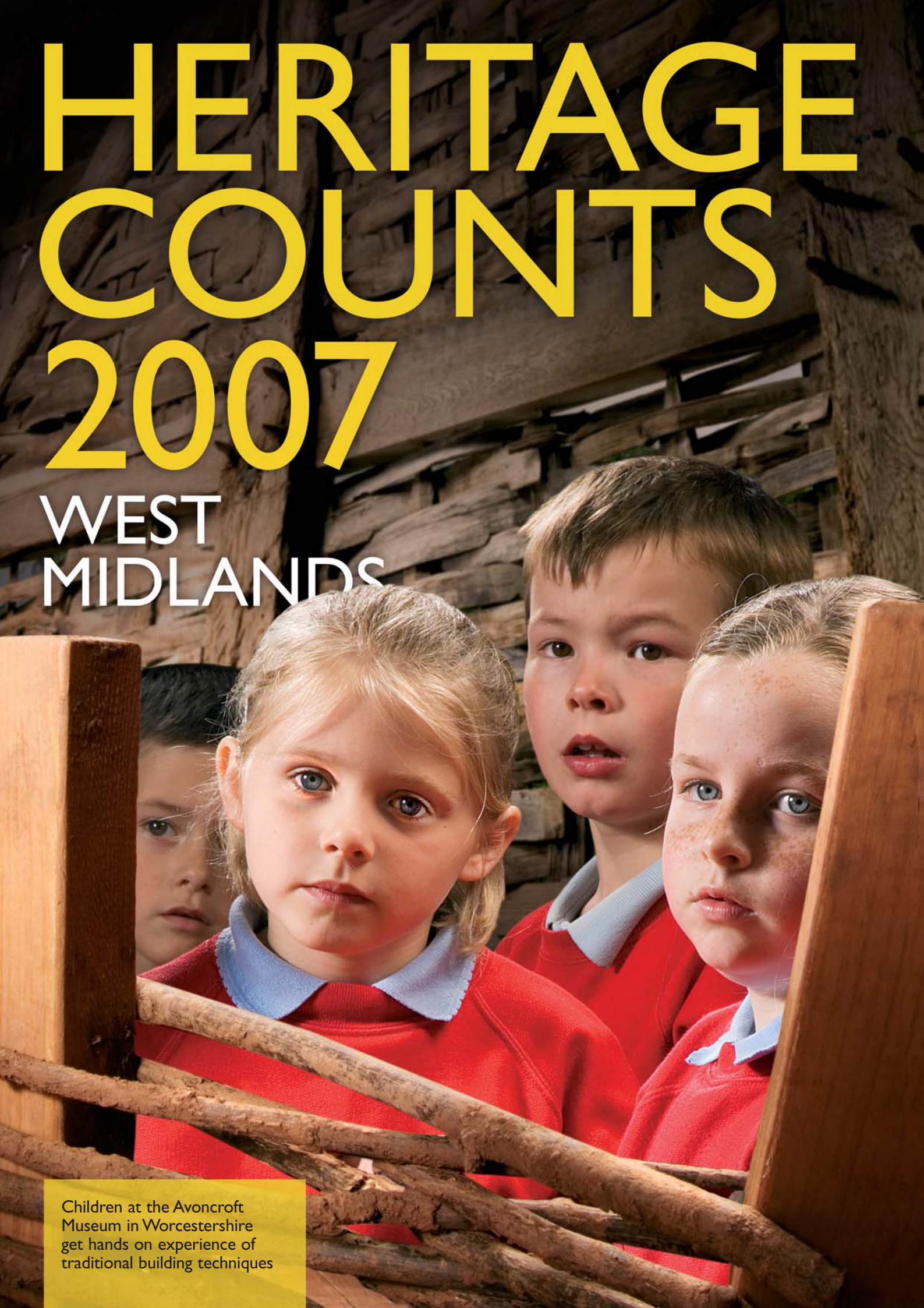


HERITAGE COUNTS 2007

WEST
MIDLANDS

A photograph of four young children in red school uniforms with light blue collars, looking intently through a wooden frame made of thick, rough-hewn logs. The background is a wall of traditional wattle and daub construction, made of woven sticks and mud. The lighting is warm and focused on the children's faces.

Children at the Avoncroft
Museum in Worcestershire
get hands on experience of
traditional building techniques

HERITAGE COUNTS 2007

WEST MIDLANDS

Heritage Counts 2007 is the sixth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. It is five years since the publication of the original *State of the Historic Environment Report* and this year's report looks at the principal changes which have occurred in the historic environment since 2002. It also includes a focus on the historic environment as a learning resource and on the issues faced by the sector in relation to the skills of the workforce.

