

Heritage Counts 2015 is an annual report about England's historic environment. The North East version is prepared by Historic England on behalf of the North East Historic Environment Forum. The 2015 report focuses on people caring for heritage at the local level. Visitors

to the *Heritage Counts* website can download more detailed research and case studies about this theme and can access the full set of local statistics about the historic environment in the North East. For more information, please see: www.heritagecounts.org.uk #heritagecounts

CARING FOR HERITAGE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Local communities value their historic environment on a level that goes well beyond simply visiting a historic site, landscape or collection. People care passionately about the places they live and what makes them different and special.

The historic environment provides many opportunities for people to get involved in their local areas and lots of heritage organisations rely upon the contributions of committed local groups and individuals.

Heritage Counts 2015 demonstrates some of the different ways that communities care for local heritage, with some inspiring examples from across the North East.

LISTED HOMEOWNERS SURVEY

One of the most fundamental and often overlooked ways that people care for local heritage is by looking after their own historic houses. Research published in *Heritage Counts 2015* explores what it means to own and live in a listed building. A survey was conducted with over 1000 listed homeowners across the country covering issues such as awareness and experience of the heritage planning system, repair and maintenance practices, plus attitudes towards listed building status. The survey found that:

- 88% of listed building owners recognised the importance of listed building consent for protecting the special architectural and historic character of their property;
- Over three quarters were clear about the types of work that require listed building consent;
- Repair was the single largest reason for applying for listed building consent – cited by 29%.

The research also demonstrated that many listed homeowners felt a sense of pride and duty towards the buildings in their care. This is shown by some of the following comments provided by listed homeowners who responded to the survey from the North East:

Comments from local survey respondents:

“There is the aesthetic pleasure of living in a building with distinctive and attractive features while at the same time having an intimate and responsible connection with part of the country's heritage.”

“Owning a listed property is an important role, keeping the property preserved in history. We are committed to making sure the property stays as it was and any changes are made sympathetically.”

“We love our old house and have repaired and restored as much as possible... It is a unique building which we are looking after for the next family who takes it over.”

RAY HAYES, CHAIR OF THE FRIENDS OF JESMOND CEMETERY

Ray Hayes is the Founder and Chair of the Friends of Jesmond Cemetery. Ray got involved with the site after reading about it in a book given to him one Father's Day. Ray went to take a look around but couldn't get to many parts of the Cemetery because they were so overgrown. He contacted Newcastle City Council who challenged him (supportively) to do something about it.

Ray set up a group to clear the overgrowth. The Friends of Jesmond Cemetery have since played a significant role in supporting the maintenance and enhancement of the Cemetery, through a regular programme of vegetation clearance, fundraising and public events.

Newcastle City Council gave initial support and advice to the group and a number of charitable bodies, including the James Knott and Community Foundations, provided finance for essential tools and equipment.

The project quickly gained momentum and the group started to take on bigger conservation projects, including their most challenging project yet (the restoration of the Reed Tomb) with support from Historic England.

"I'm a big believer in keeping people's stories and histories alive. I have a nursing background, working alongside older people and a lot of their stories die with them. This is a way to remember that Newcastle wouldn't be the place it is without a lot of the people in this cemetery."

Ray Hayes

<http://www.jesmondoldcemetery.co.uk/>



Image: Ray Hayes © Historic England

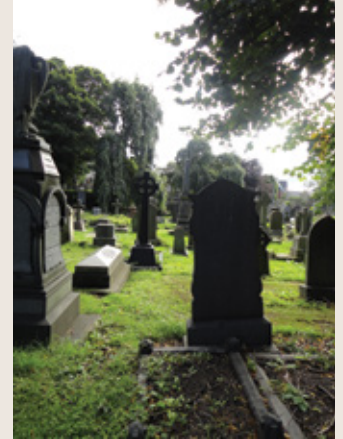


Image: Jesmond Cemetery © Historic England

PEARL SADDINGTON, CENTRE MANAGER OF THE OLD LOW LIGHT

The Old Low Light is a social enterprise and heritage centre at Fish Quay in North Shields, which tells the story of Fish Quay's past.

The project started with a group of teachers wanting to develop resources to teach children about their local heritage. The project grew and a permanent home was found in the form of the Grade II listed Old Low Light.

This was restored with support from a range of partners including: North Tyneside Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Coastal Communities Fund plus local building preservation trusts, architects and designers. It now provides a café, exhibition and events space.

A passionate and enthusiastic group of volunteers was critical to the success of this project, which has opened up one of the oldest buildings on the Fish Quay for people to enjoy and explore. Pearl Saddington was appointed as Centre Manager in 2014 to coordinate the work of the volunteers.

"Seeing people enjoying and sharing the heritage of the Fish Quay around such a wonderful historic building is fantastic and will protect the Old Low Light Building for years to come."

