



ENGLISH HERITAGE

# HERITAGE AT RISK

2013



NORTH WEST

# HERITAGE AT RISK

Heritage at Risk is our campaign to save listed buildings and important historic sites, places and landmarks from neglect or decay. At its heart is the Heritage at Risk Register, an online database containing details of each site known to be at risk. It is analysed and updated annually and this leaflet summarises the results. Heritage at Risk teams are now in each of our nine local offices, delivering national expertise locally.

The good news is that we are on target to save 25% (1,137) of the sites that were on the Register in 2010 by 2015. From Bewsey Old Hall to Whitesyke and Bentyfield Lead Mines, this success is down to good partnerships with owners, developers, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Natural England, councils and local groups. It will be increasingly important to build on these partnerships to achieve the overall aim of reducing the number of sites on the Register. **Henry Owen-John**, Planning and Conservation Director, North West

The creation of the North West Heritage at Risk (HAR) Team provides an exciting opportunity for staff to concentrate on sites on the Register and work both proactively and creatively to save them. The Team is driven by the expert knowledge and skills of our architects and project officers.

We will build on the successes of the past year, which has seen the removal of 11 listed buildings and scheduled monuments, 10 places of worship and 5 conservation areas from the Register. Overall, we have so far removed 45 of the 301 entries on the 2010 Register.

We are particularly pleased that two long standing cases – Bewsey Old Hall in Warrington and Whitesyke and Bentyfield Lead Mines in Cumbria – have been resolved as a result of 'constructive conservation' through close working with partners. Good progress has been made with others, such as Alston Conservation Area, which provides an excellent example of a local community's commitment to its heritage. We have also supported the Heritage Lottery Fund in the operation of their new Grants for Places of Worship scheme by giving technical advice on proposed fabric repairs, a service we will continue to provide.

However, while there have been successes there remain many challenges. A further 4 listed buildings/structural scheduled monuments, 25 non-structural scheduled monuments, 6 places of worship and 14 conservation areas have been added to the Register. This year we are including Scarisbrick Hall in our local list of 10 priority sites. Scarisbrick Hall is a stunning country house, which was built principally in 1836-45 in an exuberant Gothic style to the designs of AWN Pugin. With the assistance

of an English Heritage grant, the owners are undertaking urgent repairs to the highly decorative main hall. This is only a start and continued collaborative working over several years will be necessary to secure the future of this important grade I listed building.

A major focus over the past year has been the grade II pilot projects. These have proved invaluable in exploring different ways of expanding the HAR programme to include grade IIs, which account for around 93% of all listed buildings in the North West. One project involved the North of England Civic Trust successfully recruiting and managing of a group of 32 volunteers to complete condition surveys of more than 400 sites in Copeland, Cumbria. Maximising the value of volunteers' work requires professional organisation, demonstrating why we feel that the expert support offered by the new Heritage at Risk Team will, in partnership with others, deliver sustainable solutions for those parts of our heritage that are most at risk.



**Charles Smith,**  
Principal Adviser, Heritage at Risk

## BEWSEY OLD HALL, BEWSEY, WARRINGTON

Bewsey Old Hall is located on the site of a 13th century monastic grange and medieval manor house. After years of part-redundancy, this 16th century grade II\* listed building has now been converted successfully into seven fully-occupied flats. During the conversion work in 2011, a deliberate fire devastated the attached 18th century farmhouse. Thankfully, however, the main building was saved and the farmhouse (separately listed at grade II) has since been repaired and restored on a like-for-like basis. Through effective partnership working with the Homes and Communities Agency, the developers and the architects, Bewsey Old Hall has now been taken off the Heritage at Risk Register.

## BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

- Nationally, 4.1% of grade I and II\* listed buildings (excluding places of worship) are on the Register. In the North West the percentage is 6.6% (104 buildings). 9 building or structure entries have been removed from the 2012 North West Register because their futures have been secured, but 4 have been added.

## PLACES OF WORSHIP

- Of the 302 listed places of worship assessed in the North West, 71 are on the Register.
- 10 places of worship have been removed from the 2012 Register following repair work.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

- 3,265 (16.5%) of England's 19,792 scheduled monuments are on the Register, of which 202 are in the North West.
- 2 archaeology entries have been removed from the 2012 Register for positive reasons and 25 have been added.
- 22% of archaeology entries (37) on the North West baseline 2009 Register have been removed for positive reasons, compared to the national figure of 21.1%.
- Nationally, damage from arable cultivation is the greatest risk factor, accounting for 43% of those on the Register. In the North West the proportion is 15%. The greatest threat for 52% of entries on the North West Register is from unrestricted plant, scrub and tree growth.

