

HERITAGE COUNTS

WEST MIDLANDS



Heritage Counts West Midlands 2009 is the eighth annual survey of the state of the region's historic environment. It is prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the West Midlands Historic Environment Forum. This year, *Heritage Counts* has increased its online presence and visitors to the dedicated web site will be able to download the national data, and a full set of regional indicators as well as view maps detailing the historic environment. This year we have also undertaken a ground-breaking study which shows that the historic environment has a positive impact on sense of place and social capital. Please see www.english-heritage.org.uk/heritagecounts for more information on the historic environment in the West Midlands and for our sense of place research.

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSETS

WEST MIDLANDS	2009
WORLD HERITAGE SITES	*2
SCHEDULED MONUMENTS	1,422
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE I	604
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE II*	2,089
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE II	31,437
REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS	150
NO. OF CONSERVATION AREAS	770

* Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2009, is partially within the West Midlands although the majority of the site is located in Wales.

CARING AND SHARING

HERITAGE AT RISK IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

In the West Midlands in 2009, listed buildings are faring better than scheduled monuments: while 4.5% of Grade I and II* buildings are at risk (dropping from 5.8% in 1999), 20.1% of scheduled monuments are classified in this category. Elsewhere, 7.3% of registered parks and gardens and 8.3% of conservation areas, giving cause for concern.

MANAGING POSITIVELY

In 2008/09, 2,330 listed building consents and 114 scheduled monument consents decisions were granted in the West Midlands. This represents a decrease of 9.9% in listed building consent decisions since 2002/03.

CAPACITY AND RESOURCES

Spending on the historic environment comes from a variety of sources including private owners, the voluntary sector and local, regional and central government.

While it is not possible to collate this data to produce a grand total for spend on the historic environment, the most important sources of funding in the regions are the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and English Heritage.

In the West Midlands, English Heritage offered £3.7 million in grants across the six main schemes in 2008/09 with the total of grants paid out amounting to £1.63 million. The latter figure consisted of £528,207 on historic buildings, monuments & designed landscapes; £76,954 on Area Partnership Schemes; £913,295 on places of worship; £59,519 in regional capacity building and £55,579 on management agreements. While both offer and actual spend are down on previous years, there has been a near doubling of the budget for historic buildings, monuments & designed landscapes in the region.

HLF funding is also down on previous years. This is partially due to resources being allocated to the 2012 Olympics, although legislative changes in the way lottery money is funded are also a factor, with changes in the way HLF allocate money a particular issue this year. Since 1994/95, the HLF has provided grants totalling more than £317 million in the West Midlands – which has included £121.3m for historic buildings & monuments; £31.9 million for industrial, maritime & transport heritage; £20.9 million for intangible heritage and £60.8 million going to museums, libraries and archives collections. In 2008/09, £17 million in grants have been awarded in the West Midlands.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities are central in the protection and management of the historic environment. This role is set to be even greater under changes being implemented through Heritage Protection Reform. An important piece of research this year looked at existing historic environment resources in Local Government.

The number of full time equivalent (FTE) historic environment staff, employed by local authorities in the West Midlands was 111.3 in 2003 and 121.1 in 2008. In terms of areas of specialisation, 68 FTE staff worked on conservation, and 43.3 on archaeology in 2003. This figure was 71.8 and 49.3 respectively in 2008.

As of 2009, there are 24 Heritage Champions in the West Midlands, drawn from the ranks of elected councillors. While this has fallen from a total of 25 Heritage Champions in 2006, the number of local authorities in the region has decreased owing to electoral changes. Hence, Heritage Champion 'coverage' in the region has actually increased from 67.6% to 72.7% over that period.

USING AND BENEFITING

PARTICIPATION

In 2008, the final figures for measuring PSA 3 – increasing participation in culture and sport for priority groups was published. In the West Midlands participation in the historic environment was 65.4% in 2007/08, which has not significantly changed from the baseline in 2005/06. Participation among adults identifying as belonging to black and ethnic minority groups has increased nearly nine percentage points. In 2008/09

a new measure of participation in the historic environment was introduced, with the definition changing from one visit in the previous 12 months to two visits or more. The baseline figure in the West Midlands was 52.9 % in 2008/9.

