

State of the
Historic
Environment
Report 2002

**EAST OF
ENGLAND**

The State of the Historic Environment in the **East of England** Region 2002

COVER IMAGE:
Isaac Lord Complex,
Ipswich. Dating back
to the 15th century,
this complex is of
considerable significance
as a major and
complete group of
historic industrial
buildings which remain
under one ownership.

The publication of the first annual State of the Historic Environment Report (SHER) offers the opportunity to collate relevant information and begin to analyse the condition of the historic environment in England. SHER 2002 is a pilot and the Historic Environment Review Steering Group is inviting comment on the format and content of the national and regional documents to ensure that future SHERs can be improved. Future versions of this document will analyse year-on-year changes. All documents can be viewed at www.historicenvironment.org.uk

Please make your response by 28 February 2003 to:
Richard Halsey, Regional Director, English Heritage,
24 Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge CB2 2BU

CURRENT ACTIVITY IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND

Regional Planning. In regional planning terms, the region is a new one, bringing together the East Anglia counties with part of the South East. The Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England consists of RPG6, covering Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, and RPG9 as it relates to Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Essex. This is currently being reviewed, to produce a single document for the East of England – RPG14.

Regional Assembly. The East of England Regional Assembly has recognised the value of working in partnership with environmental interests in a number of ways. It has joined with the Sustainable Development Round Table to produce the regional Sustainable Development Framework, the over-arching framework for all regional policy statements, in October 2001. The historic environment is addressed in the Framework, and Buildings at Risk data is included as a regional indicator. A more recent initiative has been the joint Assembly/East of England Environmental Forum decision to produce an Environment Strategy for the region, which will help inform decision makers about the nature of the region's environment. It will perform the dual function of audit and action plan. The historic environment is a key element of this.

East of England Historic Environment Forum representing the main groupings involved with the region's historic environment (as owners or advisers) first met in 2002. It aims to be an advocate for understanding and appreciation of the historic environment and the skills needed to maintain it throughout the East of England. The regional SHER will be a primary tool for this task.

Regeneration. The East of England has a combined total of 28 **Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes (HERS)** schemes running in the first four annual rounds, with an English Heritage allocation of £1,820,000. A further 5 schemes (including Soham and Sudbury) are being worked up for HERS (5) to start in 2003. There is a good spread of activity throughout Suffolk (9), Norfolk (7), Essex (6) and Cambridgeshire (4). There are only two HERS in Bedfordshire (both in Luton) and none in Hertfordshire. HERS activity is targeted at those parts of the region that score highest in the deprivation indices, are linked to other programmes (such as Objective 2, Single Regeneration Budget or the Market Towns Initiative (MTI)) or where there are specific problems to be addressed (such as in rural Glemsford). Despite the region's close proximity to London, as well as Cambridge's international role in academia and hi-tech industry, the region has some hot-spots of economic deprivation, such as Wisbech (HERS, MTI and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)) and Great Yarmouth (HERS & THI). Most of the CAPS have been extremely successful, with Fakenham taking a variety of awards for its innovative approach to public realm works.

The **Great Yarmouth Partnership** has had a particularly successful year, where the partners are English Heritage (as owners) alongside the local authority, National Trust, the local building preservation trust and the county museum service. A joint Objective 2 bid has been submitted, work has started on the Tower Curing Works, the re-display of English Heritage's Row Houses completed and a successful stage 1 bid made for the largest THI in the country. The new CAPs & HERS funded Nelson Museum was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh in July 2002. There are Heritage Lottery Funded **Townscape Heritage Initiative** schemes in Wisbech and Cromer with schemes expected to begin shortly in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

Another key element of work in the region is the **Regional Market Towns Partnership** which involves the East of England Development Agency (EEDA), English Heritage, the Countryside Agency, DEFRA, local authorities and other partners. The Market Towns Initiative is now at its delivery stage and, where appropriate, is linked with other grant initiatives, such as schemes in Brandon and Beccles. The partnership launched a good practice guide for local communities at the 2002 Annual Convention of Action for Market Towns held in Ely.

Buildings at Risk. Local authorities and English Heritage are continuing to develop strategies for individual buildings at risk to find practical solutions. English Heritage has offered repair grants of £463,000 towards the repair of 16 of the buildings on the Register during 2001/2, which was half of the Region's available grant budget. Further English Heritage funding has increased the number of part-funded, dedicated buildings at risk posts in local authorities to seven. One Buildings at Risk Officer has produced a very timely guide on maintenance for owners, "Prevention is Better than Cure".

A regional analysis of local buildings at risk registers, highlighting the factors leading to redundancy and neglect in the Region, was published in the *Conservation Bulletin*¹. That issue also features a piece on one of last year's successes, Abbey Farm Barns at Snape.

