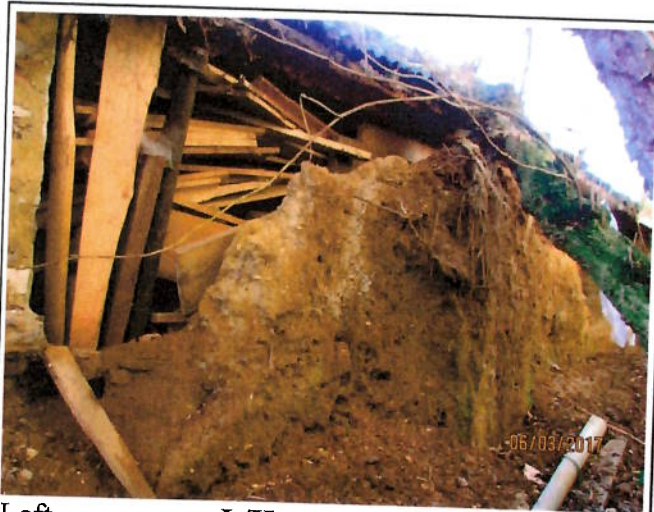
Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	12ft 3in 3m 74cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 1in 33cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 1m 83cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work	4ft 6in 1m 37cm	Coping 1ft 6in 46cm
Condition	Good. Coping requires attention. Soil level too high.				
Comments	Soil level requires reducing.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	12ft 3in 3m 74cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 1in 33cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 8in 2m 03cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	8in 20cm	Mud Work (Exposed)	4ft 6in 1m 37cm	Coping 1ft 6in 46cm
Condition	Good. Coping requires attention.				
Comments	Vegetation should be removed.				

Location **Black Bull Public House / Former Cinema**



Left **L/H end of wall**



Right **R/H end of wall**

Identifier	WMWG 26
Location	Black Bull Public House / Former Cinema
Footing	Not visible
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	None
	Restoration planned for 2017
	Restoration planned for 2017

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	20ft 6m 10cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in - 2ft 1m 98cm - 61cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work	6ft 6in 1m 98cm	Coping Nil
Condition	Very poor.				
Comments	Brick building in front of wall to be demolished.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	20ft 6m 10cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in - 2ft 1m 98cm - 61cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	Not visible	Mud Work	2ft 61cm	Coping Nil
Condition	Very poor.				
Comments	Soil level high - mud from collapsed wall. We welcome the planned restoration.				

Location **30 Bassenhally Rd / 28a Bassenhally Rd**



Left **30 Bassenhally Road**



Right **28a Bassenhally Road**

Identifier	WMWG 27 (Pt 1)
Location	30 Bassenhally Road / 28a Bassenhally Road
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Exposed 1 side, Rendered 1 side
Coping	Wood

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	97ft 28m 58cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 10in - 6ft 1m78cm-1m83cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 4in - 1ft 10cm - 30cm	Mud Work (Exposed)	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	1ft 30cm
Condition	Evidence that end of wall has been lost and replaced with bricks and corrugated metal coping. Remaining mud and footings generally good.				
Comments	Attention required to wooden coping. Evidence of bee activity.				

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	26ft 7m 93cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 1m 83cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 10in 25cm	Mud Work (Rendered)	4ft 3in 1m 30cm	Coping	11in 28cm
Condition	Rendered with topsoil, over footing also.				
Comments	Attention required to wooden coping. Some moss present.				

Location

30 Bassenhally Rd / 1 Bassenhally Court



Left **30 Bassenhally Road**



Right **1 Bassenhally Court**

Identifier	WMWG 27 (Pt 2)
Location	30 Bassenhally Road / 1 Bassenhally Court
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Exposed 1 side, Rendered 1 side
Coping	Wood , some repairs done with slates and sheet metal

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	97ft 28m 58cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	5ft 10in - 6ft 1m78cm-1m83cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	4in - 1ft 10cm - 30cm	Mud Work (Exposed)	4ft 1m 22cm	Coping	1ft 30cm
Condition	Damage to end of wall (not shown). Generally good elsewhere.					
Comments	3 brick abutments. Attention required to wooden coping. Evidence of bee activity.					

Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	71ft 21m 65cm	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 2in 36cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 6in 1m 98cm	
Height (ft) (m)	Footing	1ft 5in 43cm	Mud Work (Rendered)	4ft 4in 1m 32cm	Coping	11in - 1ft 2in 28cm - 36cm
Condition	Average. Cement render lifting off in places. Some emulsion paint used. Damage to end of wall.					
Comments	Attention required to wooden coping. Some coping replaced by slates.					

Location	72 Mayfield Rd / 78 Mayfield Rd Eastrea
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Left **72 Mayfield Rd**



Right **78 Mayfield Rd**

Identifier	WMWG 28
Location	72 Mayfield Rd / 78 Mayfield Rd Eastrea
Footing	Stone and Brick
Mud Work	Exposed
Coping	Slate

Left Picture

Length (ft) (m)	40ft + 4ft 1in 12m 20 + 1m 25	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 11in 2m 11cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 8in 20cm	Mud Work	4ft 6in 1m 37cm	Coping	1ft 9in 53cm
Condition	Good. Slates require attention. Vegetation should be trimmed.				
Comments	Total length - 44ft 1in / 13m 45cm. Unusual in having slate coping.				

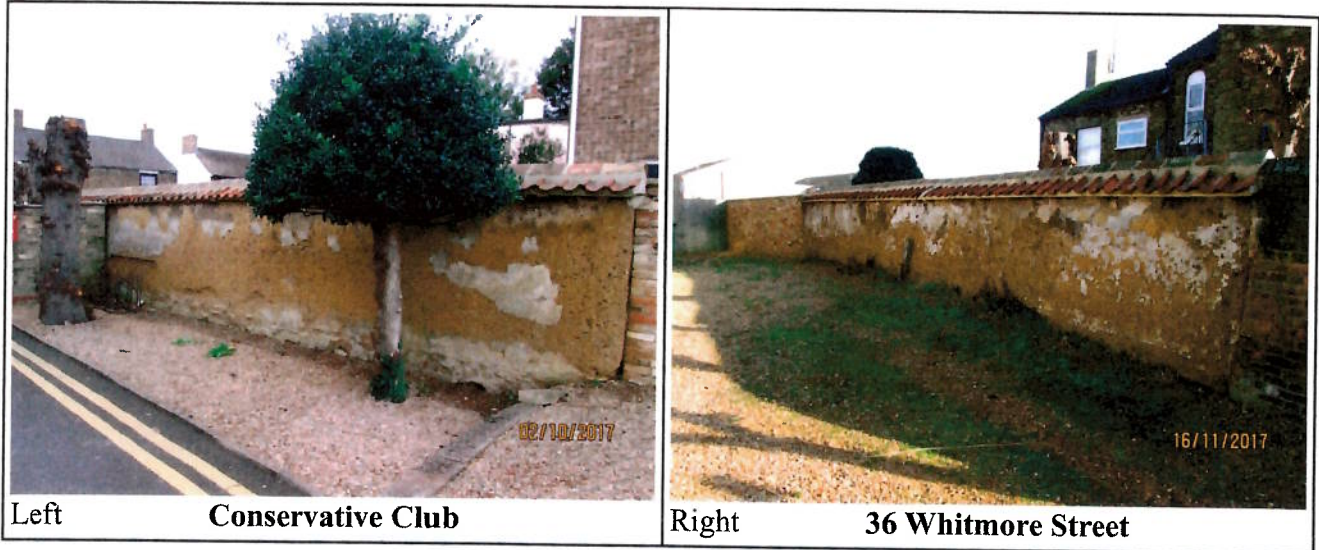
Right Picture

Length (ft) (m)	41ft 3in + 5ft 4in 12m 38 + 1m 63	Width (ft) (m)	1ft 3in 38cm	Height (ft) (m)	6ft 11in 2m 11cm
Height (ft) (m)	Footing 8in 20cm	Mud Work	4ft 6in 1m 37cm	Coping	1ft 9in 53cm
Condition	Good. Slates require attention. Evidence of bee activity.				
Comments	Total length - 46ft 7in / 14m 01cm. Unusual in having slate coping.				

