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The Tenth report on Local Authority Staff Resources

Produced by Historic England, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation
October 2018

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Figures collected in early 2018¹ show that there were 798.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) historic environment specialists providing advice to local authorities in England. This comprises:
- 533.4 FTEs working on building and area conservation; and
 - 264.7 FTEs providing archaeological advice.
- 1.2 In the past 12 months:
- the number of conservation specialists has increased by 3% (15.7 FTE); and
 - the number of archaeological specialists advising local authorities in England has increased by 1% (1.9 FTE).
- 1.3 Since 2006:
- the number of conservation specialists has fallen by 35% (283.4FTE); and
 - the number of archaeological specialists advising local authorities in England has fallen by 35% (142.5 FTE).
- 1.4 In the last 12 months, the number of planning application decisions and Listed Building Consent decisions (both indicators of workload) decreased by 1.8% and 4.8% respectively (*table 1*).

¹ IHBC data gathered between January and March 2018; ALGAO data gathered April 2018

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This report compares the levels of historic environment staff resources in local authorities in the early months of 2018 with those available since 2003 but collected consistently since 2006.
- 2.2 This report has been produced by Historic England in partnership with the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO), the forum representing archaeologists working for local authorities and national parks and advising on all aspects of the historic environment; and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC), the professional body for building conservation practitioners and historic environment experts, many of whom work in local government.
- 2.3 The data collected for this report is not limited to those FTEs directly employed by a local authority, but reflects the advice provided via the increasing variety of emerging models of service, for example shared services, Service Level Agreements, Trusts and contractors.
- 2.4 This report updates the position recorded in its predecessor report (published in September 2017) on the changes in levels of expert staffing resources in local authorities and includes data available on the numbers of planning application decisions. The source of that data is the Department for Communities and Local Government <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics> and it covers the 2017/18 financial year.

3 Local authority specialist provision

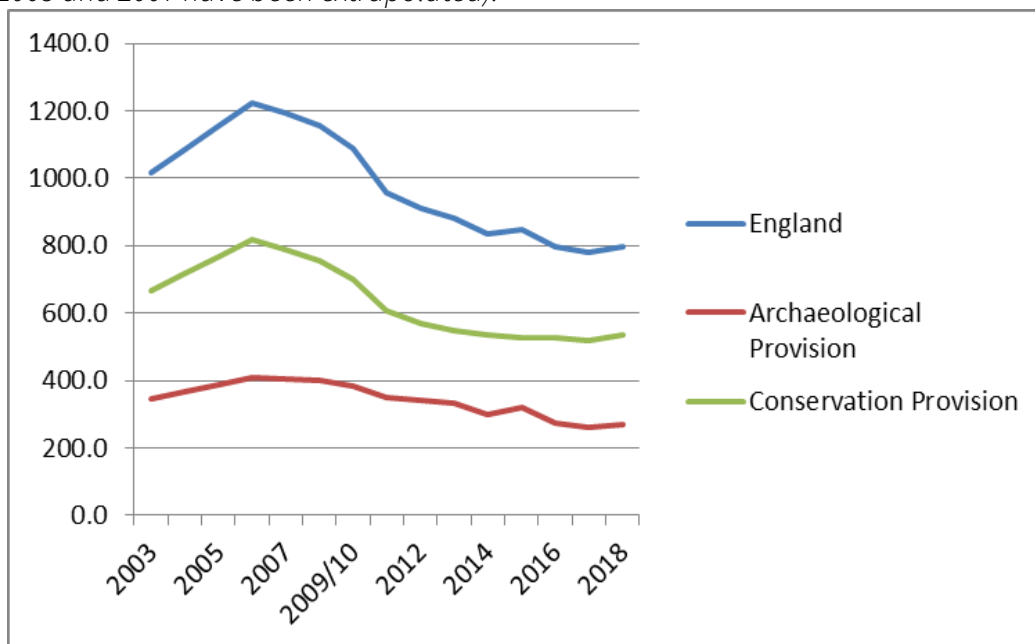
- 3.1 In early 2018 there were 798.1 FTE historic environment specialists providing expert advice to local authorities in England. This was made up of 533.4 providing advice on building and area conservation and 264.7 providing archaeological advice².
- 3.2 These figures are for permanent, temporary, and consultancy full- and part-time staff (shown as FTE). The posts are those for which a related historic environment professional or academic qualification is required and for other staff, not qualified, who are engaged on equivalent work. Administrative staff are not included. Time spent directly managing staff is counted, as it has a direct consequence for the management of the historic environment. The management time of the head of a historic environment team is therefore included, whereas that of the head of a group which includes the historic environment team is not.
- 3.3 The data was collected by ALGAO and IHBC. ALGAO has been collecting figures on local government archaeological staff resources on an annual basis since 1998; IHBC

