

Heritage at Risk



Historic England

London Summary 2016



The Heritage at Risk Register in London reflects the diversity of our capital's historic environment. It includes 682 buildings and sites known to be at risk from neglect, decay or inappropriate development - everything from an early 18th century church designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, to a boathouse built during WWI on an island in the Thames. These are sites that need imagination and investment. In London the scale of this challenge has grown. There are 12 more assets on the Heritage at Risk Register this year compared to 2015. We also know that it's becoming more expensive to repair many of our buildings at risk. In the face of these challenges we're grateful for the help and support of all those who continue to champion our historic environment.

Emily Gee Planning Director, London



We're delighted to have removed 32 entries from the Heritage at Risk Register this year. These successes bring to life the history of each site, as well as the stories of those who have worked tirelessly to rescue them.

carefully conserved, with a grant of £116,000 from Historic England. Their transformation included a coat of terracotta red paint, reinstating the original mid-19th century colouring. At Gunnersbury Park our funding is helping to conserve the 'Gothic' ruins and grotto. These are just two of many romantic follies in the grade II* registered landscape, once home to the Rothschild family. Both of these parks are well on their way to being removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.

One such story is the campaign to save Wilton's Music Hall, which started in the 1960s when the building faced demolition. Sir John Betjeman and Spike Milligan are just two of the well-known figures to have supported the campaign. Half a century later Wilton's has reopened to the public, thanks to the Wilton's Music Hall Trust and a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The grade II* listed building has been removed from the Heritage at Risk Register this year.

Our successes also showcase some of London's best 20th century heritage. Poplar Baths in Tower Hamlets, for example, dates from 1932 with all the hallmarks of a grand Art Deco building. 28 years after the building closed, the baths have been lovingly restored and the doors are once again open to the local community.

This year we've invested considerably in some of London's most important public parks. The grade II listed sphinxes in Crystal Palace Park have been

Despite these successes our historic environment in London is still vulnerable. A total of 45 entries have been added to the Heritage at Risk Register this year – from the tomb of a champion sculler in Brompton Cemetery, to a large Victorian church designed by George Gilbert Scott in Ealing. Most notable, however, is the addition of 11 conservation areas, reflecting the growing development pressures London continues to face.

Finding solutions to these sites is a priority for us in London. It will require the imagination and support of all our partners, including volunteers, local authority staff, private owners and commercial developers. The continued generosity of funding bodies, both big and small, will also be critical. We look forward to tackling these challenges in the year ahead.

Rebecca Barrett Principal Adviser, Heritage at Risk

Cover image: The grade II* listed **Snowdon Aviary** is a much-loved landmark in **London Zoo**. It was designed by Lord Snowdon and opened in 1965. The structure was pioneering – not only was it Britain's first walk-through aviary, but its aluminium frame was an impressive feat of engineering. 50 years on the aviary is showing signs of its age and has been added to the Heritage at Risk Register this year. The aluminium mesh is a patchwork of past repairs and the cantilevered concrete bridge has suffered water damage. Funding already secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund will help towards much needed repairs.

Designated assets on the 2016 London Register



There are **682** assets on the London Register, **12** more than in 2015

Calvary Charismatic Baptist Church Poplar



Trinity Congregational Church (now known as the Calvary Charismatic Baptist Church) was built in 1951 by Cecil Handisyde and D Rogers Stark. It formed part of the 'live' architectural exhibition at the Festival of Britain, which featured the newly built Lansbury Estate in Poplar. With its slender brick tower, distinctive

copper cladding and exposed concrete frame, the church was one of the exhibition's showpieces. It was daring in its design and an early example of a 'church centre' with meeting rooms, recreational facilities and worship space accommodated on a single site. The church, now grade II listed, remains an important local landmark today; a much-loved and well used building.

Over recent years the condition of the church has started to deteriorate. The main roof is leaking, causing damage to interior fittings and furnishings, many of which are original. Crumbling concrete is also in need of repair, particularly where the structural steel reinforcements are now exposed and slowly corroding. The church was added to the Heritage at Risk Register in 2002.

To help tackle the most urgent repairs Historic England has offered the congregation a grant of £234,600. Over the last year research and technical investigations have been carried out to inform these repairs. A radar survey, for example, has helped to better understand the extent and condition of steel reinforcements embedded in the 1950s concrete. Extensive trials have also found the best possible match between the original concrete and new materials.

Repairs will soon be underway, with the first phase due for completion in 2017. Our advice and funding will help secure the future of this much-loved building for many years to come.

‘The Watchers’ **Roehampton**

‘The Watchers’ are the work of internationally acclaimed British sculptor Lynn Chadwick. They were erected in the grounds of Downshire House, now owned by Roehampton University, in 1963. The abstract bronze figures are fine examples of Chadwick’s work. In recognition of their importance, they were listed (grade II) in 1998.

Public art was commissioned for all to enjoy, adding colour to our local places and daily lives. But our great outdoor public art gallery is under threat. In 2006 one of the three figures from ‘The Watchers’ was stolen. It was sawn off at the legs and police estimate that it would have taken at least eight people to carry the artwork away. A decade after the crime, the sculpture featured in an exhibition about missing post-war public art curated by Historic England. To this day the original has not been found.

To restore ‘The Watchers’ to their former glory, Roehampton University asked relatives of the artist for permission to re-cast the stolen figure. In February 2016 the newly cast figure was reunited



with the original two, now restored, and once again they stand proudly in the grounds of the university. The grade II listed sculpture has been removed from the Heritage at Risk Register this year.

50th Anniversary of Conservation Areas

In 2017, Historic England will celebrate the 50th anniversary of conservation areas. These precious historic areas, from urban and industrial to rural and remote, create a strong sense of place and are likely to be what you think of when you think of special local character.

We’ll carry out research into people’s attitudes towards conservation areas and the challenges they

face in protecting them. We also plan to analyse local authorities’ conservation area survey data to better understand what puts conservation areas up and down the country at risk. Finally, at a time when local authority resources are under pressure, we’ll ask how local civic groups and organisations can become more involved to help safeguard conservation areas.

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