

A WATERFALL OF A STRANGE NEW KIND



Richard Huws' Piazza Fountain
Drury Lane, Liverpool

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Last, but by no means least, I am indebted to Stewart Denham, for initiating this project, tracking down the ex Cammell Laird operatives and creating the report's title page and to Derek M Hudson for determining the critical ownership of the fountain and finally to both for reading successive drafts and providing invaluable comments. Both, like Peter Carmichael and myself, were students of Richard Huws at the Liverpool School of Architecture during the time he was developing his ideas for the Piazza Fountain - which he later very appropriately described as:-

"A waterfall of a strange new kind".¹

RM, January 2019
(Revised, January 2020)

A Waterfall of a Strange New Kind

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1. Introduction

The origins of this report lie in the reminiscences of myself and four other former students of the Liverpool School of Architecture, on being taught there by Richard Huws in the 1959/60 academic year, when he was developing his fountain designs from his original “*water mobile sculpture*” for the 1951 Festival of Britain.



Initially, in late August 2018, a page from an old copy of the official 1951 festival catalogue (extract opposite) listing Richard Huws as a contributor, alongside many of the famous designers and sculptors of the day, had been shown by a friend to one of the group, Stewart Denham, who then shared this with the other four.² This led to our recollections of Richard Huws' later Liverpool 'bucket' fountain of 1967 and in early September to another of the group, Derek M Hudson, visiting central Liverpool, to discover that the fountain was still working, but only partially and in obvious need of repair.³

Having first checked and found that 'Richard Huws' fountain was not listed, on the 15 September 2018, I consequently suggested to the group that “*rather than simply taking our current reminiscences to the grave, I think we should give them a more positive outcome by getting the Liverpool fountain listed*”.⁴ This was agreed and having recently fully retired, I offered to take the lead in the research needed to make a convincing application for the fountain's listing.⁵

An early internet trawl revealed an unspecified photograph (shown in section 2.2 below) of a black commemorative wall plaque to the designer from the Isle of Anglesey Council⁶ saying in Welsh that he “*lived and died in this house*”. Fortunately, Stewart has another friend who lives on Anglesey, who was not only able to translate the plaque but recognised it as being on a house in the village of Talwrn, near Llangefni.⁷



Airbnb photograph showing wall plaque

On the 2nd, 9th and 10th November 2018, I visited the NLW to examine these papers and the information so gained provides a large part of the evidence presented in this report. We knew from existing descriptions of the fountain that it had been “*campaignd for*” by the Merseyside Civic Society (MCS)¹³ and, consequently, enquiries were also made to the Liverpool Record Office, who told us they held a folder containing the papers of the MCS Fountain Sub-Committee 1962-67 as well as the bound proceedings of the Society's Executive Committee covering the same period.¹⁴ These were examined in a visit to Liverpool on 7 November 2018, again providing further substantial evidence for the report.

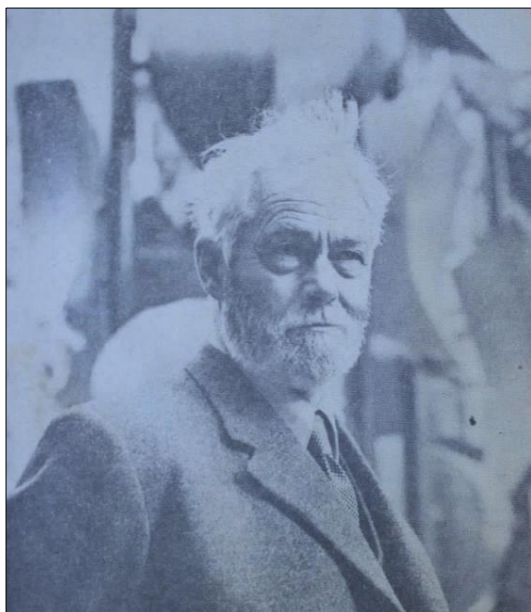
In the meantime, Stewart had contacted the National Archives in Kew regarding Richard Huws' 1951 Festival fountain¹⁵ and Cammell Laird concerning the fabrication of the Liverpool fountain. He also submitted a letter to the *Wirral Globe* requesting information from any apprentices who had worked on the Piazza 'bucket' fountain, this being published on both the 5th and 11th December.¹⁶ This elicited responses from three operatives who had been involved in either the fabrication of the 'trial hoppers' or the final components of the fountain.¹⁷

Architects Brock-Carmichael and BCA Landscape were contacted for information on the history of the fountain post 1976, after being informed by the MCS treasurer of their conversion of Beetham Plaza in 1997-2000.¹⁸ Derek also contacted HM Land Registry to determine the current owners as required for the listing application¹⁹ – the latter then being submitted to Historic England on the 8 January 2019, having the previous day published the first edition of our historical report on the MCS website for referencing in the application.

2: Richard Huws, 1902-1980

The following biography of the designer focuses on his life and work before 1960, these being the sources of inspiration for his Piazza Fountain in Drury Lane, Liverpool. It has been compiled from the three main sources referenced in the endnotes.^{20,21,22}

2.1 Richard Hughes. Education & Early Life



Richard Huws with his Liverpool fountain

Richard Llywelyn Hughes was born on the 10 June 1902 at Penysarn, near Amlwch, on the Isle of Anglesey, where his father Thomas Hughes was the headmaster of the local school and later of Llangoed, near Penmon Point. Richard was educated at nearby Beaumaris Grammar School, but he also learnt woodworking from a local carpenter and woodcarving from a retired architect.

In 1920, he started work as an apprentice at the Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead, and then in 1922 won a three-year Armstrong scholarship to study naval architecture at Liverpool University. After graduating in 1925, he was obliged to return to Cammell Laird for a year, but due to order shortages was allowed to leave early.

Richard then attended Liverpool College of Art, drew cartoons for Liverpool newspapers and spent the summer of 1926 doing sketches of tourists in North Wales coastal towns. In 1927 he travelled to the Riviera to again earn money by sketching and began to sign his work "Huws". In October of the same year, he enrolled at the, largely ex-Bauhaus staffed, Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Applied Arts) in Vienna and remained there until 1930.

That autumn, he returned from the continent and established himself in Devonshire Street, London as a freelance designer and cartoonist. The following year he changed his name by deed poll to 'Huws' and married Edrica Tyrwhitt, an artist who had studied at the Royal College of Art and later became well known for her 'patchwork paintings'. Subsequently, the couple had five children, two boys and three girls.²³

2.2 Richard Huws, Later Career

In 1933, Richard and Edrica Huws moved to Verbena Gardens, Hammersmith, where they shared a house with two other artists, Ceri and Frances Richards, while keeping the accommodation in Devonshire Street as a studio. In the same year, Richard was commissioned to design the original Triban (three peaks) logo for Plaid Cymru. In 1935, he moved his workplace to a large workshop off Tottenham Court Road and embarked on his largest project to date, 'the Mechanical Man' (an enormous working model of the human body) for the major Glasgow Empire Exhibition of 1938.

In 1939, just before the outbreak of war, he moved his family back to Anglesey, to Talwrn near Llangefni, and the following year returned to Cammell Laird to do war work. In 1941, he transferred to Saunders-Roe in Beaumaris to undertake more innovative war work, while in his spare time landscaping his critically acclaimed garden at Talwrn.²⁴

In 1947, Richard Huws returned to freelance design work in London, now living near Great Ormond Street, and soon after was asked by Misha Black to join Sir Hugh Casson's design team for the South Bank site.²⁵ Here he was responsible for four designs:- the masts of Spinners for the bailey footbridge attached to Hungerford railway bridge; sail like Sky Sections and Dividing Cell Features both for the Dome of Discovery;²⁶ and his greatest contribution, his iconic 'water mobile sculpture' for the river walk. Despite receiving great acclaim for the latter, thereafter work became scarce and in 1953, he returned to work for Saunders-Roe, at Cowes, Isle of Wight.



In 1955, he was appointed as a full-time lecturer in design at the Liverpool University School of Architecture and bought a family house in Llanrwst.²⁷ In 1966 he moved to a flat in Huskisson Street, Liverpool and remained at the University until his retirement in 1969. After retirement, he then stayed on in Liverpool perfecting his fountain designs.

He returned to Anglesey in 1979 and died on 27 February 1980 after further landscaping work in his garden in Talwrn. In 1997, his life and work were commemorated by a plaque on his house awarded by the Isle of Anglesey Council.²⁸

3: Festival of Britain, Water Mobile Sculpture, 1951

The Liverpool fountain was a direct development of Richard Huws' original water mobile sculpture for the 1951 Festival of Britain, which at the time of the former he specifically referred to as a "prototype".²⁹ The following account of the 1951 structure has been compiled largely from a recent study of the uncatalogued Richard Huws Papers in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.³⁰

3.1 A New Type of Fountain

Richard Huws categorised traditional water features as being either jets/sprays or falling cascades and thought both monotonous. As appropriate to its position outside Basil Spence's Sea and Ship Pavilion, he wanted his festival fountain to reproduce the much more dramatic effect of waves crashing on a rocky shore, of which he was very familiar having lived as a boy close to the Anglesey coast. He realised that this could be achieved by having pivoted vessels that filled and emptied into the receiving pool at random intervals.³¹

The brief for the water sculpture, however, was that it had to be over 40ft tall and, given an oval receiving pool only 14 ft wide, he realised that he could not have water tipping from this height.³² He therefore devised a fountain in which water first cascaded down upper sculptural forms in two separate streams, one filling the highest of the bucket/hoppers and one the lower, largest hopper. These then tipped when full, the water from the higher proceeding to cascade down a further sculptural stack (left photograph below), while the largest hopper tipped and emptied at right angles onto curved aluminium forms in the pool (middle). Beneath the two larger hoppers there were four smaller tipping hoppers grouped in pairs either side on the main support, these being filled directly from a pipe within the support (right).³³



Images from the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth and National Archives, Kew (right)

This water sculpture proved to be one of the most popular attractions at the Festival and Richard Huws put this down to the unpredictability of its action, creating elements of surprise and expectancy.³⁴ It features in every video of the Festival available on the internet, one of the most comprehensive being at <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xb3z>, which includes, as well as a short clip of the fountain in the introduction, a longer sequence showing it in action starting at the 5.10 minute point.³⁵

It was also very widely reported and illustrated in the press at the time. Even prior to the Festival, the *Picture Post* of 6 January 1951 illustrated Richard Huws inspecting his large working model of the water sculpture, with the caption "Something New in Fountains". Most reports, however, including illustrations of the fountain in the *Sunday Graphic* (06/05/51), *The Architects Journal* (17/05/51), *The Illustrated London News* (26/05/51), *the News Chronicle* (undated) and *Vogue* (undated), and a cartoon by McGinty featuring the fountain, appeared soon after the Festival's opening on the 3 May 1951.³⁶

3.2 The Fate of the 1951 'Prototype'

After some 8.5 million people had visited the South Bank site in under 5 months, the Festival closed on the 30 September 1951. Following this, *The Builder* of the 15 February 1952 in an article on the 'Future of the South Bank' reported that an Interim Development Report, accepted by the London County Council (LCC), stated that on the riverside promenade "the 'water mobile' designed by Richard Huws ... will be retained."³⁷

However, in the event, all of the festival buildings and structures were demolished or dismantled, with the one exception being The Royal Festival Hall.

Later Richard Huws reported that there had been several proposals to re-erect his 1951 water sculpture including one in the mid 1960's from the LCC.³⁸ At this time, re-erection of the fountain would have been feasible as RH had kept the model and a full set of working drawings. However, in around 1976 he had lent these to the V & A for an exhibition commemorating the Festival of Britain and the museum had managed to lose them.³⁹

Despite its feasibility, he had advised against all of these proposals, regarding the fountain as "a temporary prototype". While it was deemed an outstanding success visually, mechanically it was anything but. The backward return of the two larger hoppers, the largest of which contained half a ton of water, had to be restrained by a spring-loaded stop, while the powerful forward motion was restrained by an oil dash pot.⁴⁰ Notwithstanding these precautions, Richard Huws later reported that the fountain "*shook itself to bits before the festival ended*" and that he had "*spent most of my time repairing it*".⁴¹

The four smaller and lower centrally pivoting hoppers, which were filled directly from the 'rising main' appear to have been less problematic in this respect and it was these elements that Richard Huws went on to develop for his next kinetic design to create an even more dramatic wave effect in Liverpool.

4: Piazza Fountain, Drury Lane, Liverpool, 1962-1967

*Richard Huws' Liverpool fountain was commissioned by the Merseyside Civic Society and the following account results from an examination of the proceedings of the Society's Fountain Sub-Committee of 1962-67 and minutes of their Executive Committee of 1962-72 in the Liverpool Record Office, the recollections of ex Cammell Laird operatives, as well as the records again included in the Richard Huws Papers in the National Library of Wales.*⁴²

4.1 The Merseyside Civic Society's Fountain Sub-Committee

The Fountain Sub-Committee (FSC) of the Merseyside Civic Society (MCS) comprised the following members⁴³ and held its first meeting in Liverpool on 10 July 1962:-

- Colin Reay, J.P., F.C.A., Messrs R.F. Frazer & Co (then chair of the MCS Executive Committee);
- F.J Gamenisch, Morecroft & Jones Sephton, Solicitors, Castle St (chair of the Sub-Committee);
- Colin R. Wilson ARIBA, Messrs Hall, O'Donahue and Wilson, Bluecoat Chambers;
- J. Roy Parker B.Arch, ARIBA., Messrs Nelson and Parker;
- Mrs J.W. Hallam, Pipers Lane, Heswall, Wirral, Cheshire;
- H.F. Lewis, Studio 15, Bluecoat Chambers; and
- David Gregory-Jones of Graeme Shankland Associates (joined FSC after its 2nd meeting, after Graham Shankland had written to Mrs Hallam requesting to be represented).⁴⁴

At this initial meeting, Colin Wilson outlined his idea for a large fountain in a proposed new pedestrian precinct at the junction of Bold St and Hanover Street, Liverpool, to commemorate the completion of the Treweryn scheme and reported that Graeme Shankland, the City's planning consultant, and Alderman H McDonald Stewart, the chair of the Council's Special Redevelopment Committee, were both favourably disposed to the idea. Roy Parker mentioned that "*Mr. Huws of the Liverpool University School of Architecture had been responsible for the very successful fountain on the South Bank during the Festival of Britain in 1951*", and it was agreed that he should be approached informally and his views on the proposal ascertained.⁴⁵

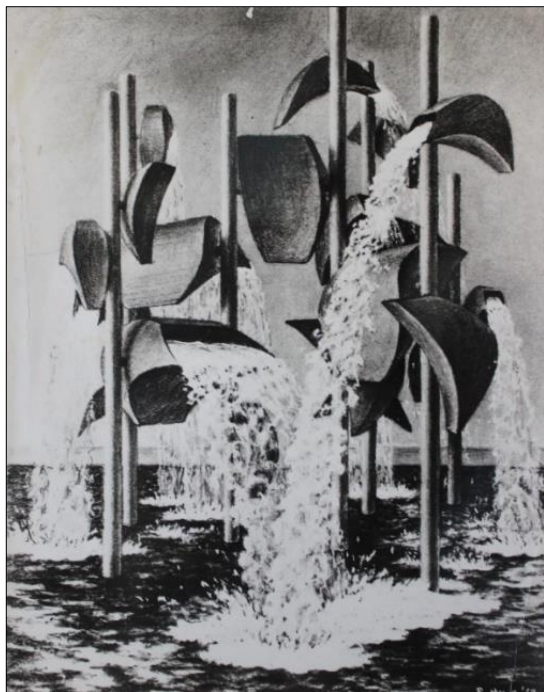
At the next meeting in August, Mr Parker reported on his meeting with Richard Huws. He was delighted to design a fountain for Liverpool, but as "*a principal opponent*" of the Tryweryn scheme would not want the project to celebrate its completion⁴⁶. Seemingly anxious to secure Richard Huws as the designer, the Committee agreed this need not be the case and that a water fountain to celebrate the opening of a proposed precinct was equally appropriate. "*It was therefore agreed that the chairman should write to Mr Huws inviting him to submit a design for a fountain costing about £10,000*" – which RH had thought was a realistic figure.⁴⁷

Those present at the third September meeting included Richard Huws and Graham Ashworth for Graeme Shankland Associates (GSA). It was emphasised that the main feature of the proposed fountain should be water in large quantities, with sculpture as a secondary feature and this was agreed by both RH and Mr Ashworth. Referring to his 1951 South Bank fountain, RH said that he had now developed an inherently more sculptural form in which the water would be dominant, "*the acoustic value being tremendous*". Careful calculations would make it possible to ring constant changes in the flow of water and a maximum height of about 20 ft was visualised and a spread of about 60 ft would be required.

Graeme Ashworth thought that the corner of Church St and Parker St might prove a more suitable site and that it should be possible to make a start on the fountain by 1964 as part of the Ravenseft development. RH said he agreed with Mr Ashworth that it would be essential for him to work in co-operation with the architects designing the precinct. RH offered to submit sketch designs and to get in touch with the chair and GSA when his sketches were complete.⁴⁸

At the next meeting on the 3 October 1962, the chair read a letter from Richard Huws confirming his offer to submit sketch designs and a model. The Sub-Committee would be responsible for raising the fee and financial assistance would be sought from the Civic Trust initially. However, it was agreed that formal consent should first be gained from the Corporation and Graeme Shankland (although this had already been received verbally) and RH was asked to wait until this was obtained.⁴⁹

4.2 Presentation and Reception of the Design



Presentational drawing - "R. Huws '62"

Formal consent appears to have been quickly given, as on the 23 October 1962 a further FSC meeting was convened for Richard Huws to present his initial design. To quote the meeting notes "*The sub-committee were delighted to find that Mr Huws ideas were exactly what they had hoped for and much enthusiasm was shown*". Mr Meats, representing GSA, undertook to brief Graeme Shankland on the design, but added that "*He had little doubt that Mr Shankland would be equally enthusiastic*". A second meeting was then proposed to show Alderman McDonald Steward and others the design and for RH to demonstrate the model.⁵⁰

With several high-ranking persons attending, this subsequent meeting was not held until the 8 January 1963. However, as the chair reported at the regular FCS meeting the following day, present were Alderman McDonald Steward, Graeme Shankland, Walter Bor, the City Planning Officer and Richard Huws as well as Messrs, Wilson, Parker and Camernisch from the MCS Sub-Committee.

Richard Huws had presented his model and drawings for the proposed water feature which had "*made an extremely good impression*" and it appeared the planners present "*were unanimously in favour of it*". The meeting had discussed the siting and, given that it was now clear that there would be long delays if the original proposed sites were adhered to, Richard Huws had proposed the nearby Williamson Square.

He thought that this more enclosed space would enhance the fountain "*both visually and aurally*". He also suggested that stainless steel should be used instead of fibreglass and aluminium, even though this would increase the costs, and Alderman McDonald Steward volunteered that the Corporation were prepared to help financially. It was suggested that the model and drawings should be entered for the Civic Trust's £500 competition and exhibited at the Bluecoat 1963 Festival and Exhibition on the redevelopment of Liverpool.⁵¹

In the event, the Williamson Square site did not materialise and in October 1963, Walter Bor replied to the MCS saying that he shared their concern at progress on the matter, but "*I am sure, however, that the scheme will not end up in the wastepaper basket for sheer lack of interest on the part of the Civic Authorities ... As you will know, the committee, after considering your proposal, agreed in principle and instructed the Planning Consultant to report further on a suitable site for the fountain*".⁵²

4.3: The Liverpool Fountain Design

The presentational drawing (pictured above) which Richard Huws first showed to the commissioning MSC Fountain Sub-Committee in October 1962 appears an almost identical depiction of the fountain finally opened in May 1967. Since the mechanical problems that had plagued the 1951 Festival of Britain fountain, he had been working to design out the violent repetitive shocks and constant wear and tear resulting from the original tipping action of the larger hopper/vessels. For his subsequent kinetic fountains, he sought for a much smoother swivelling motion, free of any springs or dashpot restraining devices.⁵³

For this he called upon his training as a naval architect and shipbuilding experience with Cammell Laird. He knew that vessels with large free surface areas capsize easily and so used mathematical calculations to design a hopper shape in which, as it tips, the "*free surface builds up to a maximum and then decreases as the counterbalancing tail comes into play*".⁵⁴ In this way he devised a self-righting vessel, not needing stops,

in which the remaining water in the hopper's tail dampens the momentum as it falls back to a stable upright position for refilling again.⁵⁵

Given that the Liverpool fountain was designed over 56 years ago it still looks remarkably 'modern', unlike the 1951 water mobile sculpture which arguably appears much more of its time. This may be because it represents a near perfect example of 'Form Follows Function', the shape of the hoppers being determined, as described above, to achieve this gentle forward emptying motion and a smooth transition to an equally gentle return to the upright re-filling position. As a result, an article in the *Observer Weekend Review* at the time of the fountain's opening was able to quote Richard Huws as saying that he had "*spent a week on the aesthetics and several years on the engineering*".⁵⁶

The same article reported that he wanted to create "*movement in space and time*". To achieve this he altered the number and size of the water outlet holes in the horizontal pipes, which pass through each hopper, to give different tipping times and thus an almost infinitely random action across the whole fountain.⁵⁷ The emptying times were designed to vary from 15 seconds for one of the smaller hoppers to 90 seconds for one of the largest.⁵⁸ Because the emptying is intermittent, RH calculated that it used a twentieth of the pumped water required by a comparable traditional cascade⁵⁹ and, as the water falls in 'blocks', produces very little wind-blown spray unlike a traditional fountain jet.⁶⁰

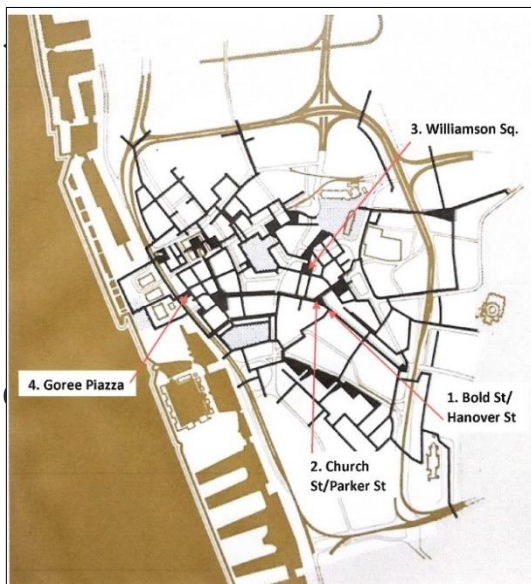
One aesthetic decision that Richard Huws did consciously make was to extend the supporting vertical supply pipes to above the highest hoppers, likening the overall effect to a ball of wool skewed with knitting needles.⁶¹ As shown in his 1962 presentation drawing, the fountain comprises 7 vertical bronze upstands supplying the water to the 20 stainless steel hoppers. The smaller hoppers were each cantilevered off the side of the vertical pipes, while the larger hoppers were all supported on both sides, each spanning between two supports.

