



Historic England

# Highlights

Our work in the South West in 2015–16





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# 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 South West 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.

## Vale of Pewsey

In partnership with Reading University, we will undertake research in the Vale of Pewsey focussing on the remarkable Marden Henge. Bigger than Avebury, ten times the size of Stonehenge and half way between the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Sites, there is comparatively little known about this ancient landscape. The work will examine the henge itself and the important sites in the landscape threatened by ploughing. We'll focus on identifying sites for protection and improved management and add a new dimension to our understanding of the area.

## Mendip Hills

Richly illustrated with photographs, maps, detailed plans and reconstruction drawings, the new publication *The Historic Landscape of the Mendip Hills* explores the archaeology and architecture of this remarkable corner of England. From the enigmatic ceremonial structures of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, to the ancient farming landscapes and brooding hillforts of the later prehistoric period, this volume presents a synthesis of the results of recent fieldwork undertaken by Historic England and traces this region's remarkable past, revealing ways in which it has shaped the landscape we see and value today.



Excavations of the late neolithic Marden Henge or Hatfield Enclosure in the Vale of Pewsey, Wiltshire.



# The Blackdown Hills and East Devon River Catchments Project

The National Mapping Programme methodology is an effective way of discovering unknown sites and increasing understanding of archaeological landscapes. In Devon, the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is poorly understood, but is particularly sensitive to change. We are supporting a bid from AC Archaeology and Devon County Council for a mapping project using techniques tailored to this landscape of enclosed fields and woodland. The project will inform heritage input to initiatives aimed at improving water quality and supporting biodiversity. The likely start date is late 2015.

## 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.



Despite a few striking scheduled monuments such as Dumpdon Camp Iron Age hillfort above, the archaeology of the Blackdown Hills is poorly understood.



# We support change

We help people to enjoy and make use of their heritage in ways that safeguard and enhance its significance through an approach that we call **Constructive Conservation**.

## Stonehenge

We provide advice on applications for planning and listed building consent in historic places including major infrastructure projects. At the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, we are working closely with National Trust to advise the Department for Transport and Highways England on the proposed improvement of the A303 trunk road. Our proactive and constructive engagement last year on a Feasibility Study led to the Government's announcement in December 2014 that it would invest in a bored tunnel of at least 2.9km in length for the A303 at Stonehenge. This is an exceptional result and if built will represent one of the largest single investments in our heritage. It will remove the highly intrusive A303 which runs close to Stonehenge and will reunite this unparalleled World

Heritage landscape. As the project progresses we will continue our strategic engagement with the scheme, using the principles of constructive conservation to secure the enormous benefits the road improvement will bring to Stonehenge and the local economy whilst removing a major traffic congestion hotspot.

Recent research by Historic England's landscape archaeologists within the World Heritage Site has led to the identification of previously unknown sites and, perhaps even more importantly, the re-interpretation of known sites, including Stonehenge itself. Our new book *The Stonehenge Landscape: Analysing the Stonehenge World Heritage Site* traces human influence on the landscape from prehistoric times to the very recent past and presents an up-to-date synthesis of the results of recent fieldwork.



The A303 at Stonehenge. A new tunnel will protect and enhance the special qualities of the World Heritage Site.

## Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement for Dorset Bridges

We have been supporting Dorset County Council in preparing the South West's first Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement (LBHPA) to manage on-going maintenance and standard repairs to the many historic bridges in its ownership. Over 170 bridges in the county are listed and an LBHPA means a long-term programme of works to repair the bridges can take place without the need for repetitive applications for Listed Building Consent. We look forward to the LBHPA being signed later this year.

## Bristol Old Vic

Grade I Bristol Old Vic is one of the South West's major cultural attractions. Since 2013, we've been providing expert advice on a £12m refurbishment project which will help it adapt its front of house to meet 21st century needs. The Old Vic comprises three historic buildings including the original auditorium of the 1760s, which is one of England's finest surviving Georgian theatres. When faced with closure in the 1940s, the Old Vic Theatre Company was formed and in the 1960s noted architect Peter Moro was engaged to modernise the site. While the current proposals involve the loss of much of Peter Moro's modern section of the building, our constructive approach and partnership working has helped ensure the highest quality replacement scheme.