This report is one of nine separate regional reports and has been prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the West Midlands Historic Environment Forum. It should be read in conjunction with the national *Heritage Counts 2007* report, available at www.heritagecounts.org.uk, where a set of regional statistics for the Heritage Counts indicators can also be obtained. These include data on designated assets, buildings at risk, development control data, visitor and membership numbers, details of funding for the historic environment, and education and participation statistics. Additional regional case studies on this year's theme are also available.

The five editions of the regional Heritage Counts have demonstrated the value of the historic environment as a resource for community participation, its value to the region's landscape and rural economy and the importance of sustained and targeted investment. This year we have the opportunity to revisit some of these themes, to start to examine the trends and changes that have occurred and to tease out the issues and challenges the historic environment might face in the coming years. *Heritage Counts 2007* also examines the role the historic environment plays as a resource for learning. The historic environment represents a physical link to the past that can stimulate and inspire in equal measure. Its value as a context for learning about our past is a tremendous asset and one that is illustrated throughout this year's report. Maintaining this resource requires specialist skills, the expertise of craftspeople and the commitment of skills providers such as colleges and employers to ensure those skills are sustained. This year's Heritage Counts looks at the way in which the skills and heritage sectors overlap and are mutually reinforcing. Finally, this has been a momentous year for the heritage sector. New legislation will change forever the way in which we work. This presents a tremendous opportunity to create a legacy for future generations that places learning and skills at the heart of our heritage protection system.

TIM JOHNSTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE WEST MIDLANDS
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM

COVER STORY – Avoncroft Museum The Avoncroft Museum near Bromsgrove in Worcestershire was established in 1964 when The Merchant's House, a timber framed building in the town, was dismantled and reconstructed on a site on the edge of town in an eleventh hour attempt to save the building from demolition. Today, the fifteen acre site houses 25 exhibits with a range of buildings and structures that span five centuries and reflect a broad range of architectural styles and building types. In doing so, the Museum offers an eclectic snapshot of regional architectural history that provides a leisure and learning resource. Avoncroft's education service has won the Sandford Award for Heritage Education four times. In 2006, there were 9,700 education visits to Avoncroft, which is more than half the number of general visits in the same year. Key stage 1 and 2 pupils (5 – 11 year olds) are given hands on experience of traditional building techniques, such as Wattle and Daub (Front Cover Image), and Brickmaking which develop their skills at handling tools, understanding building techniques and at team working, whilst nurturing an interest and understanding of the past. Avoncroft's achievements are striking when set against a context of significant maintenance costs and a decline in visitor numbers. Avoncroft does not receive any direct subsidy – grants from the local and county councils have been withdrawn in recent years. The Museum relies on its team of thirty volunteers to run the site and its education service, whilst four full time staff oversee day to day management. Avoncroft is a unique educational asset that owes a significant amount to the dedication and enthusiasm of its volunteers and supporters.

IN THE REGION

Heritage Protection White paper

2007 has been a hugely significant year for the historic environment sector. In March, the publication of the Heritage Protection White Paper established the legislative agenda that sets a template for the sustainable management of the historic environment. The key proposals identified in the paper include:

- A unified designation regime and register for all national heritage assets. Local authorities will remain responsible for designating conservation areas and lists of locally important assets.
- A unified Historic Assets Consent regime.
- Statutory provision for voluntary Heritage Partnership Agreements for large and complex sites providing advance consent for certain repetitive or routine works.
- Strengthened protection for certain types of archaeological remains, locally listed buildings and World Heritage Sites.
- Statutory duty for local authorities to maintain or have access to a Historic Environment Record.

The guiding principles underpinning the reforms are to unify existing arrangements, to create a system that engages local communities in the protection of their heritage and to put the historic environment at the heart of a reformed planning system. The historic environment sector has responded enthusiastically to the proposals, pending allocation of sufficient resources.

The Planning White Paper

The Department for Communities and Local Government published its White Paper *Planning for a Sustainable Future* in May 2007. Along with its four associated consultation papers, it addressed two key sets of issues:

The first is improving the way nationally significant **infrastructure projects** are dealt with through a three stage process, involving national policy statements drawn up by Ministers, an improved application process to help developers improve their proposals and an independent commission to take decisions on major projects. The reforms are designed to speed up the decision making process while providing better opportunities for public engagement. At each stage the historic environment sector will need to make its voice heard.



