

HERITAGE COUNTS 2011

EAST OF ENGLAND

Heritage Counts 2011 is the tenth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. It is prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the East of England's Historic Environment Forum. This year the theme for Heritage Counts is the role of the historic environment in strengthening civil society. Visitors to the Heritage Counts website can download the complete research projects commissioned to support this year's report and access the full set of local statistics and maps detailing the historic environment for the East of England, including asset data, funding information, employment numbers and visitor figures.
www.heritagecounts.org.uk

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND BIG SOCIETY

New research shows that the historic environment can provide the context and means for people to get involved in their local areas. Heritage groups are an important source for community input into shaping areas, with 85% of civic societies responding to planning applications. They also provide opportunities for people to take part in their community, with 50% of The Heritage Alliance members offering volunteering opportunities. To encourage more people to play a part in their local heritage, Heritage Counts presents a checklist which local heritage groups can use to widen and strengthen community involvement in their projects and groups. Please see the national Heritage Counts report for more detail.
www.heritagecounts.org.uk

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND BIG SOCIETY: EAST OF ENGLAND

Few, if any, parts of East Anglia remain untouched by man. The patchwork of buildings and landscapes document both our past and the inevitability of change. Our duty is to hand on the baton knowing that 'not on our watch' was damage done. Volunteers play a huge part in making this a reality.

The National Trust has over 5,000 volunteers in the region and English Heritage is developing volunteering in East Anglia, starting with Wrest Park and Audley End House. At a local level, the Campaign to Protect Rural England (Hertfordshire) schools project educated young people about the countryside, and Bury St Edmunds Town Trust saved 6 Angel Hill, a grade II* former house.

THE ROLE OF HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS

At Oxburgh Hall in Norfolk, a team of 30 volunteers have replaced an unsafe 1960s greenhouse with one inspired by the Victorian original. The skills of existing volunteers, including carpentry, bricklaying, glazing, welding and architecture, and support from local businesses saved the National Trust £130,000. The glasshouse means the Trust will be able to grow the 7,000 plants required for the gardens each year, saving a further £800 per year.



To the Potting Shed! Strawberry plants in the Kitchen Garden Vinehouse at Audley End House, one of the many English Heritage properties which offer volunteer opportunities.
© English Heritage

HELPING TO SHAPE LOCAL AREAS

Peterborough Civic Society and City Council are working together to revise the list of Buildings of Local Importance for the district. The list aims to safeguard important buildings through the Council's local development plans. The Civic Society realised that its members had the professional skills and experience to help the Council do such a labour-intensive piece of work, preventing it becoming a low priority. Local groups can also carry out street clutter audits¹ to improve the local environment, or character assessments² to support a Conservation Area application or a Neighbourhood Plan.

HERITAGE COUNTS: INDICATOR DATA

www.heritagecounts.org.uk provides a comprehensive set of statistics on the historic environment in the East of England. The key changes for 2010/11 are highlighted below.

PLANNING DATA

2010/11 has seen an increase in planning applications on 2009/10. There were 53,984 applications, up 7% on 2009/10's 50,343. This is still though well below the 2004/05 peak of 77,400. It remains to be seen whether this is the beginning of an upward trend. Listed building consents have increased by 7% between 2009/10 and 2010/11, growing to 3,937 in 2010/11. Between the peak year of 2004/05 and 2010/11, listed building consents dropped 14% in comparison with planning applications which fell by 27%. This seems to indicate that listed building consents are less affected by the economic context than overall planning applications.

¹www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/docs/sosaudit.pdf

²www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decP/CharacterAppraisalToolkit.htm

Conservation area consents are up 10% on 2009/10 to 449 in 2010/11. Since Heritage Counts started collecting this data in 2002/03, there has been no discernable trend. Applications relating to Parks and Gardens have increased 22% from 90 in 2009/10 to 110 in 2010/11. As with conservation area consents there has been no clear trend over time.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT STAFF

106 full time equivalent staff (FTE) worked in East of England in 2011; this is down 2% from 2003 and 12% on 2009/10 when there were 136 FTE.

VISITOR NUMBERS TO HERITAGE SITES

The National Trust and English Heritage staffed sites in East Anglia have seen a steady rise in visitor numbers and membership. Between 2009/10 and 2010/11 English Heritage visitor numbers were up 4% and membership 9%, with the National Trust up 6% and 4% respectively. Whilst these figures are healthy, the data, along with that of the Historic Houses Association, suggests that sites cannot be complacent in this difficult trading period.

KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT LOCAL MANAGEMENT

With the increase in all types of planning consents and the reductions in council staff numbers documented in Heritage Counts, it is important to recognise that the main historic environment planning work is done by local authorities. It is essential that local authorities have experienced staff available to meet their statutory duties, planning policy statements and the emerging national Planning Policy Framework. East Anglia is blessed with significant numbers of listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and conservation areas which give the area its attractiveness and popularity. The historic environment is not a barrier to future growth and prosperity. Change managed sensitively benefits everyone who lives and works in an area and encourages civic pride.

Councils are facing difficult choices and are asking challenging questions about services. That is why English Heritage joined with Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF), Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Prince's Regeneration



New Heritage. The Willis-Faber Building in Ipswich by Foster & Partners. It was the first building of the 1970s to be listed. © English Heritage

Trust, National Trust, and Asset Transfer Unit to produce *Pillars of the Community: the transfer of local authority heritage assets*. Building on the sector's successful record with historic buildings and volunteering it gives practical advice to councils thinking of disposing of a historic building to focus on community uses.

The Historic Environment Local Authority Capacity project (HELAC) is English Heritage working in partnership with the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, the Institute of Historic Building Conservation, the Planning Officer Society, and the Local Government Group, to support change in local government. Pilot projects with different ways of providing historic environment services in a challenging financial environment will be sharing their experiences with other councils. In East Anglia, HELAC is assisting Essex County Council which is integrating historic environment, design and natural environment services in a new delivery model.

GIVING AND FUNDRAISING

Philanthropy is not new to the sector. The work of volunteers across East Anglia has been keeping places of worship in good repair, rescuing buildings, and caring for the places where they live. The government's Giving White Paper highlights a number of new ideas for increasing philanthropy and volunteering and case studies, such as:

Round Pound schemes where retailers can invite customers to round their bills up to the nearest pound with the money going to specific good causes.

The national Do-it volunteer database matching volunteers with volunteering opportunities.

The Do Some Good phone application which lets people contribute on the move as 'eyes and ears' for a cause.

The Slivers of Time system which allows local people and resources to be offered and booked for specific times.

The One Day Challenge which encourages organisations and businesses to get staff to volunteer one day per year.

While it may still be tough financially, there always are opportunities to get projects started, especially through the use of mixed funding models. The HLF is contributing to the Catalyst initiative which will provide from £500,000 upwards to larger heritage organisations to match-fund private donations. Smaller institutions will benefit from another fund to help them fundraise and encourage giving. English Heritage has match-funded a £1 million contribution from the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation over five years to create a Challenge Fund for Buildings at Risk in England, managed by the AHF. The fund is open to registered charities seeking to help inactive or new building preservation trusts to tackle grade I and II* buildings at risk on English Heritage's Heritage at Risk Register.

CREDITS

Heritage Counts 2011 is produced by English Heritage on behalf of the East of England Historic Environment Forum:

Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Civic Voice, English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Houses Association, Institute for Historic Building Conservation, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (East of England), National Trust

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