

HERITAGE COUNTS

Heritage and Society 2016

Heritage:

1. **Plays an important part in our wellbeing and quality of life** – 93% of residents say that local heritage has an impact on their personal quality of life.
2. **Improves places** – 80% of people think local heritage makes their area a better place to live.
3. **Engages young people** – Almost 2 million children visited a historic property as part of a school trip.
4. **Is viewed positively by the general public** – Nearly all adults (95%) agree or strongly agree that it is important to them that heritage buildings and places are well looked after.

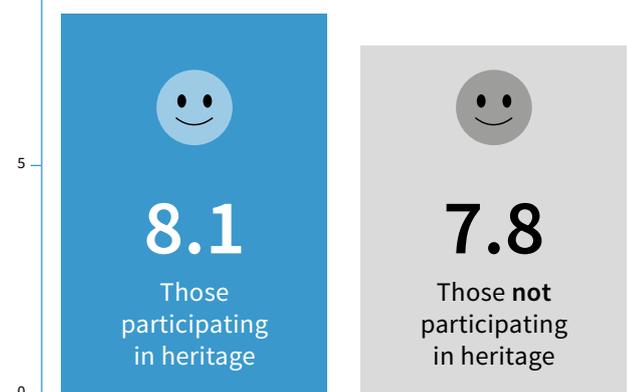
For most people, the historic environment represents the place in which they live and work. **99.3% of people in England live less than a mile from a listed heritage asset**¹.

1. Heritage plays an important part in our wellbeing and quality of life

1.1 Heritage makes you happy. People who visit heritage sites are happier than those who do not.

The Taking Part survey asked respondents to self-assess their happiness on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is 'extremely happy'. Between 2010 and 2013, on average, those who had visited a heritage site in the previous 12 months, reported happiness scores 1.6% greater than those who had not². See Chart 1 for 2014/15 findings.

Chart 1 – The average happiness score for heritage participants
Source: DCMS (2015) Taking Part Survey 2014/15.



1 Historic England (2015) New Evidence Shows Surge in Enthusiasm for Heritage
2 DCMS (2014) Culture, Sport and Wellbeing

At a personal level, 93% of residents say that local heritage has an impact on their quality of life³.

50% answered 7 or more out of 10 when asked to rate the impact local heritage sites have on their personal quality of life⁴.

The wellbeing value of visiting heritage sites has been calculated as equivalent to **£1,646 per person per year**⁵.

This is the amount of money that would have to be taken away from a person to restore them to their level of wellbeing had they not visited a heritage site. This figure is more than participating in sports or the arts. Visiting a historic town or city was found to be the most beneficial.

Heritage activity (such as visiting, volunteering and heritage membership) is a driving factor for wellbeing.

As part of the 2015 Heritage Index research, areas which scored highly on heritage activity also tended to have higher levels of well-being⁶.

56% of adults surveyed agree that their local area's heritage is important for their personal sense of identity⁷.

3 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) (2015) 20 years in 12 places

4 Ibid

5 Fujiwara, D (2014) Subjective wellbeing and heritage

6 HLF (2015) 20 Years in 12 Places

7 Ibid



Owners of Adlingfleet Medieval Rectory, East Riding of Yorkshire.
© Historic England

Residents' experiences of heritage sites are positive⁸.

86% of those who have visited local heritage sites say they enjoyed their visits, whilst a majority say that local heritage sites are well maintained, and that they would encourage others to come to the area to experience its heritage.

Owning a listed home gives a sense of pleasure and pride⁹.

The majority of listed homeowners in England, who responded to a comprehensive 2015 survey, take great

pleasure from living in a listed property and wish to preserve their piece of heritage for future generations. When asked to describe how they feel about living in a listed building, most owners used highly positive and emotive words. For example:

“

I love our beautiful home and I'm proud to be a custodian of a little bit of England's and our local community's heritage; it doesn't feel so much like we own our property, more that we're privileged to be part its story.

Owner of Grade II property in the South East.

”

1.2 Engagement with heritage has positive social effects.

8% of people volunteered their time in the heritage, museum or library sectors within the last 12 months¹⁰.

This equates to approximately 4.2 million people.

83% of residents visiting or taking part in heritage sites and projects say their activity has helped them understand more about the history of their local area¹¹.

Heritage develops connections between people and groups in local areas.

Over 90% of Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) volunteers benefitted from socialising on heritage projects, and 35% sustained these friendships outside the project¹².

In 2014, 39,780 volunteers took part in the annual national Heritage Open Days (HODs) event.

45% of young people (18-34) report learning new things as a reason for volunteering in heritage¹³.