Pearl Saddington

<http://oldlowligh.co.uk/>



Image: The refurbished Old Low Light © The Old Low Light

RICHARD GILES, VICE-CHAIR OF TYNEMOUTH VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Richard Giles is the Vice-Chair of Tynemouth Village Association, a group of local residents who work to promote, protect and enhance the special character of Tynemouth Village.

Richard played a key role in facilitating community input to the Tynemouth Conservation Area Management Strategy by submitting a bid for Council funding to resource this. This allowed the local community to get involved in surveying their area and consulting other residents about what should happen there.

The resulting document now provides a framework for planning decisions affecting the Tynemouth Conservation Area.

"We hoped to draw together the various constituent interest groups within the community to create a planning framework to conserve what is best about the heritage in Tynemouth while remaining sensitive to the needs of all who live and work in the village and who come here to enjoy its amenities."

Richard Giles

www.tynemouthvillage.org.uk/



Image: Tynemouth Conservation Area © Historic England

KATE SHEEHAN-FINN, YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS CLUB, VOLUNTEER BRANCH LEADER

The Young Archaeologists Club (YAC) is for children aged 8-16 and aims to create fun ways of learning about the past to promote greater understanding of archaeology and awareness of local heritage.

The North Pennines and Northumberland Uplands YAC was established in 2014 to give children from rural areas the opportunity to engage with archaeology who might not otherwise be able to do so.

Supported by the North Pennines AONB Partnership and Northumberland National Park Authority, the programme relies upon support from a core group of volunteers, including Volunteer Branch Leaders. As a result of their involvement in the Young Archaeologists Club, young participants have gained a greater understanding of the protected landscapes in which they live.

"Volunteering with the Young Archaeologists Club is a great opportunity to do fun archaeological activities which educate children in an informal and enjoyable way for all involved."

Kate Sheenan

BOB DOUGHTY, HERITAGE AT RISK VOLUNTEER



Image: Volunteers in action © Northumberland National Park Authority.

Since 2011, a group of volunteers has been systematically recording the condition of a number of scheduled monuments at risk across Northumberland National Park.

Volunteers received training on how to identify, assess and record threats to archaeological sites within the Park. A total of 300 monuments have now been assessed and data has been fed back into the national Heritage at Risk Register.

The original project was established through a partnership between Historic England and Northumberland National Park. Surveys are now coordinated by a volunteer steering group of which Bob Doughty is a member.

The data gathered by volunteers like Bob is used to inform the management of monuments and would be impossible to resource otherwise.

"The Heritage at Risk programme is a great way to be involved in the local landscape and to make a difference for future generations to survey interesting sites, often in out of the way places, and help with their preservation."

Bob Doughty

<http://matrix.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/>

www.yac-uk.org/clubs/north-pennines-and-northumberland-uplands



Image: Young Archaeologists © Northumberland National Park Authority.

IAN FORBES, CHAIR, FRIENDS OF THE NORTH PENNINES

The Dukesfield Smelters and Carriers Project grew from local concerns about the state of the grade II listed Dukesfield Arches. The parishes of Slaley and Hexhamshire worked with the Friends of the North Pennines to raise funds to repair the Arches. They also helped to promote community interest in the site with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and other sponsors.

Ian Forbes chairs the Friends of the North Pennines and the Dukesfield Steering Group. This is made up of a dedicated band of volunteers who have donated their time, expertise and enthusiasm to the project.

The Friends took on a lease from the land owner (Allendale Estates) through a 25 year asset transfer agreement. They demonstrated great skill in executing this arrangement, which helped to secure the future of the site.

It has helped safeguard the arches through physical repairs, whilst an extensive community programme of events, workshops and educational activities has helped increase public awareness and understanding of the site. In recognition of these huge achievements, the project was shortlisted for a national Heritage Angel award in 2015.

"The arches look stunning now – it has given us so much joy seeing them cared for."

Ian Forbes

<http://www.dukesfield.org.uk/>



Image: Dukesfield Arches © Peter Jackson

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT IN THE NORTH EAST

Heritage asset	2015	% of English total 2015
World Heritage Sites	2	11%
Scheduled Monuments	1,397	7%
Listed Buildings	12,262	3%
Registered Parks and Gardens	55	3%
Registered Battlefields	6	13%
Protected Wrecks	1	2%
Conservation areas	299	3%
Accredited museums	65	4%
Designated collections	6	–

About the North East Historic Environment Forum

The North East Historic Environment Forum is a group of organisations responsible for managing the historic environment in the North East who work together in partnership.

The following organisations are represented on the Forum:

- Arts Council
- Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
- Association of North East Councils
- English Heritage
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Historic England
- Historic Houses Association
- Institute of Historic Building Conservation
- National Trust
- Natural England
- Northern Architecture
- North of England Civic Trust
- Northumberland National Park Authority (on behalf of protected landscapes)
- Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums

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**North East Historic
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