HERITAGE PROTECTION REFORM

Heritage Counts 2004 reported on the start of the Heritage Protection Pilot project at Kenilworth in Warwickshire, which was one of fifteen national pilot projects selected by English Heritage in conjunction with Government to test the theory of Heritage Partnership Agreements. Kenilworth Abbey, Castle and Mere were selected as a pilot because they encapsulate a number of issues the new legislation will seek to resolve. Ownership of the study area is split between a number of organisations and various private owners. This raised particular issues for English Heritage which has roles as a regulator and a custodian (of the Castle) as well as undertaking the pilot study and review. The challenge of adopting a holistic management approach to three distinct assets of the town was at the heart of the pilot project. In fact the interrelationship between the three sites was arguably a strength. They possess a logical historical coherence which enables a rational starting point for future management and a clear and improved baseline of information and data about the sites which can be expressed through the Historic Asset Record (an improved and more accessible statement of a site's significance).

The Pilot identified scope for several benefits of a Heritage Partnership Agreement including the potential for an integrated and more accessible management framework.

The second is to improve the **town and country planning** system, speeding it up and making it more efficient by, for example, allowing householders greater flexibility to make minor extensions to their homes. The detail of a number of changes remains to be fleshed out following consultation, including the proposal to replace the 'need test' with a new test which would aim to strengthen the 'town centre first' policy in relation to retail development while continuing to promote competition and consumer choice.

Regional Economic Strategy

As reported in *Heritage Counts 2006*, the latest West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy is due for publication in 2007, following an extensive round of consultation. The significant emphasis placed by Advantage West Midlands, the sponsoring body, on ensuring a rigorous environmental evaluation on all of the Strategy's predicted and potential impacts has been welcomed by the historic environment sector; as has a more thoughtful and integrated approach to place making and place shaping as a driver for economic growth. The challenge for the sector will be to ensure the historic environment is not left behind as the latest strategy moves into implementation phase.

Regional Spatial Strategy

The first phase in the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), concentrating on the Black Country, saw greater emphasis placed on protecting and enhancing its environmental assets, including its heritage, and support for the preparation of a canal management plan – all welcomed by the heritage sector. The second stage in the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy has gathered pace in 2007. The Phase Two Review is due to be submitted to Government at the end of the year and focuses on regional planning policies for housing, employment, transport and waste. In common with many regional partners, the heritage sector has articulated its concerns about the extent of housing growth and the importance of adopting a considered and sustainable approach to its planning, design and management. Meanwhile, the final phase of the review process, which concerns environmental issues, as well as the provision of recreational and cultural services, is due to be launched towards the end of 2007.

Rural Implementation Plan

Working with lead partners, Natural England, the Forestry Commission and Advantage West Midlands, English Heritage has contributed to the development of the

Regional Implementation Plan for the new Rural Development Programme for England. This sets out the regional funding priorities and delivery arrangements for socio-economic and agri-environment schemes and allocates the regional budget of European Union and UK Government funds. A priority for the heritage sector will be future engagement in the targeting of agri-environment funds to help deliver benefits for the region's rural heritage.

Historic Environment Strategy

Heritage Counts 2006 reported on embryonic plans to develop a Historic Environment strategy for the West Midlands region. The aim of the Strategy is to articulate a collective voice for the region's public, private and voluntary sector heritage organisations. Work is underway on the Strategy, which will be overseen and monitored by the West Midlands Historic Environment Forum. The document is planned for publication in 2008.

Buildings at Risk

English Heritage's annual Buildings at Risk register was launched in July. The organisation reports that a more proactive work plan is being developed to help find solutions for problem buildings and there have been some positive results over the last year. Sixteen entries, about 8%, were removed from the register and two were added meaning that in 2007 there were 179 entries in total. This is a significant challenge. The West Midlands has more entries on the Buildings at Risk register than any other region and bridging the gap between the commercial value of those sites and their maintenance needs would cost some £65 million. Nonetheless, there have been achievements worth celebrating, notably at Whittington Castle in Shropshire where, with the backing of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Castle has been repaired and new means of access and interpretation have been created. It is worth noting that for the first time since the launch of *Heritage Counts* (in 2002) the West Midlands region has not reported an increase in numbers of 'at Risk' buildings and sites.