Heritage Open Days (HODs)



99% enjoyed volunteering



75% agreed that their participation had increased their sense of making a useful contribution



89% said they are more likely to volunteer with other heritage sites and organisations



35% reported an increase in self-esteem

Sources: Heritage Open Days (2014) Heritage Open Days Report 2014, Heritage Open Days (2011) Heritage Open Days Report 2011

8 Ibid

9 Ecorys (2015) Survey of Listed Building Owners

10 DCMS (2015) Taking Part Survey 2014/15

11 HLF (2015) 20 Years in 12 Places

12 BOP Consulting (2011) Assessment of the social impact of volunteering in HLF-funded projects: Year 3

13 Cebr (2013) The community census: a report for Ecclesiastical Insurance Group



Kenilworth Castle. © Historic England



Archaeological dig at Marden Henge, Wiltshire. © Historic England

2. Heritage improves places

2.1 Heritage improves the perception of place.

A 2010 on-street survey in places which had seen significant historic environment led regeneration found that **over 90% agreed that investment in the historic environment had resulted in a nicer place in which to live, work and socialise, as well as creating a more attractive visitor destination**¹⁴.

The survey also found that **93% of respondents felt that their local heritage regeneration project improved their perceptions of the local area and 91% that it had improved the image of the wider town**¹⁵.

80% of people think local heritage makes their area a better place to live¹⁶.

This number includes those who do not visit or participate in local heritage events or projects. This may well be because, in addition to providing opportunities to visit and participate, the historic environment can boost local economies and encourage local pride.

Approximately 95% of those who had taken part in a heritage project agreed or strongly agreed that the areas where the projects took place were now a good place to meet friends¹⁷.

The historic environment is considered beautiful.

A 2010 study found that across all age groups, older buildings were favoured as being 'more beautiful'. The most common reason people gave was that older buildings conveyed a sense of longevity and grandeur¹⁸.

Following the completion of heritage projects, respondents reported increased **positive feelings of safety**



Increased by
10%
during the day



Increased by
9%
during the night

Source: AMION and Locum Consulting (2010), Impact of Historic Environment Regeneration

2.2 Heritage provides a sense of place.

People who live in areas with more heritage assets are likely to have a stronger sense of place.

Adults and young people that live in areas with more heritage assets or cite a local building or monument as special are likely to have a stronger sense of place (after controlling for other socio-economic factors that impact on sense of place)¹⁹.

92% of respondents to an on-street survey in areas that had seen significant historic environment led regeneration **felt that heritage projects had raised pride in the local area and 93% that it had increased their sense of place**²⁰.

14 AMION and Locum Consulting (2010), Impact of Historic Environment Regeneration

15 Ibid

16 HLF (2015) 20 Years in 12 Places

17 Ibid

18 IPSOS MORI (2010) Public Perceptions of Beauty

19 AMION and Locum Consulting (2010), Impact of Historic Environment Regeneration

20 Ibid

Owners see their listed home as central to making their place special²¹.

Nine out of ten (92%) listed homeowners surveyed agreed their listed building was 'important' or 'very important' to the character of the local area.

Most owners see their listed home as playing an important part in the nation's history²².

Three out of five (62%) listed homeowners felt that their property was important or very important to the national history of England.

Almost seven in ten (69%) UK adults believe that local heritage buildings and sites are important to their local community – an estimated 35 million people²³.

Listed buildings are widely photographed by the public.

A 2014 analysis of over 2 million photographs web-shared on Flickr taken in London found that around half had at least one photograph within 25m of a listed building²⁴. Higher graded buildings were more likely to have photographs falling within 25m of their centre – 88% of Grade I buildings compared to 76% of Grade II* and 61% of Grade II.

3. Young people are engaged in heritage

Nearly 2 million children visited a historic property in 2014 as part of a school trip²⁵.

47% of young people aged 18-24 surveyed say they are interested or very interested in their local heritage²⁶.

250 schools are directly involved in Historic England's Heritage Schools programme, reaching approximately 100,000 children since the programme began in 2012. It has also trained over 3,100 teachers since it began²⁷.

A 2015 evaluation²⁸ of the programme found highly encouraging results:

- the number of teachers who know 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' about local history and heritage has increased from 19% to 90%;
- the number of teachers who know 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' about how local history connects to the national story has increased from 12% to 78%;
- and the number of children who have a good knowledge of local history and heritage has increased from 4% to 70%.



Heritage Open Days, Gloucester, Gloucestershire. Group at Kings School. © Historic England

21 Ecorys (2015) Survey of Listed Building Owners

22 Ibid

23 Cebr (2013) The community census: a report for Ecclesiastical Insurance Group

24 Nesta (2014) Heritage in Space

25 Visit England (2014) Visitor Attraction Trends in England 2014: Annual Report

26 Historic England (2015) Exploring English Attitudes to Historic Places, Yougov Poll

27 Historic England (2014) Heritage Schools Programme

28 Heritage Counts (2015)

4. The public view heritage as something to be protected

The English public care deeply for their heritage.

Just under two fifths (38%) have taken action to protect a local building or local place from damaging change, or from becoming derelict or disused²⁹. Action includes signing a petition, joining a membership group, fundraising/donating for local heritage and attending a public meeting about local heritage.

