

# WHAT DO THE PUBLIC THINK OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE?

Earlier this year, English Heritage commissioned BDRC Continental to do a survey into people's attitudes towards industrial heritage. 2,007 adults in England completed the online survey. 256 adults responded from **the North West** (268 weighted), 65% had lived in the local area for 20 years or more.

## Why industrial heritage is important

- 64% of those in the North West agree that the industrial revolution is the most important period of British history (63% England)
- 57% of those in the North West agree that the local area where they live is well known for a particular type of industry (43% in England)
- 85% of those in the North West agree that "it is important that we value and appreciate the industrial heritage we have in this country" (87% England)
- 86% of those in the North West agree "it is important to identify the industrial heritage sites of significance, so they can be protected" (86% England)
- 82% of those in the North West agree that "our industrial heritage is as important to preserve as our castles and country houses" (80% England)

## Why there is an issue

- 58% of those in the North West agree that "we seem to care less about what happens to the industrial heritage sites of this country than most of our other heritage sites" (57% England)

## Industrial heritage is important for identity

- 74% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'are an important reminder of what makes this country great'. (71% England)
- 66% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'are important in making this area of England special'. (62% England)
- 71% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'provide me with an important connection to this area's history'. (62% England)

- 62% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'make me feel proud of my local area'. (56% England)
- 41% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'provide a link to my or my family's history'. (33% England)
- 39% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'are important to me because my direct ancestors worked in those buildings'. (29% England)

### **Industrial heritage is important for the economy**

- 64% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'help to attract visitors to the local area'. (61% England)
- 41% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'play an important role in the local economy'. (40% England)
- 46% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'are a reminder of the economic decline of the area'. (41% England)

### **Industrial heritage is important for quality of life**

- 80% of those in the North West agree that its industrial heritage sites 'are important to pass down to future generations'. (75% England)

### **When asked what words or phrases they associate with local industrial heritage sites**

- North West 'educational' (55%) – England (51%)
- North West 'thought provoking' (48%) - England (41%)
- North West 'inspiring' (36%) – England (33%)
- North West 'decaying' (31%) – England (26%)
- North West 'famous' (24%) – England (20%)

### **Getting involved**

- 43% of people in the North West would be interested in 'getting involved with helping to protect the industrial heritage', for example through volunteering or helping with fundraising' (44% England). 11% would be very interested (10% England)

### **The future for industrial heritage**

- 74% of those in the North West agree that "industrial heritage sites should be reused for other, modern day purposes, but make sure that their character is preserved" (71% England), 85% in the North West agree that "industrial sites should be preserved to remind us of our industrial past (85% England). Only 3% in the North West agree that

“industrial sites should be demolished and replaced with modern buildings and structures” (8% England) and 6% in North West agree “industrial heritage sites should be left exactly as they are to decay naturally” (12% England).

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