Visit Britain statistics show that trips to historic sites in the West Midlands increased by 8% for those sites that answered the survey in both 2007 and 2008, and was at least 3.3 million in 2008. While visits to English Heritage properties in the region fell by 6.9% to 265,521, National Trust properties recorded a 5.5% rise in visitor numbers to 1.2 million. The Historic Houses Association in the West Midlands had 473,004 visits in the last year.

EDUCATION

School visits are crucial in developing an appreciation and understanding of the historic environment in young people. The number of education visits to English Heritage properties in the West Midlands continues to increase – in 2008/09 22,390 people benefited from this free service, up 8.3% on the previous year. Since 2001/02, education visits in our region have increased by 23.3%.

The Historic Houses Association has estimated that 4,746 education visits were made to their member properties in 2008.

Visit Britain figures show that the number of education visits in sites surveyed has grown between 2001 and 2008.

MEMBERSHIP

The 60,458 English Heritage members who live in the West Midlands make up 8.8% of the organisation's total membership in 2008/09. The number of English Heritage members in the region has increased by 16.7% since 2006/07.

There are currently 335,229 National Trust members in the region, this number has risen by 4.9% in the last three years.

For more information on the state of the historic environment in your region please visit <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/heritagecounts>

THE WEST MIDLANDS HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

Putting the Historic Environment to Work has been developed on behalf of the West Midlands Historic Environment Forum (HEF) following workshops, interviews and written representations



Image Craftsmen working on the Birmingham & Fazeley canal. Traditional craft skills are highlighted in *Putting the Historic Environment to Work*.

from a wide range of stakeholders within the historic environment sector. The draft Strategy was released for public consultation in the summer of 2009 and is due to be launched by the end of the year.

The Strategy sets out the overall direction for the heritage sector in the West Midlands and incorporates an action plan which will provide a framework by which key stakeholders may measure the progress made in meeting identified priorities. Actions included in the plan are time specific, which will allow for the Strategy to be reviewed on a regular basis.

Three key themes underpin the Strategy and form the core of HEF's vision of the historic environment. The action plan is structured to reflect these priorities – **People, Places and Policies**.

People looks at the way everyone benefits from improved physical and intellectual access to the historic environment, resulting in increased health, well-being, educational development and quality of life. It also examines the way that communities are engaging with their local heritage through business, leisure and volunteer activities, as well as ensuring the right skills are in place to conserve the historic environment for future generations.

Places explores the whole of the historic environment – taking in the everyday as well as the protected and the iconic. New places and buildings, and their

future significance, are considered alongside an examination of the history of the West Midlands, its landscape and heritage. This section also looks at ways the region's industrial legacy may be put to sustainable re-use, without damaging its historic fabric.

Policies reflects the need for the historic environment to continue to contribute to cultural and environmental policy-making throughout the region. It acknowledges that strategic decision making is best served by a robust evidence base, which can demonstrate how the historic environment makes a tangible and positive contribution to the region's economy. This section also looks at ways stakeholders might work in partnership to best serve the historic environment.

Putting the Historic Environment to Work has a five year lifespan, and has been prepared to assist other policy-makers to ensure the historic environment is considered in evolving strategic plans and policies throughout the West Midlands. Similarly, communities may use the Strategy to identify sources of support and possible funding for local projects that aim to enhance, conserve and broaden access to local heritage.

Heritage Counts 2009 has been produced by English Heritage on behalf of the West Midlands Historic Environment Forum

- Advantage West Midlands
- Association of Local Government
- Archaeological Officers
- Association of Preservation Trusts
- Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery
- British Waterways
- English Heritage
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Council for British Archaeology
- Country Land & Business Association
- Government Office for the West Midlands
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Historic Houses Association
- Institute of Field Archaeologists
- Institute of Historic Building Conservations
- Ironbridge World Heritage Site
- Local Government Association
- Museums, Libraries & Archives Council
- National Trust
- Natural England
- West Midlands Amenity Societies Association
- West Midlands Regional Assembly

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