Architect's impression of the new Bristol Old Vic. © Haworth Tompkins.

## Listed Building Owners

We are surveying 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 are better placed to respond to them in future.

## Farm Buildings

We will be running a series of events with the CLA 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.

## Perran Foundry, Cornwall

We will continue to provide advice and support for the regeneration of the former Perran Iron Foundry in Cornwall to provide new housing. At its height, the foundry was a principal supplier of parts and machinery for the Cornish and global mining industry, and employed over 400 people. A scheme for the conversion of the whole site which reflects our constructive conservation approach was granted in 2008 and is being successfully implemented in a phased manner (see page 10).

# 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:

## 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. Recently listed war memorials include Gotherington War Memorial in Tewkesbury Gloucestershire and Kenton War Memorial in Devon.

## 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.

## 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.



# We champion historic places

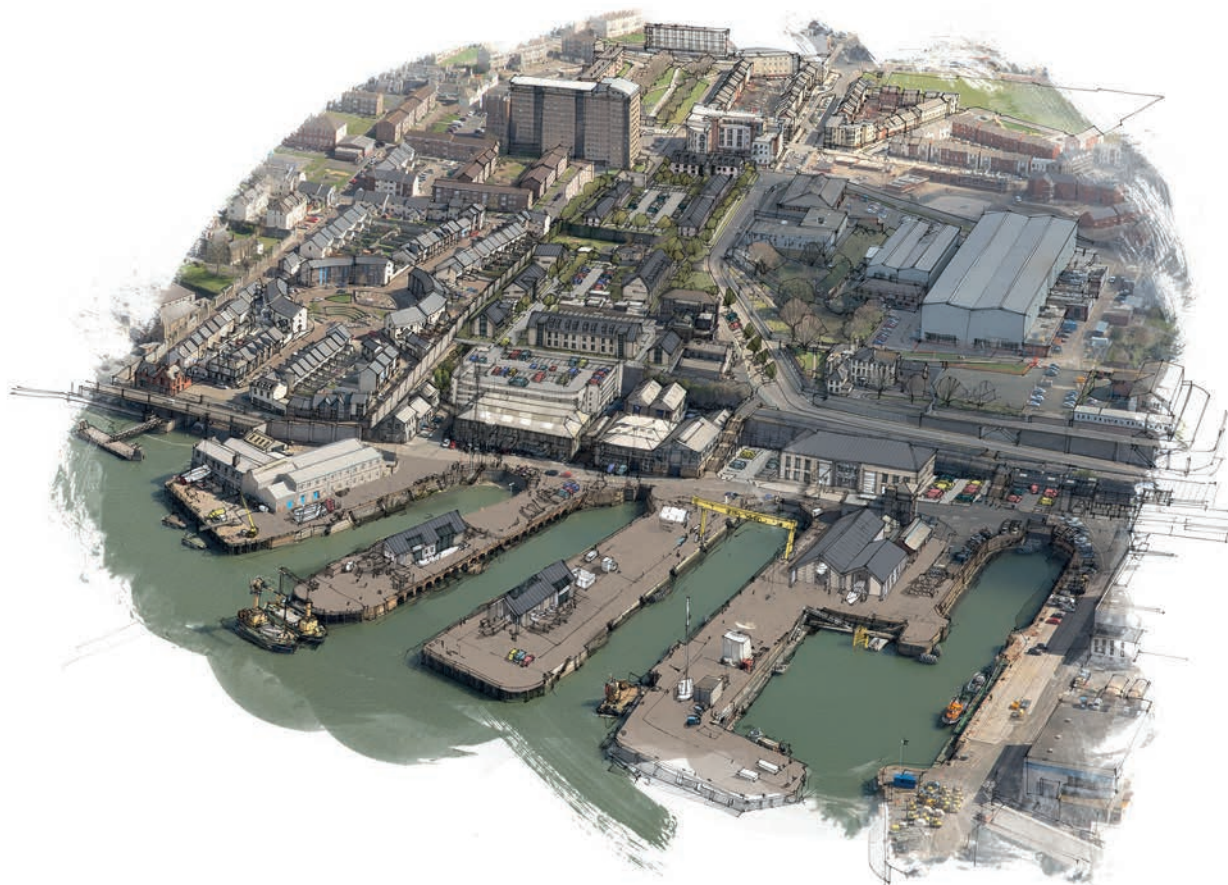
We champion historic places so that everyone, from individuals and communities to government and major landowners, can look after and care for heritage.

