

HERITAGE COUNTS 2011

SOUTH WEST

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 South West 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 South West, 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

SOUTH WEST BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUSTS

Building preservation trusts (BPTs) are driven by local communities for local communities and breathe new life into old buildings. They act as catalysts to social and economic regeneration and provide exemplars of best practice in design and conservation work.

This winter, the first ever survey of BPTs in the South West will be published. The research was commissioned by English Heritage and the UK Association of Preservation Trusts to better understand the scope and capacity of the region's BPTs, to assess their future role in tackling heritage at risk, and to identify follow-on pilot initiatives around community asset transfer and housing association projects.

Perhaps not surprisingly in a region where volunteering and civic participation is strong, the initial findings indicate that the region's BPTs are relatively healthy. They have rescued over 100 buildings in recent years and there are 42 projects currently under way (half tackling heritage at risk). New trusts continue to be set up, reserves are in some cases healthy and over two-thirds of BPTs report that they are supported and encouraged by their local authority.

However, the research has identified areas which may need to be addressed

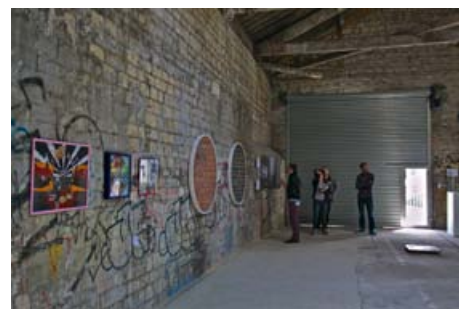
to adjust to significant change in the BPT operating environment. Dependence on public sector funding for major projects is a significant issue; two of the BPTs' main funders, local authorities and English Heritage, expect grant levels to diminish in the next few years. Levels of sponsorship and local fundraising are relatively low, and may need to be developed in the near future. The study also reveals that the support of local authority conservation staff is vitally important to the success of BPT projects. Numbers of specialist staff are falling faster than the national rate in the South West (see overleaf), another significant change for BPTs to adapt to.

A third of South West BPTs feel that their capacity is strong, possibly due to Trustees' wide range of skills: almost 80% have Trustees with business management, fundraising and project management skills; just over half have Trustees with architectural or design skills, and a quarter have Trustees who are Conservation Officers. However, half the South West BPTs report their capacity is 'sufficient' but could be strengthened; indeed 50% report having a capacity-building plan. Attracting Trustees from a wider range of age groups is likely to be an issue (80% of the South West BPTs have Trustees in the 50-70 years age group); however, only two thirds of BPTs have a recruitment policy in place.

This research comes at a critical time, as challenges for the heritage sector intensify and the policy context for the community and voluntary sector evolves. The study indicates that the region's BPTs will continue to play a critically important role in rescuing buildings at risk, however; this will depend on long-term support, exploring new ways of working, sharing best practice, and developing new partnerships.

STROUD PRESERVATION TRUST

In May 2011, the Stroud Preservation Trust leased the newly repaired 1845 Brunel-designed goods shed to Stroud Valley Artspace, who will use the building for arts and education purposes. The goods shed had been in the care of the Trust for 25 years and on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk Register since 1999. The Trust has



Analogue Exhibition, Brunel Goods Shed, June 2011. © Steve Hurrell

been shortlisted for an English Heritage Angels award in 2011 in recognition of their work to save the building.

HERITAGE COUNTS: INDICATOR DATA

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

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSETS

Regional Assets	2003	2011
World Heritage Sites	3	4
Scheduled Monuments	6,903	6,984
Listed Buildings Grade I	2,017	2,047
Listed Buildings Grade II*	5,079	5,146
Listed Buildings Grade II	81,769	82,264
Registered Parks and Gardens	287	294
Registered Battlefields	8	8
Protected Ship Wrecks	23	23
Conservation Areas	1,509	1,567

Nine of the region's Historic Environment Records are currently available online; five through the Heritage Gateway.

Nearly 40% (880,000 hectares) of the South West is a protected landscape – either National Park (Dartmoor, Exmoor and a small area of the New Forest) or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (there are 14 wholly or partly within the region).

Of the region's 2,100km coastline, 638km (one third) is Heritage Coast – 60% of the total for England.

CARING AND SHARING

The number of listed buildings and scheduled monuments at risk in the South West in 2011 was 154, 2.1% of all grade I and grade II* buildings, and 1,419 20.3% respectively. There were two new registered parks and gardens at risk in 2011.

Nationally, planning applications increased by 5% in 2010/11, but only by 3.4% in the South West. The number of applications in 2010/11 (58,300) is 34% down on the peak year of 2004/05.

There was a 7% increase in listed building consent applications nationally in 2010/11

compared to 2009/10, but only 1% in the South West where there were 5,952 applications last year, 20% fewer than in 2002/03.

The number of scheduled monument consent applications in the South West has dropped by 21% between 2002/03 and 2010/11, as opposed to a national increase of 13%. There were 153 applications in 2010/11.

Last year the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) awarded £29.5m to 165 projects in the South West, the most awarded in a single year since 2004/05. This represents 10.2% of all HLF awards in 2010/11, a proportion in line with previous years. In total, the HLF have awarded £441.4m to South West projects since 1994. English Heritage offered £1.5m in grants in 2010/11, and paid £3.4m to existing projects.

Since January 2005 in the South West, Natural England have awarded over £14m to historic environment options within their Environmental Stewardship agri-environment schemes. This is 21% of the national total.

In 2010/11 there were 147.3 full time equivalent (FTE) local authority historic environment staff in the South West, 12.3 FTE fewer than 2009/10. Nationally, there has been a 5.6% reduction in the number of local authority historic environment staff between 2003 and 2011, but in the South West the figure is higher, at 11.4%.

At the end of the financial year 2011, there was a Heritage Champion in 32 of the 41 authorities in the South West (78% coverage, in line with the national average).

USING AND BENEFITING

There were 1.74m visits to staffed English Heritage properties in the South West in 2010/11, accounting for around a third of all English Heritage visits. The figure was up by 3% on the previous year (2009/10), and by 9% on 2007/08.

There were 4.47m visits to staffed National Trust properties in the South West in 2010/11, accounting for 28% of all National Trust visits in England. This was a 2% increase on the previous year.

The South West has above average rates of volunteering and participation in heritage. According to the Department of Culture Media and Sport Taking Part survey, 70.7% of all adults in England visited at least one heritage site in the past 12 months; in the South West the figure is slightly higher

at 72.9%, a slight increase on 2009/10. Last year there were 14,309 National Trust volunteers in the South West.

Heritage Open Days (HODs) have increased significantly in the South West between 2007 and 2010 when there were 599 events, accounting for 13% of all HODs events in England.

In 2010/11, 62,000 (just over 8%) of English Heritage's Members came from the South West, up by 4,000 on 2009/10. The number of Friends of the Historic Houses Association in the South West was just over 4,000 in 2010, up by almost a quarter since 2007.

There were over 78,000 English Heritage education visits in the South West in 2010/11, the highest number since 2001/02, and an increase of 49% on that year; the second highest rate of growth after London.

Heritage Counts 2011 has been produced by English Heritage on behalf of the South West Historic Environment Forum:

Association of Local Government
Archaeological Officers
UK Association of Preservation Trusts
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Country Land & Business Association
English Heritage
Heritage Lottery Fund
Historic Houses Association
Institute of Historic Building Conservation
National Trust
Natural England
RIBA
Sustainability South West
University of the West of England

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