This wall has a short section at 90degrees at one end, not long enough to be considered separately.

It was mentioned on their respective pages, 24, 36, and 37, that repairs were due in 2017. The work was done in late 2017 after the survey, so the pictures of completion are included in this Appendix.

WMWG 13



Left

Conservative Club

Right

36 Whitmore Street

WMWG 23



Left **Black Bull Public House**



Right **Queen Street car park**

WMWG 24



Left **Black Bull Public House**



Right **7c Queen Street**

WMWG Appendix 2

Survey Number Cross-references

When the walls were first surveyed in 1981 and compiled in a list, each wall was given a numerical index reference. This resulted in a list of walls numbered 1 – 42.

In all following surveys, this index number has been quoted. During this period, walls continued to disappear, meaning that in these later surveys, there were gaps in the numerical listings, which continued to increase.

By the time we did our survey in 2016/2017, this listing index was obsolete. We therefore decided to compile our own numerical index reference. This resulted in a list of walls numbered 1 – 28. This makes it easier to see how many walls we have left.

However, to ensure continuity, the list below cross-references those numbers. Starting on the left are the WMWG numbers, then the location of the wall, on the right are the numbers used for that wall in the previous surveys. (x - Not previously surveyed)

Please note that some of the old numbers are used more than once. This is because what was once a long wall is now a number of short walls, and are listed separately.

WMWG	Wall Location	Previous Survey Number
1	Grosvenor Rd	27
2	Grosvenor Rd	27
3	Old Crown Lane	5
4	Arnolds Lane	10
5	Delph St	11
6	Delph St	41
7	Delph St	39
8	Delph Ct	x
9	Windmill St	19
10	Gracious St	16
11	Gracious St	18 / 40
12	Con. Club	18 / 40
13	Con. Club	12
14	Low Cross	21
15	West End	28
16	Finkle Lane	33
17	Finkle Ct	37
18	Willow Cl	x
19	Hallcroft Rd	x
20	Horsegate	8
21	Horsegate	2
22	Horsegate	31
23	Black Bull	22
24	Black Bull	17
25	Black Bull	17
26	Black Bull	x
27	Bassenhally Rd	4
28	Mayfield Rd, Eastrea	38

We formed in 2016, as there was a concerted desire to conserve the remaining mud boundary walls in Whittlesey and Eastrea.

Over the ensuing period, we have begun highlighting these walls by organising events, designed to educate owners and the general public as to their significance and importance. We have organised practical demonstrations, guided walks to see the walls, and information displays. The displays will be taken to events around Cambridgeshire, the walk now has a printed leaflet to allow you to visit in your own time. As members of SPAB, (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings), we're trying to arrange some training courses here in Whittlesey, so that those interested can learn about traditional earthen construction, and repairing this type of structure.

One of our members has made an exquisite 1/12th scale model of a mud wall, (shown below), which will be used as an educational tool when we start giving talks on these walls. You may also see it at our information displays.

If you're reading this, it means you have our completed survey document, which gives you all the information about the surviving walls, general mud wall history, as well as advice on maintenance of the walls. If you find this document interesting, you may consider becoming a member of our group. You'll also find our contact and meeting details within. You'd be very welcome.

Mike.



