



Historic England

Annual Report Highlights

2022-23





Historic England is the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic places

Our Purpose
Improve people's lives by championing and protecting the historic environment.

Our Vision
A heritage that is valued, celebrated and shared by everyone. A historic environment that people connect with, learn from and that we are proud to pass on to future generations.



Front cover: The Grade II listed crane at Prince's Wharf, Bristol. Top row: Blythe Hill Tavern, Forest Hill, London, Grade II listed. Cambridge Central Mosque. Middle row: Hi! Street Fest, Middlesbrough High Street Heritage Action Zone. Converted Oast House, East Sussex. Bottom row: The Old Lighthouse, Flamborough, North Yorkshire. Cleveland Pools, Bath, removed from the Heritage at Risk Register 2022.

Top row: St Peter's Church Bristol, removed from the Heritage at Risk Register in 2022. The Old Fire Station, Market Harborough, Grade II listed. Bottom row: Grade II* listed Electric Cinema in Harwich, Essex. Grade II listed K8 kiosk, Chorleywood London Underground Station.

Our work looking after historic places has proven benefits: from boosting wellbeing, civic pride, community connection, and economic opportunity to supporting heritage skills and helping to improve energy efficiency.



A selection of highlights from 2022-23

We saved historic places, enabling them to thrive for future generations

Revealing the significance of historic places and protecting our heritage

We have made significant progress in unleashing the power of the historic environment as a catalyst for economic growth and community connection. Round one of our **Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)** programme has given ten places from Hull Old Town to Weston-super-Mare, a new lease of life. Working with partners and local communities, we have seen historic buildings restored, conservation areas regenerated, and communities revitalised.

Our £95 million **High Streets Heritage Action Zones** programme continues to transform high streets across England from North Shields to Redruth. Now in its third year, more historic buildings have been restored, vacant space in town centre buildings is being reused, and public realm improvements are revitalising areas for local communities.

The supporting **High Streets HAZ Cultural Programme**, which concludes in 2024, is one of England's biggest ever community-led arts and heritage programmes. It has seen 180,000 people reconnect with their high streets through events and open days, including our touring photography exhibition in 2023, Picturing High Streets.

A £2.5 million government **Levelling Up** grant was awarded for a pioneering collaboration between Historic England and cultural partners to help local places realise the potential of their heritage, cultural, and sporting assets.

Our **Heritage at Risk Register** identifies the sites most at risk of being lost through neglect, decay or inappropriate development. 175 places were added in 2022, but 233 sites were removed from the register after being rescued, restored, and brought back to life. Many were saved



Above: The restored Grade I listed Main Mill, Grade II listed Kiln and Jubilee Tower at Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings. Left: Penlee Lifeboat House and Slipway, Cornwall, listed 2023.

through the hard work and dedication of local community groups and volunteers.

We opened 'the grandparent of skyscrapers', Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings, in September 2022 following extensive fundraising and restoration.

We manage the **National Heritage List for England**, the official register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England, which includes over 400,000 entries, ranging from prehistoric monuments to office blocks. This year we added 249 historic places to the List, ranging from rare shipwrecks and First World War training trenches to London cabmen's shelters and commemorative markers on the M62.

We helped the sector continue to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

Protecting the sector's future with emergency funding

Delivery of the final round of the **Culture Recovery Fund** helped to secure and revitalise vulnerable heritage sites and organisations. 186 projects received £37.6 million in the second round of the Heritage Stimulus Fund, bringing the total number of the country's top assets repaired through the scheme to nearly 1,000.

2022-23 Highlights

Heritage Action Zone Programme*



Repaired **80**
heritage buildings

10,000m²
of commercial floor
space reinstated

High Street HAZ Cultural Programme

180,000
people engaged at

2,340
public open days
and events



Heritage at Risk Register sites



£9.43 million
grants awarded

175 places added to list
233 removed

Engagement

556,000
followers on our channels

1.3 million
video views

836,000
blog views

500
Everyday Heritage
Grant applications



National Heritage List for England



Newly added
223 listed buildings
21 scheduled monuments
3 protected wrecks
2 parks and gardens

Digital Capability



Digitised almost
2,000
aerial photographs[†]

Added
3,788
Historic Environment
Records

[†] For the Harold Wingham Collection. *Numbers relate to the ten Heritage Action Zones that completed during Round 1.
Left page: Former workshops at Elsecar, now housing a heritage centre. Hi! Street Fest, Middlesbrough High Street Heritage Action Zone. Grade II listed, Cabmen's Shelter, Chelsea Embankment, London. This page: Bramble clearance by volunteers of Gannow Green moated site, Birmingham. A group of men playing dominoes at Leeds West Indian Centre. April 1983. © Crown copyright. Historic England Archive. An aerial photograph from the Harold Wingham Collection.

We ensured our advice and evidence served people and places well

Providing advice, support, and – where necessary – challenge

We use our knowledge and expertise to make sure England's heritage is recognised, respected and enjoyed.

