



Historic England

Highlights

Our work in the East of England in 2015–16





Historic England

Introducing Historic England

This is a new era for England's heritage, and I'm delighted to have joined Historic England as its first Chief Executive. I'm looking forward to meeting our partners, friends and champions across England. Public support and enthusiasm for the historic environment has never been greater. Its economic benefits and role in defining our national identity are more clearly acknowledged than ever before. But there are significant challenges.

Historic England is the public body for England's historic environment, and we have a unique role and opportunity as its champion and protector. We provide expert advice, help people protect and care for it and help the public to understand and enjoy it. These different aspects to our role are interdependent: the more people know about it and appreciate it the better it will be protected.

We're committed to working with you and our many other partners across the region to raise the profile of the historic environment; ensuring it makes the fullest possible contribution to communities, and enriches all our daily lives. Our local offices are usually the principal point of contact for people. Our local teams specialise in

assessment, processing grants, giving advice to owners, developers and local authorities, as well as designation, heritage data, government policy and communications.

Following are highlights of the work we will be doing in the East of England in the year ahead. We work in partnership wherever that helps us to achieve our aims, recognising that working together with sympathetic organisations and individuals we can always achieve more. Do stay in contact with my colleagues both locally and nationally. There are so many opportunities to get involved in our work, and you can find out about these by joining our mailing list, following or liking us on social media, and contacting our local teams.

With best wishes,

Duncan Wilson
Chief Executive

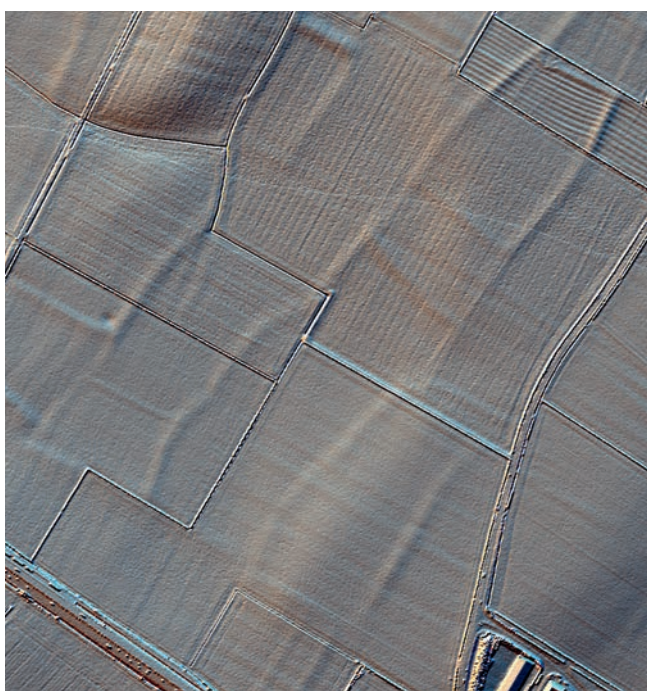


We understand historic places

We share our understanding of the significance of England's places. Using cutting-edge science, research, partnerships and information, we help people manage historic places both physically and economically.

Identifying New Archaeology

In a new type of project, we are integrating aerial mapping with other techniques of investigation to discover archaeological remains of all periods in an area south and west of Cambridge, stretching from the Fen edge to Therfield Heath. The National Archaeological Identification Survey (NAIS) project will show how remote sensing and survey can be used to inform protection and planning in a landscape under pressure from large-scale development and arable agriculture. Aerial mapping has already revealed intriguing results, such as a network of long linear banks of probable early medieval origin in the northern part of the survey area; these and other features will be investigated in subsequent stages of the project.



Earlier field boundaries are visible in LiDAR data of fields near Swavesey.
© Environment Agency 2014.

Pubs

Pubs are one of England's most-loved building types but are increasingly under threat of closure or conversion to other uses. A number of research projects will help increase understanding and protection for pubs by identifying especially threatened or significant ones. We are looking in particular at mid – and later 20th century – examples as these are vulnerable and rarely protected by listing.

We champion historic places

We champion historic places so that everyone, from individuals and communities to government and major landowners, can look after and care for heritage.

Future Secured for Stow Maries

Stow Maries is the largest and most complete surviving First World War aerodrome in Britain and is listed at Grade II*. Historic England has been working with the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome Trust, Maldon District Council and other partners to secure its future. The first Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement in England was agreed in 2014 to conserve the 24 buildings on site. We provided a £50,000 grant, which, with partnership funding from WREN (a landfill charity), will address 12 buildings at risk. The Trust has now appointed a firm of architects to begin works.

