

Press Release

6th November 2008

Chiltern Fire at the Globe

The exquisite Globe Theatre in London was the venue for the second '*Recycling Historic Buildings*' seminar, organised by Chiltern International Fire's sister company TRADA. CIF's Peter Barker, Head of Section: Fire Consultancy, spoke on '*Fire safety challenges and solutions for historic buildings*'.

The seminar attracted a high-powered audience comprising developers, local authority conservation officers, architects, structural engineers, heritage consultants and specialist contractors.

Many historic properties evolve over the centuries, Mr Barker told delegates. 'Many aspects of an original building may have been altered through fashion or necessity. This can create an incongruous mix of materials and inconsistency in workmanship, concealing construction faux pas and creating hidden voids. Ad hoc repairs and poor maintenance can, over time, lead to hidden structural damage, while shrinkage or fungal attack may create enlarged voids, all of which can present particular fire risks.'

Approved Document B provides practical guidance on Building Regulations requirements for England and Wales, but historic buildings rarely 'fit' the prescriptive nature of the Regulations, said Mr Barker. 'Historic buildings must be considered on a case-by-case basis. By dealing with each of the requirements in turn, and introducing practical solutions suited to the building and its contents, a holistic fire safety strategy can be developed which also meets the functional requirements of the building regulations.'

Fire risk assessment and management are at the core of any effective fire safety strategy. This can be broken down into preparation, prevention, protection and management. For more information email pbarker@chilternfire.co.uk

Ends

Chiltern International Fire

With more than 30 years' experience, Chiltern International Fire is one of Europe's leading authorities on fire, providing a range of services to clients around the world. Services include, consultancy, research, training and testing to British, European and international standards. In addition, it offers fire risk assessments, fire safety audits, upgrading and assessment of fire performance and expert witness. All major tests are accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). The company also offers a first class facility for Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV), Breathing Apparatus (BA) and Compartment Fire Behaviour training for fire services personnel, as well as outdoor exercises and drills.