This year, we advised on around **20,000 casework applications, planning permission or listed building consent**. Proposals to adapt for climate change are forming a growing part of our work, including advising on the addition of solar panels and repairing historic windows.

Our involvement in **planning reforms** has helped to ensure heritage remains a consideration in delivering Government priorities, including the levelling up agenda, energy efficiency, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Environmental Improvement Plan 2023. Our contribution to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill led to some significant strengthening of heritage protections in the planning system.

We also responded formally to 17 **Government consultations**, engaging with a broader range of Government departments than ever, advised on **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects**, including power stations and major highways, and consulted on **proposals for major developments** in historic towns and offshore windfarm projects.

Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland, Heritage at Risk grant recipient.

We published our **National Research Framework** and are establishing a Research Ethics Committee.

Climate change remains a priority for this year and we continue to make sure heritage plays a role in tackling this issue through providing support and advice to homeowners, the community, sector and Government.

Our work has included updating our online advice and guidance to homeowners to improve energy efficiency, contributing to a Heritage and Carbon research project, and advising on energy efficiency revisions to the National Planning Policy framework.

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Historic buildings and landscapes can make an important contribution to responding to the impacts of climate change, through both the conservation of embodied energy in buildings and environmentally sustainable management of land and landscapes. Balancing and reconciling the issues of climate change adaptation and heritage conservation is a key challenge for local planning authorities, and we must ensure our advice is clear and applied consistently.

Duncan Wilson CBE

Chief Executive, Historic England



Tyldesley High Street Heritage Action Zone community group inside Frank's Cafe

We worked with people to build skills, knowledge, confidence and motivation to fight for, and look after, their historic environment

Helping others to look after our historic places

We work with heritage professionals, owners, communities and individuals to enable them to look after our historic places. We help build capacity and develop skills, and we share our knowledge through training, guidance, policy and advice. We build relationships and networks, and we work in partnership across every area of the country to raise the profile of the historic environment.

In 2022-23, we developed our new **Learning Management System** and Continuing Professional Development offer, and increased our online training.

Our **Heritage Protection Commission** and **National Capacity Building** grant programmes funded projects tackling climate change and heritage crime, as well as programmes supporting traditional building and craft skills.

We have also been working with forums to promote the resilience of the heritage sector and to develop a skills and careers action plan.

We improved our digital capability to open up our collections, assets, knowledge and expertise to everyone

Helping people benefit from, understand and cherish England's heritage

We work together to deliver national expertise locally. We share our knowledge and passion through communications, digital resources, activities and exhibitions, and through the Historic England Archive – the biggest national collection of records about the historic environment – so that as many of us as possible are inspired and equipped to care for, and take action for, our heritage.

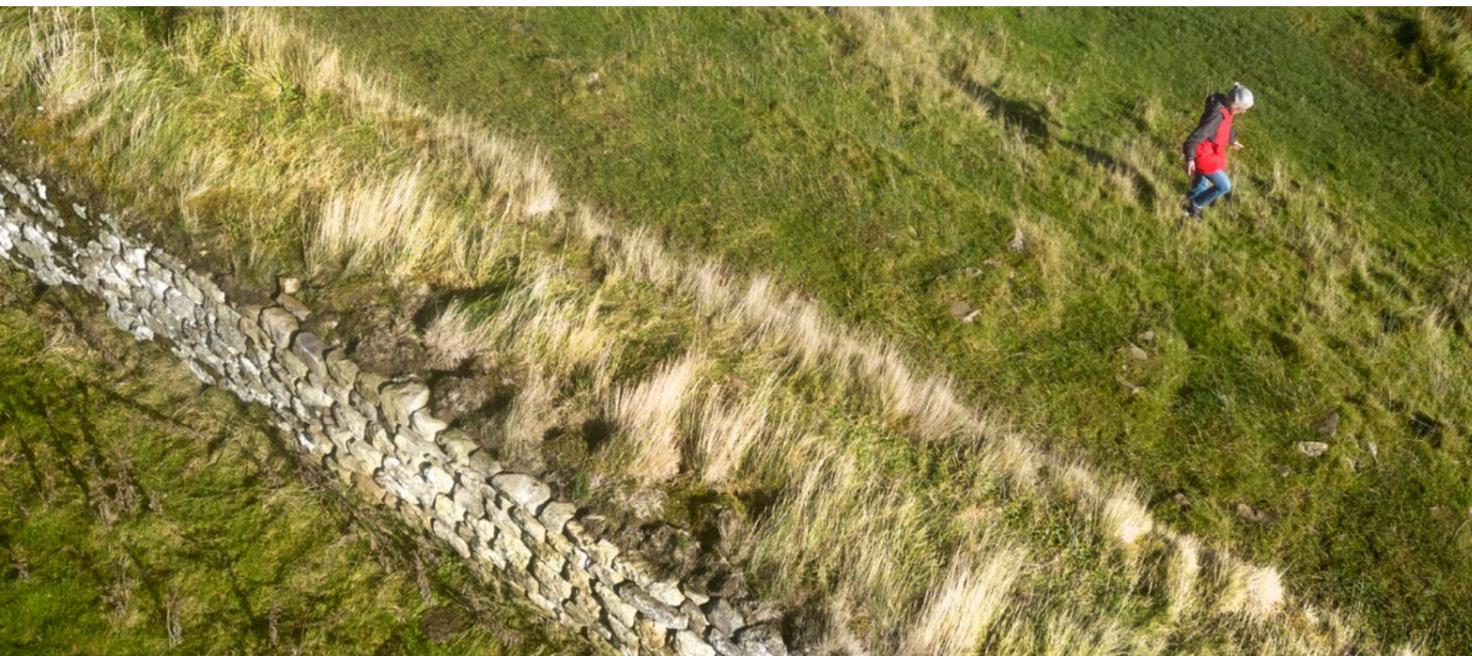
Through our new **Digital Strategy**, we are continuing to expand and improve the **digital availability and discoverability of our assets**, from making documents more accessible to improving our data download function. We have also improved access to Historic Environment Records (HERs), a valuable information source in planning.

