

HERITAGE COUNTS

SUMMARY



Heritage Counts 2009 is the eighth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. This year, *Heritage Counts* launches an exciting piece of research which conclusively demonstrates that the historic environment has a positive relationship to people's thoughts and feelings about where they live, or in other words their sense of place. As in previous years, *Heritage Counts* reports on the issues facing the sector in 2009 and summarises the key changes in the historic environment. Regular readers of *Heritage Counts* will note a change in format this year. The full indicator set is now only available online along with regional summary reports which provide further details of the state of the historic environment in each of the nine government office regions. Please see www.english-heritage.org.uk/heritagecounts for the complete suite of *Heritage Counts* reports.



Learning at Dover Castle
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Training Craft Skills



Hatfield House



Wells

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE

In recent years 'place' has emerged as a core concept in Government policy. In 2009, English Heritage commissioned research to explore the role of the historic environment in creating a stronger sense of place. This produced the first robust evidence demonstrating a strong link between the historic environment and a stronger sense of place. Key findings include:

- ▶ The historic environment has a positive and significant relationship to sense of place.
- ▶ Adults who live in areas with higher concentrations of historic environment are likely to have a stronger sense of place ■.
- ▶ Adults who are *more interested* in the historic environment are more likely to have a stronger sense of place ■.
- ▶ Adults and young people who cite a local building or monument as special are likely to have a stronger sense of place ■.

POLICY DEVELOPMENTS 2009

A major milestone in Heritage Protection Reform (HPR) was reached with the launch of the consultation draft of the Government's *Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment*. This updates and for the first time unites the planning policy affecting archaeology, historic areas, buildings and landscapes into a single document. Once finalised, it will replace the current Planning Policy Guidance notes 15 and 16. At the time of publication of *Heritage Counts*, the consultation was drawing to a close.

In May 2009, the Government published *World class places – the Government's strategy for improving quality of place* (May 2009). The report acknowledges that the built environment plays a vital role in creating places where people want to live and communities thrive. It is recognised as influencing crime levels, health, education, social inclusion, community cohesion and well-being. The historic environment was identified as one of the four factors which influence quality of place and is

particularly important in developing a sense of place, identity and making somewhere a better place to live.

During the 2008/09 financial year, visitor figures at many historic environment sites were slightly down on 2007/08, and there were some concerns that the economic situation would have a continued negative impact on visitor numbers. However, figures for the first half of 2009/10 are encouraging with visitor figures at many sites the highest they have been since 2001/02. This increase is in part due to the larger number of British people taking holidays at home, particularly weekend breaks and day trips. Some concerns nevertheless remain. The number of overseas visitors to England was down 12% in the first five months of 2009 compared to the same period last year and there are early indications that the growth in visitor numbers to historic environment sites is slowing. In addition, while some properties have seen earned income increase, others have had declines in earned revenue.

More than
44 million
people
visited historic sites
in 2008

More
than half
of people in England
consider that they
live in a historic area

In 2008 there
were over
1.6 million
educational
visits
to historic sites

Over **90%**
of adults
think that historic
features are worth
saving when trying to
improve local places

KEY FACTS 2009

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSETS

World Heritage Sites In 2009 the Pontcysyllte aqueduct and canal was designated a World Heritage Site, taking the total number in England to 18. The majority of the site is in Wales with a part in the West Midlands.

Listed Buildings The total number of listed buildings in England has increased by 0.9% between 2002 and 2009 to 373,892. The largest increase has been in Grade II*, where there was a 1.4% increase over this time period.

Scheduled Monuments In 2009 there were 19,271 scheduled monuments in England. There has been a 1.9% increase in the number of scheduled monuments between 2002 and 2009.

Registered Parks and Gardens Five registered parks and gardens were added to the English register in 2009 taking the total in England to 1,600. The number of registered parks and gardens increased by 7.3% between 2002 and 2009.

CARING AND SHARING

Listed buildings at Risk In 2009, 969 Grade I* and II* buildings (3.1% of all listed buildings of this type) were classified as at risk. The proportion of Grade I and II* buildings at risk has declined from 3.8% in 1999.

Listed Building Consents There were 30,400 listed buildings consent decisions in 2008/09, down 7% on 2002/03 and 10% on 2007/08. Listed building consents are now below 2002/03 levels.

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) In 2008/09 the value of awards made by HLF was £160.8 million. In real terms, this is a 43% fall on the value of awards made in the previous year, and a 58% decrease on the value of awards made in 2002/03. There are a number of factors which have led to the reduction in funding in 2008/09, these are discussed in the full report. £180 million in grants per annum will be made available up to 2013.

English Heritage expenditure and income In 2009, English Heritage grant-in-aid was £132.7 million, a 2.6% increase on the previous year and 15% more than 2002/03 (non-adjusted).

USING AND BENEFITING

Participation in the Historic Environment 56.9% of all adults visited at least two historic environment sites in the 12 months to April 2009 ². In 2008 there were more than 44.3 million visits to historic environment sites.

Heritage Open Days In 2008 there were 3,717 events and activities during Heritage Open Days. This is a 6% increase on the previous year and a 71% increase on the number in 2002. The number of events and activities has increased fairly steadily over the period.

Volunteering in the historic environment

It is estimated that every year around 427,000 adults regularly volunteer in the historic environment. This represents 1.1% of the adult population ³.

Educational visits to the historic environment In 2008, there were at least 1.6 million educational visits to historic environment sites in England. The total figure is likely to be much higher as this only includes data from sites which replied to the *Visit Britain visitors to visitor attractions survey*.

Well-being and quality of life attitudes to the historic environment

The proportion of adults who agreed with the statement that "when trying to improve local places, it's worth saving their historic features" was 92.6% ⁴.

¹ When other relevant factors are held equal.

² Taking Part 2008-2009.

³ Taking Part 2005-2008.

⁴ Taking Part 2007-2008.

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