

Rescue and restoration

The pyramid

Consisting of a hollow brick cone with a thick stone cladding, restoration of this feature has been particularly challenging. Each stone has been removed, and cleaned, replaced, or repaired prior to being reinstated.



Top of the brickwork cone



Interior of the brickwork cone



Recladding the pyramid

On 2nd April 2007, an historic moment was reached as the final stone of the restored pyramid was lowered into place in front of representatives of the press and television.



The chapel ceiling

The plasterwork of the vaulted chapel ceiling had been badly fire damaged. Restoration of this has been possible by taking moulds of the surviving features and using these to replicate the original.



Restored chapel ceiling plasterwork

Much of the stonework around the base of the ceiling had suffered only superficial smoke damage however, and once cleaned still retains its finely carved detail.



Cleaned stonework details around base of chapel ceiling

Crypt ceiling and flying staircase

Work also involves rebuilding the flying staircase, the domed ceiling and niches of the crypt and the chapel floor above. Unique formwork - shaped temporary supports for the stonework in timber and fibreglass - has been built to enable the reconstruction of these self supporting features, which incorporate the use of substantial complex, multi sided pieces of Portland stone.



Interior of the Mausoleum showing crypt formwork

The lunettes - that had for a long time been bricked up - are once again glazed, only now provided with a protective Perspex outer layer set in a bronze frame.

Wrought ironwork is also being reinstated, including both the railings around the dry moat, and those around the altar in the chapel.

It is the intention to restore the internal decorative features of the chapel as part of a second phase of works.

The Cobham Ashenbank Management Scheme (CAMS) is a partnership of:

■ Gravesham Borough Council ■ Natural England ■ The National Trust ■ Cobham Hall
■ Kent County Council ■ English Heritage ■ The Woodland Trust ■ Union Railways