Whittington Castle, Shropshire

LEARNING AND SKILLS

Learning and *Skills* refer to two quite distinct sets of issues within the historic environment sector. *Learning* encompasses support to individuals, groups and possibly even communities through activities that enhance their understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Broadly speaking, this might include the way in which English Heritage and the National Trust use their properties to attract school and education groups. It would also include the Heritage Open Days programme and the work of a variety of voluntary, public and private sector organisations who deliver targeted community learning programmes to disadvantaged or excluded groups.

Skills refers to the specialised expertise that is essential in maintaining and caring for the historic environment. This is a broad and diverse constituency of people because it embraces individual property owners, managers and operational staff, specialist local authority and public sector conservation professionals as well as elected members. It includes various aspects of the construction industry, training providers and an army of volunteers, all of whom are vital to the maintenance and care of our built heritage.

The purpose of this year's Heritage Counts is to look at the condition of *Learning* and *Skills* in the historic environment sector of the West Midlands region. This is timely because the increasing popularity of history and the built environment has raised new questions about how our heritage will be cared for and sustained for future generations. The Egan Review in 2004 set the public agenda for strategic provision of essential skills as the backbone for the Government's 'Sustainable Communities' agenda. The heritage skills agenda had been identified as a key challenge as early as 2000 by the sector's policy statement *Power of Place* and was translated into action by English Heritage and ConstructionSkills in the formation, in 2003, of the National Heritage Training Group (NHTG), which, in 2005 published its first audit of the provision of Traditional Crafts Skills in England, with extensive regional summaries.



EXPLORING THE CHURCHYARD

The range of learning opportunities afforded by the historic environment community can be as wide and varied as the historic environment itself. As with so much of the management and care of our built heritage, draws upon the enthusiasm and commitment of volunteers. For example, at the Church of St Mary Magdalene in Leintwardine in the Diocese of Hereford, an innovative project has been created that uses the churchyard as its classroom. The project is organised by a retired teacher who lives locally, and has received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Local Heritage Initiative and the Nationwide Building Society. The project forms a part of the Diocese's God's Acre programme and has involved surveying the biodiversity of the churchyard, which includes bats, lichens and a variety of plants. School children participated in a variety of activities, including a 'mini-beast safari.' This has supported an 'Explore the Churchyard' exercise which will inform the way in which the churchyard is interpreted, for example through trail leaflets and interpretation panels. Primary school children have been able to learn about the history of the churchyard, its wildlife and its role as a place of tranquillity and reflection, whilst having a direct say in the way it will be managed in the future.



SPETCHLEY'S TREASURES

Members of the Historic Houses Association have for many years supported educational activities at their properties. Nine houses in the region had a formal education programme in 2006. One is Spetchley Park near Worcester, where a productive relationship has been formed with the Gateway Gardens Trust which connects a diverse range of community groups with the social and environmental heritage of historic parks and gardens. Spetchley Park played host to several visits in partnership with the Commission for Racial Equality. Visits were set up with young asylum seekers from Brushstrokes, which supports refugees and newcomers based in Smethwick. These visits, which focused on Spetchley's collection of plant treasures from every corner of the globe, have demonstrated that there are connections and links in every historic garden for everyone. Linking into the Gateway Gardens Trust's new Education Officer for the West Midlands and Brushstroke's learning and skills services supported by Barnado's and Sure Start, the visits also delivered huge benefits for the children by building confidence and self-esteem. The groups were able to discover more about the historic environment as well as finding relevance to their own personal history and culture.

Learning Policy Context in the West Midlands

In 2006, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education and Skills released their joint report on the potential for using the built environment as a resource for learning. *Laying the Foundations: Using the Built Environment to Teach*. The report set a template for integrating the built environment into cross-curricular teaching. By encouraging an approach that stretches beyond traditional subject boundaries and recognises the important role the built environment can play in inter-disciplinary education and citizenship courses, the report sets a challenging but welcome framework which supports the Government's 'Sustainable Communities' agenda and the Department for Education and Skills *Learning Outside the Classroom* Manifesto which was also launched in 2006.



BROADENING HORIZONS AT ATTINGHAM PARK

On June 13th 2007, the National Trust welcomed around 100 students to Attingham Park near Shrewsbury for a Heritage Skills Day which was held in partnership with ConstructionSkills, Shropshire County Council, Telford and Wrekin Education Business Partnership and Shropshire Telford & Wrekin AimHigher. The aim of the day was to give the students an understanding of professional and traditional careers in the construction, built environment and heritage sector. Five workshops were run throughout the day which all the Year 9 & 10 students attended. The workshops included a Heritage Mood Board Competition, Tudor Building Techniques, Ice House Restoration, Interior Care and Green Wood Working. The hands-on workshops were run by National Trust staff and outside experts. The event was featured on BBC Radio Shropshire and also in the Shropshire Star.