Heritage Watch in Essex

We are supporting the Heritage Watch scheme launched by Essex Police in April at Stow Maries First World War Aerodrome. The scheme is also supported by partners such as National Trust and follows the introduction of Heritage Watch in Hertfordshire in 2014. Local district schemes will be launched over the summer. Essex Heritage Watch is part of a wider strategy to prevent and investigate heritage and cultural property crime across the county. An example includes 'Operation Chronos' - devised by Essex Police, with our support to tackle unlawful metal detecting on farmland and protected archaeological sites.



Top: Stow Maries aerodrome. Bottom: A Heritage Watch warning sign.

Heritage Action Zones

Heritage Action Zones are areas where Historic England will bring all our different expertise together to work with local people in unlocking the potential of the historic environment. We will work with partners to establish the zones in areas of economic need.

Places of Worship

We will continue to work with partners to support congregations caring for historic places of worship. We will build on the success of support officers working locally to provide focussed help in sourcing funding and planning maintenance.

Wisbech Townscape Heritage Bid

Wisbech in Cambridgeshire is a former inland port with a wealth of highly graded Georgian buildings. It is one of our priority areas and we are working with Fenland District Council to help revitalise the area, following a successful £2 million Townscape Heritage bid. With over 400 listed buildings and two conservation areas, it is not only significant because of its architecture, but also because of the range of complex challenges it faces. We will also be updating some list entries to support the management of listed buildings.



Partnership Scheme for Cowgate, Peterborough

A partnership scheme between Historic England and Peterborough City Council has rejuvenated one of the principal approaches into the historic city, Cowgate which terminates in Cathedral Square. Changes in traffic movements had left the street struggling to find an identity. We have awarded a £125,000 grant which has supported the restoration of prominent buildings along the street. Shop vacancies have fallen from seven to one with empty upper floors brought back into use, creating a vibrant and active street at the heart of the city.

East of England Neighbourhood Planning

Over the last two years, the East of England office has been notified of 75 Neighbourhood Plans in preparation, five of which have now been successfully progressed through to referendum and adoption. Historic England seeks to provide constructive comments on all Plans with the intention of ensuring they include appropriate strategies to safeguard the area's historic environment. Where appropriate, additional support is offered, such as at Lavenham, a historic market town with a unique collection of highly graded medieval timber-framed buildings.



Left: High Street, Wisbech. Right: Cowgate, Peterborough. © Jim Daley.

We identify and protect

Advising on which historic assets need to be designated is at the very heart of what we do as expert advisor to the Government. Using our knowledge and understanding we celebrate what's special and make sure that England's history is recognised, respected and enjoyed.

The National Heritage List for England is a remarkable resource, available to everyone through our website. It covers all designated places from listed buildings to protected wrecks, scheduled monuments to registered battlefields, the Register of Parks and Gardens and World Heritage Sites.

We are working on a number of research and designation activities to identify and protect England's most important heritage including the following:

Post-War Public Sculpture

We will carry out an assessment of fixed sculptural artworks in public, civic, communal and commercial places across England with the aim of understanding the significance of public art in the period 1945-1985. A selection of the best examples will be identified and assessed for listing in order to deliver protection for this important – and sometimes threatened – aspect of modern culture.



Snape Maltings concert hall, Snape, Aldeburgh, Suffolk, with sculpture by Barbara Hepworth.

Enriching the List

This year, for the first time, we will enable members of the public to upload their own information to a new section of the List on our website. People will be able to share their knowledge of historic places they care about for everyone to use. The List has a million visitors a year, showing the immense appetite people have for finding out about historic places.

First World War

We are working in a new way with volunteers, led by partners Civic Voice and War Memorials Trust, to ensure that we deliver an ambitious programme of listing 2,500 war memorials during the centenary period.

Public Libraries

For over a century and a half public libraries have been at the heart of English life; they were and are places of learning, leisure, enlightenment and betterment, open to all. In recent years public library service provision in the United Kingdom has been undergoing radical change, particularly since severe cuts to local authority budgets in 2010. We will be assessing English public libraries for listing in two thematic projects: pre-1939 and post-war.



War Memorial at St Mary Magdalene's Church, Guyhirn, Cambridgeshire.

