

# HERITAGE COUNTS

## LONDON



*Heritage Counts 2010* is the ninth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. It is prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the London Historic Environment Forum. Visitors to the *Heritage Counts* website are able to download the full set of regional indicators and maps detailing the historic environment in their region. Please see [www.heritagecounts.org.uk](http://www.heritagecounts.org.uk) for more information on the historic environment in London.

### THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HERITAGE

Investing in the historic environment brings real economic benefits to local places. New research for *Heritage Counts* shows that on average £1 of investment in the historic environment generates an additional £1.6 in the local economy over ten years; while investments in 72 historic visitor attractions have generated £197 million of additional spend in regional economies, with half of all jobs created by heritage tourism being in the wider economy.

The historic environment is important to local economies because it attracts businesses, residents and visitors. One in four businesses surveyed agree that the historic environment was a factor in deciding where to locate, as important as road access, and 91% of respondents regarded the historic environment as an important part of decisions on where to visit, live (74%) or work (68%). The Regent Quarter in London was assessed as part of this research and is discussed below.

#### REGENT QUARTER, LONDON

The Regent Quarter is an area of four 19th-century industrial street blocks to the east of Kings Cross Station. The site comprises a mixture of warehouses, houses, factories and industrial buildings with internal courtyards. It covers 5.8 acres and is part of the Kings Cross conservation area. Following significant private investment it has been substantially regenerated.

#### INVESTMENTS IN THE QUARTER

At the turn of the century, the Quarter was run-down with many of the buildings derelict and poorly perceived. It was generally considered that the only way

forward for the area was wholesale clearance of the existing buildings and redevelopment of the site.

However, in 2000 English Heritage commissioned a plan from Urban Initiatives, which examined how the Quarter's existing buildings could be used alongside new contemporary additions, with pedestrian routes linking the blocks. This encouraged the developer, P&O estates, to produce a development scheme based on the plan's proposals. The subsequent successful redevelopment of the Quarter has seen the re-use of the 19th-century buildings to form a distinctive, mixed-use area based on the area's industrial heritage.

The project has so far involved £105 million of private sector investment and transformed this redundant industrial brownfield site into an economically viable area, with a high quality historic environment.

#### THE ECONOMIC IMPACT

Two of the four city blocks that comprise the Quarter have now been developed, creating a mix of offices, homes, shops, restaurants, bars and leisure facilities; with a third block having received planning consent for a continuation of the mixed use scheme. The project has had a significant effect on the area having so far created:

- ▶ 19,500 sq m of office space;
- ▶ 3,250 sq m of retail space;
- ▶ 4,650 sq m of restaurant/café space;
- ▶ 1,200 sq m of leisure space;
- ▶ 98 residential units; and
- ▶ a new 277 bed hotel.

Fully occupied, it is estimated that the development could provide around 1,700 jobs, with many of these being



Image Regent Quarter, Kings Cross  
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accessible to local people. Businesses in the Regent Quarter estimate that the investment in the historic environment will directly lead to an increase of £34.4 million in business turnover over a ten year period, above and beyond what would have happened without the scheme.

The project has also provided a catalyst for other developments in the local area, stimulating further regeneration. Moreover, the redevelopment of Regent Quarter has contributed significantly to creating a safer, more pleasant place to live and work. 200 respondents were asked about their opinion of the Regent Quarter: Of those who visited the area before the investment 99% agreed it was now a nicer place to live, work or meet friends in, and 90% agree that it has improved the image of this part of London. One in five surveyed (22%) agree that they now spend more money in the area directly because of the investment.

For more information on the research including further facts and figures on the benefits of investing in the historic environment please see [www.heritagecounts.org.uk](http://www.heritagecounts.org.uk)

## UNDERSTANDING THE ASSETS

LONDON	2010
WORLD HERITAGE SITES	4
SCHEDULED MONUMENTS	155
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE I	581
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE II*	1,319
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE II	16,650
LISTED BUILDINGS NOT YET GRADED	5
REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS	149
REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS	1
PROTECTED SHIP WRECKS	1
CONSERVATION AREAS	998
DESIGNATED COLLECTIONS	29
ACCREDITED MUSEUMS	144

## CARING AND SHARING

### MANAGING POSITIVELY

In 2009/10 there were:

- ▶ 68,755 planning application decisions, a 18% fall on 2002/03.
- ▶ 3,919 listed building consent decisions, a 11% fall on 2002/03.
- ▶ 78 scheduled monuments consent decisions, a 53% increase on 2002/03.
- ▶ 632 conservation area consent decisions, a 15% increase on 2002/03.
- ▶ 118 planning applications for registered parks and gardens, a 90% increase on 2002/03.

The onset of the current financial situation has seen a decrease over the past two years in the numbers of decisions made on planning applications, listed building consents and conservation area consents. However, scheduled monument consents have seen a slight rise. This is mainly due to the compact, built up nature of London, meaning that whilst the capital has relatively few scheduled monuments, they are often affected by work such as utilities, which are fairly constant. One other area to see an increase has been planning applications affecting registered parks and gardens which jumped by 84% between 2008/09 and 2009/10. It is considered likely that this is down to a combination of increased project activity by Royal Parks and Heritage Lottery Fund awards.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Since 2006, the number of full-time equivalents (FTE) in London boroughs working on the historic environment has fallen by approximately 20% from 147.2 in 2006 to 117.2 in 2010, though figures are still higher than in 2003 (77). On average each London Borough has 3.55 FTE in 2010, compared to the national average of 2.99. This downward trend in FTE is set to continue with anticipated cuts in local authority operational budgets.

## USING AND BENEFITING

### VISITORS AND MEMBERSHIP

Despite the recession, London's historic attractions continue to draw visitors in increasing numbers. There were at least 12.6 million visits to London's heritage sites with 4.6m visits to National Trust's staffed properties in London and the South East in 2009/10, an increase of almost 16% on the previous year. Similarly, English Heritage's staffed sites in London saw a significant increase of over 17% in the same period to almost 375,000. Membership of both bodies is equally healthy with year on year increases since 2006/07. There are now 1.2m National Trust members in the London and South East and 85,310 London members of English Heritage. The National Trust's volunteer programme goes from strength to strength, with 139,430 volunteers in London and the South East, the highest of any region.

### POLICY UPDATE FOR LONDON: THE MAYOR'S LONDON PLAN

After consultation in 2008, the Mayor decided to create a replacement London Plan rather than amend the previous one. The principal aim is to make it more focused, clearer and shorter, with fewer policies set at a more strategic level. However, its purpose is still to provide an integrated economic, social, environmental and transport framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years.



Images Eltham Art Deco Fair © English Heritage

English Heritage have been fully engaged with the Mayor in the preparation of policies, principally in relation to the historic environment so ensuring London's 'world class heritage' is appropriately sustained and enhanced for the future. Currently the replacement Plan is being tested at an Examination in Public (EIP), at which English Heritage has been presenting evidence. The EIP is expected to finish in October 2010, with the replacement Plan being adopted in late 2011. Further detail can be found at <http://www.london.gov.uk/shaping-london/london-plan/strategy/index.jsp>

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