A limited budget covered the costs of bringing in outside experts, catering, competition prizes and marquee hire. Due to the popularity of the event, with the schools as well as the people involved in running the workshops and organising the day, the decision has been made to run two events in 2008.

School Visits to Heritage Sites

Past editions of Heritage Counts have reported on the numbers of school visits to heritage attractions across the West Midlands region. Pleasingly, over the five editions of Heritage Counts there has seen an upward trend in numbers of school visits between 2002 and 2007.

Heritage Counts 2003 reported that the National Trust welcomed 30,200 education visitors on to their sites and land. In 2007, the figure stands at almost 42,000, an increase of some 40%. This welcome trend is reflected in other English regions, but the scale of increase in the West Midlands is bettered only by the East Midlands and the London and Solent region. It also hints at a slight reversal in the trend for fewer school visits to properties in the North and Midlands when compared to the South of England, a trend that is referred to in Government research.

Numbers of school visits to English Heritage sites in the West Midlands between 2002 and 2007 have fluctuated considerably. In 2006/07, the total number of school visits to EH properties was just over 30,000, a significant increase on the previous year and possibly reflecting major capital investment that has seen the introduction of new education facilities at English Heritage properties, most noticeably at Kenilworth Castle, but also of improvements made at other sites.

RINGING THE BELLS

St. Swithun's church in Worcester is a stylish and almost unaltered example of early Georgian church architecture, complete with all the furnishings of the time including its elegant triple-decker pulpit and mayor's pew. In November 2006, the Churches Conservation Trust held a School's Day at St Swithun's church, to raise young peoples' awareness of historic buildings and the importance of basic maintenance and to coincide with SPAB's National Maintenance Week. Pupils learnt what to look out for and what to do to keep their special buildings in good health. Each Year 7 class learnt something of the history of the church and had a go at ringing the bells, a traditional English craft skill that is in danger of dying out.

Other organisations report a similar pattern of improvement in total education visitor numbers in the region. VisitBritain conduct annual sample surveys which report on the number of school and education visits to tourist destinations in the Heart of England region, such as attractions in and around Stratford-upon-Avon. The figures from VisitBritain suggest a modest upward trend in school visits to attractions in the West Midlands.



FINDING OUT WYE

Of course, learning isn't confined to school age children. Our built heritage furnishes a stimulating and accessible opportunity for lifelong learning. Parish churches, country houses, the former industrial landscapes of the West Midlands and Potteries conurbations all provide easy access and scope for learning for those who wish to enjoy and learn from those environments. In 2006, at Hentland in the Wye Valley, a group of local volunteers were trained in basic archaeological survey techniques to create a record of earthworks around Hentland church. This involved a half day classroom session followed by a practical survey weekend on site. The volunteers were able to contribute significantly to an understanding of this area, especially to the fields and possible historic building platforms that are to the east of Hentland church. This record will be of value for the future management of the area and has raised awareness of some of the more subtle aspects of this post-medieval landscape. Crucially though, it has given volunteers an understanding of archaeological process and shown that they can contribute significantly to recording and understanding the historic landscape around them.

SKILLS POLICY IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

The National Heritage Training Group's (NHTG) traditional skills audit of 2005 was the first comprehensive analysis of the scale of the English built heritage labour and skills sector. The NHTG's research sought to establish baseline data about the amount spent on conservation, repair and restoration of historic buildings, the number of craftspeople involved and the skills needed. Using a definition of traditional trades that identifies the traditional skills as a distinct sub-sector within the construction industry, the survey showed that the West Midlands was home to about 2,293 or 10% of the English total of traditional building craftspeople in 2004. This compares favourably with other regions and is possibly related to the West Midlands' geographical location and the relative ease with which craftspeople have access to trade and business opportunities in other English regions and in Wales. Nonetheless, nearly a third of contractors questioned reported that they had outstanding vacancies. Of those, some 78% (the second highest of the English regions) reported that the reason for longstanding vacancies was because of lack of skills by applicants. 68% of those questioned felt the challenge was related to training. There are some important initiatives being developed in the West Midlands that could have long lasting benefits in addressing this training imbalance.