While RH refers to the vertical supports as randomly placed, the arrangement is nevertheless such that each hopper is able to empty directly into the receiving pool. The original depth of the water in the pool was 16 inches, but RH would have liked more to enhance the wave effect created by the falling 'blocks' of water.⁶²

[4.4: The Fountain's Location in the Goree Piazza](#)

The first indication that a site had finally been found for the fountain in a re-development scheme off Brunswick Street, comes in a letter headed 'Fountain Sub-Committee' from F J Camenisch, its chair, to the MCS secretary, dated the 21 July 1964. "*As you probably know the question of the fountain is as far advanced for the moment as it can be*". The letter goes on to say that we understand that the developers are prepared to pay for its erection and that they are getting in touch directly with Mr Huws. Until the site is cleared, a new 2 storey car park erected and the small square laid out, there will probably be no more news.⁶³

From the outset Richard Huws' fountain was conceived as providing a point of interest along an extensive walkway system, much of it elevated above street level, which was being developed by the City's Planning Consultant, Graeme Shankland for his 1965 City Centre Plan.⁶⁴ This followed the principles of the influential Buchanan Report published in 1963 and aimed to separate vehicles from pedestrians across Liverpool city centre.⁶⁵ As shown in the map below (in the order that they were put forward), all four proposed sites for the fountain were located along this planned pedestrian network, with Graeme Shankland consulting with the MCS Fountain Sub-Committee from the start and being fully represented on this committee.⁶⁶



^ Network footbridge over the Strand from Beetham Plaza
< Proposed Pedestrian Network for Liverpool City Centre

The fourth site in a newly constructed Goree Piazza was the one finally chosen, the first two sites being dropped due to delays in the associated redevelopment scheme.⁶⁷ The Goree Piazza was designed as the section of the pedestrian network that provided the main link between the city centre and the Pier Head and the Three Graces. This was via a wide, covered pedestrian bridge over the Strand, the latter serving part of the western leg of the proposed primary distributor road encircling the city centre.⁶⁸

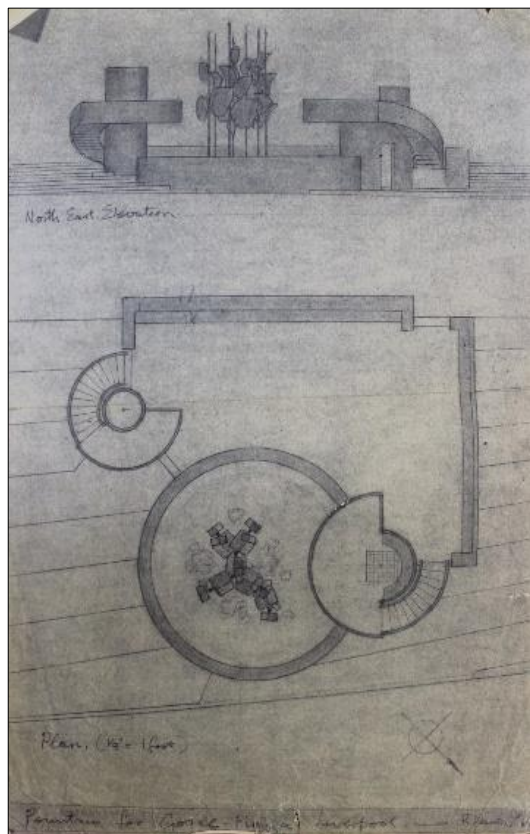
Much of the pedestrian system was built in the 1960s and 70s, but the isolated elevated sections were little used and became areas of crime, the bridge over the Strand coming to be known as “*mugger’s alley*” - and no doubt contributing to the vandalism of the nearby fountain in its early years. However, unlike most of the system which did not last long, the Strand bridge was only finally demolished in 2007 after Wilberforce House had already been converted to Beetham Plaza⁶⁹ (see photograph above).

With an elevated walkway still existing on the Strand frontage of Beetham Plaza, Alice Bennett, the then Liverpool Mayoral Lead for Heritage and Design, argued that the piazza/plaza and its focal point of the fountain are therefore of historical interest and should be saved.⁷⁰ Indeed, the Goree Piazza with its focal point of the fountain is, we believe, the first and only purpose-built, publicly accessible open square built for and currently still surviving intact from the 1965 Shankland Plan. However, a few isolated and often no longer publicly accessible sections of the elevated walkway system still remain elsewhere.⁷¹

Around October 1964, F.J. Camenisch suggested “*that the site of the proposed new fountain be known as the Goree Piazza*” and after this was unanimously approved by the MCS, the secretary wrote to the Town Clerk asking the Council to consider this.⁷² In February 1965 the Town Clerk replied saying that, in a meeting last month, the Development and Planning Committee had agreed. This letter also revealing that the development off Drury Lane was being “*carried out jointly by the Corporation and Thames Estates and Investments Ltd*”⁷³ - the latter having also agreed to the piazza’s name by the beginning of March.⁷⁴ As a result, the fountain was later officially named the Piazza fountain.

A similar exchange occurred regarding the name of the new office block, Wilberforce House being eventually decided upon, this building being partly for occupation by the Liverpool Corporation planning department, with half of the accommodation sublet to the Liverpool Regional Hospital Board.⁷⁵

The architects for the Goree Piazza redevelopment scheme for Thames Estates and Investments Ltd (a subsidiary of the City of London Real Property Company) were the London firm of Gotch and Partners.⁷⁶ For the open piazza, the architects had proposed a rectangular receiving pool on the stepped slope up from Drury Lane with a freestanding ventilation shaft, for the underground carpark beneath the piazza, located nearby.



Drawing of fountain complex – “RH 65”

Richard Huws, however, considered this pool to be too small and noted that no accommodation had been made for the required water pump.⁷⁷ Instead, Richard Huws designed a larger round pool and, to enhance any spectator’s experience, provided in addition to two ‘seating walls’, two round cantilevered viewing platforms.

He designed the platform intersecting the pool to house the large water pump and the freestanding one to incorporate the carpark ventilation shaft. He further proposed that these and the pool be painted black to accentuate the whiteness of the water⁷⁸ (see his plan and elevational drawing dated 1965, opposite).

Thus, while the actual fountain was designed in 1962 before the site was chosen, the fountain’s receiving pool and two viewing platforms, which comprise the bulk of the complex, were all designed specifically for the new Goree Piazza. These curved elements complement the sculptural shape of the hoppers but contrasted with the original rectangular forms of the surrounding buildings and provided an interesting composition when looked down on from the surrounding offices.

Richard Huws also carefully positioned the fountain complex against Drury Lane to exploit the additional interest given by the change in ‘ground’ levels and to capture the maximum amount of the limited sunlight reaching the small piazza on the stainless-steel hoppers, cascading water and waves in the pool.⁷⁹

On the 4 October 1965, the new MCS chair, Peter Howell Williams wrote to F J Camenisch reporting that he had received a call from Hugh Scrutton, the Director of the Walker Art Gallery, saying that he was on an Arts Council Panel advising on suitable objects for a grant and had asked what progress had been made on

Richard Huws' "sculpture in Brunswick Street". Williams "had no hesitation" in telling the director that the Society would be only too pleased if he could put in a request for a capital sum, but as Scrutton had asked for some designs, he now requested Camernish to ask RH what stage his designs had now reached.⁸⁰

Two days later, Hugh Scrutton wrote to Howell Williams, saying that he would receive an official letter from the Arts Council shortly and that the decision of the Arts Panel to make a grant of £750 to the Civic Society was "unlikely to be upset at any higher level of the Arts Council". He specified that the decision to give £750 was made on the basis that it would cover half of the fee to Richard Huws and that "There is no doubt that your project is an outstandingly good one".⁸¹

4.5 The Fabrication of the Fountain by Cammell Laird

As a one-time apprentice/employee of the firm, Richard Huws arranged appropriately for the Birkenhead shipbuilders, Cammell Laird to fabricate his fountains. Contact has been made with two ex-apprentices and a retired sub-contractor who were all involved.⁸² The latter, Alan Jones, recounts how he and a colleague, Cliff Cowley, working at Cammell Laird (probably in the early to mid 1960s⁸³) were introduced by the chargehand to the designer who wanted different sizes and shapes of "trial buckets" fabricated from his drawings. Initially the central holes, which allow the hoppers to fill, were left out and a framework set up to test the buckets and balance them.

The sub-contractor then moved on to work on Polaris Submarines, but his colleague, Cliff Cowley, stayed on to position the centre holes for RH, after more calculations were made.⁸⁴ As these trial buckets were fabricated from galvanised sheet and not stainless steel, it is probable that they were also used for RH's similar fountain erected at the 1965 Tokyo International Trade Fair, where galvanised steel was specified - particularly as the retiree mentions that there could have been "more than one project". He emigrated to Australia in 1969⁸⁵.

The two Cammell Laird ex-apprentices, however, had both been involved with the fabrication of the final Liverpool fountain. One, Robert Brett, had helped the welder, Bernie Bushel, to weld the fountain bases by setting up the equipment. He recalls that the bases were made of "a type of bronze" and welded using a MIG welder, but was unable to provide any further information on the fabrication.⁸⁶ However, the other ex-apprentice, Anthony Miller, who on joining the company in August 1966 had been assigned to Owen (Paddy) Maloney in the Sheet Iron Shop, assisted with the fabrication of the fountain's stainless-steel hoppers.⁸⁷ He later studied social history at Liverpool University and became an author and local historian and recollects the process in significant detail.⁸⁸

He recalls that to fabricate the hoppers, 8ft by 4 ft sheets of top quality, 8 gauge stainless-steel were used, Paddy Maloney first making templates from Richard Huws' plans/design to cut, shape and roll the various pieces that made up each individual hopper. The edges of each piece were then thoroughly cleaned with industrial strength Acetone before being taken to the welding bay where they were tacked together and left to await welding. Argon Arc welding was used by the three particularly skilled welders involved, Billy Gabriel, Jack Gilfoyle and Billy Prescot⁸⁹. The latter was also cited as being employed at this later stage by Alan Jons, who had worked on the earlier galvanised steel "trial buckets" before moving on to other work⁹⁰



Taking shape in Liverpool's New Goree Piazza — a fountain commissioned by Merseyside Civic Society and designed by Richard Huws, a lecturer at Liverpool University's School of Architecture. The fountain has been built at Cammell Laird's — where Mr Huws was once an apprentice.

To quote Anthony Miller verbatim, "After welding was completed the hoppers came back to Paddy's bench for the welds to be buffed and smoothed down by a hand-held air-powered emery belt grinder, before being finished off by hand with sheets of black emery cloth and finally cleaned with fresh cotton waste soaked in Acetone"

He also recalls Richard Huws being in conversation with Paddy Maloney on numerous occasions and suggests that they may have already been acquainted "as they both worked in the yard during the early 1920's".⁹¹

Once all of the fountain parts had been fabricated, they were transported to the Goree Piazza site and erected in the reinforced concrete receiving pool. The undated newspaper cutting opposite in the National Library of Wales archive (probably from the Liverpool Echo) shows the hoppers being fitted to the bronze upstands during the course of the fountain's construction in the new Piazza.⁹²

Fountain being installed in the Goree Piazza 1966/67

4.6: The Completion of the Fountain and its Press Coverage

A letter from F.J. Camerisch to John Clarke of the 7 April 1967 noted that “*the fountain is almost complete and the buckets are being polished to-day*” while a second letter of 14 April 1967 reported that the fountain had successfully passed its latest tests, “*certain modifications having been made to ensure a less violent flow of water*”. He further reported that Cammell Laird had agreed to donate a bronze wall plaque in the shape of an African shield for the base of the freestanding viewing platform.

This commemorates the history of the original Goree piazzas, and concludes as follows:- “*In 1967, to mark the completion of the new plaza, this plaque was kindly presented by Cammell Laird & Company (S&E) Limited, builders of the fountain*”. Camerisch’s second letter also reported that the pump manufacturers had donated a door to the pump house, which had been specially designed by RH with a porthole through which could be seen the pump in action, its capacity and makers name.⁹³



^ The fountain complex, with seating, soon after its opening
< Richard Huws watching his fountain in action

Richard Huws’ Liverpool fountain was finally completed and officially opened on the 2 May 1967, almost exactly 16 years after the opening of the 1951 Festival of Britain and his original iconic water mobile sculpture. The opening ceremony was attended by, among others, the Lord Mayor, Alderman Herbert Allen, D.S. Nixon, chairman of Thames Estates and Investments Ltd, Richard Huws and his youngest daughter Ursula⁹⁴ and from the Merseyside Civic Society, Peter Howell Williams, the chair of the Executive Committee, Mr F J Camerisch, chair of the Fountain Sub-Committee and Colin Wilson, the Liverpool architect who had first proposed that a fountain be commissioned.⁹⁵



4, ‘Water Sculpture,’ by Richard Huws, at Liverpool. 5, water gushing from one of the stainless steel ‘mouths.’ 6, ‘Woman’ by Picasso.

The opening of the fountain made the front page of the *Liverpool Echo* that evening.⁹⁶ However, the following day it was reported with illustrated articles not only again locally in the *Liverpool Echo* and *Liverpool Daily Post*, but nationally in *The Guardian* and in the *Daily Express* under the heading “*Space age splashdown in the city*”.⁹⁷

The same week, the fountain was further reported and illustrated in *The Observer Weekend Review* under the title ‘Mersey Splash’ and also in May 1967 in the *New Statesman*, in an article by Kenneth Muir on ‘Art in Liverpool’, which commented that “*one of the few successes is Richard Huws’s delightfully crazy fountain, on a good site near the Corn Exchange*”⁹⁸

Richard Huws was also interviewed for the Spring 1967 edition of the Liverpool University student magazine *The Sphinx*.⁹⁹ Further reports of the fountain appeared in the *The Journal of Commerce and Shipping Telegraph* and in March 1968, *The Architectural Review* included two photographs of the “*Water Sculpture*” in action, alongside works by Picasso and others, in its monthly symposium on painting, sculpture and the applied arts – the one shown on the left (4) plus a close up of one of the hoppers emptying (5).¹⁰⁰

This particular chapter in the history of Richard Huws fountain designs effectively came to an end when on the 5 January 1968, he gave a concluding talk on his Liverpool Piazza Fountain and its 1951 origins at the Annual Meeting of the commissioning Merseyside Civil Society.¹⁰¹ When the Liverpool fountain was erected he had told the Merseyside Civic Society that:-

“It is a waterfall of a strange new kind. Instead of streaming steadily, water hurtles down unexpectedly in detached lumps in all directions.... The sight and sound of waterfalls is so spellbinding that they have always been centres of attraction in the landscape, and in the places where we work we are prompted to create them artificially,” He had added that the ‘perpetual bubbling’ of man-made fountains seriously bored him.... *“To make it more exciting we contrive various means of providing additional animation, a very simple device which interrupts the regular flow, so as to create a round of action. The sound and movement of which is no longer that of the ever-monotonous bubbling river, but that of the restless, temperamental sea...”*¹⁰²

5: Richard Huws’ Other Fountain Designs, 1957-1979

This section again relies mainly on documents in the Richard Huws Papers in the National Library of Wales. Initially there was limited information on some of the designs, particularly on his fountain for Basildon New Town Development Corporation. All of the Richard Huws Papers, were deposited in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth in 2009, but subsequently some of the papers, including a full set of working drawings for Basildon, were “transferred out of the archive collection to other collections” and mislaid by the Library.¹⁰³ However, in early October 2019 these were subsequently found and examined by the author later that month.

5.1 [The New York Fountain Design, 1957](#)

In 1976, in a talk at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies at York, Richard Huws accepted that his kinetic fountains were not appropriate for all locations.¹⁰⁴ In 1957 he had produced a very different design when commissioned to provide a water feature for a small courtyard at the Manhattan apartment of Joseph Buttinger and his wife Muriel Gardiner, an American heiress and close friend of RH during his period in Vienna.¹⁰⁵



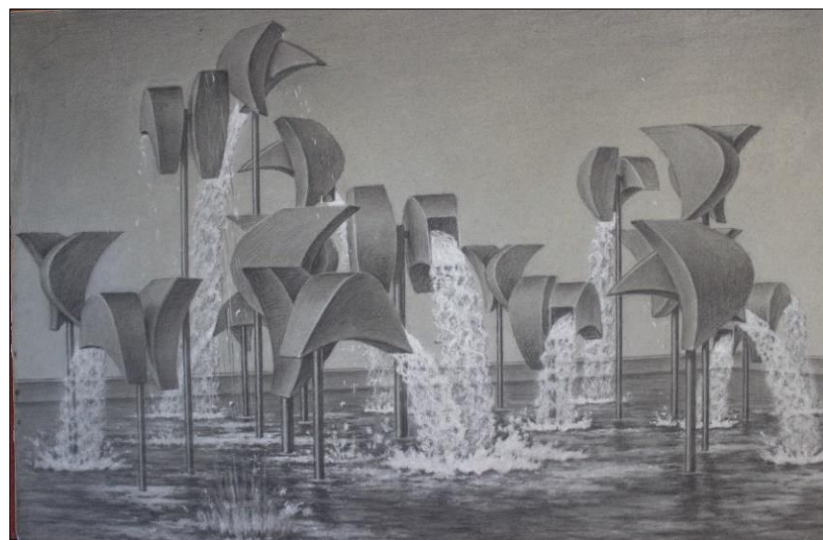
Model of New York fountain design, 1957

As his model shows, this comprised a smooth ‘boulder’ surrounded by a horizontal groove from which the water flowed down onto a low pile of large pebbles. A letter of December 1957 from the client’s New York architect, discusses the pump size required for a flow of 30 to 40 gallons per minute, but says he is awaiting final plans.¹⁰⁶

It seems that the fountain was not built in Manhattan, as a letter from Muriel Buttinger to RH of May 1978, says about his design “*we want to order it for our lawn at Brookdale Farm*” in New Jersey.¹⁰⁷ As there appears to be no such fountain on this site nor any record in the Richard Huws Papers of a completed fountain, it is probable that it was never erected either in New York or New Jersey.¹⁰⁸

5.2 [Fountain Designs for British Petroleum, 1964 and 1965](#)

At the time of the opening of his Liverpool fountain, Richard Huws’ interview for the University’s magazine *The Sphinx* mentioned that he had worked on the interior design of the British Petroleum building in London.¹⁰⁹ In 1964 he had also presented his design for a large kinetic fountain for the new BP headquarters building in Moorfields, London, using the same basic hopper design as developed for the Piazza fountain in Liverpool.¹¹⁰



Presentational drawing of fountain for BP headquarters, 1964



Child at Tokyo fountain, 1965

Unlike Liverpool, however, RH's 1964 presentational drawing shows that this comprised 16 upstands of different heights each supplying water to only two hoppers arranged either side of the pipe tops and emptying randomly in opposite directions into a rectangular pool. Later RH reported that the BP headquarters project was stopped when the Labour government in the 60s put a brake on office building.¹¹¹

The following year, however, BP were able to erect a smaller version of his headquarters fountain design on their stand at the 1965 Tokyo International Trade Fair.¹¹² A photograph reproduced in *The Sphinx*, showing a small child watching the fountain in action, confirms the very similar design.¹¹³ RH later reported that galvanised mild steel was used for both the risers and hoppers.¹¹⁴ As the fountain was on the BP stand, it is reasonably assumed that it was dismantled after the closure of the Fair – like his original 1951 Festival of Britain fountain.