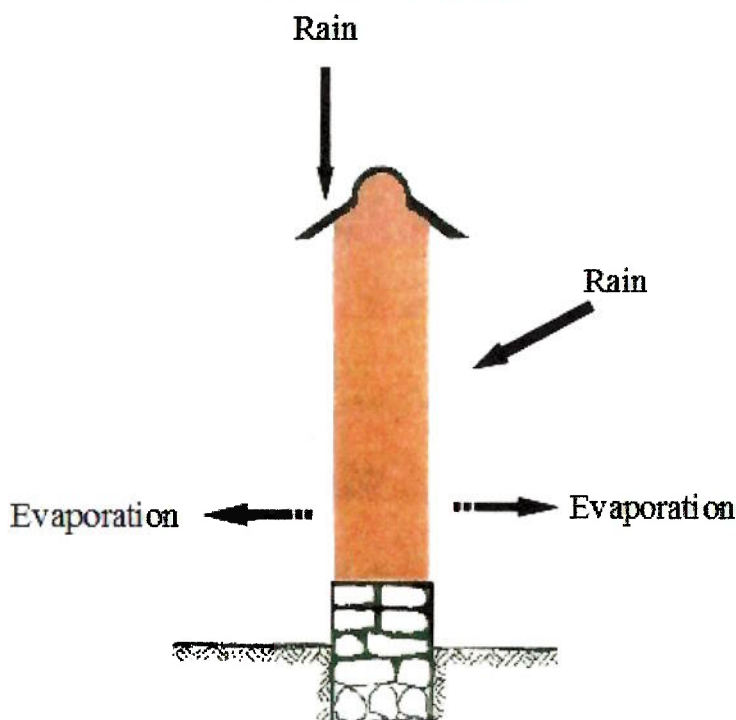
WHITTLESEY MUD WALLS GROUP

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR MUD WALL



The walls are constructed as follows. A plinth of rubble stones or brick, known as footings, is constructed, which should rise about 20 cm (8") above ground level to prevent dampness and allow penetrating rain to soak away freely. The well prepared clay subsoil mixed with straw, is put onto the footings in layers, known as lifts, of about 45 cm (18") or more along its length and left to dry before the next lift is added. The sides are trimmed with a sharp spade. The walls may then be lime rendered for decorative purposes, but boundary walls are usually left without render. Traditionally, most boundary walls had thatched roofs, which ensured good protection against the weather. In most instances thatch has been replaced by tiles, (plain or pantiles), or wooden boards called coping.

How a wall 'breathes'



As long as the tiles are undamaged and have an adequate overhang, they will deflect the rain away from the wall. Any rain that penetrates the mud wall will either evaporate or drain through the footings. As long as the footings are prominent enough they will prevent rising damp and rodent infestation.

Some problems encountered with the care of mud walls

“All an earth wall needs are good boots and a good hat to keep it dry” is a saying often quoted in literature on the subject of earth buildings. Unfortunately, this simple rule worked well only until cement, modern plasters, renders and paints came on the market in the second half of the 20th century. Cement rich renders and dense plasters, coated in impervious paints, create strait-jackets, which stop walls from breathing, trap moisture and prevent early detection of trouble caused by decay of the building material. Similarly, if the soil level is allowed to build up above the footings, or there are broken tiles, water will soak into the mud wall and start to erode it. A prolonged high moisture content can create conditions which will wash out the fine materials and may rot the straw. Moisture allows the build up of soluble salts, which in turn breaks down the material, and

this loose material is washed down the narrow channels created within the wall by water. The results are pockets or layers that have lost their strength, and even drying out may not cure. Severe frost (over weeks) can also freeze this water and cause the mud to disintegrate. These scenarios can lead to the collapse of an entire wall, the lower sections of which may have been weakened over a long period.

Effects of dampness in mud walls



Picture 1



Picture 2

Picture 1, shows imminent collapse caused by absorption of dampness from the high soil level above the footings.

Picture 2, shows a fine section of wall, except for the missing tile at the far end, causing damage to the mud wall and footings by erosion.

Essential maintenance that is very beneficial for the health of the wall

Prevent earth from building up over the footings.

Prevent creeper growth covering the wall, and trees growing too close to the wall.

Remedial works & repairs which keep mud walls in good health

Replacing cement pointing with lime mortar in the footings.

Removal of cement render, modern plaster and paints.

Removal of high and dense ground surfaces without going below the often shallow footings.

Appropriate types of render

Traditionally, boundary walls were rarely rendered.

The use of lime based renders gives greater permeability and flexibility.

Finishes; Traditionally, these were either a fine clay slurry or a lime wash. Only breathable paints should be used on mud walls.

Damp in walls

Dampness is the main reason why a mud wall may become unstable. The reasons for moisture becoming trapped inside a wall are;

Splash-back, especially from hard surfaces, caused by traffic from a nearby road.

