



ENGLISH HERITAGE

HERITAGE AT RISK

LONDON



THE BAPTIST
CHURCH HOUSE

1893

HERITAGE AT RISK

This year, the government issued a new statement on the historic environment for England, in part to recognise progress in the way we all manage and value the legacy of the past. One of the key contributions made by English Heritage to that progress has been the publication of the national Heritage at Risk Register, now in its third year. The first comprehensive Register of its type in the world, the Register identifies which heritage assets are at risk from development pressures, neglect or decay. It also monitors the changing condition of assets in order to help us prioritise where resources and expertise can best be deployed to resolve the problems.

Last year the Register was expanded to include conservation areas at risk, using information provided by our partners in local authorities. Since then, English Heritage has worked to refine the method of collating this information so that a more robust picture can be used as a baseline against which to measure progress.

This year, we undertook a pioneering 15% sample survey of England's 14,500 listed places of worship to help us understand the condition of the thousands of designated churches, chapels, synagogues, mosques and temples and other faith buildings that are the spiritual focus for our communities. They face many different kinds of challenges and we need to help congregations ensure their future. At the same time we are also highlighting the many important success stories, including imaginative conversions and adaptations to meet new community needs.

For many, visiting historic places has become an increasingly popular leisure activity and we know that for foreign visitors, London's heritage is a major attraction. It is therefore in all of our interests to ensure that it is managed well. The Register for London this year is relatively stable but there have been some notable successes. The spectacular restoration of Uxbridge Lido and the welcome renovation of 6-10 Royal College Street in Camden are causes for celebration, as is the repair and new lease of life secured for Bethnal Green Town Hall, which is now partly a conference centre. It is also pleasing to see St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill finally coming off the Register, demonstrating how persistence can be rewarded.

However, we continue to see new additions to the Register, including several boundary walls, two ice houses and a number of historic landscape features. Perhaps more

surprising is the significant number of residential buildings appearing this year – maybe a forewarning of the challenges that will face us all as the effects of the recession and measures to tackle the national deficit emerge. It is a concern, for example, that the grade II* listed Baptist Church House in Camden, which has been on the Register since 1995, is still awaiting repair despite permissions being granted for conversion. Unfortunately this relied on a funding package put together in 2008, which has fallen victim to the global financial crisis.

Maintaining progress on heritage at risk in these circumstances will require greater determination, but working with our partners we are already seeing the first results of the High Street 2012 project. In the last year, and in conjunction with the London boroughs, English Heritage has provided approximately £1m for partnership schemes in conservation areas at risk.

Strong partnership working and positive engagement with owners and local authorities on sustainable solutions will remain at the heart of future success in managing Heritage at Risk in London.



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BAPTIST CHURCH HOUSE, 2-6 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

This grade II* listed building has stood empty since the Baptist Union of England moved out in 1989. It has been on the London Buildings at Risk Register since 1995, but was bought in 2007 by a company who plan to convert it to a 5* boutique hotel. The necessary consents were granted in February 2008 but as a result of the financial crisis, progress on the project has halted. The owners are currently putting together an alternative funding package and in the meantime are keeping the building secure, wind and weathertight.

LISTED BUILDINGS

- 1 in 32 (3.1%) grade I and II* listed buildings are at risk across the country. In London region this rises to 4.5% (87 sites).
- 2.4% (407) of London's grade II listed buildings are at risk.
- 6 grade I and II* and 41 grade II buildings were removed from the London Register during the year, but 6 new grade I and II* and 47 grade II listed sites were added.
- Since publication of the 1999 baseline Register, 66.7% of the region's grade I and II* buildings at risk (70) have been removed from the regional Register as their futures have been secured, compared to the national figure of 50.7% (724).
- Nationally, £6.2m was offered to 76 grade I and II* sites on the Register during 2009/10. In London we awarded grants totalling £290k to 6 sites.
- In addition grants were offered to 9 grade II buildings at risk.

CONSERVATION AREAS

- 272 local authorities (81%) have taken part in our national survey of conservation areas, including 32 of London's 33 Boroughs.
- We now have information for 7,388 of England's 9,300 designated conservation areas, of which 894 are in London.
- 549 (7.4%) of the conservation areas for which we have information are at risk, 72 (8.1%) of them in our region.

SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

- Approximately 1 in 6 (17.2%) of England's 19,731 scheduled monuments are at risk. In the London region, this increases to 26.1% (40 sites).
- The total at risk has fallen by 140 (4.0%) since 2009, only 1 of which (2.4%) was in London.
- Arable ploughing and unrestricted plant, scrub or tree growth account for nearly two thirds of sites at risk. In London it is general deterioration due to lack of management (32.5%) and uncontrolled vegetation (27.5%) that are the commonest risks.

- Nationally, 82% of scheduled monuments at risk are in private ownership, but in London two-thirds of sites belong to local authorities.
- Of the £450k offered to owners of scheduled monuments at risk in 2009/10, only £6k was to 3 sites in our region reflecting the low proportion of privately owned sites.

REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS

- 1 in 16 of England's 1,606 registered parks and gardens are at risk, an increase from 6.0% (96) in 2009 to 6.2% (99). In London, 14 of our 148 sites are at risk (9.5%).
- Nationally, 5 sites have been added and 2 removed from the Register. There has been no change in London.

REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS

- Of the 43 registered battlefields in England, 6 are at risk, 1 less than in 2009.
- London's single registered battlefield is not at risk.

PROTECTED SHIP WRECKS

- Of the 46 protected wreck sites around England's coast, 8 are at risk, a fall of 1 since 2009, due to the implementation of an improved management regime.
- London has no protected wreck sites.



PLATT'S EYOT, LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND

The future of this unusual waterside conservation area remains in the balance following the collapse of earlier redevelopment proposals.

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26%
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8.1%
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CONSERVATION
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£1 OVER
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2009 REGISTER

CARING FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Places of worship make a huge contribution to our towns and villages. They sit at the heart of communities, dominating skylines and landscapes. They are the product of centuries of invested skill and philanthropy. Most remain as places of prayer and spirituality but others have acquired new social uses that benefit a much wider cross-section of urban and rural society.

Like all buildings, they require regular maintenance to keep them in good condition. They also need to adapt to the evolving needs of their congregations and the wider community. Responsibility for their care falls almost entirely on the shoulders of volunteers, and for many smaller congregations the burden can be heavy.

We have therefore undertaken a series of consultation events with congregations, user groups and local authorities to identify the biggest concerns of those who manage these very special places. Places of Worship are particularly close to the heart of local communities, but in practice it is often just a handful of dedicated individuals who maintain them. They face unique challenges, which are illustrated in an accompanying report.

What we know

- 45% of all grade I buildings are places of worship.
- 85% of listed places of worship belong to the Church of England.
- Up to 1 in 10 could be at risk from leaking roofs, faulty gutters or eroding stonework.
- 1,850 repair projects at 1,567 buildings have shared £171m of English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund grant aid since 2002/3.

What congregations want to understand better

- Why their building has been listed and what that means.
- How to get permission to make changes and find expert help.
- How to raise money for one-off projects and day-to-day maintenance.
- Who will look after their buildings in the future.

All of these are considered in our booklet *Caring for Places of Worship*, sent to every listed place of worship.



For more information, see www.english-heritage.org.uk/risk or contact your English Heritage regional office.

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact our customer services department on telephone: 0870 333 1181 fax: 01793 414926 textphone: 01793 414878 email: customers@english-heritage.org.uk