² Figures rounded to one decimal place

has also produced consistent figures in 2006, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 with broadly equivalent figures available from the Local Authority Conservation Provision Survey of 2003. Although there is more data for the archaeological resource, this report looks at the years for which both archaeological and building conservation data is available. These are 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009/10, and then annually from 2011 to 2018.

- 3.4 The data shows a small increase in the specialist archaeological and conservation advice being provided to local authorities. Over the last year the number of specialist providing archaeological advice increased by 1.9 FTE and the number of conservation specialists providing advice has increased by 15.7 FTE (*figure 1*).

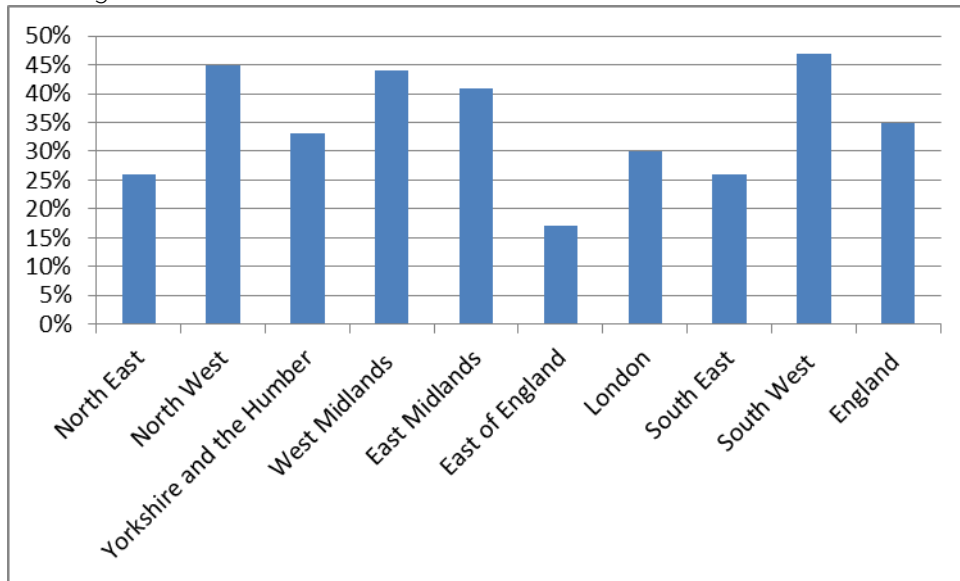
Figure 1, conservation, archaeological and total specialist advice expressed as FTEs (figures for 2004, 2005 and 2007 have been extrapolated).



4 Regional breakdown

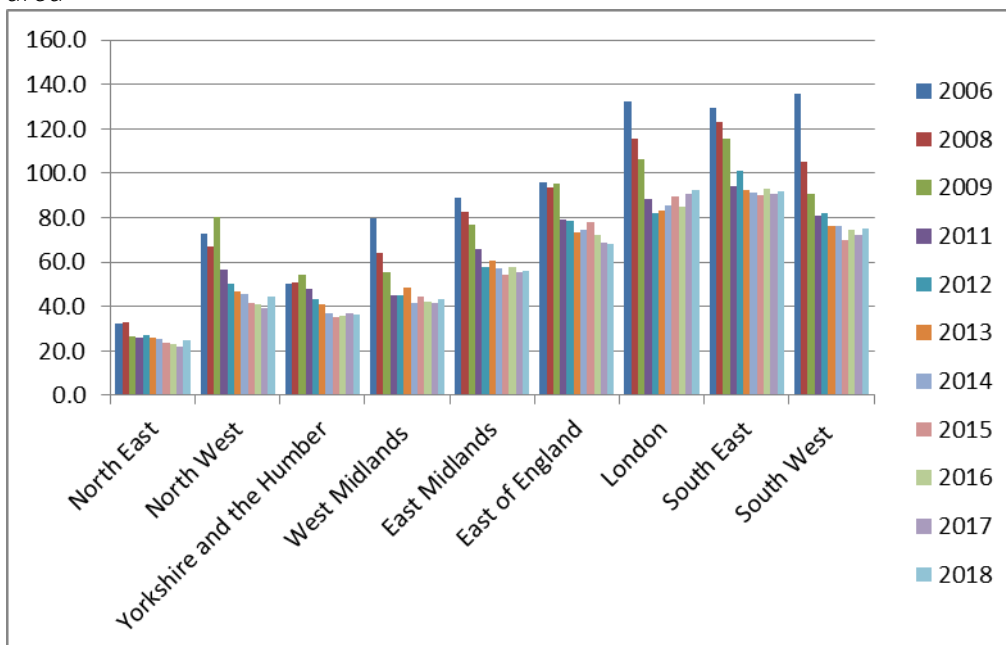
- 4.1 The regional breakdown of the data highlights a significant variation. It is clear that the impact of budgetary cuts and how authorities have responded to them has varied from place to place.
- 4.2 *Figure 2* shows the percentage decrease in specialist historic environment advisors since 2006 for each of the Historic England local office areas. This serves to highlight the variation with numbers falling by nearly 50% in the South West, compared to 17% (which is still significant) in the East of England.

Figure 2, all specialist advisers, combining conservation and archaeological FTE, percentage fall since 2006.



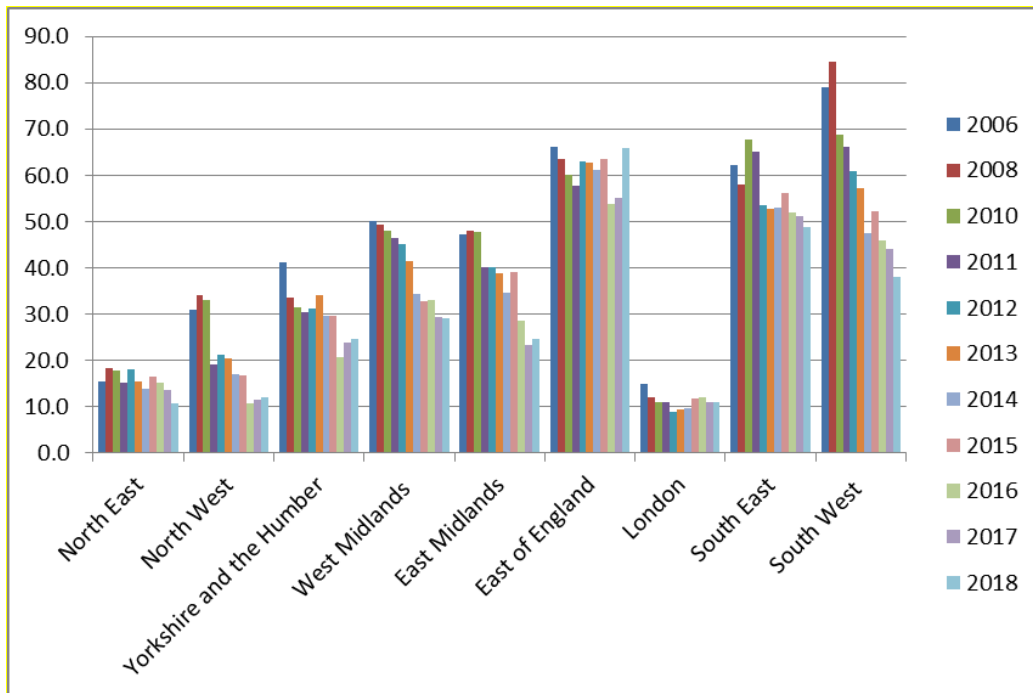
4.3 Figure 3 shows the variation of cuts to expert conservation advisers across the different Historic England local office areas. For example, the North East saw a 15% increase in FTEs over the last year, whilst Yorkshire and Humber witnessed a decrease of 2% over the same period.

Figure 3, total FTE conservation advisers broken down by Historic England local office area



4.4 The picture for archaeological provision is even more variable than that for conservation (this is likely to be because of the higher proportion of temporary, project based, staff captured by the data). The East of England saw a rise of 20% over the last year, which the South West saw a decrease of 13%.

Figure 4, total FTE archaeological advisors broken down by Historic England local office area



5 Planning data 2016/17

- 5.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)³ planning data shows that the number of planning application decisions and Listed Building Consent application decisions have both fallen since 2017.