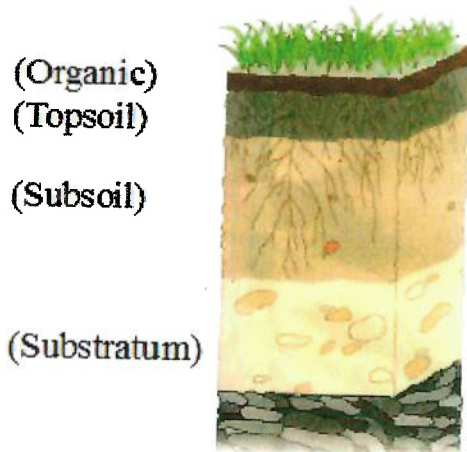
Ground levels have been allowed to build up above the footings.

Footings have been pointed with cement based mortar. This prevents the plinth from doing its job, traps moisture which seeps into the mud wall.

Cement render has been extended down to the ground over the footings.

Failed roof coverings, which expose the top of the wall to rain and frost. Structural failure of walls can be the consequence. Moisture content must be monitored during this process and the wall be allowed to dry out gradually. Repairs must be carried out to decayed areas of the wall, as they are revealed, working from the bottom upwards.

Soil Strata



Sound used clay can be reconstituted, or freshly dug subsoil mixed with straw, can be applied in lifts when wet. Alternatively, the material can be shaped into blocks, allowed to dry and used like bricks with a clay slurry as mortar. Because the use of dried mud blocks avoids the problem of shrinkage, this is one of the most straightforward repair methods. Small areas of hollows and depressions can be dubbed out with clay or lime mortar, having been cut back to sound material first. The newly mixed material must be allowed to set before a plaster or render is applied.



Picture 3, shows a badly finished wall, painted in a non-breathable paint. The paint is shedding due to moisture trying to get out of the wall. The missing wooden coping is responsible for the main ingress of water.

Picture 3

Masonry Bees

You may notice small holes in the vertical face of your wall, evidence of masonry bee activity. They're active from early May to late July, and those holes are their nests. The holes will be found on the south-facing (sunny) side of the wall, and they tend to be no deeper than an inch or two. With most walls being at least 15" in thickness, masonry bees cause very little damage. It can be said that if your wall has bees, then the wall is generally in good condition. However, if you dislike the bees, try hanging debris netting over the wall in the early spring. This should prevent them nesting in your wall.

Summary of advice

If you are the owner of a mud wall, please remember this is a tried and tested building material that has been in use in one form or another for several thousand years in different parts of the world. The material also has excellent insulating qualities.

If your wall has a modern cement render, which many walls have acquired over the years, but shows signs of distress such as cracking or bulging, do not rush to carry out alterations. Ensure the existing render is well maintained which will prevent damp penetrating through capillary action.

Essential maintenance, as discussed above, should be carried out at regular intervals.

Also, consider the careful removal of render covering the footings, and reduce the build up of soil to well below their top course. Once the footings can do their work again, your wall will find its own moisture control mechanism made so much easier.

If you have walls without render, you don't have to render them, just keep their copings repaired.

Any repairs that become necessary will have to be carried out using only traditional materials.

Remember; “All an earth wall needs are good boots and a good hat to keep it dry”.
Cement, modern plasters and paints have no part to play in the care of your mud wall.



Acknowledgements

Whittlesey Mud Walls Group wish to thank the following individuals and organisations for their help with this survey:

The wall owners and/or property residents, for allowing us into their gardens.
Whittlesey Mud Walls Group members and colleagues for their diligent work with tape measures and cameras.
Fenland District Council, and especially their Conservation Officers.
Whittlesey Town Council.
The Whittlesey Charity, for the use of the Town Hall for monthly meetings.
Whittlesey Museum, who allow us access to their archives, and run our Facebook page.
Whittlesea Society, who were instrumental in our formation.
SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings).

Contacts

For further specialist advice on the care and repair of earth structures:

SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings),
37 Spital Square, London, E1 6DY.
Tel: 020 7377 1644
Email: info@spab.org.uk / education@spab.org.uk

Information about Whittlesey Mud Walls Group:

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at
The Town Hall, Whittlesey, at 10.30am.
Email: whittleseymudwallsgroup@gmail.com