## South Yard, Devonport, Plymouth

We are working with Plymouth City Council and the Ministry of Defence on development proposals for South Yard in the Devonport Naval Base. Recently designated as an Enterprise Zone, the 7.5 hectare site will become a marine industries campus attracting £110 million of public and private investment. The scheme embraces the distinctive character of the 17th century naval base and will provide 32,400sq m of high tech and manufacturing space and create up to 1,100 new jobs.

## Heritage Crime

In a bid to tackle heritage crime in Somerset, Historic England and Avon and Somerset Police held a seminar in Taunton earlier this year, attended by police, the Southwest Heritage Trust, Somerset County Council and Finds Liaison Officers from the portable antiquities scheme. The one-day event raised awareness and understanding of the threat and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour on Somerset's rich and diverse range of historic buildings and archaeological sites. We plan to offer more workshops in the South West to raise awareness of rural and heritage crime this year.



We're advising on the master-planning of South Yard, Devonport, Plymouth. © LHC Architecture + Urbanism.



## 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.

## Weston-super-Mare

We are also offering our extensive experience of involvement in historic town centre regeneration around the country to advise North Somerset Council on the positive role which the town's distinctive heritage could play in its regeneration. The aim is to secure the removal of three conservation areas and Grade II\* Birnbeck Pier from our Heritage at Risk register.



Birnbeck Pier, Weston-super-Mare.

## Bridport Literary and Scientific Institute, Dorset

A two-year major repair project is beginning which will breathe new life into Grade II\* Bridport Literary & Scientific Institute, which has been on our Heritage at Risk register since 2003. We have offered a grant of £300k for repair and conservation, part of a £1.7 million project which will completely restore the building and improve its facilities. The aim is to return the Institute to community use and provide much-needed exhibition space for Bridport's nationally-important rope and net industry. We are delighted that the Bridport Area Development Trust has gained the freehold for the building and we will continue to work with them and West Dorset District Council to secure the Institute's future.

## St Giles, Wimborne St Giles

This year will be a landmark one for St Giles, a country house, garden and park near Wimborne in Dorset. A major conservation programme, on which we've provided extensive research input, advice, support, grant aid and expertise for a number of years, is now nearing completion. Exemplary conservation work and craftsmanship has not only restored the Grade I listed house to a family home, but protected the economic future of St Giles as a visitor attraction, film and TV location and wedding venue. The Grade II\* park and garden has benefitted from a grant from Natural England and an 18th century shell grotto, one of the most rare and significant in the country, has also been conserved.

## 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.



## Historic environment snapshot



In South West, there are:



89,676 Listed buildings



7,010 Scheduled Monuments



1,509 Conservation Areas



297 Registered Parks and Gardens



10 Registered Battlefields



4 World Heritage Sites












24 Protected Wrecks



Part of the recently completed housing conversion at Perran Foundry (see page 6). Courtesy of Heather & Lay. © Anthony Greenwood.

# Heritage at Risk in the South West

	National average of assets on the Register	Sites on the 2014 South West Register
	4%	3% (158 Buildings and structures)
	6%	5.6% (163 Places of Worship)
	15.2%	18.8% (1,317 Scheduled Monuments)
	5.7%	5.4% (16 Registered Parks and Gardens)
	13%	1 Registered Battlefield
	8.2%	No Protected Wrecks
	6.1%	4% (47 Conservation Areas)
		64 Industrial sites
	Funding	<b>£1,200,000</b> in grant was spent on 74 entries on the South West 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 36% of those in the South West.



33% of entries on the South West Register are at risk from unrestricted plant, scrub and tree growth, which is higher than the national figure of 26%.

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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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](http://HistoricEngland.org.uk/list)



**Above:** The Pavilions (1975-8), Bedminster Down, was listed Grade II through our study of later 20th century office buildings. **Front cover:** The “Stairway to Devon”, Royal William Yard, Plymouth. Courtesy of Gillespie Yunnice Architects. © Richard Downer. All images © Historic England unless otherwise stated.