

# Heritage Champions in action



Historic England

---

**NAME OF CHAMPION**

Cllr Adam Clarke

---

**LOCAL AUTHORITY**

Leicester City Council

---

## Introduction

Cllr Adam Clarke, Leicester City Council, has been a Heritage Champion since 2013. The profile outlines how Cllr Clarke carries out the role and the work done to prepare a 'local list' of non-designated heritage assets.



In November 2016, Leicester City Council published a 'local list' cataloguing hundreds of Leicester's landmarks of historical, architectural or archaeological interest. Members of the public nominated over 460 local landmarks which they felt should be included on a new local list. To view the new Local Heritage Asset Register visit [www.leicester.gov.uk/localist](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/localist)

---

## How does the Heritage Champion carry out the role?

Regular Briefings are organised for Cllr Clarke, to which officers from Planning and from Arts and Museums are invited. These cover a wide range of issues, such as the transfer of Leicester Castle from the Council to De Montfort University, two major museum redevelopments, the National Railway Museum initiative, city centre interpretation panels, Richard III Visitor Centre, Heritage At Risk, Article 4 Directions and the Local List.

Outside these briefings, Adam is involved in ongoing discussions to provide a heritage perspective on the Council's work.

Leicester's Heritage Champion is a key contact for other elected members, particularly where there are queries about planning and development control matters, and he often supports campaigns to protect built heritage. Furthermore he has led a 'place-making' project to celebrate Leicester's historic villages and a campaign for a statue of 'Leicester's Suffragette'.

**As Heritage Champion Adam is regularly invited  
to speak at conferences and events.**

As Heritage Champion Adam is regularly invited to speak at conferences and events. For instance he has been Chief Guest at Leicester Civic Society's Annual Awards, and given the Opening Address at the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Annual Conference. He also chairs the Project Management Board and Grants Panel for the Greyfriars Townscape Heritage Initiative.

---

---

## Preparing a local list

The newly elected City Mayor in 2011 made a commitment to prepare a Heritage Action Plan and form a Heritage Partnership, and also to prepare a local heritage asset register (LHAR), or local list. The Council asked people to nominate their favourite old buildings or local landmarks for inclusion on the list.



The local list includes buildings and other landmarks of local significance that may not meet the national criteria for listed status, but are nonetheless important to the city on a local level. It recognises the contribution that local landmarks can make to the city's unique character and historic environment and is used when considering planning applications and development opportunities.

Preparation of the register has featured in successive annual editions of the council's Heritage Action Plan. The city's Heritage Partnership gave advice at many stages of the project, and a wide ranging consultation took place to ask the diverse local communities of Leicester what heritage they valued. Now the draft Local Plan includes a new policy on non-designated heritage assets, with detail on the LHAR.

## Now the draft Local Plan includes a new policy on non-designated heritage assets

The approved local register catalogued 380 landmarks considered as local heritage assets, including 141 new additions, and 239 buildings and other landmarks retained from the previous local list.

Among the new landmarks included on the revised list are: the remains of the church and main cloister of the Franciscan Friary where Richard III's remains were found, the mile-long Glenfield railway tunnel built by George Stephenson in 1839; and the controversial 1960s Lee Circle car park building, believed to be the first automated multi-storey car park in Europe.

In terms of national designations, there are 402 listed buildings, 11 scheduled monuments and six historic parks and gardens in Leicester, as well as 24 conservation areas. The local heritage asset register recognises other locally important sites not currently protected in this way.

---



**St Aidan's Church St Oswald Road**



**Tram Shelter to west of Humberstone Park**



---

### **What was the role of the Heritage Champion?**

Entries for the Register were assessed by an independent three-member decision panel of local heritage experts, including Adam, local historian and chair of the Conservation Advisory Panel Richard Gill and Nils Feldmann from the Leicestershire & Rutland Society of Architects.

Beyond participating in the panel, Adam was regularly briefed on the development of the list. He was able to support elected members when owners in their wards approached them with queries about their assets appearing on the Local List. He was able to give reassurances and signpost to key council officers to provide more technical information. He also worked closely with the Council's press team, providing interviews and quotes for the local media.

From the perspective of the conservation officers, having a proactive Heritage Champion has been found very positive, particularly in an organisation as large as a city council. Adam's experience in previous heritage projects has enabled him to act as a 'critical friend' who adds value to their work, for instance in the development of the Local List.



**St Cathrine's Convent Glenfield Road**

### **What was the impact of the project and what lessons have been learned?**

New policy has been drafted for the emerging Local Plan on non-designated heritage assets and the data added to the Council's GIS system. The Council's Heritage Grant Scheme, administered by staff within the Planning Department, has been extended to include entries on the Local Heritage Asset Register and a targeted enforcement programme has been started. Information gleaned in the development of the new register has been inputted into Site Planning Briefs for relevant parts of the city and the Council's existing Vacant Historic Buildings Register is being extended to include entries on the Local Heritage Asset Register.

The Council has made particular use of the register by issuing a number of Article 4 Directions on assets listed. These removed a number of permitted development rights including:

- Demolition works
- Extensions and alterations
- Removal/replacement of windows and doors
- Painting/rendering of the exterior.

The implementation of an Article 4 Direction does not prevent the works from being carried out but means planning permission must be obtained first from the local authority before any works are carried out.

Issuing these Article 4 directions en masse was much more efficient than issuing them individually and incrementally. For instance significant costs were saved in the statutory publication of legal notices in local papers.

Adopting a local list is more than just protection. It also supports maintenance as local heritage assets are eligible for grant funding from the council's heritage grants scheme. Further details can be found in the 'Historic building grants application pack' which can be found on the heritage conservation web page: <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/planning-and-building/conservation/heritage-conservation/>

Council officers report receiving phone calls from several property owners who had wanted to demolish properties, but, having been informed of the local listing, now propose to do conversion schemes instead.

*Cllr Clarke says: "Participating in the Local List project and subsequent Article 4 directions initiative has been a fascinating experience. It's rewarding to have helped to provide extra layers of protection to locally significant heritage. More generally it's great to have raised awareness of the value of the built historic environment and its critical role in the sustainable development of a vibrant and growing city."*

If you require an alternative accessible version of this document (for instance in audio, Braille or large print) please contact our Customer Services Department:

Telephone: 0370 333 0607

Fax: 01793 414926

Textphone: 0800 015 0516

E-mail: [customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk)