

HERITAGE COUNTS 2018

East of England

Introduction

Heritage Counts 2018 is the seventeenth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. This regional report is prepared by Historic England on behalf of the East of England Historic Environment Forum. This year, Heritage Counts examines heritage assets in commercial use and how they can form the backbone of local economies. 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 of England Region including asset data, funding information, employment numbers and visitor figures.

The past is the foundation for our future: Heritage in commercial use

Heritage assets in commercial use form the backbone of local economies, not only through the provision of valuable employment land and characterful premises but also through the provision of a place and space identity capturing the spirit, the culture and the stories of neighbourhoods, communities and individual premises.



St Giles Street, Norwich. © Historic England Archive

Research commissioned for *Heritage Counts 2018* shows that there are approximately 142,000 retail, hospitality and commercial operations in listed buildings in town and city centres across England. Independent retail and hospitality sectors are the largest and most likely occupiers of listed buildings in towns and city centres across the nation. Independent businesses are particularly important in the current retail environment as national retail brands continue to consolidate national chains leaving behind vast amounts of empty floorspace ([Local Data Company, 2018](#)).

The *Heritage Counts 2018* research also shows that the number of independent businesses occupying listed buildings is declining, while on the other hand, the number of branded retailers and branded food and drink establishments occupying listed buildings has increased at an extremely fast pace since 2012. Today, branded pubs are the largest single occupiers of listed buildings with Greene King, Marstons and Mitchells & Butler being the most prevalent brands across 55 towns and cities. This is closely followed by large coffee chains like Caffè Nero, Starbucks and Costa.

Evidence from a survey of these occupiers shows that the main benefit of occupying a listed building is because it “contributes to the positive atmosphere of the surrounding area” as well as providing “a positive exterior appearance”. National evidence shows that “ambience” and “attractiveness” are increasingly important characteristics of the built environment as consumers increasingly demand “unique, curated and immersive experiences” from shopping destinations and workplaces ([Moore, 2018](#)). Experiential retailing and agile working are two concepts driving property markets that centre on the ability of cities, towns, high streets and premises to develop a unique selling point in order to attract visitors, workers and businesses ([Deloitte, 2013](#)). Heritage provides character, interest, authenticity, distinctiveness and brings credibility to national and local place brands ([Heritage Counts, 2016](#)).

Heritage Counts 2018 focuses on trends amongst more recent occupiers of historic areas and premises – creative industries. 26% of all creative industries are based in conservation areas. Over two thirds are located in London’s conservation areas, but outside London the evidence shows notable clusters of creative industries including design-orientated clusters in the Harrogate and Royal Leamington Spa conservation areas; Advertising and Marketing in conservation areas in Manchester, Leeds and Cheltenham; Architecture in conservation areas in Cambridge and Newcastle; Publishing in Norwich; Film, TV, Video, Radio and Photography in Bristol and Nottingham; Music, Performance and Visual Arts in Sheffield, Liverpool and Brighton and Hove. It is estimated that creative businesses in conservation areas employ between 460,000 to 530,000 people with a GVA contribution of up to £25 billion.

Our heritage is constantly evolving to accommodate the old and the new; the traditional and the modern, linking the past with the future. Heritage assets in commercial use tell the story of those who came before us and of how our economies have evolved and shaped into what we see today. It is vital that we continue to tell these stories. *Heritage Counts 2018* concludes that as places evolve and adapt, economic development policies must consider and prioritise the historic environment and conservation policies or risk “*the frantic transformation of centuries old [...] cities into soulless agglomerations of generic architecture*” (G Licciardi, 2012). This would not support, sustain or promote societal prosperity.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN EAST OF ENGLAND

Heritage Action Zones

After securing a HAZ for King’s Lynn in the first round of applications, the East of England region was awarded a second Heritage Action Zone in the historic coastal town of Lowestoft, at the mouth of the River Waveney in Suffolk. The North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone includes some of the oldest and most significant parts of the town, which is famous for, amongst other things, its fishing heritage and for its association with the Victorian philanthropic developer Samuel Morton Peto.

North Lowestoft was originally the main medieval settlement, developing around the fishing industry, with merchants’ housing and commercial premises lining the High Street on the cliff top, whilst the buildings associated with fishing, such as net



Lowestoft Town Hall’s future is central to the Heritage Action Zone. © Historic England Archive



Local maritime expressions add colour and interest to the Town Hall while potential new uses are being explored. © Historic England Archive

stores and workers’ cottages were on the lower ground area by the sea. They were connected by the Scores, narrow alleyways which linked the High Street to the sea. North Lowestoft is home to many fine historic buildings, the oldest dating back to the 15th century, as well as the late 19th century registered park and garden, Belle Vue Park.

The North Lowestoft Conservation Area is a conservation area at risk, and one of the main aims is that it will be revived through a five year Partnership Scheme, run by East Suffolk Council and Historic England. At the heart of the Heritage Action Zone is the renewal of historic buildings and routes, the legacy of Lowestoft’s fishing past. In particular, a key goal is to secure the future of Lowestoft’s historic Town Hall, and work has already started on this project as well as in depth research into the town’s historic parkland landscapes and shop fronts to inform their future management and enhancement.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND

Heritage and the Economy in the East of England

This year's Heritage and the Economy contains eye catching headline figures that highlight the importance of the heritage sector to the economy of our region. The research indicates that in our region the sector:

- Contributes £3.1 billion Gross Value Added (GVA) to the regional economy, equivalent to 2%
- Supports over 55,000 jobs, including 24,000 direct jobs that in turn support 18,000 indirect jobs and a further 13,000 induced jobs
- Attracts 20.5 million tourist visits each year, who spend £950 million. Nearly half (£400million) of this is spent by international tourists, highlighting the importance of tourism from outside the UK and England to our regional economies

HERITAGE ASSETS IN THE EAST

East of England Heritage Assets	2017 Totals	2018 Totals	Change
Scheduled Monuments	1,741	1,746	+5
Listed Buildings Grade I	1,744	1,745	+1
Listed Buildings Grade II*	3,527	3,530	+3
Listed Buildings Grade II	52,592	52,855	+263
Conservation Areas	N/A*	1,209	N/A
Registered Parks and Gardens	218	217	-1
Registered Battlefields	1	1	N/A
Protected Wrecks	2	2	N/A
Accredited Museums	162 (2016)	162	N/A

*From 2018, the way in which conservation areas are counted has changed from collecting the information from Local Planning Authority websites to reporting from the Historic England "Heritage Asset Management" database. Information in the database is collected by Historic England regional teams and the annual Heritage at Risk survey. This represents a change in the way that conservation areas in National Parks are counted. 2018 data cannot, therefore, be compared to previous years.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT STAFF – EAST OF ENGLAND

Role	2006	2017	2018	% change 2006–2018
Conservation Officer	96	69	68	-29.17%
Archaeological Officers	66	55	66	0% (20% increase since 2017)
Total Staff	162	124	134	-17.3%

This *Heritage Counts 2018* Regional Report was edited by Edward James and produced by Historic England on behalf of the East of England Historic Environment Forum (EoE HEF). The East of England HEF comprises the following organisations:

- Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers www.algao.org.uk @ALGAO_UK
- Association of Preservation Trusts www.ukapt.org.uk/apt-east-anglia @AssocPresTrusts
- Campaign to Protect Rural England www.cpreeast.org.uk @CPRE
- East of England Civic and Amenity Societies www.cambridgeppf.org/eecas/
- Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/about/contact-us/local-offices/east-of-england/> @HE_EoE
- Heritage Lottery Fund www.hlf.org.uk/inyourarea/EastOfEngland @HLFEoE
- Historic Houses Association <https://www.historichouses.org/> @Historic_Houses
- Institute for Historic Building Conservation www.ihbc.org.uk/about/branches/east_anglia/east_anglia.html @IHBC_EA
- National Trust www.nationaltrust.org.uk @East_England_NT