5.3 Fountain for St James Square, Grimsby, 1972-73

The fourth of Richard Huws' fountain designs to use the same shape of hopper as developed for his Liverpool fountain was erected in St James Square in Grimsby in 1973. This was similar to his 1964 design for the BP headquarters building in having two hoppers, emptying in opposite directions, positioned either side of the top of each supply pipe, but differed in having some 24 of these upstands, all of a more uniform height, located in a circular receiving pool. RH later likened the effect to a massed bed of daffodils.¹¹⁵

Despite being the largest, having nearly 50 hoppers built of galvanised mild steel, protected internally by an extra coat of black epoxy, the Grimsby fountain was also the least expensive of Richard Huws' fountains, costing well under a half of the stainless steel and bronze structure in Liverpool, after allowing for inflation.¹¹⁶

The fountain formed the centrepiece of a sunken amphitheatre in a newly created town square designed by the landscape architect, Mary Mitchell.¹¹⁷ The whole scheme and, not least, the fountain received critical acclaim, the architectural critic, Ian Nairn, dubbed it "*the best new town square in Britain*" and wrote in his Sunday Times article of August 19, 1973:-

"In that [amphitheatre], Richard Huws puts the most spectacular of his water fountains: a self-propelled organism that works on the principle of side-pivoted cans filling with water and emptying themselves under their own weight – a kind of multiple, aquatic see-saw. You may remember a similar effect at the Festival of Britain, the happiest thing in the show"..... And the fountain is an invitation to wonder, for children of all ages. Sitting in Mary's M's [Mitchell's] so quiet seats in the amphitheatre you are enthralled both by the fountain itself and by the antics of people watching it. This is "community participation" in its easiest form, the opposite of a sterile civic centre".¹¹⁸



Grimsby fountain under construction ^

The illustration to the Ian Nairn article >



The scheme for "*The creation of a town square and precinct for St James's Church*" was subsequently given a Civic Trust, Heritage Year Award for Environmental Improvement, the citation noting that "...shoppers may relax in the shelter of a small sunken area and enjoy the sparkle and splash of water" and that this had "already become a favourite meeting place".¹¹⁹

Despite its success, the fountain was a bone of contention between the warring local political parties from the start. Ian Nairn's July 1973 manuscript for his August article notes that, after a change in the Council, the fountain had been almost dismantled when half-way up and was now on a 3 months' trial, ending in September. He adds "*I cannot believe that having backed such an imaginative idea Grimsby will now scrap it.*"¹²⁰

Although this particular passage was not published, Ian Nairn's criticism was publicly aired in his subsequent article in the Sunday Times of October 7, 1973 – "*But Grimsby have finally decided to dismantle Richard*

Huws's wonderful water fountain (*This Britain*, August 19, 1973). Well' that's their loss. ... Losing something good and old is bad enough; losing something good and new, when there is so little of it around is worse."¹²¹

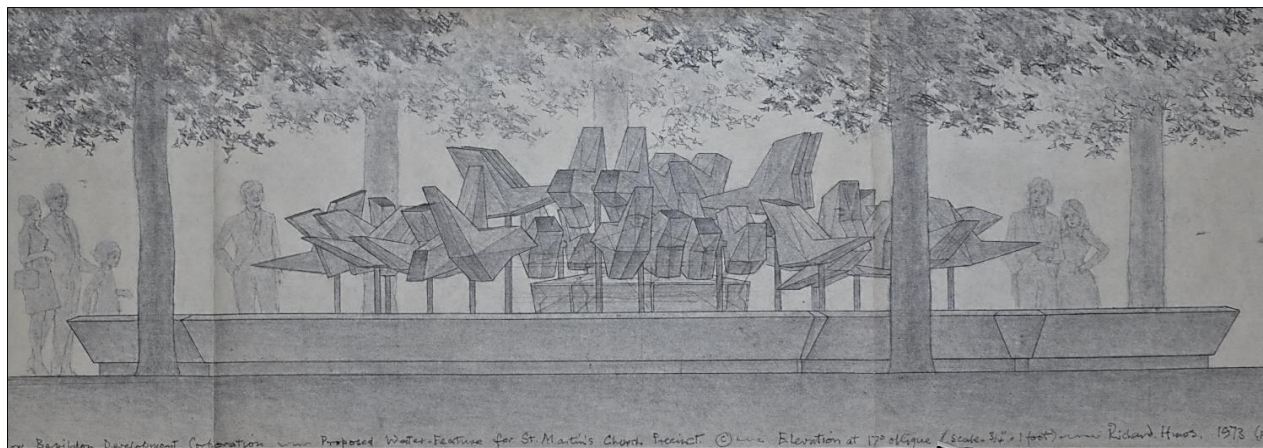
As well as Ian Nairn, 'Astragal' also followed the saga for *The Architects Journal* and in a piece, entitled, "The fountain furore - round three", reported on the 24 October 1973 that:- "Grimsby burghers are preparing to do a somersault. After the town council decided to get rid of Richard Huws's bucket fountain (see AJ 10.10.73) the planning committee was asked to decide on a new scheme for the area – and the committee came up with a startling idea: retain the Huws waterworks."¹²²

The 'nodding buckets', as they were termed locally, may have had a reprieve in 1973 and an old photograph posted on Facebook in 2011 from the Local History Library confirms that they were still there in 1975.¹²³ They were finally replaced in around 1977 by a Victorian canopied cast iron drinking fountain, relocated from Cleethorpes, this in turn making way for the current fisherman's memorial statue, erected in January 2005.¹²⁴

5.4 Fountain for St Martins Precinct, Basildon, 1972-76,

On 21 March 1972, the Chief Architect/Planner of Basildon New Town Development Corporation wrote to Richard Huws to ask if he would be interested in designing "a similar feature to that designed at the Festival"¹²⁵ of 1951, for the new town centre in a precinct bounded by shops and St Martins Church. RH replied after four days, accepting the commission, but saying that while he still had his 1951 fountain drawings, he felt that a more advanced design similar to that already built in Liverpool and currently being built in Grimsby would be more suitable for the site.¹²⁶

As the precinct included a grove of plane trees planted on a regular grid, he proposed a predominantly horizontal feature like Grimsby, having 32 hoppers paired in opposition at the top of vertical support pipes of not much more than head height, with 8 central, slightly larger 'non-opposed' hoppers at a higher level. At an early stage, he had conceived of a faceted form for the hoppers for ease of manufacture in fibreglass. However, in 1976, RH commented that due to price changes in materials, they would now have to be made in bronze sheet.¹²⁷



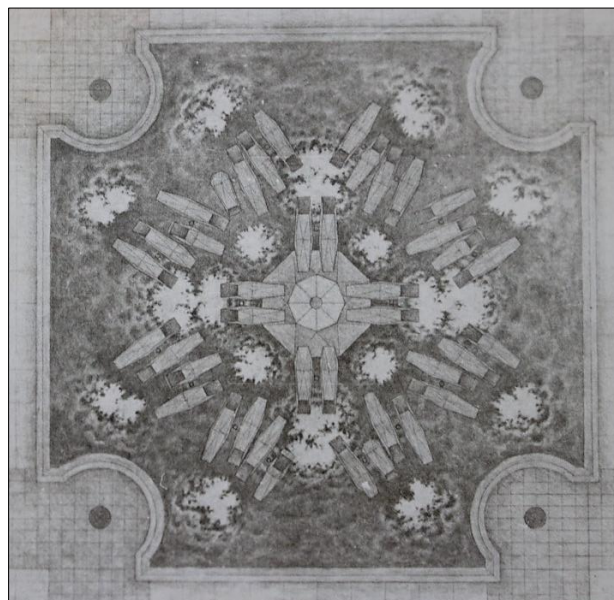
Presentational drawings for Basildon fountain, 1973¹²⁸

^ Elevation

v Plan of fountain

The new self-righting hoppers were designed with a flap near the outlet not only to keep out falling leaves, but also with internal baffles, to give a slower action and produce cascades of longer duration. Although all were designed to have a tipping frequency of approximately 30 seconds, RH advised that they would rapidly get out of phase due to their different distance from pump and slight differences in the water inlet sizes.¹²⁹

For the fountain, RH designed a square receiving pool with semi-circular recesses at the four corners to each accommodate a trunk of the regular grid of trees. For maximum efficiency and performance, he now placed the pump, and timeclock operated floodlight controls, at the centre of the fountain composition in a squat octagonal, pagoda like pump room. He also designed a screening area for the central ring-sump to cope with falling leaves from the tree canopy.¹³⁰



The project received approval from the Development Corporation in Autumn 1973 but was then halted by the subsequent oil crisis and the shortages of materials and power in British industry.¹³¹ The Chief Architect/Planner's letter to RH of November 1974 concerned the settlement of his fees for the design and supervision of "the water feature when it is eventually built"¹³² and Richard Huws expressed hopes of it going forward again in 1976, but in the event the fountain was never constructed.¹³³

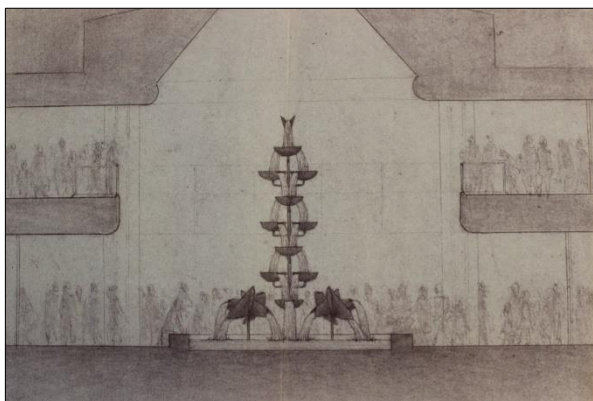
5.5 Fountain Design for the Harvey Centre, Harlow New Town, 1975-79

In October 1975, Sir Frederick Gibberd wrote personally to Richard Huws inviting him to design a water feature for a proposed new two storey shopping mall in Harlow town centre, asking him for ideas and costs and saying that he been talking to a "mutual friend, Mary Mitchell".¹³⁴ He arranged for J. A. Graham, his partner responsible for the project, to send RH drawings of the Mall.¹³⁵ RH replied that he was "most interested in doing a design" and imagined something about 25 ft tall "with some extra excitement at pool level", costing between £10,000 and £12,000. He suggested a preliminary meeting and the provision of a preliminary design and model.¹³⁶

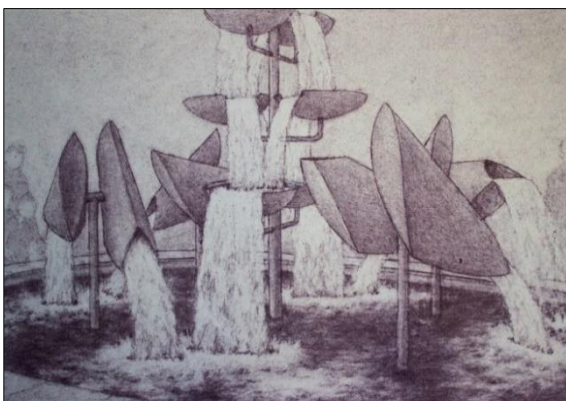
A later letter to Richard Huws, signed Freddie, of July 1978 reported that the Harvey Centre had been delayed by an inquiry into a road closure, but that he now wanted to get the Development Corporation's formal approval for RH's appointment.¹³⁷ A subsequent letter of 8 August from Graham further explained that the shopping centre, for which he now enclosed final plans, would be a 2-year building project starting that November, but that RH's sketch presentation for the fountain would be put to the Corporation next month.¹³⁸

During this delay, however, RH had been designing an improved hopper having an even more reliable self-righting pour, maintenance free long-life bearings and simplicity of manufacture. As well as a description, the Richard Huws Papers include drawings of four such, 2½ gallon hoppers on two supports in a hexagonal pool, signed "R Huws, Jan 1978", under the title of "Improved Water Hopper for Intermittent Cascades (1977)".¹³⁹

By July 1978, however, Richard Huws was suffering health problems. He replied to Sir Fredrick Gibberd saying that he was away from Liverpool and due to a pending cataract operation, finalising the scheme would be delayed. He wrote again on 2 February 1979 reporting that he had undergone the operation, but due to a setback had needed a further period in a Paris hospital. However, he said he would now submit a final design and commented that the Mall was an ideal site for a fountain; having no wind loads, no flying spray, little risk of vandalism and the advantage of two viewing levels.¹⁴⁰



Section showing proposed fountain in mall



Drawing of fountain at pool level

For the 2-storey mall, Richard Huws proposed having shallow twin bowls arranged either side of a tall main vertical supply pipe in 7 tiers, such that the water cascaded down from one tier to the next before entering a round pool, with four sets of his 'improved', twin tipping hoppers arranged around the main cascade. Thus, in combining a tall cascade with tipping hoppers at a lower level, he returned to a similar overall form to that used in his first water sculpture for the 1951 Festival of Britain - for what was to be his last fountain design.

Despite Richard Huws having submitted his final design drawings of February 1979, his poor health continued and in March, he wrote again to Sir Fredrick Gibberd relaying further unspecified health problems and saying that "My obviously prudent course is regretfully to withdraw at this stage". He advised that the fountain could still be built if the largely straightforward detailing and supervision were taken off his hands.¹⁴¹ In his commentary on the Richard Huws papers, his son also notes that "the fountain eventually fell victim to financial cuts".¹⁴² Consequently, although the mall in Gibberd's Harvey Centre, Harlow, still survives more or less as designed, it is devoid of any Richard Huws fountain.¹⁴³

Table 1 below summarises and provides further details of Richard Huws' eight fountain projects for which he was specifically commissioned. The third column from the end gives the estimated cost at the time and at 2018 prices (in brackets) of fabricating just the components of each fountain, excluding the cost of building the receiving pool and any associated structure and of installing the fountain. It shows that the first fountain for

the 1951 Festival of Britain, which had the least number of tipping hoppers (6), was the most expensive, while that for Grimsby with the most hoppers (24) but actually using the Liverpool design for the third time, was the least expensive. The penultimate column confirms that only a half of the commissions were actually built and the final column that only one still survives - his Piazza Fountain in Drury Lane, Liverpool.

Table 1: Summary of Richard Huws' Eight Commissioned Fountain Projects

Date of design/opening	Proposed Location	Commission for:-	Number hoppers/upstand	Hopper type	Tipping times (secs)	Material for hoppers/upstands	Est. cost ¹ (excluding pool etc)	Design built	Still exists
1950-51	South Bank London	Festival of Britain, 1951	6 1	'Prototype' + cascade	N.K.	Aluminium/ Sprayed steel	£4,500 (£138,850)	Yes	No
1957	Manhattan New York	Mr and Mrs Buttinger	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Stone	N.K.	No	No
1962-67	Drury Lane Liverpool	Merseyside Civic Society	20 7	'Bucket'	15-90	Stainless steel/Bronze	£4,500 (£80,235)	Yes	Yes
1964	Moorfields London	British Petroleum	32 16	As Liverpool	N.K.	N.K.	N.K.	No	No
1965	1965 Tokyo Trade Fair	British Petroleum	N.K.	As Liverpool	N.K.	Galvanised mild steel	N.K.	Yes	No
1972-73	St James' Sq. Grimsby	Borough Council	48 24	As Liverpool	40-45	Galvanised mild steel	£2,700 (£34,995)	Yes	No
1973-74	St Martins Pct. Basildon	Development Corporation	40 20?	'Facetted'	All 30 approx.	Fibre glass/ Bronze	£7,000 (£83,160)	No	No
1975-79	Harvey Centre Harlow	Sir F. Gibberd & Partners	8 5	'Improved' + cascade	20-30	Stainless steel/Ditto	£11,000 (£90,645)	No	No

¹ Estimated cost when designed and (at 2018 prices based on the Bank of England inflation calculator)

6: History of the Liverpool Fountain, Post 1967

The early history of the Liverpool fountain after its opening on 2 May 1967 is again reliant predominantly on documents in the Richard Huws Papers in Aberystwyth.¹⁴⁴ Observations of its condition prior to its restoration in 1997-2000 and details of the work carried out comes from those responsible in the Liverpool Architectural firm of Brock-Carmichael and in BCA Landscape, Liverpool. Information on the recent threat to the fountain and the campaign to save the fountain in Beetham Plaza comes largely from press reports and the Friends of the Piazza Fountain. The section concludes with information on the listing from Historic England.

6.1: A Target for Vandals, 1967-1997

Unlike today when all of the surrounding buildings have been converted to residential apartments, hotels or restaurants, when it opened in the Goree Piazza in 1967 the fountain was in a wholly commercial area and this and its novel nature made it a target for vandals in the evenings and at night when the area was effectively deserted. This in a city which Richard Huws later claimed was "famous for vandalism"¹⁴⁵.



Original lighting installation 1967

One of the earliest incidents came when, not long after it was up and running, a Cammell Laird apprentice welder, who had helped to fabricate the bronze bases for the fountain, and his mates tipped "a box or two of washing powder" in the water to "fantastic" effect.¹⁴⁶ This was reported in the Liverpool Daily Post with a photograph of the fountain full of bubbles.¹⁴⁷

In a talk on the fountain¹⁴⁸, Richard Huws commented that he didn't mind the washing powder as it cleaned the hoppers, filters and pipes. He was much more concerned with things being thrown into the pool and hoppers, particularly paper which broke down into a mulch and clogged up the system.

After only 10 days, the Liverpool Daily Post reported that it had been stopped due to litter being thrown into the hoppers, under the heading "Don't Blame the New Fountain".¹⁴⁹ As a result of continuing vandalism, the fountain was further shut down for a complete overhaul, prior to January 1968, and the hoppers then cleaned once a day and the water changed weekly, rather than every week and month respectively as originally scheduled.¹⁵⁰

The hoppers were not the only target for anti-social behaviour. A recently discovered black and white photographic print provides a particularly striking view of the floodlit fountain (above), on the back of which RH had written "At night (1967) Note -:The lighting installation was later wantonly destroyed by vandals".¹⁵¹

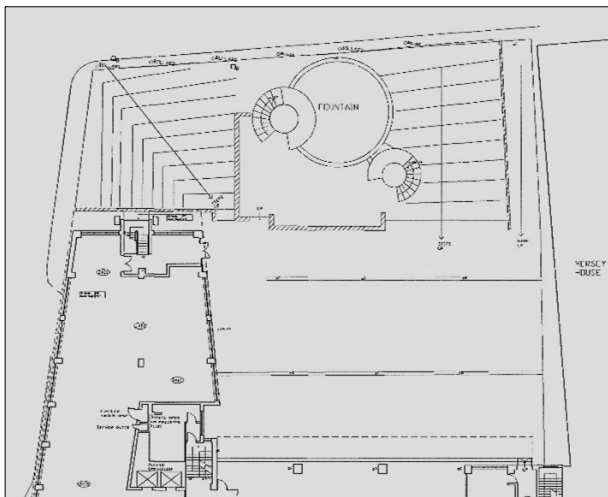
Although designed to avoid the constant wear and tear experienced in his 1951 'prototype', the bearings of the Liverpool fountain also showed signs of wear after 3 years. However, nothing was done about this until, with his Basildon design in 1973, a simple answer to the bearing problem was found.¹⁵² Given the amount of vandalism, however, the Liverpool fountain proved to be reasonably robust, in contrast to the 1951 'prototype', and in December 1975 Richard Huws wrote that "*during last 10 years this stainless steel and bronze structure has withstood an incredible amount of bashing*".¹⁵³

After this, the fountain continued to deteriorate with the hoppers leaking uncontrollably, and it is thought to have been turned off more or less permanently in the early 1980s, after the death of Richard Huws.¹⁵⁴ By this time, however, the 'bucket fountain', as it is known locally, had become a part of Liverpool 'folklore', known as much as anything for rarely being found to be working. It even had a 1970's song written about it, sung by the Liverpool Spinners, with lyrics by Stuart McTavish and music attributed to Jennie Williams, which includes a final line on this aspect.¹⁵⁵

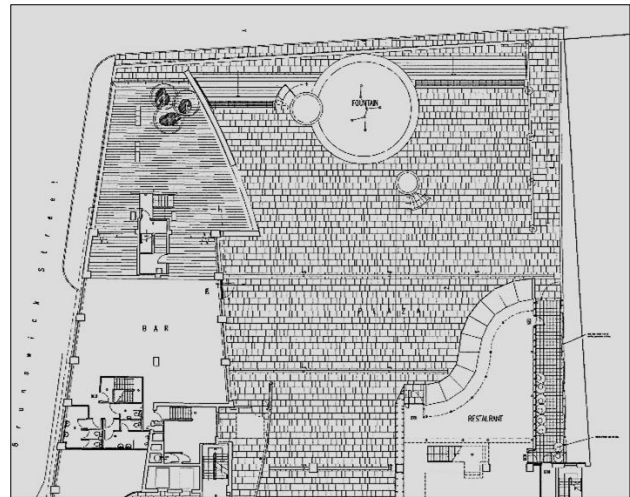
Later, in 2007 after its restoration, the fountain was also the inspiration for a classical composition, "Piazza", by Howard Skempton.¹⁵⁶ Written for an ensemble of woodwind, brass, percussion and strings¹⁵⁷ the first performance was recorded by the BBC and broadcast on Radio 3 in December 2007¹⁵⁸, with a second rendition taking place later at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Being very familiar with the fountain's location, the composer has argued recently for "*the acoustic merit of keeping the fountain in Beetham Plaza*".¹⁵⁹

6.2: Restoration of the Piazza and Fountain, 1997- 2000.

In 1997, the Liverpool Architects of Brock Carmichael were commissioned by the Beetham Organisation to convert the former 1960s office block of Wilberforce House into a mixed-use development comprising luxury apartments, offices, restaurant and bar facilities, with penthouses in a new 2 storey rooftop extension.¹⁶⁰ The project included the conversion of the adjacent piazza into a new landscaped terrace for outdoor café/dining, BCA Landscape, Liverpool, being responsible for the design of the new external works.¹⁶¹ Once complete, the whole area was renamed Beetham Plaza and the scheme received the Liverpool Architecture and Design Trust 2000 Award for the Best New or Refurbished Building in Liverpool.¹⁶²



Ground Floor Plan before re-landscaping



Ground Floor Plan after re-landscaping

Brock Carmichael's plans of the plaza before and after the re-landscaping are shown above.¹⁶³ To create a larger open terrace, lightweight void formers were used to build up the ground level either side of the fountain complex, above the existing shallow stepped slope which forms the roof of the basement carpark. These steps were replaced by new, steeper steps up from Drury Lane and the two original 'seating walls' behind the fountain were removed to extend the new terrace to the fountain pool without interruption.¹⁶⁴

The 1997 to 2000 renovation sought to get the fountain working again after many years of it being effectively abandoned, but did not address the basic problem of the worn bearings. To quote the head of the Liverpool Studio of BCA Landscape, who with the Liverpool sculptor, Robin Riley, were primarily responsible for the restoration:- "*Robin dealt with all the detail regarding the workings of the water feature. ... Even though he got it working - there was still some leakage at the joints and I think this was due to general weathering of the metals since its original completion.*"¹⁶⁵ (For further details of fountains restoration, see section A.1 in Appendix A below). In addition, a new scheme of decoration was undertaken, with the receiving pool finished in blue and the viewing platforms in off-white.