The most commonly-valued parts of England's historic environment are country houses and castles (70%)³⁰.

See chart below.

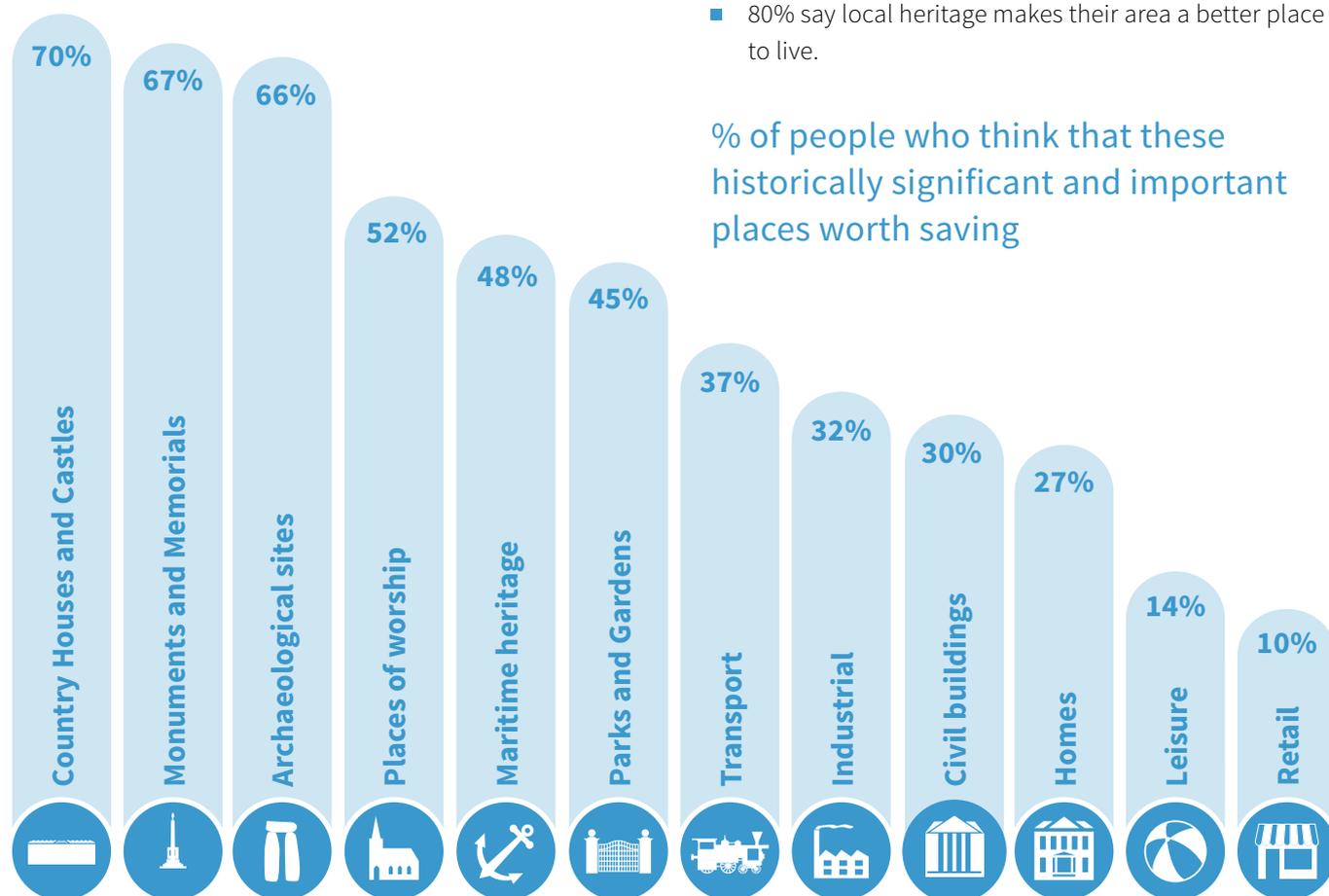


Chart 2 – The most commonly-valued parts of England's historic environment

Nearly all adults (95 per cent) agree or strongly agree that it is important to them that heritage buildings and places are well looked after³¹.

ComRes interviewed 2000 adults in Great Britain in September 2015³²

- Nearly three quarters (73%) agree that the UK government has a moral obligation to protect our heritage.
- The majority agreed that heritage contributed to attracting tourists (81%), the economy (73%) and creative industries (61%).

Likewise, an HLF study from 2015 found³³:

- 93% see heritage as important to 'the country'
- 85% see heritage as important to their local area
- 81% see heritage as important to 'me personally'
- 80% say local heritage makes their area a better place to live.

% of people who think that these historically significant and important places worth saving

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Historic England

²⁹ Historic England (2015) Exploring English Attitudes to Historic Places, Yougov Poll

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ DCMS (2015) Taking Part Survey 2014/15

³² ComRes (2015) Public Perceptions of Heritage

³³ HLF (2015) 20 Years in 12 Places