

England's Heritage

England is an historic country. Our history is all around us and under our feet. It provides the backdrop to everyday life and adds variety, character and quality to the places where we live and work. This is not simply our opinion: time and again, opinion polls reveal the huge support that the historic environment has among members of the public.

Heritage is an accessible and enjoyable way of learning about our history – outside the classroom and throughout our lives. Looking after our heritage can be a focus for local communities, helping to bring people together.

Heritage is a great national asset: it underpins the UK's international reputation, helps create a positive climate in difficult economic times and it attracts visitors to the UK.

- Heritage is the main motivation for 30% of all international visits
- There are around 400,000 listed buildings and scheduled monuments and approximately 9,800 conservation areas
- 3% of buildings listed at Grade I and II*, 6.6% of conservation areas and 16.9% of scheduled monuments are at risk
- At least 500,000 people volunteer in the historic environment
- 1 million people take part in Heritage Open Days
- There were 50.4 million visits to historic properties in England in 2010

Front cover: A major new visitor experience opened at Dover Castle in June 2011. The new displays use state-of-the-art effects and real film footage to re-create the drama of the Dunkirk evacuation of May 1940.

Inside front cover: The iconic Abbey Road zebra crossing was listed at Grade II in February 2010 following advice from English Heritage. Identifying heritage through designation is an essential part of our heritage protection system.