We support change

We want people to use and enjoy historic places in ways that reveal and reinforce their significance and safeguard their setting in a wider landscape. We find approaches to prevent heritage at risk and tackle it as a priority

Abbey Farm Barns, Thetford, Norfolk

The Abbey Farm development is on the site of a former works depot. It contains two buildings which, externally, appear to be early 19th century farm buildings, but which contain two medieval halls. Once part of Thetford Priory, they are listed at Grade I. The site is separated from the rest of the Priory ruins by modern housing and has been on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register since the depot closed in the 1990s. We have been in discussions over several years to agree a scheme to adapt the listed buildings for residential use and for the construction of new buildings, which is now taking place.

Farm Buildings

We will be running a series of events with the Country Landowners and Business Association and the National Farmers' Union about the conversion of redundant traditional farm buildings. The aim is to highlight appropriate and sensitive ways of converting unused but historic buildings in the countryside for a wide range of uses. We have Defra and DCLG endorsement for this approach of bringing Constructive Conservation to the rural environment.



Abbey Farm barns, Thetford.

Listed Building Owners

We are doing a survey of owners of listed buildings to find out what they think about owning a nationally important building. In this first comprehensive survey of its kind, we will find out more about owners and their needs, ensuring we will be better placed to respond to them in future.

Cambridge Station Gateway

Cambridge Station Gateway (also known as CB1) contains a large number of buildings of local interest but was badly in need of regeneration. We provided expert advice to developers to ensure the scheme involved the reuse of the special buildings which contribute to the area's character. This year will see the newly-converted Fosters Mill emerge from scaffolding and work is due to start on the square in front of the Grade II listed railway station. When complete, the scheme will provide a more welcoming point of entry for Cambridge and deliver high quality office space and residential housing.



Cambridge Station Gateway.

Finchingfield Guildhall Restoration

Built in the 15th Century, the Guildhall at Finchingfield, Braintree has been successfully conserved with the help of advice and grant aid from Historic England. A prominent feature of the village and conservation area, it had a complex history as a school, alms-houses, library and museum. Since removal from the Heritage at Risk register in 2013, it has won a number of architectural awards and was a runner up at the Angel Awards in October 2014. The Guildhall is an exemplar of the combination of sympathetic repair, significant but justified alteration and creative design.



Historic environment snapshot












In the East of England, there are:

	57,702	Listed buildings
	1,734	Scheduled Monuments
	1,210	Conservation Areas
	211	Registered Parks and Gardens
	1	Registered Battlefield
	0	World Heritage Sites
	1	Protected Wrecks



Friston Post Mill, East Suffolk, the tallest surviving post mill ever built in Britain, Grade II*.

Heritage at Risk in the East of England

	National average of assets on the Register	Sites on the 2014 East of England Register	Since the baseline Register
	4% (of grade I and II*)	2.8% (95 Buildings and structures)	59.3% (64) entries removed (since 1999)
	6%	4.9% (115 Places of Worship)	
	15.2%	4.9% (207 Scheduled Monuments)	29.1% (59) entries removed (since 2009)
	5.7%	2.8% (6 Registered Parks and Gardens)	
	13%	No Registered Battlefields	
	8.2%	No Protected Wrecks	
	6.1%	4.4% (39 Conservation Areas)	
		23 Industrial sites	
	Funding	£1,700,000	in grant was spent on 21 entries on the East of England Heritage at Risk Register during 2013/14.

Threats to agricultural sites:



Damage from arable cultivation is the greatest risk, affecting 43% of archaeological entries on the national Register and 74% of those in the East of England.

Risk assessments of heritage assets are based on the nature of the site. Buildings and structures include listed buildings (excluding listed places of worship) and structural scheduled monuments; archaeology assessments cover earthworks and buried archaeology.

Data collected as part of Heritage Counts 2014
– asset data correct as of April 2014, Heritage at Risk data August 2014.
Map shows revised Historic England Localities.



Historic England

National expertise, locally delivered

Our local office is the principal point of contact for many customers. Our staff specialise in assessment, processing grants, giving advice to owners, developers and local authorities, as well as designation, heritage data, government policy and communications.

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Historic England

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Visit the Historic England Archive:
HistoricEngland.org.uk/archive

We make available information about every listed building, scheduled monument, protected wreck, registered park, garden and battlefield in England through the National Heritage List for England:
HistoricEngland.org.uk/list



Above: The official opening of the Langham Dome, Norfolk, which was removed from the Heritage at Risk register in 2014.
Front cover: Finchingfield Guildhall, Essex. All images © Historic England unless otherwise stated.