## PARKS AND GARDENS

- 100 (6.2%) of England's 1,624 registered parks and gardens are on the Register. In the North West, 7 are on the Register, the same as last year.

## BATTLEFIELDS

- Of the 43 registered battlefields in England, 6 are on the Register. None of the 3 registered battlefields in the North West are on the Register.

## WRECK SITES

- Of the 46 protected wreck sites around England's coast, 4 are on the Register. There are no protected wreck sites off the coast of the North West.

## CONSERVATION AREAS

- 8,179 of England's 9,839 conservation areas have been surveyed by local authorities. 510 (6.2%) are on the Register. Of the 801 conservation areas surveyed in the North West, 85 (10.6%) are on the Register.
- 5 conservation areas have been removed from the 2012 North West Register for positive reasons, but 14 have been added.



### WHITESYKE AND BENTYFIELD LEAD MINES, ALSTON MOOR, CUMBRIA

This scheduled site comprises a complete set of mid-19th century lead mines. Whitesyke and Bentyfield Lead Mines was a North West priority site until its removal from the Heritage at Risk Register this year. A project to consolidate the site's main structural remains has been completed, using funding from Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship scheme and English Heritage, together with improvements to visitor access and information.

**47%** OF  
BUILDINGS AND  
STRUCTURES  
ON THE 1999 REGISTER  
HAVE BEEN  
**SAVED**

**85**  
CONSERVATION  
AREAS ARE ON  
THE REGISTER

**15.4%**  
OF SCHEDULED  
MONUMENTS ARE ON  
THE REGISTER

**£660k** IN  
GRANTS  
WAS OFFERED TO  
**5** SITES  
ON THE REGISTER

## PRIORITY HAR SITES

- Castle Hill motte and ditch system, Oldcastle, Cheshire
- Central General Service Hangar, South Road, Hooton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire
- Church of St James, St James's Place, Liverpool, Merseyside
- Flaybrick Memorial Gardens, Wirral, Merseyside
- Police and Fire Station, London Road, Manchester
- Ribchester Roman fort (Bremetennacum), Ribchester, Ribbles Valley, Lancashire
- Scarisbrick Hall, Southport Road, Scarisbrick, Ormskirk, West Lancashire
- Shieling settlement close to the mouth of Scale Beck, Loweswater, Allerdale, Cumbria
- The Winter Gardens, Adelaide Street, Blackpool
- Wycliffe Congregational Chapel, Wellington Road North, Heaton Norris, Stockport

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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## ALSTON CONSERVATION AREA, CUMBRIA

### BACKGROUND AND HISTORY:

Alston Conservation Area forms the heart of a small market town high on the expansive moors of the north Pennines. It is a rugged place, exploited and shaped over millennia for its rich mineral wealth of lead and silver. Alston's cobbled main street and most of the buildings around the Market Square date from the late 17th and early 18th centuries. There is a fascinating labyrinth of underground water courses which fed the various industries; running water can still be heard just under the surface of some of the town's alleys and ginnels.

### IS IT AT RISK?

Alston was added to the Heritage at Risk Register in 2011. Despite being located in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NPAONB) and its proximity to the Lake District, in recent years Alston has been unable to sustain or grow its visitor economy. Many of the town's specialist retailers are suffering economically from reduced trade and there are increasing levels of building vacancy, resulting in the deterioration of historic fabric and loss of important architectural features. A good example is the prominent 18th century High Mill complex, which lies derelict and is rapidly deteriorating.

### WHAT'S THE CURRENT SITUATION?

The people of Alston are passionate about its heritage and are working together to develop the town's visitor economy and to conserve its industrial legacy and distinctive character. They have growing aspirations to see High Mill regenerated as a focal point for civic events, and discussions have taken place with English Heritage, the community and the Mill's owner about options for its future reuse

and the need to study its significance and condition. English Heritage is also advising a local group – The Alston Partnership – on potential major funding schemes.

To support the community, we have also undertaken a wide-ranging investigation into the historic character of the 'miner-farmer landscapes' of the NPAONB. The significance of this heavily mined landscape had not previously been fully assessed or understood. We have launched a publication that places the significance of buildings alongside the area's wider landscape character, exploring ways in which the future of heritage assets could benefit both the landscape and its community.

Whilst significant challenges lie ahead that may take time to resolve, this partnership working with committed local people is already proving fruitful. We will continue to work with the community over the coming years, offering advice and support to help them realise their vision and to remove Alston from the Heritage at Risk Register.

Find out what's at risk by searching or downloading the online Heritage at Risk Register at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/har](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/har)

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](mailto:customers@english-heritage.org.uk)