

HERITAGE COUNTS 2012

NORTH EAST

Heritage Counts 2012 is the eleventh annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. It is prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the North East Historic Environment Forum. This year the theme for Heritage Counts is resilience in the historic environment. Visitors to the Heritage Counts website can download the research commissioned to support this year's report and access the full set of local statistics and maps detailing the historic environment for the North East, including asset data, funding information, employment numbers and visitor figures. Many of these indicators were first reported in 2002, so this year also marks 10 years of Heritage Counts indicators. Further analysis has been carried out on the 10 year trends of some of the key indicators.

HERITAGE AND RESILIENCE

This year, Heritage Counts focuses on resilience: the ability of heritage organisations to cope with issues that affect them. Although prompted by the current economic climate, the research found that the resilience evident in the organisations studied predates the current difficulties, suggesting that resilient organisations have a long history of change and adaptation. The research identified barriers to resilience which might make it difficult for organisations to adapt to a changing climate. It looks at a sample of heritage organisations that have adapted in a range of ways, and identifies how these changes can be applied across other organisations in the sector. Please see the national Heritage Counts 2012 report for more detail.

www.heritagecounts.org.uk

Resilience: New ways of working at Beamish Museum

Beamish Open Air Museum opened in the 1970s and grew to be a major visitor attraction. By 2008, however, visitor numbers had declined to around 300,000, the site needed updating and local authority revenue funding was in decline. Changes were needed in how the museum was run, whilst retaining its identity and character.

Beamish overhauled its operating model and, by achieving growth, reduced its dependency on public funding. In revenue terms it now aims to be self-sufficient.

The museum has been managed by a registered charity since 2008 (with local authority retained ownership) giving staff freedom to innovate, fundraise, generate surplus and re-invest. Management posts were reduced and flexible staff contracts were increased to extend seasonal opening.

Other innovations included new ticketing arrangements, new attractions, events programming, more community engagement and investment in staff and volunteer training.

Visitor numbers have grown by 65% since 2008 and are expected to exceed 500,000 in 2012/13. The charity achieved an operating surplus of £635,000 from a turnover of £6.8 million in 2011/12.

Visitors learning about the past at the Beamish Museum © Beamish



New Trust for Auckland Castle

The Auckland Castle Trust (ACT) was established in 2012 to run Auckland Castle. Over the next few years, the ACT will raise money to restore and open the Castle and grounds, with the aim of generating over £10m to fund the site's redevelopment.

The Trust is working with the British Museum and V&A to stage exhibitions and events to enhance the visitor experience provided by the Castle, Zurbaran paintings and surrounding parkland. The formation of the Trust demonstrates the resilience of both the Castle and its supporters in seeking a new lease of life for this national gem.

Interior of Auckland Castle
© Auckland Castle Trust



Understanding the Assets

North East Assets	2002 ¹	2011	2012	% English Total 2012
World Heritage Sites	2	2	2	11%
Scheduled Monuments	1,376	1,378	1,378	7%
Listed Buildings	12,184	12,253	12,270	3%
Registered Parks and Gardens	48	54	55	3%
Registered Battlefields	6	6	6	14%
Protected Wrecks	1	1	1	2%
Conservation Areas	275	297	300	3%
Designated Collections ²	-	6	6	4%
Accredited Museums ³	-	66	66	4%

Caring and Sharing

The North East continues to have the highest percentage of grade I and II* buildings at risk in the country, with 6.1% of buildings at risk in 2012. However, the proportion of North East grade I and II* buildings at risk has decreased from a peak of 9.9% in 2001.

Between 2002/3 and 2011/12 there was a 35% reduction in North East planning applications. 22,300 applications were received in 2002/3 compared with just 14,423 in 2011/12, reflecting the slower growth rate. However, applications affecting heritage assets have reduced at a slower rate or increased over the same period. This suggests that

the development of heritage assets is continuing in spite of slower development rates in other sectors. Between 2002/3 and 2011/12 there was a 19% reduction in listed building consents, an 8% increase in conservation area consents and a 20% increase in scheduled monument consents.

At a time when many heritage consent applications are increasing in the North East, local authority capacity remains an issue. Between 2006 and 2012 there was a 6% reduction in the FTE numbers of Historic Environment staff in the North East who process heritage consent applications.

In July 2012, HLF published its strategic framework for 2013-2018, *A Lasting Difference for Heritage and People*, outlining plans to work in partnership to build a resilient heritage economy.

The HLF has played a huge role in supporting the North East heritage sector. Since 1994, HLF has invested around £238 million in the North East with £14.5 million invested during 2011/12. English Heritage is the main source of non-lottery heritage funding and invested over £2 million in the North East during 2011/12.

Using and Benefiting

Research published by the London School of Economics in July 2012 found the market value of houses sold in conservation areas was greater than those outside.⁴

Visit England's study of Visits to Visitor Attractions found that there were 3 million visits to historic properties surveyed in the North East over 2011.

The DCMS Taking Part Survey shows that 75% of adults surveyed from the North East in 2011/12 had visited a heritage site in the past twelve months compared with 71% in 2010/11 and 69% in 2005/6. The North East's volunteer force is twice the national average, with National Trust volunteers in Yorkshire and the North East increasing by 14%, compared to 7% nationally.

¹ Source: http://hc.english-heritage.org.uk/content/pub/previous/north-east/northeast_2002.pdf

² Source: www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/Designation_List.pdf

³ Source: www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme/accreditation-statistics/

⁴ www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/research/social-and-economic-research/value-conservation-areas/

Investment Boost for Middlesbrough Transporter Bridge

The Middlesbrough Transporter Bridge has been a symbol of the Tees area since it opened in 1911. It is the largest working transporter bridge in the world and a lasting symbol of Middlesbrough's engineering and industrial might.