The fountain complex soon after its restoration

After the completion of the re-landscaping in 2000, the condition of the fountain complex again appears to have deteriorated somewhat. Thus, an article in the Liverpool Echo in 2004 listing the "public and private statues, monuments and fountains" that the Council had earmarked for restoration and repair in preparation for the 2008 European City of Culture, includes the "Richard Huws Bucket Fountain".¹⁶⁶

It is not known if any work was done on the fountain as a result, but a colour photograph archive in the Liverpool Record Office, dated March 2008 entitled "Drury Lane, water fountain, L2", shows the white inside balcony wall of the far freestanding viewing platform covered with graffiti.¹⁶⁷

6.3: The Fountain's Recent and Present Condition

A YouTube video of February 2008, however, shows the actual fountain still working well, with limited leakage from the axle points, apart from one of the hoppers permanently stuck in the open position and continually spewing water.¹⁶⁸ This is the earliest of some 10 clear videos of the Liverpool 'bucket' fountain currently posted on YouTube from which can be gauged, not only its continuing popularity, but its deteriorating, operative condition in recent years. Three videos of March, August and September 2010 confirm the general absence of leakages at this time.¹⁶⁹ Subsequent videos of the August 2013, June 2014 and August 2014 show increasingly greater amounts, the first and last being taken when blue dye had been added to the water.¹⁷⁰

The YouTube video dated May 2015, as well as illustrating the continuing leakage problem, again shows one of the hoppers constantly emptying.¹⁷¹ One of the longest videos, which also reveals the poor condition of the viewing platforms, is that posted on 26 March 2017, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o91F6MAj9WU>.¹⁷² This shows the fountain operating more or less as Richard Huws intended, apart from the continuing leakages extending the frequency of some of the tipping times.¹⁷³ In the most recent YouTube video of April 2018, one of the small hoppers is again stuck in the emptying position while another is very slow to return and overall the number being supplied with water appears limited.¹⁷⁴

Table 2: Deteriorating condition of Piazza Fountain as shown by various videos, 2008-2019

Year	Month	No. of hoppers tipping	No. stuck down & emptying	No. stuck upright & emptying	No. stuck upside down	Extent of leakage	Blue water	Soapy water	Source
2008	February	19	1			Limited			YouTube
2010	March	Nearly all				"			"
	August	"				"			"
	September	"				"			"
2013	August	"				Significant	Yes		"
2014	June	"				"			"
	August	"				"	Yes		"
2015	May	"	1			"			"
2017	March	"				Extensive			"
2018	April	Limited	1			"			"
	September	2	2			"			Authors
	November	Limited		1		"			"
2019	February	"	1			Low P.*			YouTube
	April	Nearly all			1	Extensive		Yes	Friends

* Little apparent leakage but from long filling times the water pressure appears very low.

On the 28 September 2018, on the author's first visit to the fountain for many years, of the 20 hoppers only 2 were observed to be tipping and of these, the smaller one was occasionally getting stuck in the open position before slowly tipping back, and the larger one, while tipping correctly, was leaking badly from the pivot point. A further two (one larger and one smaller type) were jammed open and continually spewing water into the pool. None of the remaining 16 hoppers were filling at all, the water to these having been apparently turned off.¹⁷⁵



New Colour Scheme, September 2018

On a second visit in the evening of 7 November 2018, it was a surprise to find the fountain floodlit and around a half of the hoppers now working as intended, albeit with an even greater amount of leakage. There were no longer any hoppers stuck in their open position, but one jammed in the upright position and still filling up, with the water constantly overflowing the rim.

While the disrepair of the viewing platforms as shown on the 2017 video remains untreated, since the last YouTube video of April 2018 these and the pool have been given a garish multi-coloured paint job (of bright yellow, light blue and dark grey) to match the colour scheme of the restaurant in Beetham Plaza, but which arguably detracts from the actual fountain.¹⁷⁶

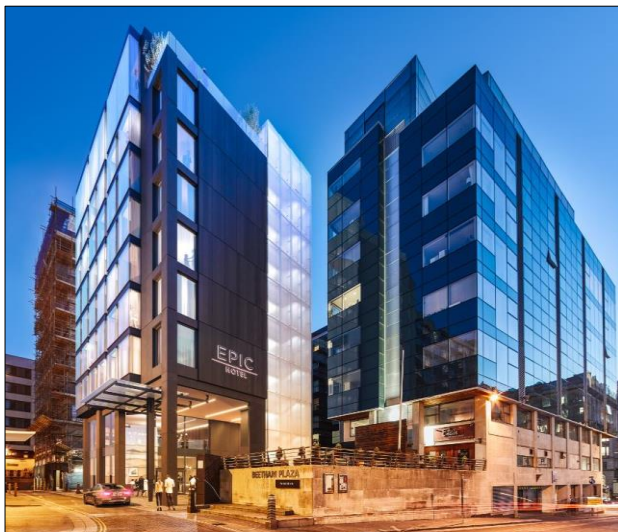
Following the commercial success of their Wilberforce House scheme, Brock Carmichael have recently completed work on a similar conversion and rooftop extension of the adjacent Mersey House (now called Strand Plaza) on behalf of their client's Primesite Developments, who are currently marketing the resulting new apartments.¹⁷⁷ This completes the transformation of the area around the fountain from a wholly office based, commercial one to a predominantly residential one, the NW and SW sides of the open plaza now being formed by the 1997-2000 conversion of Wilberforce House, the SE side by the newly converted Mersey House and, effectively, on the fourth NE side by the Corn Exchange building (housing the Staycity Aparthotels) on the opposite side of the narrow Drury Lane.

With the sole aspect from many of the apartments on all sides being the plaza and fountain, and with night-time pedestrian traffic also generated by the adjacent hotel, restaurant and bar, the vandalism which plagued the fountain during its early years has already declined substantially. This has undoubtedly been helped by the fountain being no longer the novel attraction that it once was and, not least, by the fact that Liverpool is now a much more prosperous city than it was in the late 1960s and 70s.

6.4: [The Threat to the Fountain](#)

With the City's new prosperity, a threat to the fountain now came from a different direction. In December 2018, we were informed by a respected, independent professional source that a developer was proposing to build a boutique hotel on the fountain site. We were further informed that the developer's company was reliably understood to be currently in negotiation with the present owners of Beetham Plaza to buy the long leasehold interest.¹⁷⁸

As a result of this threat, our research on the history of the fountain was rapidly brought to a conclusion and the resulting report published on the Merseyside Civic Society website on 7 January 2019.¹⁷⁹ The following day, an application to list the Piazza Fountain, including its associated viewing platforms and receiving pool was submitted to Historic England, referencing the published historical report.



Architects image of hotel on the fountain site

At the time of this submission, an enquiry to HM Land Registry showed the fountain to be still in the hands of the previous leaseholder.¹⁸⁰ However, subsequent enquiries in February, early September and late October 2019 showed that the leasehold had now passed to Beetham Plaza Ltd, but indicates that the freehold continues to be held by the Liverpool City Council.

On the 23 January 2019, the developer revealed his plans for a new 10 storey, boutique hotel, designed by Falconer Chester Hall, on the fountain site, in illustrated articles published in Liverpool Business News, Place North West and elsewhere.¹⁸¹ These articles confirmed that the developer had now acquired the long leasehold of Beetham Plaza and was proposing to relocate the kinetic fountain to a different "more visible location so that more people can enjoy it".¹⁸²

In response, the residents of Beetham Plaza and their supporters formed the Friends of the Piazza Fountain and in early February 2019, launched an online petition to save the fountain in the Plaza. Flyers were posted around the city centre referring to the petition – which received very nearly 4,300 signatures¹⁸³. This provided the option to add comments and when nearly 3,000 signatures had been received, the 402 responses (14%) with comments were analysed. More than 150 comments (over 37%) stated specifically that the fountain

should stay in its current location, and this was clearly implicit in the vast majority of the remaining responses, many commenting on their fond memories of the piazza when younger and others on the lack of need for a further city centre hotel. Only 4 signatories (under 1%) suggested the fountain's relocation as a possible option.¹⁸⁴ Subsequently, the Merseyside Civic Society invited the author to give a talk on the fountain on the 15 May 2019 at RIBA North, Liverpool. Following the talk, the capacity audience of around 100 similarly voted unanimously to keep the fountain where it stands in Beetham Plaza.¹⁸⁵



Flyer still in the Liverpool Bar, James Street¹⁸⁶

In the meantime, however, the developer had employed a PR consultant to put his case for the fountain's relocation. On the 15 February 2019 Radio Merseyside interviewed the consultant at the fountain, followed by a broadcast phone call with Gerry Proctor of Engage Liverpool, speaking on behalf of the Friends.¹⁸⁷ The consultant had clearly read our report on the MCS website, but in this broadcast and in the developer's subsequent announcements the historical facts were heavily distorted to support the developer's case.¹⁸⁸

Despite the public opposition, the presidential style Mayor of Liverpool is understood to support the proposed relocation of the fountain in a more prominent position¹⁸⁹ and, on the 10 April 2019, the developer first reported having on-going discussions with the Liverpool City Council to determine an alternative site. In the same article in *The Business Desk*, the Elliot Group announced that they were, on the same day, submitting their planning application for the redevelopment of Beetham Plaza.¹⁹⁰

By the 18 April 2019, however, Historic England had inspected and completed their initial assessment of the Piazza fountain, including the viewing platforms, *"to consider whether it has special architectural or historic interest"* and circulated a copy of their Consultation Report, requesting any responses within the next 21 days.¹⁹¹ These reports are normally sent to the owner, as well as the local planning authority, the Historic Environment Record Officer, the applicant and any other relevant parties.¹⁹²

As the owner, the developer's 'response' was to withdraw his already submitted planning application, before it had been registered and published by Liverpool City Council, pending the decision on the fountain's listing. An article in the Liverpool Business News of 30 April reported *"Now Heritage England is considering whether the structure should be listed as being of 'special merit' and Elliot would prefer to hold off submitting a detailed planning application until that assessment is complete so it can incorporate the decision into its plans."*¹⁹³

In the meantime, the redevelopment proposals appeared to have been progressed in other ways. On the 8 July 2019, the Liverpool City Council approved a scheme by the hotel architects for the conversion of part of the existing ground and first floors of Beetham Plaza from catering to retail use and from commercial to residential use respectively.¹⁹⁴ However, this application also included a Geo-environmental report covering *"the entirety of Beetham Piazza and Goree Piazza"*, which recommended in-situ testing *"to provide adequate recommendations for foundation designs"*¹⁹⁵, despite the application stating that the proposed change of use *"would not impact upon ground conditions"*.¹⁹⁶

As well as approving this report, on the 1 July the LCC also facilitated the proposals by selling the lease of the Council's car park below the open piazza and fountain to the developer.¹⁹⁷ This sale appears to have been made without due process, and the LCC's Head of Property Services later apologised to the residents for the lack of consultation, writing *"It was assumed that it had already been carried out earlier in the process as this matter has been ongoing for some time..... When the matter was passed to Property and Asset Management Services, we were instructed to deal with it as a priority."*¹⁹⁸

On the 9 August 2019, Historic England announced that the Piazza Fountain, including its associated viewing platforms, had been listed.¹⁹⁹ The immediate reaction to the listing from the developer's managing agent for Beetham Plaza was to exaggerate the current vulnerability of the fountain to vandalism, contradicting the local councillor who reports that he has had no significant complaints of such problems in all of his 15 years of representing the area.²⁰⁰ The agent claimed that the fountain would thus now need 24-hour surveillance and demanded that the 42 leaseholders in the Plaza - who pay for its maintenance through their service charges - be required to pay an extra £80,000 per annum to cover this.²⁰¹ On receiving this demand, the resident's sought guidance from a professional planning adviser who provided them with a letter for the managing agent advising that security requirements are not expected to change as a consequence of the listing and, later, this was also confirmed by the Council.²⁰²

Given that the developer had already submitted a planning application for his Beetham Plaza hotel in April, prior to its withdrawal, and the priority given by LCC to achieve the sale of the underground carpark below the site by July, it is widely believed that had it not been for the listing of the fountain and its associated viewing platforms, the structure would have been removed by now, with the construction of the planned 100 roomed hotel on the fountain site being already well underway.²⁰³

Following the listing, however, an article appeared in 'Business Desk NW' on the 14 August 2019 entitled 'Bucket fountain listed, but relocation still an option says developer'. This indicated that, despite the listing of the fountain and its viewing platforms, the developer was continuing with his development proposals and the relocation of the fountain and reported that he was "discussing two possible sites with the Council." and that he had "a team of heritage consultants advising me".²⁰⁴ A similar article appeared later the same day in 'Place North West' under the title "Bucket fountain could still be moved despite heritage listing".



A Liverpool Echo's article (opposite), also of the 14 August 2019, again quoted the developer's apparently unwavering approach to the listing, but now led under a blatantly confrontational title with the reactions of the campaigners fighting to save the fountain in Beetham Plaza.²⁰⁵

At the request of the Friends of the Piazza Fountain, a meeting was held on the 29 August 2019 with the LCC to discuss the implications of the fountain's listing.²⁰⁶ Despite having previously revealed that it was the Assistant Director of Highways who "has attended a meeting in respect of the fountain"²⁰⁷, the Head of Planning claimed to be unaware of the discussions about the future of the fountain and, in the event, the Friends gained very little from the meeting. Thus, following this meeting they submitted a number of questions to LCC on their remaining areas of concern.

Liverpool Echo's headlines on fountain's listing

On the 1 November 2019, they further asked if LCC would give their assurance that the Friends, local residents, and businesses and ward councillors would be kept updated on any new proposals for the development of Beetham Plaza. However, on both occasions they failed to receive satisfactory replies.²⁰⁸

Appearing to have the backing of the Liverpool Mayor and LCC, the developer is not thought to have given up on his redevelopment proposals, but at the time of writing he has not yet re-submitted his planning application for a 100 roomed boutique hotel in Beetham Plaza nor applied for the listed building consent now required to first get the Piazza Fountain moved to an alternative location. Indeed, he now has more pressing matters to attend to. On the 18 December 2019, the developer together with the Liverpool City Council's Director of Regeneration were arrested by Merseyside Police "on suspicion of conspiracy to defraud, bribery and corruption", although, subsequently, the two men were released on conditional bail.²⁰⁹

6.5 The Listing of the Fountain

On the 9 August 2019, following the recommendations of Historic England (HE), the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport awarded the Piazza Fountain, including its associated viewing platforms, listed building status, at Grade II.

HE's Advice Report confirms that at the consultation stage, the owner, Merseyside Civic Society, the local councillor, Local Planning Authority (LPA), Historic Environment Record (HER) Officer, Twentieth Century Society, the Friends of the Piazza Fountain, Engage Liverpool, the applicants and the architect responsible for the 1997-2000 renovation had all been consulted as interested parties. The Public Monuments and Sculpture Association (PMSA) and Cammell Laird were also separately forwarded copies of the Consultation Report by one of the Friends. All of the above parties responded with the exception of the first three.²¹⁰

The LPA responded by telephone only to confirm that the fountain is located within the Castle Street Conservation Area and also in the Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site.²¹¹ The HER Officer responded by saying that they had nothing to add to the Consultation Report. However, all of the other respondents provided comments that were highly supportive of the listing of the fountain and its associated viewing platforms.

After considering the responses, Historic England recommended the listing of the Piazza Fountain for the following six principal reasons:²¹²

"Architectural interest:

* it is a rare and important example of a mid-C20 kinetic water sculpture designed by the notable artist-engineer Richard Huws, and is his sole-surviving water sculpture;

* the fountain's impressive large-scale design successfully combines aesthetics with engineering, producing a sculpture that utilises shipbuilding expertise and knowledge to enhance its stability;

* its unique design incorporating hoppers of differing size set at differing heights, and which tip unexpectedly, creates a dramatic visual and acoustic display by replicating the sounds and movements of a stormy and tempestuous sea; a particularly apt symbolism in the international port city of Liverpool;

* the associated viewing platforms are integral to the fountain's design, understanding and appreciation, and play a key aesthetic role in the composition as well as fulfilling functional roles in housing the fountain's pump and ventilation shaft for an underground car park.

Historic interest:

* it typifies the 1950s/1960s policy of enhancing cityscapes through the incorporation of artwork in the public realm;

* the design developed and improved upon a Festival of Britain prototype produced by Huws, which was displayed outside Basil Spence's Sea and Ships Pavilion.”

On the 20 December 2019, Historic England revealed that, of over 500 places newly listed in 2019, they had chosen the Piazza Fountain to be included as one of their 21 'highlights' and most fascinating listings, and used a recent photograph of the fountain to head this announcement.²¹³ Moreover, this was then reported in The Guardian²¹⁴ and also by the BBC on the same day.²¹⁵

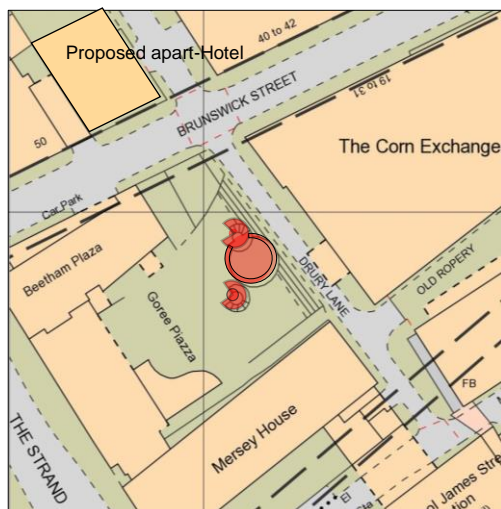
7: The Future of the Piazza Fountain

This final section makes the case for keeping the fountain in the Goree Piazza and outlines proposals for enhancing the fountain and piazza, for its future ownership and for ensuring that more people visit and appreciate it in its current location. Compared to previous sections, the information comes from a particularly wide variety of sources, but the final sub-section on “the Promotion of the Piazza Fountain” is reliant largely on information from Engage, Liverpool.

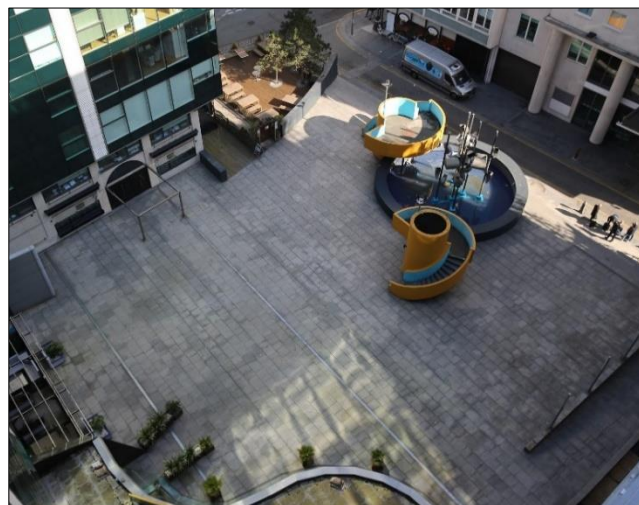
7.1 The Case for Keeping the Fountain in the Goree Piazza

The listing by Historic England should help to secure the future of the fountain in the Goree Piazza, as any relocation would totally negate or severely degrade at least a half of the principal reasons for its listing:-

1. Its current “dramatic visual and acoustic display” would be lost or severely diminished by its relocation to a busier/noisier and/or less enclosed, less sheltered site.
2. The “associated viewing platforms” and integral listed receiving pool, being constructed in-situ of reinforced concrete, would be extremely difficult if not impossible to relocate in their current form.
3. This first and sole surviving example of a city centre square enhanced with “artwork in the public realm” built under the 1965 Shankland Liverpool City Centre Plan would be lost if the fountain was relocated and the piazza redeveloped.



Plan of Goree Piazza/Beetham Plaza



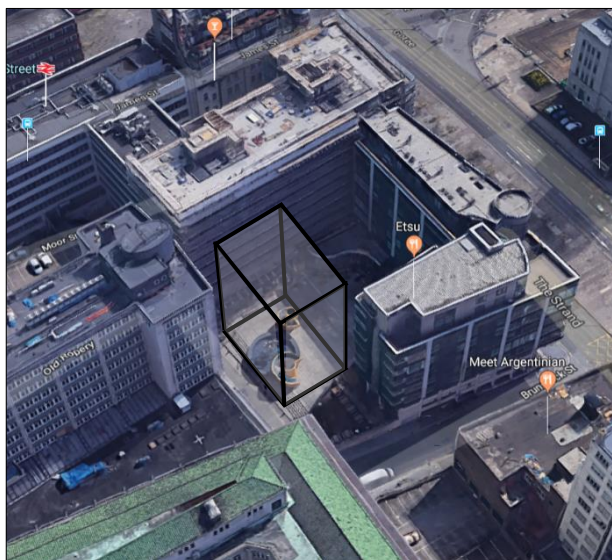
Morning sunlight catching the fountain in the Piazza²¹⁶

The overall case for retaining the listed Piazza Fountain in the Goree Piazza is an extremely strong one. In addition to the above three points:-

- The listed fountain complex, comprising the actual fountain in its large receiving pool and the two associated viewing platforms, was designed by Richard Huws specifically for the Piazza to exploit its change in ground levels and the limited sunlight reaching the piazza.²¹⁷
- The Piazza is the ideal site, enhancing the fountain both aurally and visually by being easily the most enclosed of the four sites originally proposed.²¹⁸

- The suitability of the Piazza was improved between 1997 and 2000 by the use of reflective cladding on the surrounding buildings increasing the reverberation of the sounds.²¹⁹
- The site will be further enclosed to the North West when an approved new 11 storey apart-hotel is completed on the opposite site of Brunswick Street at the junction with Drury Lane.²²⁰
- With the fountain replicating the sights and sounds of the sea, the Piazza is, appropriately, the closest of the four proposed sites to the Mersey estuary.
- Unlike the nearby Strand and Pier Head, however, it is a sheltered site which allows the fountain to operate without strong winds affecting its intended performance.
- The Piazza is otherwise quiet, thus enabling the effects of the fountain to be fully appreciated, being largely devoid of traffic and other distractions.
- The architectural interest is heightened by the fact that it is in an unexpected 'hidden' location with visitors intriguingly hearing the fountain before they see it, being referred to as one of Liverpool's 'hidden gems'.²²¹
- It is close to the city centre, the visitor hub of the Pier Head and particularly to James St Station and as such has the potential to attract more people.
- The African plaque on the fountain is effectively Liverpool's only memorial to the City's role in the slave trade and to its proximity to the original Goree Piazza and warehouses.²²²
- Contrary to the developer's claims, the Piazza provides a particularly secure site for the fountain now being overlooked on all sides by apartments or restaurants. In addition, the leaseholders of Beetham Plaza have a particular interest in its security as they pay for its maintenance through their service charges.