The digitisation of the **Historic England Archive** continues, with the Harold Wingham Collection - 2,000 aerial photographs of England's towns and villages from the early post-war period – added in a collaborative project with some of Harold's friends and associates.



Lady Alice Kenliss vessel, River Deben, Suffolk, listed 2023.

We are a lead partner in the £2.9 million Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project **Unpath'd Waters: Marine and Maritime Collections** in the UK; linking up and improving access to marine and maritime data and collections.





Huddersfield High Street Heritage Action Zone.

We engaged diverse audiences, ensuring that the historic environment is for everyone

Ensuring we are relevant to modern England's communities

We want as many people as possible to champion and benefit from our heritage. We are **increasing our digital presence** and engagement on our social channels, and this year we reached new audiences online with our Hi! Street Food Stories campaign – 2.4 million people who had never interacted with Historic England online before.

We also launched an **audience segmentation tool** to help us increase our understanding of how audiences engage with heritage.

According to **RepTrak**, a reputation benchmarking survey, we are ranked as the fourth most reputable public sector organisation in the country, moving up from seventh place.

This year also saw us engage with new audiences through schemes such as bursaries, pop-up events, and a cross-border partnership research pilot programme, **Outreach to Ownership**, aimed at empowering community-led research in the cultural sector. Our **Everyday Heritage grants programme**, which focuses on celebrating working-class heritage, had over 500 applications, and we are working with young people in the North East, as part of our **Placemaker pilot scheme**, to find new ways to commemorate significant places that are not listed.

Our **Heritage Schools programme**, which works with teachers and young people where social mobility is traditionally low, is now in its 11th year and continues to help pupils' sense of place and pride improve.

Wellbeing was another priority area in 2022-23: engaging with the historic environment has a proven positive impact on people's quality of life. Our Rejuvenate pilot programme is the first of its kind to test archaeology and heritage's ability to improve young people's wellbeing.

We ensured we were efficient and accountable, reflecting the people and places we serve

As a public body, we continually try to identify ways to improve our own efficiency and accountability and to better reflect the public we serve. We have continued to **upgrade our core systems** to meet statutory needs and essential cyber security requirements, including rolling out multi-factor authentication.

To help attract more diverse talent, we have introduced a **new recruitment system** that helps de-bias selection, and have progressed to Disability Confident Employer level 2. Many of our staff formally adopted a **hybrid model of working** and we also provided opportunities for people interested in working in the heritage sector through bursaries, training programmes, and virtual work experience days.

We supported the English Heritage Trust

We are responsible to the Government for the care and operation of the **National Heritage Collection** – over 400 historic sites and monuments under the nation's ownership or protection – which is managed on our behalf by the English Heritage Trust. We support English Heritage in its care and maintenance of the collection and in working towards financial self-sufficiency. In 2023, the 'Stonehenge of the North', **Thornborough Henges**, joined the collection.

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Thornborough Henges and the surrounding landscape is one of the most important ancient sites in Britain, and it is heartening that the future of the central and southern henges is now secure, and they will be free to visit under the stewardship of the English Heritage Trust as part of the National Heritage Collection.

Sir Laurie Magnus CBE

Chairman, Historic England (term ended August 2023)

Top: Kibworth Harcourt Mill, Leicestershire, removed from the Heritage at Risk register 2022. Bottom: Thornborough Henges from the air.



Working together

Work with us to champion heritage and improve lives. Together, we can create an even better future for our heritage so we can all keep enjoying the history on our doorstep.

Our Corporate Plan provides further information on our focus areas and priorities, and how we will use our resources over the coming years.

[historicengland.org.uk](https://www.historicengland.org.uk)



Circus group rehearsal at St Michael Coslany Church, Norwich

More details can be found in our full Historic England Annual Report & Accounts 2022-23, available at [historicengland.org.uk](https://www.historicengland.org.uk)