

HERITAGE COUNTS 2011

EAST MIDLANDS

Heritage Counts 2011 is the tenth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. This summary is prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the East Midlands Historic Environment Forum. This year the theme for Heritage Counts is the role of the historic environment in strengthening civil society. 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 East Midlands, including asset data, funding information, employment numbers and visitor figures. www.heritagecounts.org.uk

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND BIG SOCIETY

New research shows that the historic environment can provide the context and means for people to get involved in their local areas. Heritage groups are an important source for community input into shaping areas, with 85% of civic societies responding to planning applications. They also provide opportunities for people to take part in their community, with 50% of The Heritage Alliance members offering volunteering opportunities. To encourage more people to play a part in their local heritage, Heritage Counts presents a checklist which local heritage groups can use to widen and strengthen community involvement in their projects and groups. Please see the national Heritage Counts report for more detail. www.heritagecounts.org.uk

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND BIG SOCIETY: EAST MIDLANDS

Voluntary activity has always been crucial to the management of the historic environment, be it volunteering at sites, helping to conserve ancient buildings or getting involved in the planning system. This kind of activity is ever more important with the Government's emphasis on the 'big society', and the heritage sector has many examples of its effectiveness, including at archaeological sites in the East Midlands.

ARCHAEOLOGY FOR ALL AT FIN COP

An award-winning investigation at Fin Cop hillfort in the Peak District shows the scale of commitment, enthusiasm and knowledge that can be unleashed when local people get involved. Fifty volunteers from the Longstone Local History Group and nearly 200 schoolchildren joined forces with professional and amateur archaeologists for excavations at the scheduled monument over the summers of 2009 and 2010.

The volunteers worked with Archaeological Research Services Ltd with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and support from the National Park Authority and English Heritage. The young people learned

about archaeological research methods, and also skills in film production to record the excavation.

Residents not only had the opportunity to contribute to understanding of this enigmatic site, but are now more committed than ever to its long-term protection. At the 2010 British Archaeological Award the project won the prize for best community archaeology project.



Clive Waddington of ARS Ltd describing the rampart and ditch construction on an Open Day tour at Fin Cop © Heritage Lottery Fund

HERITAGE COUNTS: INDICATOR DATA

www.heritagecounts.org.uk provides a comprehensive set of statistics on the historic environment in the East Midlands. The key data for 2010/11 are highlighted below.

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSETS

Regional Assets	2011 totals
World Heritage Sites	1
Scheduled Monuments	1,512
Listed Buildings Grade I	993
Listed Buildings Grade II*	1,868
Listed Buildings Grade II	26,762
Total Listed Buildings	29,631
Registered Parks and Gardens	138
Registered Battlefields	5
Conservation Areas	1,101
Designated Collections	7
Accredited Museums	103

In addition to these designated assets, the eight local authority Historic Environment Records in the East Midlands contain over 127,000 records identified for their contribution to understanding and appreciation of the local historic environment.

CARING AND SHARING

The East Midlands has more than its fair share of the most intractable cases of heritage at risk. In 2011 a higher proportion of grade I and II* listed buildings (140 entries or 4.5% of grade I/II* buildings) are at risk than the national average (3%). However only 7% of scheduled monuments are at risk – the lowest of any region.

Figures from local planning departments suggest a slight upturn in activity in the historic environment in 2010/11.

The number of listed building consent decisions rose by 8% to 1,952 between 2009/10 and 2010/11, although this is still 12% lower than in 2002/03. In 2010/11 the districts with the highest number of listed building consent decisions were Rutland, South Northamptonshire and Harborough, each with over 100.

Likewise after a five-year decline in the number of planning applications (from 52,200 in 2004/05 to 30,600 in 2009/10), 2010/11 registered a slight increase to just over 32,000, consistent with a national trend.

However the number of conservation area consent decisions in 2010/11 was 194 decisions, lower than in 2009/10 (200) and the lowest number since Heritage Counts first collected this data in 2002/03. Again Harborough saw the most such decisions (at 22).

Over the last two years there has been a high rate of applications for scheduled monument consents in the East Midlands. 85 were approved in 2010/11, the highest number of consents since this data was first recorded in Heritage Counts in 2002/03.

Despite the recent rise in planning applications, the number of local authority staff working on conservation and archaeology has continued to decline. There has been a 15% decline in the number of local authority historic environment full time equivalents in the East Midlands between 2009/10 and 2011 compared to 12% in England. This divergence between capacity and caseload puts the historic environment at increased risk and exposes local authorities to costly appeal and legal challenges.

USING AND BENEFITING

2010/11 showed a continued steady growth of popular interest in heritage. The number of National Trust members (663,000 in the Midlands) and volunteers (5,000), English Heritage membership (56,000) and educational visits (22,000), and visits to heritage attractions (3.5m) in the East Midlands have all shown increases since 2009/10. Heritage Open Days featured 351 events in the East Midlands in 2010.

KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

The care of our most significant heritage has always been in local hands. Now planning reforms promise greater community involvement in decisions about its future, with a number of authorities in the East Midlands being funded as 'front runners' to showcase Neighbourhood Planning. At the same time, local heritage is of value to the whole nation, particularly those assets with statutory designation. England's domestic and international tourism trade thrives on the value and distinctiveness it provides.

Forty-five local authorities in the East Midlands have been working with the Heritage Forum to develop a local 'shared statement of ambition' which the sector can unite to achieve. The ambitions most frequently cited lend themselves to involvement by local communities. These are:

- Undertaking appraisals for conservation areas and developing management plans to safeguard the character and amenity of their historic neighbourhoods.
- Preparing a 'local list' of buildings, remains and other features considered to deserve protection, but which do not have a statutory designation.
- Preparing a local Heritage at Risk strategy to rescue neglected assets, through voluntary effort and statutory action.

In addition, local statements record ambitions for some 100 specific places in the East Midlands. The mechanisms now available for implementing these are set out in the document 'Heritage Leadership' available at www.helm.org.uk/ssa.

HERITAGE CONNECT LINCOLN

People in Lincoln now have a pioneering web-resource to help them learn about the city and shape its future. Heritage Connect uses GPS location, Google maps and YouTube videos, to display the results of the Lincoln Townscape Assessment (LTA) on mobile phones and computers.

The websites allow anyone with an interest in Lincoln – residents, businesses and visitors – to upload images, comments and memories relating to over 100 different places identified by the LTA. The resource is an important tool for planning in Lincoln, and is set to have a key role in the development of Neighbourhood Plans, enabling future change to take best advantage of the city's inherited character. The project, funded by the City of Lincoln Council, Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, can be seen at www.heritageconnectlincoln.com.



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Telephone: 0870 333 1181
Fax: 01793 414926
Textphone: 01793 414878
E-mail: customers@english-heritage.org.uk



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