Preliminary work has begun to install glass viewing lifts on the landmark as part of a Heritage Lottery Funded (HLF) £2.6 million improvement to

the Grade II* listed bridge. Other improvements include work to the bridge walkways, gondola and visitor centre as well as educational activities for local people.

The restoration plans will help improve the visitor experience and will ensure the structure can continue as both a working bridge and major tourist attraction for many years to come.

The project shows how HLF investment can boost the tourism economy and rejuvenate local areas and landmarks.

Middlesbrough Transporter Bridge
© English Heritage



Heritage-led regeneration in Berwick

The historic environment can provide a focus for regeneration and contribute to the social and economic resilience of the communities associated with it. A good example of this is the role played by heritage in revitalising the town centre of Berwick in Northumberland.

The programme so far has helped to improve the overall townscape and increase local confidence through a

suite of projects including a Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Initiative, two English Heritage Area Partnership Schemes and other complementary projects focusing on arts, skills, capacity and training.

In particular, historic building repairs at Dewar's Lane Granary and the surrounding area have helped to keep local buildings in active use and good repair whilst retaining local character.

Work in Castlegate has helped to tackle vacant shops and improve local shop fronts. The programme has contributed

to retail distinctiveness and increased footfall, all of which has helped support local business.

Recently regenerated: Dewars Lane Granary in Berwick.
© English Heritage



Environmental Stewardship

Natural England's Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ES) contains a number of grants which have a positive impact on the historic environment and help to tackle heritage at risk.

Since 2005, £4.7 million has been allocated to projects in the North East that had a positive outcome for the historic environment. The significant benefits achieved through ES, demonstrate the importance of securing further measures for the historic environment in the next Rural Development Programme.

An Environmental Stewardship scheme at Low Slit Mine in County Durham has recently collected the 2012 award for 'best small heritage project' at the Constructing Excellence North East Awards.

The project was funded under an ES agreement between Natural England and local landowners and was supported by advice from English Heritage and the Environment Agency.

Collaboration between the different partners was essential to the success of this complex project.

A Scheduled Monument and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, the disused mine had featured on the Heritage at Risk Register because of problems with tree growth, water erosion and decay.

Damaging vegetation was removed; dry stone walls rebuilt and the mine shaft re-capped to help save an important example of industrial heritage along with the rare plants that had colonised the site.

The project demonstrates the value achieved by working across different sectors to secure the resilience of both the natural and historic environment.

Heritage Skills Initiative

The Heritage Skills Initiative⁵ has grown from a pilot project supported by the North East Historic Environment Forum. A report by the National Heritage Training Group in 2005 demonstrated key shortages in the trades needed to maintain the North East's heritage.

Members of the partnership supported the provision of a Heritage Skills Coordinator, based at the North of England Civic Trust, to tackle these shortages. The resulting project has delivered an extensive programme of heritage skills training.

This has included taster days, lectures and accredited courses in a range of skills (from stone carving to roofing, working with lime and blacksmithing) plus training for local colleges to deliver the Heritage Skills NVQ. Three Heritage Skills Fairs have engaged the public, with the most recent event attracting over 8,000 people.

The programme has also expanded to include Engineering Heritage Skills (EHSI), a four year project providing traineeships across the region. At the end of the first year, 63% of trainees went on to heritage-related employment. A new education project also provides heritage skills training for 12-24 year-olds.

A demonstrator at the Heritage Skills Fair teaching schoolchildren about lime mortar.
© English Heritage



The Forum also commissioned a social and economic impact study of heritage in the North East⁷ which helped to strengthen the position of the sector in policies such as the *Regional Economic Strategy* and *Regional Spatial Strategy*.

The study found that:

- North East heritage organisations generate over £47 million of direct spending
- North East heritage attractions generate £180 million in visitor spending
- Heritage visitor spend represents around 17% of total tourism spend in the North East
- The historic environment sector supports 7,345 jobs

The North East Historic Environment Forum has always adopted a pragmatic approach to partnership working. As the current political and economic uncertainty continues, it is this practical emphasis that will help to ensure the future resilience of both the partnership and wider sector.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Ten Years of the North East Historic Environment Forum

The North East Historic Environment Forum (HEF) is a group of organisations responsible for managing the historic environment in the North East. The Forum has played a key role in supporting the sector over the past ten years and demonstrates the value of working together.

The partnership provides a vehicle for joint working to add value to the work of individual organisations. From small projects such as the *Heritage Rooms for Hire* directory⁶ promoting meeting facilities in local heritage venues, to

the hugely successful Heritage Skills Initiative, the Forum has provided a catalyst for much valuable joint working.

The Forum supports the sector by providing a vehicle for communication and training events to promote cohesion and best practice. Recent examples include a successful community planning workshop to help local communities understand the role of heritage in neighbourhood planning.

The partnership plays an important role in raising the profile of the sector amongst local funders and decision makers. This has been achieved through joint consultation responses, events and publications (such as *Heritage Counts*) to promote the sector's work with a united voice.

Heritage Counts 2012 is produced by English Heritage on behalf of the North East Historic Environment Forum.

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⁵ <http://www.nect.org.uk/heritage-skills-initiative>

⁶ <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/imported-docs/a-e/directory-of-heritage-rooms-for-hire.pdf>

⁷ www.nerip.com/download.aspx?id=395