While the change in the use of the surrounding buildings from offices to apartments and restaurants has substantially increased the surveillance of the fountain in the late evening and during the night, it has probably led to the immediate area being quieter during the day. Photographs taken of the fountain soon after its completion, show the piazza frequently full of office workers taking a break. Such scenes are now likely to return when the conversion of the nearby listed India Buildings (the green roofed, southern corner of which can be seen in the aerial view below) is completed and it becomes a HMRC Regional Centre housing around 3,500 civil servants.²²³



Footprint/volume of new hotel on Drury Lane

Apart from the grounds for not removing the fountain, there are compelling reasons for not redeveloping the piazza. The aerial view opposite, from 'Google Earth', illustrates the overall footprint/volume of the proposed hotel on the fountain site, based on architect's image shown in the previous sub-section (6.4). This clearly shows that the proposal would represent a gross over-development of a densely developed area, planning permission having already been given for the erection of an 11 storey apart-hotel on the previously open carpark on the opposite side of Brunswick Street²²⁴ (shown opposite, in the right foreground).

The 58 existing leasehold apartments in Beetham Plaza and more recently converted Strand Plaza, whose sole or main aspect is currently the sunlit open piazza and fountain²²⁵ will be greatly devalued if the hotel proposal is approved. These will be left looking into little more than a deep and dark lightwell or at the flank wall of the hotel only a few metres away.

As well as its historical importance as a good example of 1960s planning policy, the Goree Piazza, enhanced by the presence of Richard Huws' engaging fountain, currently provides a small but very valuable sheltered, publicly accessible open space in this densely developed part of Liverpool City Centre. It is a public asset, which is likely to be more extensively used with the opening shortly of the nearby HMRC Regional Centre.

In addition to the entire fountain complex now being a designated a listed structure, the Goree Piazza is located wholly in both the:-

- UNESCO, Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City, World Heritage Site, and
- Liverpool City Castle Street Conservation Area.

The Castle Street Conservation Area was, with Rodney Street, the first of Liverpool's conservation areas to be designated, in July 1968, just over a year after the Goree Piazza and fountain had been completed and after the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 had introduced the idea of such areas – "*An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*".²²⁶

It is exceedingly difficult to see how the removal of the fountain from the Goree Piazza and its replacement by a 100 bedroomed hotel would "*preserve or enhance...the character or appearance*" of Liverpool's first conservation area in any way. It would clearly have precisely the opposite effect.

7.2 Enhancing the Fountain and Piazza

In marked contrast, Brock Carmichael's award winning conversion of Wilberforce House and re-landscaping of the piazza between 1997 and 2000 did enhance the character and appearance of the area by:-

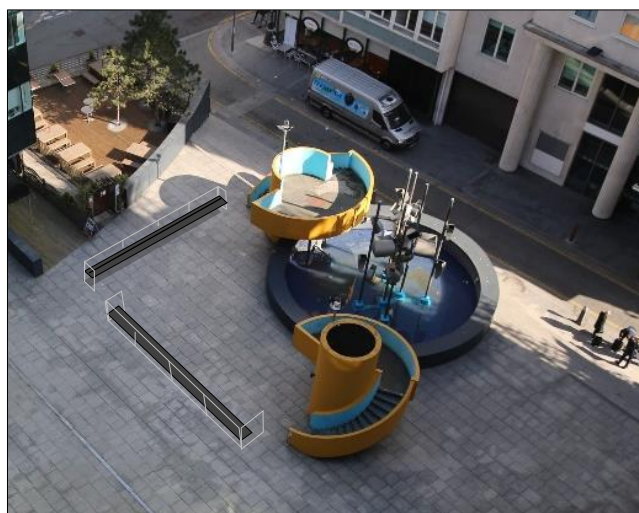
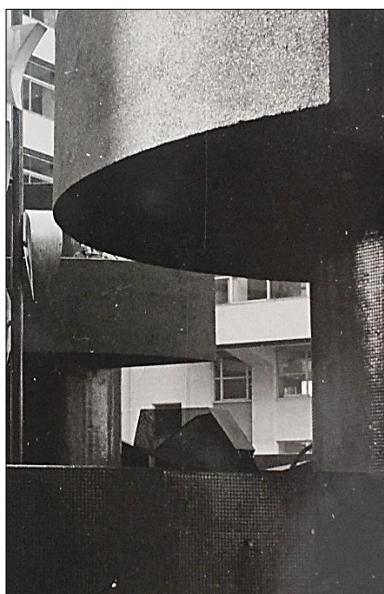
- adding an extension for the restaurant at piazza level with a beautifully designed wavy glass wall which fully complements the shapes of the fountain.
- using dark green reflective cladding in the conversion which increased the reverberation of its aural effects;
- getting the Piazza Fountain fully working again after many years of it being effectively left abandoned.²²⁷

Indeed, the enhancement was so successful that the newly named Beetham Plaza is awarded the following entry in the definitive Pevsner Architectural Guides to Liverpool, illustrated with a rare full page photograph of the restaurant's glass wall:-

"Beetham Plaza, built as offices in 1965-67 by Gotch & Partners, was converted into apartments by Brock Carmichael Associates, completed 2000. Facing the courtyard opening to Drury Lane, ground floor restaurant with wavy glass wall. Also an ingenious fountain by Richard Huws, completed 1966. Pivoted cups of various sizes, mounted on posts, fill with water until they overbalance, producing random cascades."²²⁸

Assuming that the listed Piazza Fountain is not allowed to be re-sited by LCC or DCMS²²⁹, but preserved in its existing location in Beetham Plaza, it could then be further 'enhanced' in several ways, for example, by:-

- Renovating the actual fountain to stop the current leakages and to enable it to fully operate at full water pressure during the day and in the evening in the way Richard Huws had intended. How this might be done is outlined in Appendix A to this Report.
- Changing the high-level lighting to dramatically floodlight the fountain in the evening from below in the same way as shown in the 1967 photograph in section 6.1 above. (The top of the original complex lighting installation can be seen above the rim of the pool in the 1967 black and white photograph below).
- Restoring the viewing platforms to their original dark colour to contrast with the white water of the cascades. (As also shown below, the pool and platform bases were originally finished with polished black mosaic tiles, a very small remaining portion of which can still be seen between the two spear shafts of the African plaque).
- 'Disguising' but, if necessary, still giving access to the rather ugly supporting base frame of the fountain, currently made worse by being painted bright blue. Before the water level was lowered, presumably for health and safety reasons, this structure was coloured grey and lay unseen beneath the original 16 inches depth of the pool and the waves generated on its surface. This should, at least, be repainted to match either the grey brown of the vertical bronze supporting pipes or the darker blue floor of the receiving pool.



^ Suggested new seating for the Goree Piazza
< Original mosaic tile finish & surviving piece

- Reinstating the seating in the positions of the original 'seating walls' designed by Richard Huws in 1965 (shown in his drawing on page 9 and in the photograph on page 11 above) to enable the nearby new office workers and visitors to the fountain to again sit and eat their sandwiches or simply to relax and enjoy its sights and sounds. However, it is proposed that the new seating is designed to still allow the piazza to extend visually to the pool without interruption by having simple long low benches, each surrounded by toughened clear glass 'balustrades' taking the same shape of the original low walls.
- Repairing the fabric of the pool and viewing platforms more generally, particularly the floor of the platforms.
- Cleaning the African Plaque which recounts the history of the Goree Piazza.

7.3 The Ownership of the Fountain

To facilitate these improvements and secure the future of the fountain, the open publicly accessible Goree Piazza needs to be taken out of private hands. A motion passed by the Liverpool City Council's Regeneration and Sustainability Select Committee suggests one way of achieving this. In early September 2019, Councillor Richard Kemp, the leader of the Liberal Democrats in the Council and previous Vice Chair of the Local Government Association²³⁰ submitted a motion regarding the future ownership and maintenance of the fountain for the Committee meeting of the 12 September 2019.

At this meeting, the Committee agreed to delete the part of his proposed motion which read "*It believes that the only place for the bucket fountain to be is in its current setting for which it was specifically designed. It therefore requests the council to open negotiations with the owners of the land to buy the land...*"²³¹ As amended, the motion reads as follows and, as such, was passed by the Committee with 6 members voting in favour and only 1 against.

"*This Committee welcomes the listing of the bucket fountains monument. It believes that it and its surroundings is an important recognition of the architecture and direction of the City in the 1960s. Committee requests the Council explore options with the owners of the land, Local Councillors, residents and interested parties such as Merseyside Civic Society for how the Bucket Fountain can be preserved and maintained; If appropriate by the creation of a specific local trust which could take the ownership of the land and fountain for posterity and raise its own funding for purchase and maintenance.*"²³²

Given that the Liverpool City Council is already the freeholder, however, rather than the creation of a specific trust, a simpler solution might be for LCC to terminate the lease on the open piazza such that they become the sole owner of the fountain and the surrounding space. They could then take responsibility for the maintenance of the piazza and fountain, the cost of which, once the fountain is fully renovated, is likely to be small compared to that for the larger public open spaces in the Council's ownership.

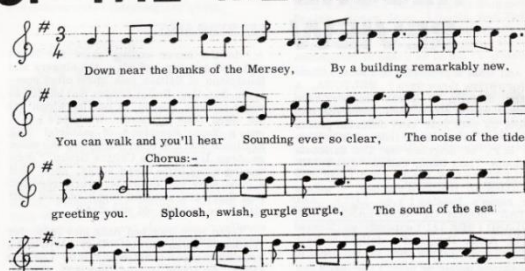
That said, the current arrangement by which the residents of Beetham Plaza pay for the upkeep of the fountain through their service charges has the advantage of increasing the general surveillance to which it is accorded. With a change in ownership, there seems no reason why this could not continue with the residents paying this service element to LCC rather than the current leaseholder, with perhaps now the residents of the adjacent Strand Plaza, particularly those who overlook the piazza, being persuaded to share the burden of the fountain's maintenance costs in a similar way. This has the potential to more than halve the existing resident's service cost allocated to the fountain or thereby possibly to allow for better maintenance in the future.²³³

7.4 The Promotion of the Fountain

The developer, supported by the Liverpool mayor, has said that the fountain needs to be relocated "*so that more people can enjoy it*".²³⁴ As already mentioned, this is likely to happen, without it being relocated, due to the influx of literally thousands of office workers in the nearby India Buildings, but additionally this could also easily be encouraged by:-

BUCKETS OF THE MERSEY

words- Stuart McTavish.
music- Jennie Williams.



Down near the banks of the Mersey, By a building remarkably new,
You can walk and you'll hear Sounding ever so clear, The noise of the tide
greeting you. Sploosh, swish, gurgle gurgle, The sound of the sea
on your brain. Sploosh, vlush, nurgle nurgle, From the fountain in old Drury Lane.

<p>Just stand and gaze on this wonder, At the different sized buckets on poles, Which fill up inside To the sound of the tide, Then tip up and puke through their holes. Chorus.</p> <p>Now people from Bootle to Garston, View the fountain whenever they roam, But they make it more real With old orange peel, And squeeze to stimulate foam. Chorus.</p> <p>The acceptance of a new feature in the city is usually signified in Liverpool by the writing of a song. This one celebrates an ingenious arrangement of crescent shaped 'buckets' that syphon water up the poles on</p>	<p>Just as the pubs are on closing, The drunkard comes up from the Strand, It is ever so late And he can't seem to wait, So he soon gives the buckets a hand. Chorus.</p> <p>So stands this Liverpool landmark, For tourists and travellers a 'must' From folks far and near If you listen you'll hear, "I went but the damn thing was bust!"</p> <p>which they are mounted and tip out a water-cascade when full. The variations in size ensure that a 'bucket' is always cascading. Artistic refinements such as orange-peel, silver paper and washingup liquids are by courtesy of the local populace.</p>
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- Providing well designed, strategically placed street signs pointing to the Goree Piazza and the fountain;
- Providing or improving the rear access from the nearby James Street Station to Moor St and Drury Lane, again with appropriate signs;
- Giving the fountain a lot more publicity, for example, in the literature directed at tourists and with posters and videos, both illustrating it and its location, displayed in the nearby Museum of Liverpool and other public places across the City.

It is also proposed that a cultural programme is designed to steer people to the fountain and to then appreciate it.²³⁵ This would be related to the Liverpool Biennial and Independents Biennial²³⁶ and to commemorate various anniversaries, for example, of the fountain's opening, its listing and Richard Huws' birth or death. It is proposed that this programme should include:-

- A performance of the folk songs "*The Family of Man*" and the wonderfully contemporary and irreverent "*Buckets of the Mersey*" of 1970, written specifically about the fountain (opposite)²³⁷, to commemorate the Liverpool Spinner's music video, partly shot at the fountain in the Goree Piazza, probably in the early 1970s.²³⁸

- A performance of “*Piazza*” the classical piece specifically inspired by the fountain, which was written for an ensemble of woodwind, brass, percussion and strings by the composer Howard Skempton in 2007.²³⁹
- Other musical events by the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union and a smaller Welsh choir, and
- A series of talks related to the fountain as part of the Biennial’s ‘Discursive Weekend’ scheduled for early October 2020.²⁴⁰

As a first step to progress these proposals, a Liverpool based, multi-disciplinary Steering Group has been established, which had its first meeting at the StayCity Aparthotel in Drury Lane, opposite the Piazza Fountain, on the 15 January 2020. As currently constituted the Steering Group includes high level representatives of the following organisations and groups.²⁴¹

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • Engage Liverpool | • Brock Carmichael, Architects |
| • Merseyside Civic Society | • MgMaStudio Architecture |
| • Liverpool School of Architecture, UoL | • Cammell Laird |
| • Liverpool School of Art and Design, LJMU | • Independent Heritage experts |
| • School of Environmental Sciences, UoL | • Independent historians |
| • Department of Music, UoL | • Independent musicians |

In future, this Steering Group could be brought under the umbrella of, a formally constituted, Friends of the Piazza Fountain or a specific local trust, as suggested in the motion passed by the LCC’s Regeneration and Sustainability Select Committee (see section 7.3 above).

Once established, with appropriate permissions obtained and the total required costs ascertained, it is proposed that the Steering Group would then apply for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.²⁴² When funding has been secured and when all of the details of the repair and renovation work and design of the re-instated seating has been finalised, a formal application for listed building consent would then be submitted to the Liverpool City Council.

Finally, once restored, with the name of the designer incorporated, we would like to see the fountain with all of its buckets/hoppers running more or less continuously as Richard Huws had originally intended, thus providing a source of enjoyment for the people of the City of Liverpool and its visitors. Instead of a fountain once infamous for rarely being found to be working, as recorded in the Spinners 1970’s folk song, it would then become a better known, frequently visited, permanent attraction of the seaport alongside the nearby Pier Head, the Museum of Liverpool and the Albert Dock.

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Appendix A - Evolution of Hopper Designs and Renovation Lessons

A.1 Wear in the Hopper Bearings and Consequent Leakages

Videos taken of the Richard Huws' Piazza fountain in Liverpool since 2008 and mostly posted on You Tube show that it has become increasingly subject to leakage in recent years.²⁴³ Most of the leakage occurs at the axle points, that is at the junction between the horizontal supporting supply pipes and the sides of the hoppers. With the smaller cantilevered hoppers this only occurs on the side closest to the vertical supporting supply pipe, as shown diagrammatically in Figure A.1,²⁴⁴ but on the larger hoppers where the horizontal pipes span between two verticals it occurs on both sides, indicating that these hoppers are probably being supplied with water from both verticals.

In some videos water can be seen spurting vertically from the horizontal pipe within a hopper.²⁴⁵ Due to the sleeve encasing this pipe, this would seem impossible in Richard Huws' original design and therefore may result from a split sleeve if not from modifications made during the renovations undertaken between 1997 and 2000 or at some other time.²⁴⁶

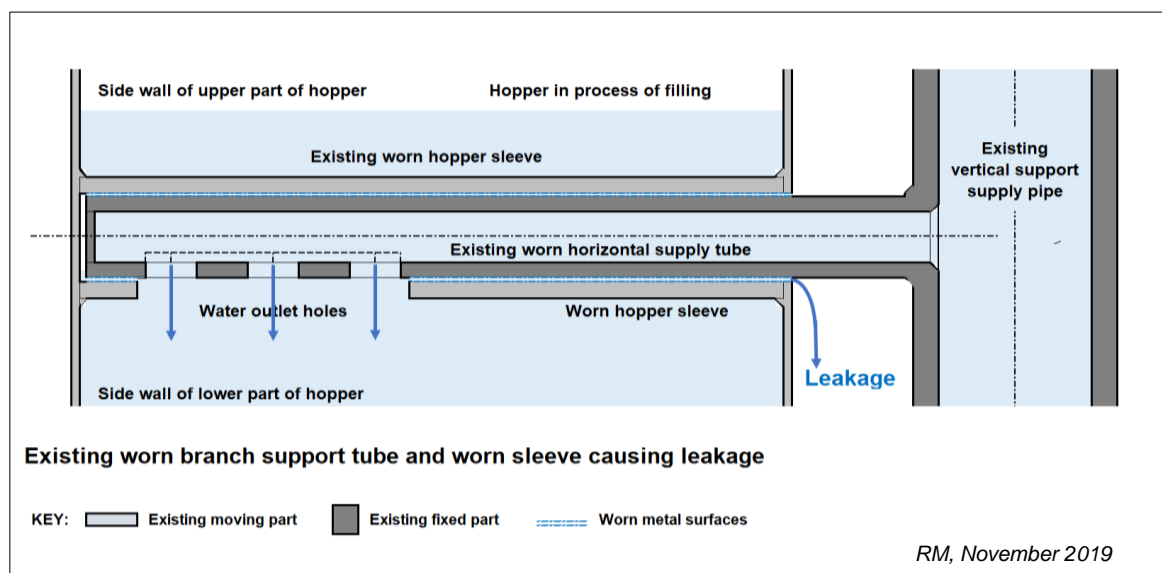


Figure A.1: Existing worn support and sleeve tubes causing leakage when hopper filling

In the absence of any detailed original drawings of the Liverpool hoppers, contact has been made with the Liverpool sculptor, Robin Riley, who working for BCA Landscapes and Brock Carmichael was responsible for the fountain's restoration. He recalls that the main reason that the fountain was not working was that the hoppers or 'buckets' were all full of bricks and other rubble, the additional weight of which he thinks could have distorted the bearings to add to the general wear and tear.

He used a ladder to completely clear all of the hoppers of any debris, but no attempt was made to try to remove these from their supporting supply tubes nor to grease any of the bearings.²⁴⁷ As a result, his knowledge of the detailed design of the bearings is limited, but he thinks that most do comprise a sleeve attached to the hopper walls which revolves around the horizontal supporting supply pipes, as also suggested by the written and video evidence.²⁴⁸

Despite the limited work undertaken on the fountain between 1997 and 2000, the videos taken from February 2008 onwards indicate that the renovations managed to limit the amount of leakage for at least 10 years, but that by 2013 this had again become significant and by 2017 extensive.

The leakage problem is by no means a new one; Richard Huws noted that the bearings of the Liverpool fountain had begun showing signs of wear only three years after its opening in May 1967. In 1975 he records that nothing was done about this until, with his Basildon design in 1973, a simple answer to the bearing problem was found.²⁴⁹ He does not specify what his solution was, but the recent discovery by the National Library of Wales of the working drawings for his Basildon fountain provides a possible pointer.²⁵⁰ These show that the hoppers were designed such that they could be easily slipped off their horizontal supporting supply pipes by the simple removal of the 3 small screws which restrained their lateral movement, thereby allowing for the full and regular lubrication of the bearings.²⁵¹

As has continually occurred in the Liverpool fountain, if the inner support tubes are not regularly re-lubricated with grease, say at least annually, wear between the inner and outer metal tubes will inevitably continue to loosen the fit leading to increased leakage at the axle points.

A.2 Richard Huws' Optimum Hopper Design

In early 1979, however, Richard Huws' devised the optimum solution for the removal of the hoppers in his proposed fountain for the Harvey Centre, Harlow. Although never built, this was his seventh and final commissioned project to use tipping hoppers and as such appears to be appropriately his most robust and sophisticated design.²⁵² As indicated by his working drawing²⁵³ (copied below with the author's coloured highlights), here he is believed to have sought to minimise leakage from the axle points with a series of design measures:-

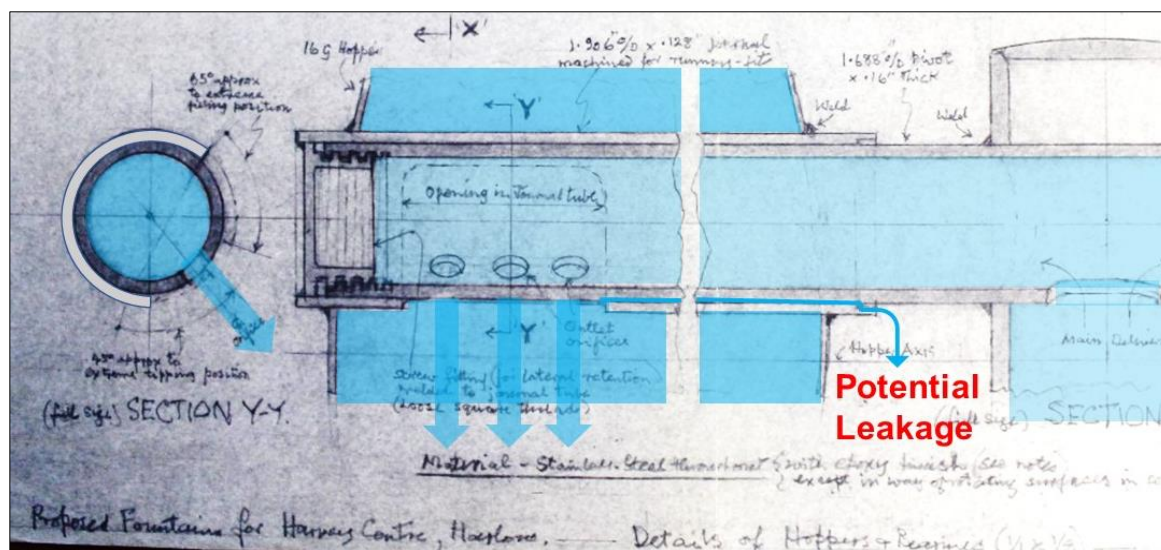


Figure A.2: RH's working drawing of hopper for fountain for the Harvey Centre, Harlow

- a tight fit between the outer sleeve tube attached to the hopper and the inner support/supply tube attached to the verticals, but not so tight as to prevent the former freely revolving around the latter;
- the grease used to lubricate the movement between these two concentric tubes;
- the positioning of the inlet holes in the inner supply tube and corresponding slot in the outer sleeve at the furthest possible point away from the inner end of the outer sleeve;
- the cutting off, by the revolving sleeve, of the water supply as soon as the hopper is full and starts to tip;
- a nib fixed around the inner supply tube at the inner end of the outer sleeve tube;
- a large screw fitting which effectively tightens the fit between the revolving sleeve and this fixed end nib as the hopper re-rights itself for refilling again; and
- not least, by facilitating any future greasing of the fountain by designing the hopper such that it can be simply unscrewed from the end of the inner support tube and quickly slipped off this support.

As noted on his working drawing, the squared screw fitting at the end of the outer sleeve prevents any major lateral movement, but a very small lateral shift will be generated as the hopper swivels through 90 degrees to re-right itself. However, this small shift appears to have been utilised to tighten the opposite end of the sleeve against the nib on the inner tube, to prevent any leakage at this point as the upright hopper fills, and conversely to loosen and break this seal when the hopper then tips.

A.3 Differences Between the Liverpool and Harlow Designs

Although incorporating significant developments, the basic design of the hoppers for the Harlow Fountain is the same as that used in Liverpool, with the way that the water is delivered to the hoppers being exactly the same in principle. The main relevant differences in Liverpool are:-

- The side walls of the hoppers are flush with the ends of the outer sleeve.
- None of the horizontal supply tubes are at the top of the vertical supporting supply pipes.
- Even in the case of the 14 cantilevered smaller hoppers, it appears that these cannot be simply removed.
- The six largest hoppers are supported on an inner support tube which spans between two of the supporting vertical tubes.

The latter appears to make the removal of the existing six largest hoppers impossible without the complete dismantling of the fountain, and it is interesting to note that this was the first and only time Richard Huws used this arrangement. In all of his five fountain commissions which followed his 1962 design for Liverpool²⁵⁴, he adopted a much simpler arrangement in which only two smaller hoppers were cantilevered out either side from the top of each vertical supporting supply pipe, thereby making the removal of all of the hoppers for maintenance far easier to achieve.

[A.4 Suggested Approach to Renovating the Piazza Fountain](#)

Because of the overall similarity in the design of the hoppers, however, it should be possible to incorporate the final design improvements proposed for the Harlow fountain in the renovation of the Liverpool Piazza Fountain to provide a more permanent solution to the leakage problem around the axle points. While retaining all twenty of the existing stainless-steel hoppers and the seven bronze vertical supporting supply pipes, it is proposed that all of the horizontal supporting pipes and/or hopper sleeves that are badly worn be replaced with a modified design based on Richard Huws' final Harlow fountain.

Importantly, when replacing the horizontal supply pipes for each particular hopper, the number and size of the existing outlet holes would need to be replicated exactly to guarantee the same tipping frequencies.²⁵⁵ Overall, the aim would be to maintain the design aesthetic and performance of the existing Piazza Fountain as closely as possible, while using Richard Huws' subsequent developments of the hopper design to make the Liverpool fountain far easier to maintain and much less prone to leakage.

This approach is possibly controversial, but if the fountain is renovated exactly as it was originally designed, then there is no doubt that the bearings will again show signs of wear after a further 3 years or so and the leakages will reoccur and again get progressively worse. As this was clearly not Richard Huws' intention, to incorporate in the renovation the design improvements that the designer had himself developed to solve the bearing problem would appear to be a wholly legitimate means of renovation and future conservation - provided that this does not adversely affect the structures original appearance and intended performance. Once renovated in this way, however, there should be no further need to dismantle the main vertical supports or the majority of horizontal branch pipes.

Indeed, the approach would be entirely in keeping with the British system of protecting the historic environment which focuses on conservation rather than preservation and recognises that *"very often assets can accommodate change and alteration without causing harm to their intrinsic significance."*²⁵⁶

The proposal, therefore, is to replace the horizontal support pipes and/or sleeves where necessary with new ones that allow the hoppers to be easily removed to allow for, say, the annual re-greasing of the bearings with a marine grade water resistant grease. This is specifically designed to resist 'wash-out' and to stay in place in the presence of water²⁵⁷ and, for example, is recommended for lubricating boat trailer axles that frequently need to operate/revolve underwater when a craft is being launched or retrieved.²⁵⁸

A more 'permanent' solution such as coating the outside of the supply tube and inside of the sleeve in a Teflon type finish is not only likely to be more expensive, but less satisfactory in the longer term, as such coatings can themselves get worn down.²⁵⁹ It is also not thought possible, for example, to use the proposed security bolt hole in the hopper sleeve to inject grease into the tight gap between the two tubes using a powerful pressure 'gun', because of the opening in the sleeve and the water outlet hole/s. The proposed new screw fitting would need re-greasing too and this could definitely not be reached in this way.

[A.5 Replacing the Worn Hopper Bearings](#)

Consequently, assuming that the hoppers would need to be fully removeable for re-greasing, Figure A.3 below shows two suggested options for replacing the inner support tube for the 14 smaller cantilevered hoppers. This figure and the subsequent ones just illustrate possible broad ideas, albeit based on Richard Huws' improved designs, which if feasible would obviously need to be worked up and detailed by a fully qualified marine engineer with good experience in designing water installations using waterproof welds in bronze and stainless steel.

While in the first option, the new branch support tubes are permanently welded to the verticals in the same way as the existing tubes, the second option would enable the branch tubes to be unscrewed from the vertical and cleaned internally of any deposits, say every 10 years or so. In both options, the suggestion is to replace the nib used in the Harlow design at the inner end of the outer sleeve with a split circular gasket at this potential leakage point, securely held in place with a metal ring in two halves screwed to the fixed supply tube. This would enable any worn gaskets to be quickly replaced in-situ without any need to remove the hoppers.

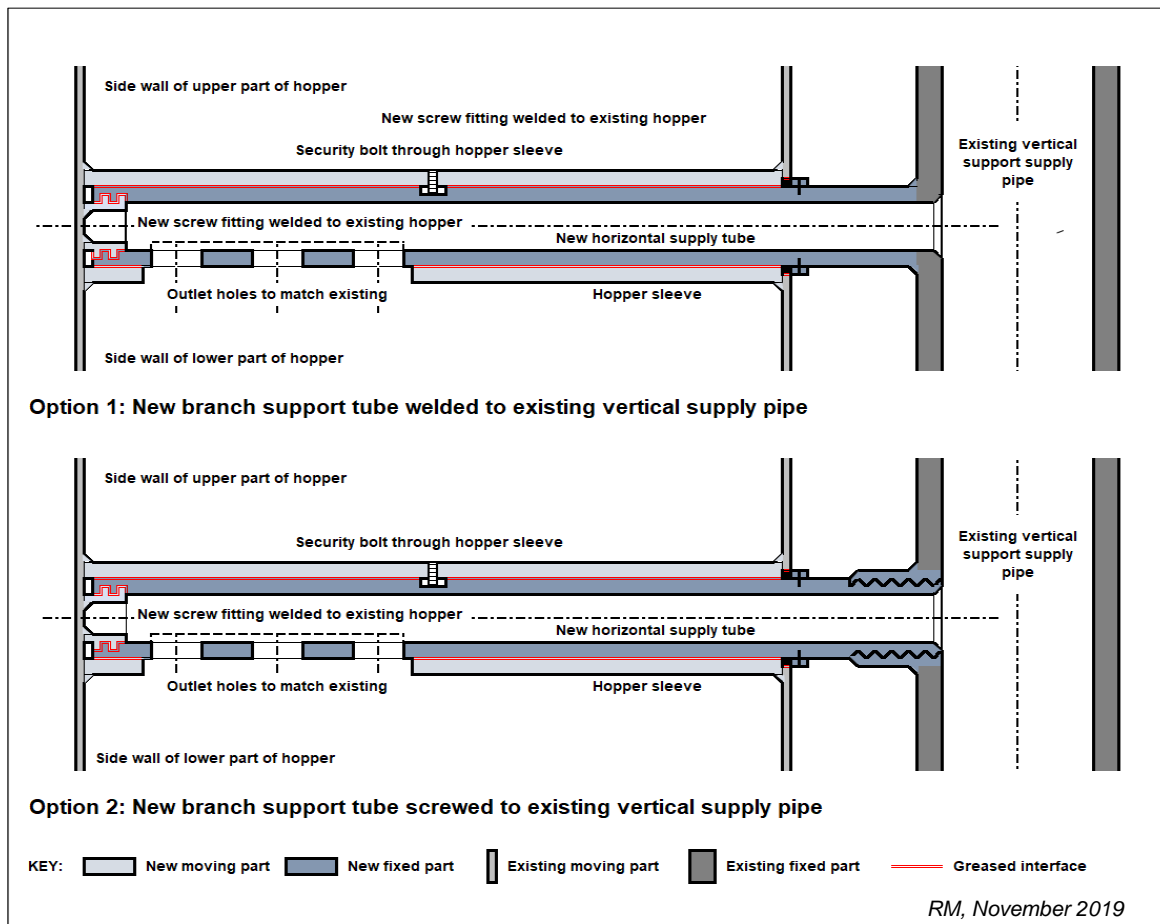


Figure A.3: Options for replacing the branch support tubes for the smaller hoppers

By using a large screw fitting very similar to that used in RH's Harlow design, however, all of the smaller hoppers could be very easily unscrewed and removed for the full re-greasing of the inner branch support tubes and screw or for other more major maintenance work. The very small lateral shift generated by this screw fitting as the hopper rights itself through some 90 degrees would be utilised to tighten the seal between the end of the revolving outer sleeve and the fixed gasket and to maintain this tight seal while the hopper fills. Conversely this screw fitting would move the hopper slightly away from the gasket as it tips enabling the near empty²⁶⁰ and lighter hopper to quickly re-right itself and avoid unnecessary wear on the gasket when the former is not full of water and immediately prone to leakage. (This is illustrated in more detail in Figure A.4, which shows all of the lubrication areas in red).

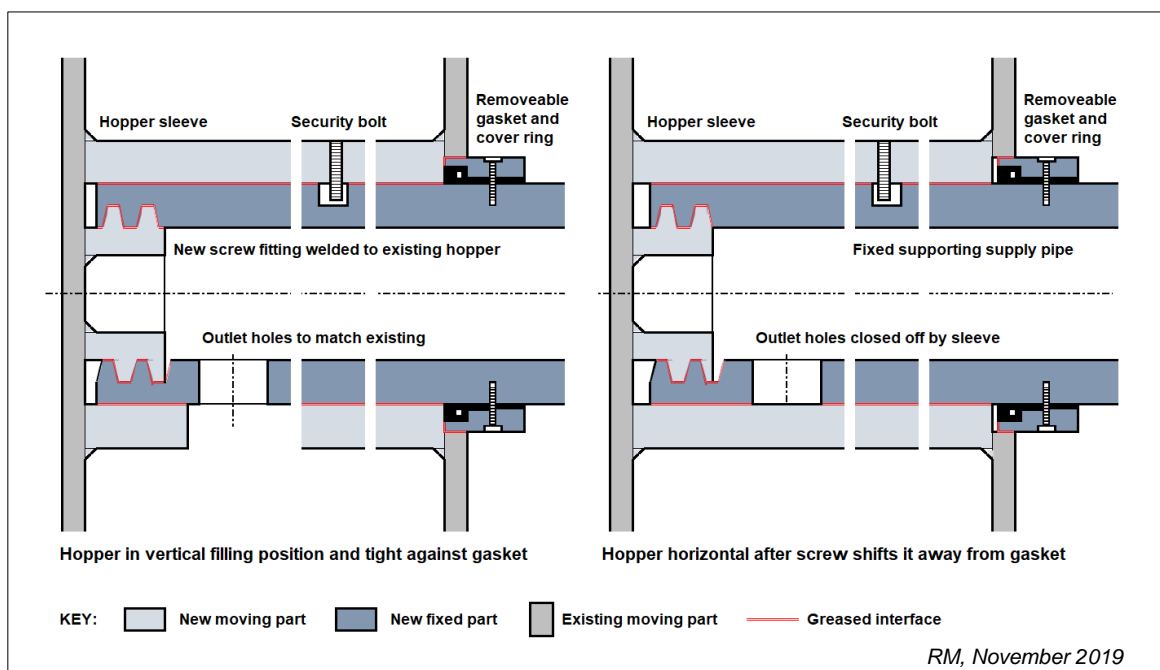


Figure A.4: Suggestions for new branch support tubes based on the Harlow design

The Harlow fountain was designed for a covered shopping mall that was locked and patrolled at night. In Liverpool, to prevent vandals simply unscrewing and stealing any hoppers, these could be provided with a locking bolt in the outer sleeve, protruding into a wide groove running nearly a third of the way around the inner support tube. This security bolt would need to be retracted from within the hoppers before these could be fully unscrewed and removed. While not restricting the normal tipping and re-righting of the hoppers in any way, these would have the added advantage of preventing any of the smaller hoppers rotating well in excess of 90 degrees and getting stuck upside down, as has occasionally occurred in Liverpool.²⁶¹

Figure A.5 suggests that the horizontal supply tube for the larger hoppers could be replaced by a tube that is in two lengths and screws together. Once the gaskets and retaining metal ring have been removed from either end, this is designed to be fully screwed together and simultaneously unscrewed from the vertical supports on either side, thereby allowing the whole assembly to be removed by hand without the need of crantage. Once removed, the inner supply tube can then be easily withdrawn out of the sleeve in the hopper and re-greased and the whole assembly re-instated.

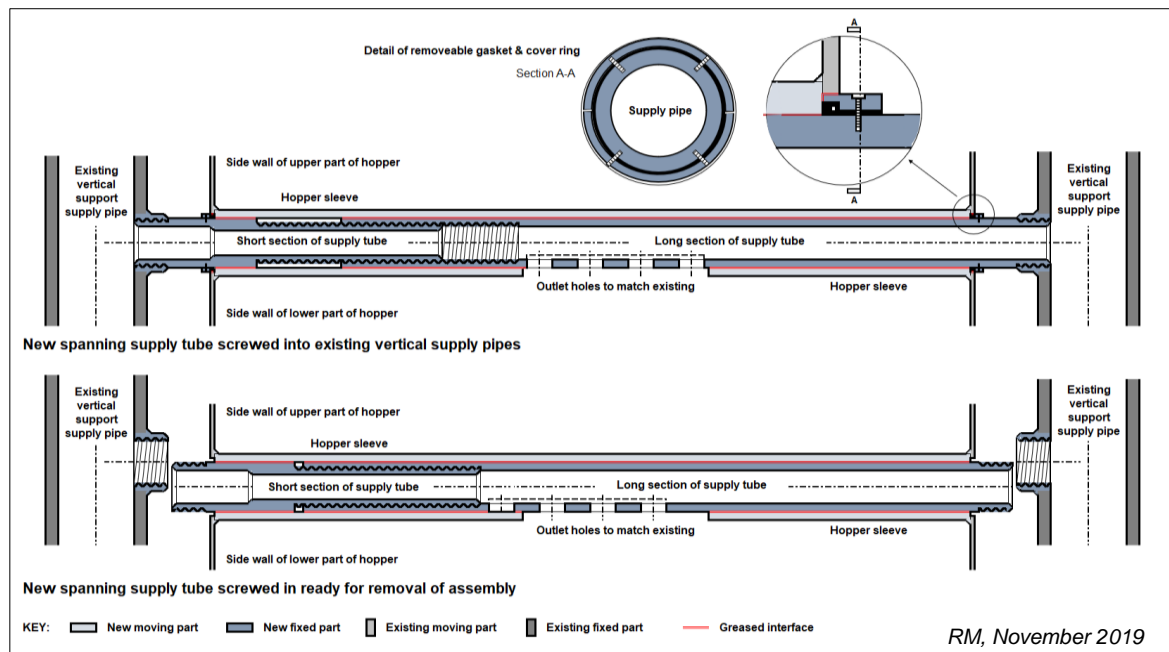


Figure A.5: Suggestion for replacing the spanning supply tube for the larger hoppers

The end gaskets used either side of each of the six larger hoppers would be of a very similar design to that used for the 14 smaller hoppers. Without the screw fitting which tightens and then loosens the seal against the revolving outer sleeve of the smaller hoppers, these gaskets are likely to incur greater wear, despite these larger hoppers being less in need of such a device being heavier and having the longest tipping frequencies.²⁶² However, by again using a metal ring in two halves to secure these, any of the split circular gaskets that are worn could again be very quickly replaced in-situ without the need to unscrew the axles and remove any of the hoppers.

The initial cost of replacing many of the horizontal pipes and sleeves is likely to be substantial, but the aim would be to reduce the costs in the longer term by giving the fountain a far longer problem free life than the previous renovation, when significant leakages again became apparent after a little over 10 years.

Appendix B - References and Endnotes

Acknowledgements

- ¹ Hughes, Quentin (1969), *Liverpool*, City Building Series, London, Studio Vista, 1969. Entry 177 Piazza Waterfall, Wilberforce House 1966, p.136-7.

B.1 Introduction

- ² Denham, Stewart (2018a), *A name from the past!*, e-mail to Frank Trowell, Derek M Hudson, Richard Moore and Phil Walling, 27 August 2018, with photographs of the front cover and page 90 of the 1951 Festival Catalogue. Three of the group including the author recall seeing the fountain on their respective school trips to the Festival of Britain.
- ³ Hudson, Derek M (2018a), *Tipping Bucket Fountain ...*, e-mail to Stewart Denham, Frank Trowell, Richard Moore and Phil Walling, 12 September 2018, followed by a photograph and a short video of the fountain in action.
- ⁴ Moore, Richard (2018a), *Getting RH's Liverpool Fountain Listed*, e-mail to Frank Trowell, Stewart Denham, Phil Walling and Derek M Hudson, 15 September 2019.
- ⁵ Initially I wrote to Historic England to determine whether listing would provide the fountain with more protection than afforded by its position in both the Liverpool's World Heritage Site and Castle Street Conservation Area and was told that it would: Calvert, Linda (2018), e-mail to author from Business Officer, HE, 18 September 2018.
- ⁶ Moore, Richard (2018b), *Re: Edrica Huws – Patchwork pioneer – Following her artist's instinct*, e-mail to Stewart Denham, 20 September 2019. Richard Huws' had told us that his home was on Anglesey, but not where on the island.
- ⁷ Denham, Stewart (2018b), *A bit more of the jigsaw!*, e-mail to the author, 30 September 2018.
- ⁸ Airbnb (2018), *Talwrn Wild Garden Retreat*, at <https://www.airbnb.co.uk/rooms/3111104> (accessed 20/09/2018).
- ⁹ Nagashima, Catharine (2019), *Re: Your Father's Fountain designs*, email to the author, 24 September 2010, replying to the author's e-mail of the same date.
- ¹⁰ In an email of 19 September (Denham, Stewart, *Edrica Huws – Patchwork pioneer – Following her artist's instinct*) SD had already suggested that Daniel Huws, former archivist at the National Library of Wales, could be the designer's son and this was largely confirmed by finding that the Wikipedia entry – at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Huws - cited him as the co-editor of a 2007 book "*Edrica Huws Patchworks*" on the work of Richard Huws' wife'. However, in the event contact was made through his sister Catharine and daughter, Hanna, rather than through the Library.
- ¹¹ National Library of Wales (2017), *D.Litt for Daniel Huws*, 08.11.2017, at <https://www.library.wales/information-for/press-and-media/press-releases/2017-press-releases/dlitt-for-daniel-huws/> (accessed 19/09/2018).
- ¹² Huws, Daniel (2009), *Richard Huws Papers, Draft List*, May 2009; Items (9) Festival of Britain, 1951, (10) Other water features, 1975-79, (11) for BP, (12) Liverpool, Goree Piazza, 1967 (13) Grimsby, 1973, (14) Basildon, 1973-5, (15) 'Notes on various water-features'. Copies of the 'biographies' referenced at 20, 21 and 23 below were also provided.
- ¹³ Beetham Plaza (2019), *Bucket Fountain*, fountain tab on current Beetham Plaza website, Liverpool - <http://beethamplaza.co.uk/bucket-fountain/>.
- ¹⁴ Parry, Margaret (2018), *Re: Contact us: Liverpool Record Office*, email to author from library assistant, Liverpool Record Office, 19 October 2018. The MCS were unable to supply this information, but did provide other important leads.
- ¹⁵ This yielded the photograph reproduced on the right in section 3.1.
- ¹⁶ Denham, Stewart (2018) Calling all Cammell Laird 'fountaineers', Letters, *Wirral Globe*, Birkenhead, 5 & 11 December 2018.
- ¹⁷ Detailed in section 4.5.
- ¹⁸ Massey, David (2018), *Richard Huws' Fountain*, email to the author from the treasurer of the Merseyside Civic Society, 15 November 2018. The Goree Piazza from which the fountain gets its name was then renamed Beetham Plaza.
- ¹⁹ HM Land Registry (2019); Beetham Plaza proprietor and map details for Freehold Title number MS657037 and Leasehold Title number MS413913.

B.2 Richard Huws, 1902-1980

- ²⁰ Jones, Chris & Crickmay, Chris (1982), A Tribute to Richard Huws, *Architectural Association Quarterly*, Vol 13, London.
- ²¹ Huws, Daniel (1997), *Richard Llywelyn Huws, 1902-1980*, translated transcript of a speech in Welsh given by his son at the unveiling of an Isle of Anglesey Council commemorative plaque on his house in Talwrn, 29 July 1997.
- ²² Huws, Daniel. (2009), *Richard Huws Papers, a list of important dates in the introduction to the papers*, Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, May 2009.

2.1 Richard Hughes, Education & Early Life

- ²³ Nagashima, Catharine (2019), email to author, 24 September 2019, with dates of Richard Huws' children, Daniel 1932; Catharine 1938; Angharad 1941-1990; Ursula 1947 and Thomas 1950.

2.2 Richard Huws, Later Career

- ²⁴ Lady Allen of Hurtwood and Susan Jellicoe (1953), *The things we see: Gardens*, London, Penguin, 1953.
- ²⁵ Huws, Richard (c.1968), Undated handwritten transcript of talk on Festival of Britain and Liverpool fountains, in RH Papers, NLW, Item 12.
- ²⁶ Huws, Richard (1950), Working drawings of Spinners, Sky sections and Cell dividers + 1951 photographs in RH Papers, NLW, Item 12.

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- ²⁷ As a full-time lecturer in Liverpool, Richard Huws wanted a family house closer to Liverpool, but also desired an area that was still predominantly Welsh speaking. (Conversation with Catharine Huws at Talwrn, 22 September 2019.)
- ²⁸ The plaque reads, in English, “*Isle of Anglesey Council, RICHARD HUWS, 1902 – 1980, ARTIST, Sculptor, Cartoonist, Designer, He lived and died in this house.*”

B.3 Festival of Britain, Water Mobile Sculpture, 1951

- ²⁹ “*Water mobile sculpture*” is how Richard Huws fountain is described in the list of external new works of art on page 90 of the official South Bank Exhibition, London, 1951 Festival of Britain Guide, the fountain being later referred to by RH as a “temporary prototype” in Huws, Richard (c.1968), as referenced above .
- ³⁰ Although uncatalogued, the Richard Huws Papers are accompanied by a list of items (set of papers), each with a short introduction/commentary provided by the depositor, Daniel Huws, in 2009.

3.1 A New Type of Fountain

- ³¹ Huws, Richard (1976), *Fountains in Urban Features*, Handout to RH’s talk at the Water in Landscape Design Seminar, 26-30 January, York, Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, Kings Manor.
- ³² Huws, Richard (1975), *Longer handwritten transcript for the above talk*, dated 9/12/1975 in RH Papers, NLW, Item 15.
- ³³ The action of the 1951 water mobile sculpture has been determined from studying the photographs and several video clips of the fountain, particularly in the ‘dailymotion’ video referenced below.
- ³⁴ Huws, Richard (1976).
- ³⁵ The video of the 1951 Festival of Britain at <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xb3zl> is probably the most comprehensive available, setting the whole Festival in context and highlighting its influence on architecture and design.
- ³⁶ Richard Huws Papers (1951 Press Cuttings), several with sources and/or dates missing, Aberystwyth, NLW, Item 9.

3.2 The Fate of the 1951 ‘Prototype’

- ³⁷ Builder (1952), ‘Future of the South Bank’, *The Builder*, London, 15 February 1952.
- ³⁸ Huws, Daniel (2009), *Festival of Britain, 1951*, Introduction to Item 9 in the Richard Huws papers, NLW, May 2009.
- ³⁹ Huws, Richard (c.1968).
- ⁴⁰ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ⁴¹ Wright, Terry (1967), Richard Huws’ Splash, *Liverpool Daily Post*, Liverpool, 11 May 1967.

B.4 Piazza Fountain, Drury Lane, Liverpool, 1962-67

- ⁴² Liverpool Record Office Archives, Proceedings of the Fountain Sub-Committee 1962-1967, *Secretary’s Correspondence*, (Catalogue reference No. 711 CIV 4/1/12) and *Merseyside Civic Society Executive Minutes*, 1962-1972, (Catalogue reference No. 711 CIV 2/4).

4.1 The Merseyside Civic Society’s Fountain Sub-Committee

- ⁴³ Merseyside Civic Society (1963), Note of Fountain Sub-Committee members, in *Proceedings of the Fountain Sub-Committee* (MCS FSC), 1962-67, Liverpool Record Office.
- ⁴⁴ MCS FSC (10 August 1962a), Request from G. Shankland, *Minutes of meeting of fountain sub-committee*, Liverpool
- ⁴⁵ MCS FSC (10 July 1962), Proposals for a New City Fountain, *Minutes of meeting of fountain sub-committee*, Liverpool.
- ⁴⁶ The Tryweryn valley in Gwynedd, included the village of Capel Celyn, was flooded in the early 1960s to create a large reservoir Lynn Celyn to provide water for Liverpool and was fiercely opposed by the Welsh nationalists and others.
- ⁴⁷ MCS FSC (10 August 1962b), Report on meeting with Mr Huws, *Minutes of meeting of sub-committee*, Liverpool.
- ⁴⁸ MCS FSC (18 September 1962), Initial fountain proposals, *Minutes of meeting of fountain sub-committee*, Liverpool.
- ⁴⁹ MCS FSC (3 October 1962), Obtaining formal consent, *Minutes of meeting of fountain sub-committee*, Liverpool.

4.2 Presentation and Reception of the Design

- ⁵⁰ MCS FSC (23 October 1962), Presentation to Sub-Committee, *Minutes of meeting of fountain sub-committee*, L’pool.
- ⁵¹ MCS FSC (9 January 1963), chairman’s report on presentation to Alderman McDonald Stewart, Graeme Shankland and Walter Bor on 8 January, *Minutes of meeting of fountain sub-committee*, Liverpool.
- ⁵² Bor, Walter (1963), Fountain in Central Area, *Letter to Merseyside Civic Society*, 29 October 1963.

4.3: The Liverpool Fountain Design

- ⁵³ Although RH had been working since 1951 to progress the principles of a kinetic fountain, we have found no evidence in the Richard Huws Papers or elsewhere that the Liverpool fountain was originally designed for a new town in Lancashire as reported, for example, in the description of the ‘Bucket fountain’ included on the Beetham Plaza website at <http://beethamplaza.co.uk/bucket-fountain/>.
- ⁵⁴ Huws, Richard (1964), *Moorfield Project BP Proposed Water Sculpture*, Oct 1964, Brief note on principles of proposed hopper design.
- ⁵⁵ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ⁵⁶ *Observer Weekend Review* (1967), ‘The Mersey Splash’, London, 7 May 1967.
- ⁵⁷ Merseyside Civic Society (1968), *Talk by Richard Huws at 1968 Annual Meeting*, 5 January 1968, Liverpool.
- ⁵⁸ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ⁵⁹ Huws, Richard (1976).
- ⁶⁰ Huws, Richard (1964).
- ⁶¹ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ⁶² Huws, Richard (c.1968).

4.4: [The Fountain's Location in the Goree Piazza](#)

- ⁶³ Camenisch, F.J. (1964), 'Fountain Sub-Committee', *Letter to the MCS secretary, John Clarke*, 21 July 1964.
- ⁶⁴ Houghton, Alistair (2017), Liverpool's secret streets in the sky – the story of the walkways above our heads, *Liverpool Echo*, Liverpool, 24 December 2017. (<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/liverpools-secret-streets-sky-story-14077266>).
- ⁶⁵ Buchanan, Colin (1963), *Traffic in Towns*, Ministry of Transport, London, 23 November 1963.
- ⁶⁶ Moore, Richard (2019), *A History of Richard Huws' Piazza Fountain, Drury Lane, Liverpool*, Merseyside Civic Society, Liverpool, January 2019, sections 3.1.
- ⁶⁷ In the event the redevelopment scheme adjacent to these first two sites was never built.
- ⁶⁸ Houghton, Alistair (2017).
- ⁶⁹ Ibid.
- ⁷⁰ Bennett, Alice (2019), Radio interview with the Mayoral Lead for Heritage by Paul Salt, *BBC Radio Merseyside*, 15 February 2019, 5.25 pm (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p06yfq6z> at the 1.25 hour point). Subsequently, Alice Bennet lost her seat in the May 2019 local elections.
- ⁷¹ Houghton, Alistair (2017).
- ⁷² Clarke, John (1964), *Letter from MCS secretary to the Town Clerk, Mr Alker*, 27 October 1964.
- ⁷³ Alker (1965), Re Site of fountain within the Central Area, *Letter from Town Clerk to John Clarke*, 22 February 65
- ⁷⁴ Alker (1965), Letter from Town Clerk to MCS secretary, John Clarke, 4 March 1965.
- ⁷⁵ *Liverpool Echo* (1967), Opening Ceremony Today, 2 May 1967, Liverpool.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ⁷⁸ Huws, Richard (c.1968).
- ⁷⁹ The optimum position of the fountain in relation to the sunlight reaching the piazza is shown by the aerial view from Google Earth and a series of high level photographs of the piazza taken at different times in April 2019 by one of the Friends of the Piazza Fountain, Tony Folan.
- ⁸⁰ Williams, Peter Howell (1965), *Letter to chair of Fountain Sub-Committee, F.J.Camenisch*, 4 October 1965.
- ⁸¹ Scrutton, Hugh (1965), *Letter from Director of Walker Art Gallery to Peter Howell Williams*, 6 October 1965.

4.5 [The Fabrication of the Fountain by Cammell Laird](#)

- ⁸² Contact was made through a letter published in the Wirral Globe appealing for information – Denham, Stewart (2018) Calling all Cammell Laird 'fountaineers', Letters, *Wirral Globe*, Birkenhead, 5 & 11 December 2018.
- ⁸³ This timeframe is suggested by the fact that the galvanised steel hoppers for the 1965 Tokyo Internal Trade Fair were probably fabricated in 1964/65 and that an apprentice who joined Cammell Laird in August 1966 does not recall meeting either Alan Jones or his colleague Cliff Cowley.
- ⁸⁴ Jones, Alan (2018), *Email from retired CL sub-contractor in Perth, Australia, to Stewart Denham*, 17 December 2018; Alan Jones was sub-contracted to Cammell Laird from the local mechanical engineering firm of R. McIvor & Sons.
- ⁸⁵ Alan Huws Papers, NLW, Aberystwyth, Item 12. Alan Jones was contacted through his son – Ian Jones, *telephone call to Stewart Denham*, 17 December 2018.
- ⁸⁶ Brett, Robert (2018), *Email from ex Cammell Laird apprentice to Stewart Denham*, 13 December 2018.
- ⁸⁷ Miller, Anthony (2019a), *Email from ex Cammell Laird apprentice to Stewart Denham*, 18 February 2019.
- ⁸⁸ Denham, Stuart (2019), *Emails from Anthony Miller – RH at CL*, Email to the author recounting an initial telephone conversation with the respondent, 19 February 2019.
- ⁸⁹ Miller, Anthony (2019b), *Second email to Stewart Denham*, 25 February 2019.
- ⁹⁰ Jones, Alan (2018).
- ⁹¹ Miller, Anthony (2019a).
- ⁹² Richard Huws Papers, NLW, Aberystwyth, Item 12.

4.6: [The Completion of the Fountain and its Press Coverage](#)

- ⁹³ Camenisch, F.J. (1967), *Letters from chair of FSC to MCS secretary, John Clarke*, 7 April and 14 April 1967.
- ⁹⁴ *Liverpool Echo* (1967).
- ⁹⁵ MCS (15 May 1967), chairman's Report, *Minutes of meeting of MCS Executive Committee*, Liverpool.
- ⁹⁶ *Liverpool Echo* (1967).
- ⁹⁷ *Liverpool Echo* (3 May 1967) Ursula steals the fountain's thunder, Liverpool/ *Liverpool Daily Post* (3 May 1967), The office block by the fountain, Liverpool/ *The Guardian* (3 May 1967), London/ *The Express*, (3 May 1967), Space-age splash down in the city, London.
- ⁹⁸ *Observer Weekend Review* (1967) / Muir, Kenneth (1967), 'Art in Liverpool', *The New Statesman*, London, May 1967.
- ⁹⁹ Starkk, Mischa (1967), Richard Huws, *The Sphinx*, Guild of Students, University of Liverpool, Spring 1967.
- ¹⁰⁰ *The Journal of Commerce and Shipping Telegraph* (c. 1967 undated cutting), Liverpool/ *The Architectural Review* (March 1968), a monthly symposium on painting, sculpture and the applied arts, London.
- ¹⁰¹ Merseyside Civic Society (1968).
- ¹⁰² 'Bucket fountain', *Beetham Plaza website* at <http://beethamplaza.co.uk/bucket-fountain/>.

B.5 Richard Huws' Other Fountain Designs, 1957-1979

- ¹⁰³ Benham, Stephen (2018), *email by NLW archivist to author*, 21 November 2018 and Day, Jayne (2018), *emails from NLW librarian to author*, 28 November and 30 November 2018.

5.1 The New York Fountain Design, 1957

- ¹⁰⁴ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ¹⁰⁵ Huws, Daniel (2009), *Other water features, 1957*, Introduction to Item 10 in the Richard Huws Papers, NLW, May 2009.
- ¹⁰⁶ Augenfeld, Felix (1957), Buttinger Residence, *Letter from client's architect to Richard Huws*, New York, 11 Dec 1957.
- ¹⁰⁷ Buttinger, Muriel (1978), *Letter to Richard Huws*, Aspen, 17 May 1978.
- ¹⁰⁸ By 1985, Muriel Buttinger had donated Brookdale Farm and two other properties, totalling 585 acres to the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association and neither the photographs on their website (<https://thewatershed.org/center/>) nor the images from Google Earth show any signs of Richard Huws' 'boulder' fountain.

5.2 Fountain Designs for British Petroleum, 1964 and 1965

- ¹⁰⁹ Starkk, Mischa (1967).
- ¹¹⁰ Large black and white isolated copy of a presentational drawing entitled "Moorfield Project BP Proposed Water Sculpture, Oct 1964" in RH Papers, NLW.
- ¹¹¹ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ¹¹² Ibid.
- ¹¹³ Starkk, Mischa (1967).
- ¹¹⁴ Huws, Richard (1974), *Notes on various water features carried out by the Designer*, Liverpool, 11 March 1974: Typed summary of fountain designs to date on Huskisson Street headed notepaper and signed.

5.3 Fountain for St James Square, Grimsby, 1972-73

- ¹¹⁵ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ¹¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁷ Civic Trust (1975), *Heritage Year Awards*, June 1975: Environmental Improvements - Grimsby, Humberside, St James's Square, "Designers – Mary Mitchell, Landscape Architect; Clarke, Nicolls & Marcel, Consulting Engineers; Richard Huws, Designer (water feature)."
- ¹¹⁸ Nairn, Ian (1973a), This Britain, *The Sunday Times*, 19 August 1973.
- ¹¹⁹ Civic Trust (1975).
- ¹²⁰ Nairn, Ian (1973b), *Typescript for above Sunday Times article*, 8 July 1973, copy in RH Papers, NLW, Item 13.
- ¹²¹ Nairn, Ian (1973c) Grimsby's loss whose gain? *The Sunday Times*, October 7, 1973.
- ¹²² Astragal (1973), The fountain furore – round three, *The Architects Journal*, London, 24 October 1973.
- ¹²³ Grimsby Local History Library (2011), The controversial 'nodding buckets' water feature/fountain in St. James' Square, circa 1975, *Facebook*, 11 August 2011.
- ¹²⁴ HIS (2017), St James Square, Cleethorpes Drinking Fountain, *Memorial Drinking Fountains*, 5 March 2017.

5.4 Fountain for St Martins Precinct, Basildon, 1972-76.

- ¹²⁵ Galloway, D. (1972), *Untitled letter to Richard Huws*, 21 March 1972 in RH Papers, NLW, Item 14.
- ¹²⁶ Huws, Richard (1972), *Water Feature as in Festival of Britain, 1951*, Reply to D. Galloway, Chief Architect/Planner, Basildon Development Corporation, 25 March 1972, in RH Papers, Item 14.
- ¹²⁷ Huws, Richard (1975).
- ¹²⁸ The Basildon drawings were originally lost/mislaid by the National Library for Wales, but were relocated on the 7 October 2019.
- ¹²⁹ Huws, Richard (1974) & (1975).
- ¹³⁰ Huws, Richard (1974).
- ¹³¹ Huws, Richard (1974) & (1976).
- ¹³² Galloway, D. (1974), *St. Martin's Church – Water Feature*, Letter to Richard Huws, 12 November 1974 in RH Papers, NLW, Item 14.
- ¹³³ This did not stop the Town's Heritage Trail of 2009 nor the Basildon Echo of January 2016 claiming that a traditional water feature, now in St Martins Church precinct, is the Richard Huws fountain - when it is literally nothing of the kind.

5.5 Fountain Design for the Harvey Centre, Harlow New Town, 1975-79

- ¹³⁴ Gibberd, Sir Frederick (1975) *Letter to Richard Huws*, 15 October 1975 in RH Papers, NLW, Item 15. Gibberd was the consultant architect planner for Harlow New Town and Mary Mitchell then the consultant landscape architect.
- ¹³⁵ Graham, J.A. (1975), Harlow Town Centre Stage IV, *Letter to Richard Huws with enclosures*, 15 October 1975.
- ¹³⁶ Huws, Richard (1975), *Letter to Sir Frederick Gibberd*, Liverpool, 22 October 1975
- ¹³⁷ Gibberd, Sir Frederick (1978) *Letter to Richard Huws*, 18 July 1978.
- ¹³⁸ Graham, J.A. (1978), *Letter to Richard Huws with enclosures*, 29 July 1978.
- ¹³⁹ Huws, Richard (1978), *Improved Water Hopper for Intermittent Cascades (1977)*, January 1978, in RH Papers, NLW.
- ¹⁴⁰ Huws, Richard (1978/79), *Letters to Sir Frederick Gibberd*, 29 July 1978 & 2 February 1979.
- ¹⁴¹ Huws, Richard (1979), *Letter to Sir Frederick Gibberd*, 5 March 1979.
- ¹⁴² Huws, Daniel (2009), Introduction to Item 15 in the Richard Huws Papers, NLW, May 2009.
- ¹⁴³ See for example the photograph at <https://elonexoutdoormedia.co.uk/listing/the-harvey-centre/>

6.6 History of the Liverpool Fountain, Post 1967

- ¹⁴⁴ National Library of Wales, *Richard Huws Papers*, Aberystwyth, Item 12.

6.1: A Target for Vandals, 1967-1997

- ¹⁴⁵ Huws, Richard (1975).

- ¹⁴⁶ Former Cammell Laird Apprentice (2018 name withheld), Email to Stewart Denham, 13 December 2018, in reply to his appeal for information published in the *Wirral Globe*.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Liverpool Daily Post* (1967a), Undated press cutting from Richard Huws Papers, NLW, Item 12.
- ¹⁴⁸ Huws, Richard (c.1968).
- ¹⁴⁹ *Liverpool Daily Post* (1967b), Don't Blame the New Fountain, Liverpool, 12 May 1967.
- ¹⁵⁰ Merseyside Civic Society (1968) and Huws, Richard (c.1968).
- ¹⁵¹ In a separate folder from Richard Huws Papers, NLW, entitled "12 Photographs Liverpool fountain - 37 b/w prints", but see introduction to section 4 in main text.
- ¹⁵² Huws, Richard (1975); but provides no details of his solution to the bearing problem.
- ¹⁵³ Ibid.
- ¹⁵⁴ Cosser, Michael (1918a), Richard Huws Fountain, *Email from partner in Brock-Carmichael Architects to author*, 3 December 2018, point 3.
- ¹⁵⁵ Liverpool Folk Song a Week (2012), 58: *Buckets of the Mersey*, 31 October 2012, at <https://aliverpoolfolksongaweek.blogspot.com/2012/10/>.
- ¹⁵⁶ Skempton, Howard (1919a), *The Piazza (bucket) Fountain*, email from composer to Shiela Lane, 29 May 2019.
- ¹⁵⁷ Skempton, Howard (2007), *Piazza, Conductor's score for hire*, Oxford University Press, 22 March 2007.
- ¹⁵⁸ BBC Radio 3 (2007) *Hear and Now*, 08/12/2007, at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008fwkd>.
- ¹⁵⁹ Skempton, Howard (1919b), "Piazza", email from composer to Shiela Lane, 31 May 2019

6.2: [Restoration of the Piazza and Fountain, 1997- 2000](#)

- ¹⁶⁰ Brock Carmichael (current website), *Beetham Plaza*, at <http://www.brockcarmichael.co.uk/portfolio/beetham.plaza>.
- ¹⁶¹ Cosser, Michael (1918a), point 2
- ¹⁶² Cosser, Michael (1918b), Richard Huws Fountain, *Email from Michael Cosser to author*, 12 December 2018, point 1.
- ¹⁶³ A founding partner of Brock Carmichael, Peter Carmichael was, together with the author, a student of Richard Huws at Liverpool School of Architecture at the time when he was designing his Liverpool fountain.
- ¹⁶⁴ Cosser, Michael (1918a), point 2.
- ¹⁶⁵ Thompson, Andy (2018), *Re: Contact, email from the head of the Liverpool Studio of BCA Landscape to the author*, 5 December 2018.
- ¹⁶⁶ *Liverpool Echo* (2004) Monumental job, Liverpool, 6 January 2004.
- ¹⁶⁷ Brown, Ron (2008), Photograph "Drury Lane, water fountain, L2" March 2008, (Catalogue Reference No. 770 RBR/1/131).

6.3: [The Fountain's Recent and Present Condition](#)

- ¹⁶⁸ *YouTube* (2008), Bucket Fountain, 19/02/2008, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thWEdqclU1M>.
- ¹⁶⁹ *YouTube* (2010a), Bucket Fountain in Liverpool, 22/03/2010 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xovoBtwcZdw>; *YouTube* (2010b), Fountain Liverpool, 05/08/2010 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YP6i5iXzLJI>; and *YouTube* (2010c) Bucket Fountain in Liverpool, 06/09/2010 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYJhBnoKL9A>.
- ¹⁷⁰ *YouTube* (2013), Water bucket fountain, Liverpool, 28/08/2013 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mohmBNgNaBE>; *YouTube* (2014a), Piazza Fountain, Beetham Plaza, 27/06/2014, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFrXXXkVbMc>; & *YouTube* (2014b), Piazza Fountain, Liverpool, 14/08/2014 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzVdGrydLZ4>.
- ¹⁷¹ *YouTube* (2015) Bucket fountain Liverpool, 27/05/2015, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8aXZ6zqy1c>.
- ¹⁷² *YouTube* (2017) The Bucket Fountain on Drury Lane, 26/03/2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o91F6MAj9WI>
- ¹⁷³ Presumably for health and safety reasons, the pool depth is now kept significantly lower than its original 16 inches and as a result the desired wave effect has been diminished, although filling the bottom of the pool with beach pebbles could possibly help to restore the effect of waves crashing on the shore while still keeping the pool shallow.
- ¹⁷⁴ *YouTube* (2018) Bucket Fountain Drury Lane, 16/04/2018, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WANrUsz7zek>. 2007)
- ¹⁷⁵ From the different hoppers observed to be filling on this day and on a subsequent visit, it appears that the water supply to each of the 7 vertical riser/support pipes can be separately turned on and off.
- ¹⁷⁶ The property management company, who are the current leasehold owners, were probably responsible for the re-paint
- ¹⁷⁷ Cosser, Michael (1918a), point 6. For the marketing of the new Strand Plaza, see <http://www.primesite-developments.com/development/strand-plaza/> and <http://www.certainvest.co.uk/investment/strand-plaza/>

6.4: [The Threat to the Fountain](#)

- ¹⁷⁸ This was later effectively confirmed by the Government's Companies House website, which showed that the developer's recently formed company Beetham Plaza Ltd had, on the 28 December 2018, taken out a Lloyds Bank mortgage on the open Beetham Plaza and adjacent properties, ready for this purchase. (see Companies House, *Beetham Plaza Limited*, Company number 11592377, Charges tab, at <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/11592377>). This was followed by the then current leaseholder satisfying a HSBC Bank mortgage on the same parts of the property on the 3 January 2019, in preparation for the sale of the leasehold. (See Companies House, *KM (Property Management) North West Ltd*, Company number 06266529, Charges tab, at <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/06266529/charges>).
- ¹⁷⁹ Moore, Richard (2019).
- ¹⁸⁰ HM Land Registry (2019).
- ¹⁸¹ McDonough, Tony (2019), 'Developer plans £10m hotel project at Liverpool's Beetham Plaza', *Liverpool Business News*, 23 January 2019 at: <https://lbdaily.co.uk/developer-plans-10m-hotel-project-liverpools-beetham-plaza/>.

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- ¹⁸² Place North West (2019a), *Elliot Group plans boutique hotel after acquiring Beetham Plaza*, 23 January 2019. <https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/elliott-group-plans-boutique-hotel-after-acquiring-beetham-plaza/>.
- ¹⁸³ Change.org (2019), *Save the Bucket Fountain*, Petition at <https://www.change.org/p/liverpool-city-council-save-the-bucket-fountain> (accessed 22/11/2019).
- ¹⁸⁴ Friends of the Piazza Fountain (2019a), *Save the bucket fountain petition*, E-mail on analysis of responses to the author and Gerry Proctor, 17 February 2019.
- ¹⁸⁵ Merseyside Civic Society (2019), *Unanimous Verdict – the Bucket Fountain must stay!*, MCS News, at <http://www.merseysidecivicsociety.org/news/unanimous-verdict-the-bucket-fountain-must-stay> (accessed 12/11/19)
- ¹⁸⁶ Posted by The Friends in February 2019, the flyer was recently found still in place above the hand dryer in the spotlessly clean toilets of the pub nearly a year later: Folan, Tony (2020), *Flyer in the Liverpool Bar*, email with photograph, 14 January 2020.
- ¹⁸⁷ BBC Radio Merseyside (2019), 10 minute broadcast at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p06yfq4g> starting at the 1.08 hour point (accessed 15/02/2019 – no longer available).
- ¹⁸⁸ The importance of the fountain, for example, as a ‘sound sculpture’ is contradicted and the Goree Piazza misleadingly referred to as “*the fourth choice location*” (see Elliot Group, 2019, *A History of the Bucket Fountain* at <https://bucketfountainliverpool.com/> - accessed at 22/11/2019). In fact, this was easily the most suitable location of those proposed and Richard Huws had designed the associated viewing platforms and receiving pool specifically for the site (See section 4.4). The developer also continued to state that the fountain was commissioned to commemorate the controversial Tryweryn scheme, when it was not (See section 4.1), and that in its present site it continues to attract anti-social behaviour, when this is now minimal.
- ¹⁸⁹ Folan, Tony (2019), Personal account of a conversation with Joe Anderson, Liverpool Mayor.
- ¹⁹⁰ Hodgson, Neil (2019a), Developer to submit plans for city centre boutique hotel, *The Business Desk.com*, 9 April 2019 at http://www.thebusinessdesk.com/northwest/news/2040276-developer-to-submit-plans-for-city-centre-boutique-hotel?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NorthWest_10th_Apr_2019_Daily.
- ¹⁹¹ Charlesworth, Sarah (2019), *Piazza Fountain, including viewing platforms: Invitation to comment on Consultation Report*, e-mail from Historic England to author, 18 April 2019.
- ¹⁹² Historic England (2019a), *Listing Process*, HE at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/apply-fo-listing/listing-process/>.
- ¹⁹³ McDonough, Tony (2019), ‘Historic England may list ‘bucket fountain’ as developer seeks planning delay’, *Liverpool Business News*, 30 April 2019 at <https://lbdaily.co.uk/heritage-england-may-list-bucket-fountain-developer-seeks-planning-delay/>. (accessed 30/04/2019).
- ¹⁹⁴ Liverpool City Council (2019), *Beetham Plaza*, Application No 19F/1113, Date Registered 02/05/2019
- ¹⁹⁵ Clancy Consulting Ltd (2019), *Phase 1 Ground Conditions-phase1.pdf*, March 2019, Documents, Application No. 19F/3111., p.12.
- ¹⁹⁶ Zerum Planning Limited (2019), *Cover Letter.pdf 19.04.09*, Documents, Application No. 19F/113, p.7.
- ¹⁹⁷ [Sales document awaiting]
- ¹⁹⁸ Friends of the Piazza Fountain (2019c), *Revised Historical Report on the Piazza Fountain*, e-mail to author quoting the LCC’s Head of Property Services, 28/11/2019.
- ¹⁹⁹ Organ, Cara (2019), *Piazza Fountain, including associated viewing platforms: Notification of Designation Decision*, e-mail from HE to author, 09 August 2019.
- ²⁰⁰ Friends of the Piazza Fountain (2019b), *Piazza Fountain, including associated viewing platforms*, e-mail to the author, 10 August 2019.
- ²⁰¹ El Paraiso, Scott (2019), *Piazza Fountain, including associated viewing platforms*, email from managing agent for Beetham Plaza to Resident/Leaseholders, 10 August 2019.
- ²⁰² Friends of the Piazza Fountain (2019d), *Re: Piazza Fountain, including associated viewing platforms: Notification of Designation Decision*, e-mail to author, 2 September 2019. Despite the advice from the professional adviser and Council, the demand for additional charges has not yet been withdrawn (Friends of the Piazza Fountain, 2019c).
- ²⁰³ Proctor, Gerry (2019a), *Re: Geo-physical report - response from LCC*, E-mail to author and others from the Chair of Engage, Liverpool, on 29 November 2019.
- ²⁰⁴ Hodgson, Neil (2019b), *‘Bucket fountain listed, but relocation still an option says developer’*, *Business News NW*, 14 August 2019, at. http://www.thebusinessdesk.com/northwest/news/2046583-bucket-fountain-listed-but-relocation-still-an-option-says-developer?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NorthWest_14th_Aug_2019_Property
- ²⁰⁵ Thorp, Liam (2019), ‘City centre fountain campaigners score major victory in battle with developers, Historic England weighs in on unique structure which could have to be moved’, *Liverpool Echo*, 14 August 2019 at <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/city-centre-fountain-campaigners-score-16752620> (access 22/11)
- ²⁰⁶ For the Council, this meeting was attended by the Head of Planning, the Head of the City Centre Development Team, and an officer from the heritage team (Friends of the Piazza Fountain (2019e), *Re: Fwd: Response from Have Your Say Team*, email to author and Friends, 30 August 2019). The Assistant Director of Highways, Andy Barr, who had met with the developer to discuss alternative locations and had then negotiated the sale of the Beetham Plaza carpark (Friends of the Piazza Fountain, 2019f, *Fwd: ‘Bucket fountain’ listed, but relocation still an option says developer*, e-mail from the Friends to Councillor Nick Small, 15 August 2019) was understood to have been also invited but failed to attend.
- ²⁰⁷ Campbell, Samantha (2019), *‘Bucket fountain’ listed... e-mail from Head of Planning to Councillor Nick Small*, 15 August 2019.

²⁰⁸ After several reminders, a response from the Team Leader, City Centre Development Management (CCDM), was received on the first set of questions on 21st October. This response did not fully answer the questions raised, but ended with:- “I consider that I have given you responses to all the questions that you have raised in your e-mails. If you have any further questions could you please submit these through the City Council’s formal Have Your Say procedure using the following link <https://liverpool.gov.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback/make-a-complaint-about-most-council-services/> (Friends of the Piazza Fountain, 2019c, e-mail to author quoting the Team Leader, City Centre Development Management). On their request for assurances, the point was made that it would not be appropriate to refer this to the ‘Have Your Say’ team. However, on 24th November the CCDM Team Leader re-stated that any further questions should be formally directed to this team and, subsequently, the LCC’s CEO has also confirmed that this is the Council’s position (Ibid).

²⁰⁹ Duffy, Tom & Thorp, Liam (2018), City property developer and council regeneration chief arrested in police fraud probe, *Liverpool Echo*, 19 December 2019, see <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/city-property-developer-council-regeneration-17445045> (accessed 19/12/2019).

6.5 The Listing of the Fountain

²¹⁰ Organ, Cara (2019).

²¹¹ Lewis, Angela (2019), *Freedom of Information Request 843465*, E-mail attachment to author from LCC Information Team, 9 September 2019; Reply to FOI request of 18 July 2019 requesting a copy of LCC’s response to the HE Consultation - way over the 20 working days statutory reply period.

²¹² Historic England (2019a), *Piazza Fountain, including associated viewing platforms*, List entry number 1463126, 09 August 2019, at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1463126>.

²¹³ Historic England (2019b), *21 Fascinating Places Listed in 2019*, 20 December 2019, see <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/news/21-fascinating-places-listed-in-2019> (accessed 22/12/2019).

²¹⁴ The Guardian (2019), *Heritage fit to gorge on, Mr Creosote’s haunt among notable listing of the year*, 20 December 2019.

²¹⁵ BBC News (2019), *National Heritage List for England’s eye-catching protected*, 20 December 2019, see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-50851709> (accessed 22/12/2019).

B.7 The Future of the Piazza Fountain

7.1 The Case for Keeping the Fountain in the Goree Piazza

²¹⁶ Folan, Tony (2019), Photograph taken from a high level of Mersey House/Strand Plaza and hereby acknowledged

²¹⁷ Historic England (2019a), *Your Contributions*, 10 September 2019 (at end of entry).

²¹⁸ See for example, Skempton, Howard (2019), ref 153.

²¹⁹ See section 6.2. 8

²²⁰ Liverpool City Council (2018), *Apart-hotel suites & Hotel rooms*, Planning Application No 17F/2513, Date Registered 19/01/2018.

²²¹ BBC Radio Merseyside (2019).

²²² The African shield shaped plaque summarises the history of the original Goree Piazza and warehouses and by implication this area’s association with the slave trade, being named after the slave embarkation island of Gorée off Senegal, West Africa. e.g. see National Archives (2019), *A Virtual Tour of the Black and Asian Presence in Liverpool, 1500 – 1850*, at https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/journeys/virtual_tour_html/liverpool/liverpool.htm (04/12/2019).

²²³ Wikipedia (2019), *India Buildings*, at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India_Buildings (accessed 04/12/2019).

²²⁴ Liverpool City Council (2018).

²²⁵ Cosser, Michael (2019), *Re: Beetham Plaza, Planning Application & HE Consultation*, e-mail to author from partner, Brock Carmichael, Architects, 15 April 2019.

²²⁶ Liverpool Heritage Bureau (1979), *Liverpool Conservation Areas*, Liverpool, 1979, at www.walkingbook.co.uk/liverpool (accessed 04/12/2019)

6.2 Enhancing the Fountain and Piazza

²²⁷ See section 6.2 and Appendix A.

²²⁸ Sharples, Joseph (2004) *Liverpool, Pevsner Architectural Guides*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 04 May 2004, p.163.

7.3 The Ownership of the Fountain

²²⁹ Although only used in rare circumstances, if an application is to be approved by an local planning authority, against Historic England’s specific objection, they have the power to require that application to be called in by the Secretary of State for DCMS’s consideration: (Smallwood, Marie (2019a), *RE: Piazza Fountain, including associated viewing platforms: Notification of Designation Decision*, E-mail from the Development Advice Team Leader, Historic England North West, 20/08/2019).
, 20 August 2019.

²³⁰ Local Government Association (2019), *LGA Governance, Cllr Richard Kemp CBE*, at <http://lga.moderngov.co.uk/mgUserInfo.aspx?UID=348> (accessed 22/11/2019).

²³¹ Schouten, Charlie (2019), ‘Council asked to bid for Bucket Fountain land’, *Place North West*, 5 September 2019 at <https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/council-asked-to-bid-for-bucket-fountain-land/> (accessed 22/11/2019).

- ²³² Liverpool City Council (2019), *Regeneration and Sustainability Select Committee*, printed minutes of meeting of 12 September 2019, Agenda Item 31, see <http://councillors.liverpool.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1586&MId=17336&Ver=4> (accessed 22/11/2019).
- ²³³ Currently, all 42 leaseholders in Beetham Plaza pay for the maintenance of the fountain through their service charges, although the piazza is the main aspect for only 15 of these. However, the total will increase to 50 when the approved application to convert part of the 1st floor from offices to 8 apartments is completed. As far as we are aware, there is no existing contractual obligation for the new residents of Strand Plaza to also contribute, although we understand that some residents are prepared to do so. If only those whose main aspect is the piazza agreed to contribute, this would increase the total number to 93, i.e. 50 in BP + 43 in SP, thereby more than halving the existing burden.
- 7.4 The Promotion of the Fountain**
- ²³⁴ Place North West (2019a).
- ²³⁵ Proctor, Gerry (2019b), *Revised Historical Report on the Piazza Fountain*, Email to author from the Chair of Engage, Liverpool, on 29 November 2019.
- ²³⁶ Liverpool Biennial is the largest international contemporary art festival in the United Kingdom, which as the name implies is held in the City every two years, while the Independents Biennial has run parallel to the Liverpool Biennial since the latter's inception in 1999.
- ²³⁷ *Spin magazine* (1970), Vol 8, No.1, 1970, The Spinners, Liverpool, p.11. Following a search by Gerry Proctor, a copy of the magazine turned up in the archive of a friend in Bristol of the MCS Vice Chair, Gavin Davenport, part of which he'd received from the late Eric Winter (former director of the National and Keele folk festivals).
- ²³⁸ YouTube (2019), *The Spinners-The Family of Man-Its Trueman-1964* at <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=7jimmysguitars++Family+of+Man&view=detail&mid=ACFC914052CD353FC361ACFC914052CD353FC361&FORM=VIRE> (accessed 04/12/2019 - see fountain sequences near end of video after 2.06 mins .)
- ²³⁹ See section 6.1, last paragraph.
- ²⁴⁰ Proctor, Gerry (2019b).
- ²⁴¹ Proctor, Gerry (2019c), *Piazza Fountain Steering Group Meeting 15.01.20*, E-mails to author from the Chair of Engage, Liverpool of 20 December 2019 and 10 January 2020.
- ²⁴² Proctor, Gerry (2019b).

B.8 Appendix A - Evolution of Hopper Designs and Renovation Lessons

- ²⁴³ See section 6.3 in the main report above.
- ²⁴⁴ Figure 1 is purely diagrammatic. Richard Huws' descriptions of his Liverpool fountain, detailed drawings for his subsequent fountains and recent video evidence all indicate that the bearings comprise a sleeve attached to the sides of the hopper which revolves around the fixed horizontal supporting supply pipe. However, in the absence of detailed drawings for the Piazza Fountain hoppers, it is not known what mechanism is used for the smaller cantilevered hoppers to prevent any large lateral movement of these along the supporting pipes and/or to stop them being removed altogether e.g. by vandals.
- ²⁴⁵ *YouTube* (2017) *The Bucket Fountain on Drury Lane*, 26/03/2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o91F6MAj9WI> (accessed 08/11/2019) and video taken for the Friends of the Piazza Fountain, April 2019.
- ²⁴⁶ Undertaken by BCA Landscape for Brock Carmichael, Architects, Liverpool; see Section 6.2 in main report above.
- ²⁴⁷ Riley, Robin (2019), Telephone call to the author, in response to a letter sent to the sculptors Liverpool address, Call received 23 November 2019.
- ²⁴⁸ By Richard Huws' descriptions of the Piazza Fountain and the detailed hopper drawings for two of his subsequent fountains. See also endnotes 251 and 253 below.
- ²⁴⁹ Huws, Richard (1975a), *Handwritten transcript for a talk at the Water in Landscape Design Seminar, 26-30 January, at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, Kings Manor, York*, dated 9/12/1975 in Richard Huws Papers, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Item 15.
- ²⁵⁰ A full set of working drawings for Basildon was deposited in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth in 2009, but subsequently "transferred out of the archive collection to other collections" and lost/mislaidd by the Library.²⁵⁰ However, in early October 2019 these were subsequently found and examined and selectively copied by the author during a further visit to the NLW.
- ²⁵¹ Huws, Richard (1975b), *Water Feature for St Martins Precinct Project, Basildon Development Corporation; Particulars of Upstand-Pipe and Bearings*, Working Drawing, May 1975, in RH Papers, NLW, Aberystwyth, Item 14.

A.2 Richard Huws' optimum hopper design

- ²⁵² See main report above, Section 5.5.
- ²⁵³ Huws, Richard (1975c), *Proposed Fountain for Harvey Centre, Harlow; Details of Hoppers and Bearings*, Working drawing, undated (but probably February 1979) in RH Papers, NLW, Aberystwyth, Item 15.

A.3 Differences Between the Liverpool and Harlow Designs

- ²⁵⁴ For BP headquarters, Moorfields, London, 1964; Tokyo Trade Fair, 1965; St James' Square, Grimsby, 1972-73; St Martins Precinct, Basildon, 1973-75; and Harvey Centre, Harlow, 1975-79; for details see Section 5 of the main report.

A.4 Suggested Approach to Renovating the Piazza Fountain

- ²⁵⁵ In the Piazza Fountain the number and size of the outlet holes in the horizontal supply pipes differ for each hopper to give tipping frequencies ranging from 5 seconds for one of the smaller hoppers to 90 seconds for one of the largest., see Huws, Richard (1975a).

²⁵⁶ Smallwood, Marie (2019b), *RE: Piazza Fountain, Liverpool, List Entry 1463126*, E-mail from the Development Advice Team Leader, Historic England North West, 29/11/2019.

²⁵⁷ See for example WD-40's product at <https://www.wd40.com/products/water-resistant-grease> (accessed 08/11/2019) although similar marine grade greases are available from other manufacturers.

²⁵⁸ e-trailer.com (1919), *Recommendation For Greasing Boat Trailer Bearings - Regular or Marine Grease*, at <https://www.etrailer.com/question-9065.html> (accessed 08/11/2019).

²⁵⁹ As evidenced by old Teflon coated kitchen pans.

[A.5 Replacing the Worn Hopper Bearings](#)

²⁶⁰ The hoppers are shaped to retain a small amount of water in their tails to assist re-righting and bring the hoppers quickly back to a stable vertical filling position.

²⁶¹ One such hopper is shown in a video produced for the Friends in April 2019, this showing only an occasional drip of water from the mouth, the water supply to the hopper having been effectively cut off by the revolving sleeve.

²⁶² See endnote 255 above.