

HERITAGE COUNTS 2017

London

Introduction

Heritage Counts 2017 is the sixteenth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. This Regional Report is prepared by Historic England on behalf of the London Historic Environment Forum. This year's theme is Conservation Areas at 50, chosen to celebrate 50 years since the Civic Amenities Act 1967, which introduced the concept of Conservation Areas. Visitors to the [Heritage Counts website](#) can download the research projects commissioned to support this year's report and access the full set of local statistics detailing the historic environment for London.

50 Years of Conservation Areas

Research commissioned for Heritage Counts 2017, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of conservation areas, employs a novel approach to analysing trends in conservation areas by benchmarking performance against matched non-conservation areas (OCSI *et al*, 2017). The research provides a comprehensive review of conservation areas nationally, using spatial data and national statistical indicators over time and particularly looked to understand trends in conservation areas in terms of 'good growth'. Head to the website for the [full report](#).



The Cock sign has stood at the top of Sutton Town Centre High Street since the 1930s, originally advertising The Cock Hotel. © London Borough of Sutton

Case Study: Sutton Heritage Action Zone

Through the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) initiative, Historic England is working to unleash the power in England's historic environment to create economic growth and improve quality of life in villages, towns and cities.

London's first HAZ is in Sutton Town Centre, including the conservation area. The High Street has always been a busy and important thoroughfare between London and the south. It developed rapidly with the coming of the railway in 1847, becoming a prosperous financial and retail centre. Development continued into the early 1900s with new public and civic buildings; later developments in the mid-20th century have had mixed success in terms of the character and historic context of the area.

Sutton, as one of only four metropolitan town centres in south London, faces unprecedented levels of growth and the Sutton Town Centre Master plan (June 2016) identifies a number of development sites, placing the conservation area under immense pressure (it is on the Heritage at Risk Register). The potential of the conservation area to support the economic growth and social vitality of this town centre has been recognised by the London Borough of Sutton, who want to ensure the town's heritage is at the heart of future growth.

The Sutton HAZ is bringing together a number of partners (including the local authority, Successful Sutton Business Improvement District and Carshalton and District History and Archaeology Society) to support Sutton's growth and enhance Sutton's local distinctiveness. The HAZ will engage with residents, businesses and visitors to generate a better understanding of the value and role of heritage in Sutton's growth, reinforce a sense of place and enhance the experience of all those who live, work and visit Sutton.

Key developments in London

New London Plan



Image: King's Cross is an example of Good Growth, re-using heritage assets and respecting the character of the Conservation Area. © Historic England

- **London's historic environment is vital to London's success.** The continued pressure for growth in the capital is not going to abate and as we await a new London Plan, it is as important as ever that we demonstrate the contribution, and role, of the historic environment to London's future.
- We have continued to develop our evidence base in preparation for the forthcoming consultation on the London Plan, including a report on the importance of London's archaeology and a study by ARUP on Translating Good Growth for London's Historic Environment that demonstrated, through a number of case studies, how heritage is fundamental to good growth because:
 - Heritage is at the heart of 'London-ness' and an essential part of London's current and future character
 - Heritage is an inherent part of successful change in London
- Investment in heritage delivers dividends
- Heritage engages people and is at the heart of Londoners' identity
- All our studies, alongside our responses to the Mayoral strategies can be found on our website at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/get-involved/protect/keep-it-london/>
- We are continuing to work with the GLA, the London Assembly, and other partners to push for a Heritage Strategy for London, one of our original recommendations in Keep it London: Putting heritage at the heart of London's future: <http://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/get-involved/keep-it-london-roundtable-report.pdf>