A partnership between English Heritage, the Learning & Skills Council, ConstructionSkills and the National Heritage Training Group has been established in the West Midlands to take forward the recommendations of the NHTG's report of 2005. Early in 2007 and with the financial backing of the LSC and the support of a part-time project officer, the group is funding additional research and developing a suite of seminars to raise awareness in the region of the skills shortage.

Leadership Skills

Local Authorities have a hugely significant role to play in managing the historic environment. They are responsible for managing, regulating and, where appropriate, enhancing most of the designated and undesignated historic environment within their area. To do this, Local Authorities must have the right expertise on board and a management structure that places the historic environment at the heart of the authority's work. Local Authority Historic Environment Champions are crucial in promoting heritage

BURSARY PLACEMENT

The Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme is a partnership between Cadw, ConstructionSkills, English Heritage, The National Trust, and the National Heritage Training Group with £900,000 funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support 80 work (bursary) placements at traditional crafts skills employers in England and Wales. Based on the findings of the NHTG report of 2005, the Bursaries will support placements that might address a particular regional skills shortage, so in the West Midlands this might include thatching, carpentry, brickworkers and leadworkers. The scheme is in its infancy but West Midlands firms are showing an interest.

within their authorities and acting as a focal point for heritage at a senior level. In July 2007, 25 of the region's 38 authorities, or two-thirds, had an appointed Historic Environment Champion. In conjunction with their partners in the design sector, English Heritage, which coordinates the scheme, runs a bespoke training scheme for Historic and Design Environment Champions which enables Champions to develop their skills and learn more about the sector. In support of this, Urban Vision North Staffordshire, the architecture centre for the North Staffordshire districts, is developing a training and induction brochure for all West Midlands regional Champions which will be launched towards the end of 2007. Champions will support the delivery of the Heritage Protection legislation in their authorities. This is a huge task and in July 2007 a one day seminar was held in central Birmingham to give Champions the chance to find out more about the White Paper and its implications for local government.



Peter Kent-Baguley, Historic Environment Champion for the City of Stoke-on-Trent.

Professional Skills

The management and care of the historic environment relies on a range of expertise and specialist skills. Maintaining and raising the standards of expertise in the sector is a fundamental aspect of sustainable management. Ensuring that professionals within the sector are fully equipped to meet the demands and challenges placed upon them requires continuous professional training, sharing best practise and capacity building. The implementation of the Heritage Protection White Paper will demand specialist and cross-disciplinary management skills and the Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation (IHBC) and the Institute of Field Archaeology (IFA) will be key players in supporting this process. The ongoing professional development training programmes of the IHBC and the IFA support professionals in the sector, whilst with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Training Bursaries scheme, the IFA is now offering work place bursaries to encourage cross-disciplinary skills in archaeology.

Conservation Accreditation, which was established in 2003, provides a clear framework and training structure within which architects and chartered surveyors can develop their skills in conservation work. Accreditation was set up in part to make information available to clients but also to provide an additional level of qualification that is based on training, experience and peer review. In 2007, 36 architects based in the West Midlands region are already registered under the scheme, which is now supported by the RIBA and the RICS. Although this is a relatively small proportion of the number of architects based in the region it is clear that interest in and awareness of the scheme is growing, not least amongst the professionals but, crucially, amongst their clients.

Skills in the Voluntary Sector

In common with previous editions of *Heritage Counts*, many of the case studies featured in this year's report illustrate the hugely important role that volunteers play in caring for and managing the historic environment. Moreover, the role of the voluntary sector is strengthened by the Heritage Protection White Paper, which places a strong emphasis on scrutiny, consultation and local level delivery. These measures have the potential to formalise and make better use of the wealth of expertise and knowledge within the voluntary community. Heritage Link and Planning Aid already provide a national framework of support that reinforces the voluntary sector's skills, but the White Paper's explicit pledge to community level capacity building is a welcome statement of commitment.



TROWELLING AROUND IN STOURPORT

British Waterways has championed a programme of volunteer engagement and participation. By equipping enthusiasts with a range of skills, British Waterways has initiated a community based project at Stourport on Severn in Worcestershire. Stourport owes its existence to its canals. It grew around the transshipment port where goods were transferred from the River Severn to the Staffs and Worcester Canal for onward transit to Birmingham and the industrial centres of the Midlands. The town itself is undergoing something of a renaissance based on a renewed interest in its canal heritage. The Heritage Lottery Fund, British Waterways and Advantage West Midlands have invested heavily in the restoration of the Stourport Basins and the wider townscape. In conjunction with the Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, British Waterways developed a community led archaeological survey project. This involved training volunteers in the archaeological processes of trowelling and the use of hand tools. 150 volunteers participated in what became a rewarding experience for both the organisers and the volunteers, not least because so many volunteers brought an unanticipated dimension to the project with oral, personal, written and photographic records of the Basins which will inform British Waterways' future interpretation regime. As well as learning new skills, it is hoped the exercise will reinforce a sense of ownership and pride amongst those who participated.