Table 1, Planning and LBC decisions 2016/17 and 2017/18

	2016/17	2017/18	% change
Planning Application decisions	439,612	431,480	-1.8%
Listed Building Consents decisions	31,285	29,788	-4.8%

Figure 5 shows an overall decline between 2003/4 and 2009/10 followed by a relative plateau with small fluctuations year on year.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>

Figure 5, number of planning decisions

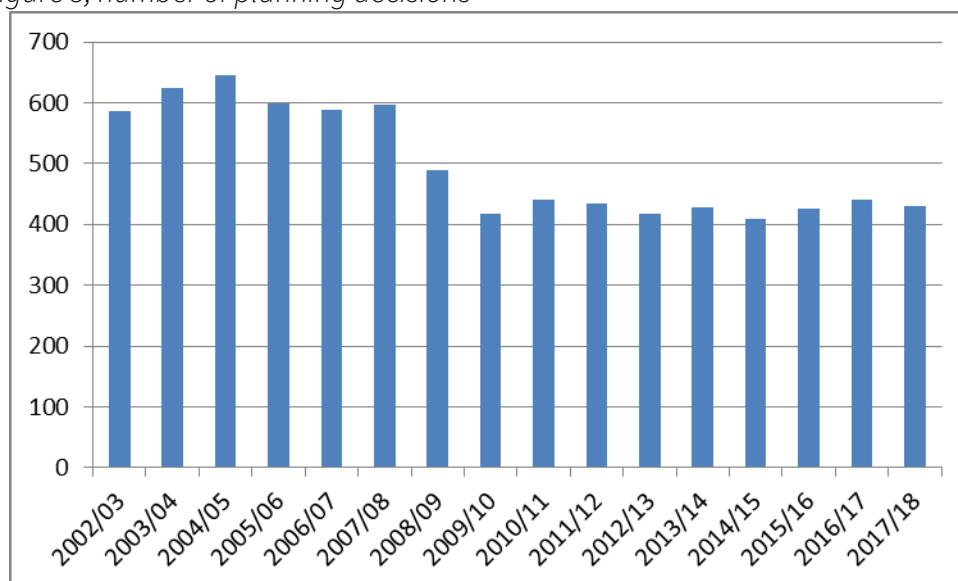
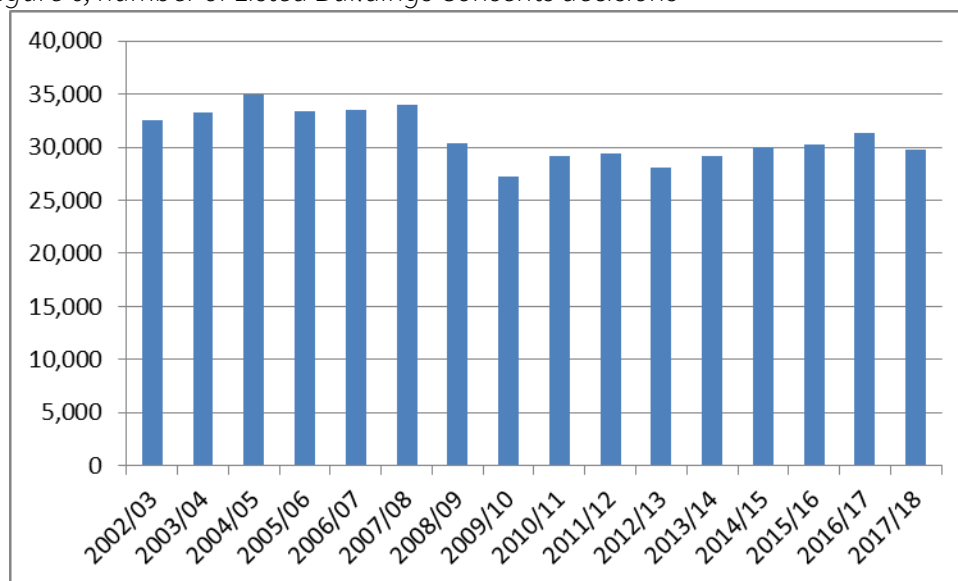


Figure 6 shows the number of listed building consent decisions between 2003/04 and 2016/17. There was a discernible fall between 2003/04 and 2009/10 and a gradual overall increase over the period 2009/10 to 2016/17, prior to the more recent fall.

Figure 6, number of Listed Buildings Consents decisions



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