Historic Environment Statistics for London

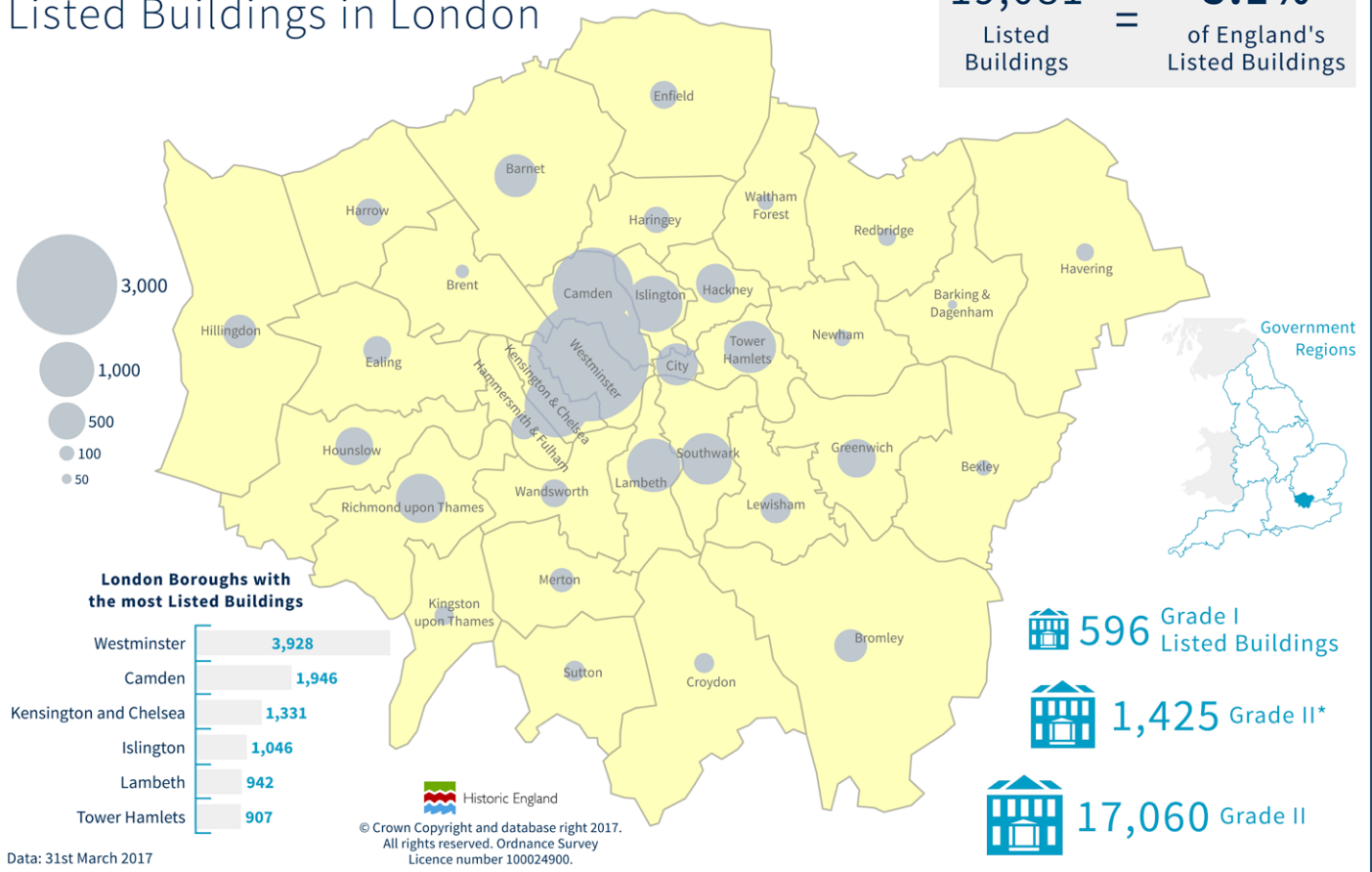
London Assets	2017 Totals
World Heritage Sites	4
Scheduled Monuments	165
Registered Parks and Gardens	151
Registered Battlefields	1
Protected Wrecks	0
Conservation Areas	*1, 025
Accredited Museums	134

* Incorrect figure reported in 2016

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Listed Buildings in London

19,081 Listed Buildings = **5.1%** of England's Listed Buildings



London's heritage and the economy

- Heritage is vital to London's economy, in particular to heritage tourism, which generated over £13.4 billion in spend by domestic and international visitors in 2015. Four out of the top ten most visited places in England can be found in London: Tower of London, Kew Gardens, Westminster and St Paul's Cathedral (all, except St Paul's, are World Heritage Sites). London's heritage directly contributes to growth and employment too, with heritage contributing over £3.2 billion in Gross Value Added and directly employed over 30,700 people in 2014.

Managing London's Heritage

- London has experienced a slight increase (5%) in the number of FTE staff working within conservation and archaeology in the past year. However, since 2006, we have seen an overall reduction of 30% in FTE staff. The number of planning applications (2%) and Listed Building Consent applications (1%) and Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) applications (4%) continue to rise. It is interesting to note that SMC applications have increased by 112% since 2002/3 (the first publication of Heritage Counts).

Heritage at Risk

- 42 sites have been removed from the Heritage at Risk Register this year. Despite these successes, London's historic environment is still vulnerable, with 45 sites added to the Register, including 12 conservation areas, particularly noteworthy in this 50th anniversary year. The addition of these conservation areas indicates the challenges these areas face in terms of accommodating growth in a positive and characterful way.



Image: This beautiful monument to Joanna Vassa at Abney Park Cemetery has been saved and removed from the Heritage at Risk Register. © Historic England

Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS)

- GLAAS maintains London's Historic Environment Record (GLHER) and provides archaeological planning advice to London boroughs (except the City of London and Southwark, who have their own in-house advice). In 2016-17 GLAAS commented on 2,927 planning applications and 463 other development related consultations; an increase of 6% on the previous year. Potential archaeological interest was identified in 42% of these cases, triggering further investigation.
- London Archaeological Priority Area Reviews were completed for Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Westminster so that 39% of boroughs have been updated since 2011.
- The GLHER undertook 713 data searches and recorded 1,785 new investigations with the help of volunteers and placement students. GLHER, in partnership with the Getty Conservation Institute are also working to build a new, more accessible HER system for London.



Image: The Deptford Project, situated in the Deptford High Street Conservation Area, puts the restoration of built-heritage at the heart of a mixed-use residential-led regeneration scheme and features in the Historic England Translating Good Growth for London's Historic Environment report. © U+I Plc

This **Heritage Counts 2017** Regional Report is edited by Rachael McMillan and produced by Historic England on behalf of the London Historic Environment Forum (London HEF). London HEF comprises the following organisations:

Architectural Heritage Fund; Association of Local Government Archaeology Officers;
Council for British Archaeology; Diocese of London; English Heritage; Heritage Lottery Fund;
Heritage of London Trust; Institute of Historic Building Conservation;
London Forum of Civic and Amenity Societies; London Parks and Gardens Trust;
National Trust; Transport for London; University of Westminster.