REGIONAL INDICATORS

Overall the historic environment in England is in a better state in 2007 than in 2002. Many of the indicators tracked by Heritage Counts have been moving in a positive direction. The key exception is the decline in public funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage. However, the proportion of buildings at risk has been steadily falling and the number of people visiting historic sites is high and broadly stable.

Further information and sources of data about the historic environment in the West Midlands can be found at www.heritagecounts.org.uk

THE ASSETS

- There was an increase of 203 listed building entries in the West Midlands between 2002 and 2007, which is relatively modest and in keeping with the national picture. The total number of listed buildings of all grades in the region in April 2007 was 34,129.
- Similarly, the number of scheduled monuments rose by 34 to 1,424 in 2007. This represents an increase of 2.4%, which is in keeping with the national average.
- Five Parks and Gardens have been added to the Register since 2002. The total now stands at 148.
- There is one World Heritage Site (Ironbridge) and six Registered Historic Battlefields in the West Midlands.
- As reported earlier in Heritage Counts, the proportion of Grade I and II* buildings and structures considered by English Heritage to be 'at Risk' has fallen from 5.8% in 1999 (the baseline year) to 4.9% in 2007. There were 155 Buildings at Risk in English Heritage's register in 1999 and 134 in 2007. Meanwhile the number of entries in the priority or most urgent categories dropped between 1999 and 2007 by about 3%, an encouraging trend that better the national average of 0.5%. 38 entries are in categories which suggest positive progress is being made, representing an improvement of 9 when set against 1999 figures.

FUNDING AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

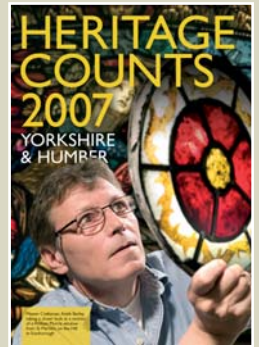
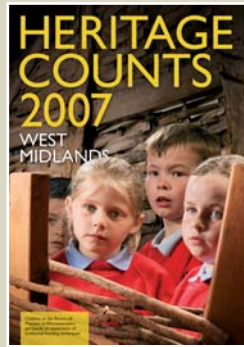
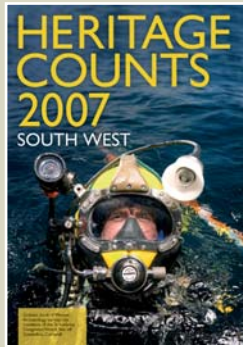
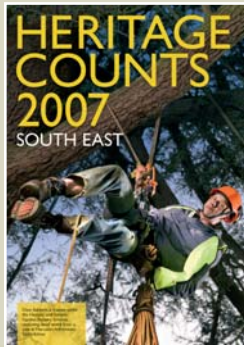
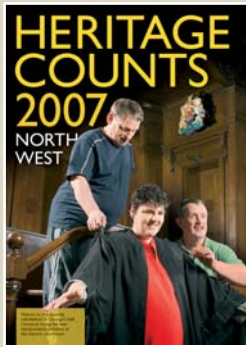
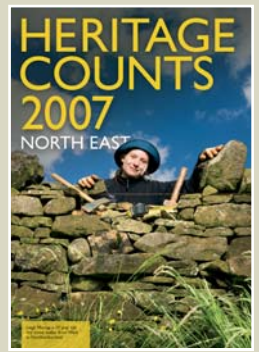
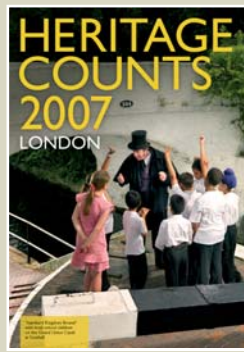
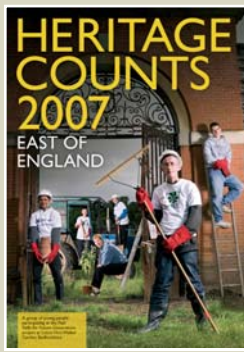
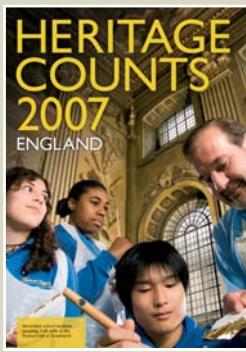
- Between financial years 2001/02 and 2006/07, English Heritage grants declined by about 15%, including those they administer in conjunction with other organisations. In the West Midlands there was actually a slight increase in terms of spend over that time frame – perhaps reflecting the fact that the West Midlands contains two of the organisation's major projects in Chatterley Whitfield colliery in North Staffordshire and Ditherington Flax Mill in Shrewsbury – but a significant drop of more than 30% in their spend on other secular projects.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded £272 million to over 2,600 different projects in the region since the organisation was established in 1994/95. More than £100 million has been allocated under historic buildings and monuments grants streams, and represents the largest single category of grantee. Applicants to the Heritage Lottery Fund in the West Midlands region have the second highest success rate of all English regions, in that a little over 72% of applications have been successful. This perhaps suggests a targeted and proactive approach that is bearing fruit.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund has been the single largest source of grants received by the National Trust in the West Midlands between 2003/04 and 2006/07. The Trust's external income is received from a wide variety of sources, including English Heritage, via European Structural Funds and also from DEFRA. Over that time frame, the National Trust in the West Midlands region received approximately £2 million in grant aid from external sources.

