

HERITAGE COUNTS 2013

NORTH WEST

Heritage Counts 2013 is the twelfth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. It is prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the North West Historic Environment Forum. This year the theme for Heritage Counts is skills in the historic environment. Visitors to the Heritage Counts website can download the complete research projects commissioned to support this year's report and access the full set of local statistics and maps detailing the historic environment for the North West, including asset data, funding information, employment numbers and visitor figures. Please see www.heritagecounts.org.uk.

SKILLS IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

This year, Heritage Counts focuses on skills; since the beginning of the financial crisis many parts of the sector have seen significant reductions in budgets and staffing numbers, causing concerns that specialist knowledge is being lost. For the 2013 report, a number of research projects were undertaken to assess these skills provisions, including a survey of the whole cultural heritage sector in the UK. One of the key findings from this study was that the majority of respondents (60%) indicated that they did not have a training budget, which means that initiatives like those outlined in the case studies below are essential for developing skills across the sector. Please see the national Heritage Counts 2013 report for more analysis and further details.

Work Training Contracts for Heritage Construction Projects

The current Heron Corn Mill is an 18th-century collection of buildings, in Beetham, Cumbria which probably replaces much earlier mills on this site. The grade II* listing reflects the national importance of both the mill and its associated structures such as the attached mill race, grain kiln/dryer and internal machinery – and the fact that it is a relatively intact, operational corn mill that continues to be powered by water.



Heron Corn Mill taken from Images of England website. © Mr Adrian Allchin. Source English Heritage

A programme of repairs is underway at present, which has provided the opportunity to properly embed training and skills development into the restoration contract. If the works and training contract currently being piloted at this HLF funded project is successful, it should provide a model for others to adopt when drafting their contracts. The repair tender specifications were developed by Alan Gardner Associates (conservation accredited surveyors) and incorporated comprehensive 'Construction Phase Outreach, Education and Training' clauses and individual Training 'Events' Sheets. The whole 'training' element of the brief was given a substantial weighting in the tender evaluation.

Noted North West developer Lambert Walker (who won the contract) and Alan Gardner Associates, in conjunction with the Heron Corn Mill Learning Officer, have so far conducted two one-day construction college events, two one-day primary school visits, one technical day and two one-day community open events. In addition,

supported by the National Heritage Training Group's 'Building Skills for the Future' programme, two bursary trainees have been recruited and they are now nearing the end of their 3-month placements. Both trainees have managed to secure further training within the heritage sector. Further information on Heron Corn Mill can be found at <http://heronmill.org/>.



Trainee Rob cutting slate at Heron Corn Mill, © Alan Gardner Associates

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT INDICATORS FOR 2013

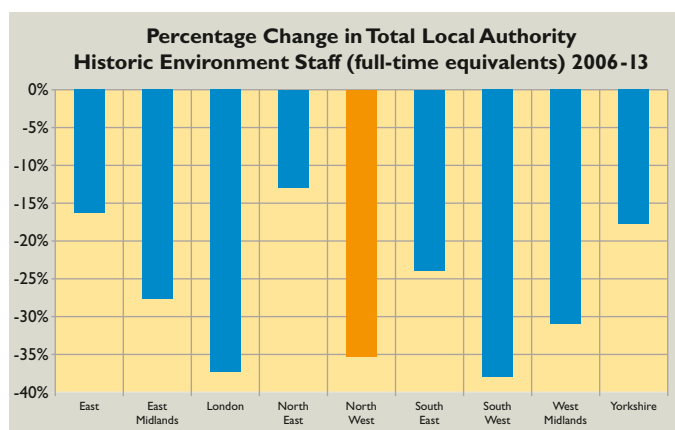
North West Assets	2002 totals	2013 totals
World Heritage Sites	0.5	1.5
Scheduled Monuments	1,309	1,314
Listed Buildings Grade I	476	486
Listed Buildings Grade II*	1,529	1,533
Listed Buildings Grade II	23,790	23,529
Registered Parks and Gardens	123	133
Registered Battlefields	3	3
Listed Places of Worship	Unknown	1,323
Protected Ship Wrecks	0	0
Conservation Areas	674	864
Designated Museum Collections	Unknown	15
Accredited Museums	154	149
% Land in a National Park	18.4%	18.4%
% Land in an AONB	10.9%	10.9%

Caring and Sharing

The number of planning applications in the North West reflects the region's economic climate quite accurately; namely a large drop in 2009/10, and then static figures since. Planning applications affecting the historic environment generally follow a similar pattern, although the numbers of conservation area consents have gone up by 8 per cent in the last year. In 2012/13 there were 1,670 listed building consents in the North West.

The 2013 EH Heritage at Risk register contains 475 entries for the North West, indicating the considerable challenge facing the region in managing the threats to the historic environment, particularly with these difficult economic circumstances.

One of the biggest concerns facing the management of the historic environment is the loss of specialist staff employed by local authorities. *The fifth report on Local Authority Staff Resources* by English Heritage, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation indicates the national average loss of full-time equivalents is 28 per cent since 2006. These losses are unevenly distributed though; the North West has the 3rd highest losses at 35 per cent. Perhaps equally important is that in many cases



Source: *A fifth report on Local Authority Staff Resources* by English Heritage, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation

it is the most experienced conservation staff who are being made redundant or taking early retirement. This is something the 29 Heritage Champions (senior local councillors) in the region's 42 authorities could raise.

Last year over £28 million was invested into the historic environment by the public sector in the North West (by Natural England, English Heritage and most importantly by the HLF who spent £27,283,500). Whilst the HLF investment in the North West since it began is now a massive £585,694,982, it is of some concern that the amount invested by English Heritage, often focussing on our Heritage At Risk, continues to decline (from £3.3 million 10 years ago to just over £700,000 last year).

Building Preservation Trusts (BPTs) play a key role in preserving and restoring some of the most difficult historic buildings and sites in the country. Evidence from the Architectural Heritage Fund shows that the 13 BPTs in our region have 19 live projects out of the total 100 – the second highest in the country. BPTs often play a prominent role in supporting construction craft skills, for example the Heritage Trust for the North West is host to the region's Skills Hub Coordinator who coordinates the HLF Skills for the Future projects. Under this scheme there were eight people last year in the region who have either received, or are receiving, training via work placements towards their NVQ or apprenticeship qualifications.

Using and Benefiting

The annual DCMS Taking Part Survey tracks the participation in a number of areas, including the historic environment. Participation is defined as at least one visit to a designated site in the year. Nationally this was down by around 2 per cent last year; in the North West it fell from 71 per cent in 2011/12 to 68.9 per cent.

Volunteering is still crucial in the work and plans of many historic sites including museums. The National Trust in the North West for example, has around 7,500 thousand volunteers who gave over 305,000 hours in time to the trust in 2012/13. Other examples include The People's History Museum in Manchester, where the 26 volunteer staff contributed over 3,500 hours in 2012/13 and Tatton Park, Cheshire where over 10,500 hours were given by 120 volunteers.

Visits to National Trust pay for entry sites in the North West fell by a round 54,000 to 1,107,621 last year. Visits to English Heritage sites totalled 169,818 – similar to the year before, and visits to Tatton Park fell by around 250,000. Possible reasons for these falls might include the distractions of the major sporting events last year and the poor summer weather. Whilst visits to outdoor heritage attractions fell last year, visits to museums in the region continued to increase. The National Museums Liverpool for example, recorded a further increase in visitor numbers to 3,277,303 – again reflecting the benefits of investing in exhibitions, galleries and on site activities.

Heritage Counts 2013 is produced by English Heritage on behalf of the North West Historic Environment Forum.



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