MANAGING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- In 2006/07, decisions were made on 50,700 planning applications in the West Midlands region. This is slightly higher than the number of planning applications determined in 2001/02, but not significantly so. Of those decisions, 2,703 were for listed building consent. This figure reflects a fairly constant level of activity over the last five years (in 2001/02 there were 2,401 listed building consent decisions) with a slight increase in the 2005/06 reporting year.
- 237 Conservation Area Consent applications were determined in 2006/07. The number of Conservation Area Consents determined has steadily increased over the last five years from 176 in 2001/02 to a peak of 250 in 2005/06.
- The number of scheduled monument consents determined has been a fairly constant figure over the last five years, although there were above average peaks in 2002/03 and 2004/05. 94 Scheduled Monument Consents were determined in 2001/02. In 2006/07, the number was 99.
- The Garden History Society – which, subject to resources, comments on planning applications affecting historic landscapes – was notified of 88 applications in 2003/04 and 75 in 2006/07.
- In July 2007, there were 25 local authority historic environment Champions.

USING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- The Taking Part survey for the period June 2005 to December 2006 shows that in the West Midlands region some 67% of all adults attended at least one historic environment site in that timeframe. This is slightly below the national average. Amongst priority groups, only 42% of Black and Minority Ethnic adults visited a site. This is the lowest participation rate by the BME community in England. 56% of people with a limiting disability or illness and 54% of people from lower socio-economic groups visited historic environment sites. On the latter two measures, only London region had lower levels of participation.
- A survey of visits to historic attractions in 2006 showed that of the 84 properties, sites and places classified as such in the West Midlands region, there were 4.13 million visits in that year, of which 1.16 million visits were to Heritage/Visitor centres such as the Black Country Museum or the Gladstone Pottery Museum in Longton, North Staffordshire. In the West Midlands there were more visits to this category of attraction than anywhere else in England. A quarter of all visits in England to Heritage/Visitor centres took place in the West Midlands region. The majority of visitors (60%) to heritage attractions in this region were local. 14% were from overseas and 26% from elsewhere in the UK. On average, each of the 84 attractions surveyed employs 4 people and relies on an average of 30 unpaid volunteers to run the attraction. Using the year 2000 as a baseline, there has been no significant change in numbers of visitors to historic properties in this region over the period to 2006.
- The National Trust passed the 3.5 million members mark in 2007. Approximately 319,500 are residents of the West Midlands region, a little over 9%. The organisation also reports that there are 3,400 National Trust volunteers in the region, of a national total of just under 50,000. In 2006/07, English Heritage had 630,000 members in the UK. 8.22% or some 51,600 of these are residents of the West Midlands region. Membership levels for the two organisations in the West Midlands broadly reflect regional population distribution.



This document has been produced on behalf of the West Midlands Historic Environment Forum:

- Advantage West Midlands
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- English Heritage
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- Historic Houses Association
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- Institute of Historic Building Conservation
- Ironbridge World Heritage Site
- National Trust
- Natural England
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- West Midlands Amenity Societies Association
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