While only a few buildings have reached the stage this year where they can be removed from the Register, some significant cases are moving forward most satisfactorily, with financial packages being put together and ownership arrangements negotiated.

Isaac Lord complex, Ipswich. The owner Stuart Cooper, Ipswich Borough Council and English Heritage have been working in partnership to secure the repair and sensitive conversion of this important group of historic buildings. Dating back to the 15th century, the complex is significant (and possibly unique) on account of its completeness and continuity of ownership. Within a HERS area and grant aided under English Heritage's Buildings and Monuments grants scheme, the phased repair of these former buildings at risk, is approaching completion, and is a major step in the continuing regeneration of Ipswich's historic waterfront.

Other issues. English Heritage has funded, in partnership with county archaeologists, a Coastal Survey of the Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex coasts. This is now underway with the aim of identifying important archaeological remains in coastal and estuarine locations. The relatively rapid rate of erosion of the East Anglian coast has made this region a priority in the national context.

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE EAST OF ENGLAND

SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS

- In July 2002 there were 1707 scheduled monuments in the East of England compared to 1596 in 2000. This represents an above-average increase of 7.0%. The average number of monuments in a region is 2204.
- 94 applications for Scheduled Monument Consent were made in the East of England in 2001/2 compared to a national average of 88 per region.
- One indicator of the degree of pressure on the stock of monuments is the number of Scheduled Monument Consent cases as a proportion of all Scheduled Monuments. In the East of England this was 5.5% compared to a national figure of 4%.

LISTED BUILDINGS

- In August 2002 the East of England had 57,643 entries on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, 15.3% of the national total.
- The East of England region had the lowest rate of Grade I and II* Listed Buildings at Risk, at 2.0%. It was significantly below the national average of 3.7% but it rose slightly from 1.7% in the base year of 1999. Analysis in 2000 of 31 local authority Buildings at Risk lists, which cover all grades, found a figure of 800 buildings at risk, also 2.0% of listed buildings, an average of 26 per local authority. A third of all buildings at risk were domestic, a quarter agricultural, 17% industrial and 12% religious.
- 17.3% of the entries in the East of England on the 2002 English Heritage BAR Register were capable of economic repair (i.e. unlikely to require some public subsidy to make re-use viable). The national figure is 12.8% but this is inflated by the large number of buildings in London capable of economic repair.

¹ *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 42, English Heritage.

² As some monuments will have been the subject of more than one application in a year and scheduled monument consent is not always applied for, this figure should be treated with caution and is only one indicator of relative pressure for change.

³ As point 1.

⁴ *Local Authority Conservation Provision* by Oxford Brookes University for the IHBC and EH, 2002.

⁵ English Heritage.

⁶ Regulations require that planning applications in or affecting the setting of conservation areas that cover more than 1000sq.m. or where a proposal is more than 20m high should be referred to English Heritage.

⁷ *Local Authority Conservation Provision*, 2002.

- In the East of England in 2001/2 678 listed building consent applications were notified to English Heritage which is consulted on the more important proposals; an average of 1 application for every 85 listed buildings (the figure for all regions except London was 1 for every 64 listed buildings). In 2000/01 there were a total of 4455 listed building consent applications made to local authorities in the region, an average of 1 application for every 13 listed buildings³. This is the same as the average for all regions (excluding London).
- The Local Authority Conservation Provision (LACP) survey⁴ found that on average, authorities in the East of England served 3.6 Enforcement Notices (compared to a national average of 5.4) and made 0.7 prosecutions for listed building matters (compared to 0.4 per authority nationally).

CONSERVATION AREAS

- In June 2002 the East of England had 1141 conservation areas⁵. The average number of conservation areas per English Region was 1003 in 2001/2.
- During the year 2001/2 the East of England office of English Heritage was notified of 423 substantial planning applications in conservation areas⁶. This equates to around 0.4 major applications per conservation area in a year. The average per region was 558 applications or 0.6 major applications per conservation area.
- One way of measuring how conservation areas are being managed is the number of Conservation Area Appraisals that have been adopted by local authorities. The LACP report found that local authorities in the East of England had prepared an average of 6 Conservation Area Appraisals (compared to 8 per authority nationally), 50% had budgets for conservation area enhancement compared to only 35% nationally.

HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

- In September 2002 there were 208 entries on the Historic Parks and Gardens Register in the East of England, compared to an average per region of 170. Eight sites have been added to the Register since 2000.

WORLD HERITAGE SITES AND REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS

- The East of England does not have any World Heritage Sites at present but has one site, the Wash and the North Norfolk Coast, on the UK government's Tentative List.
- Two of England's 43 Registered Historic Battlefields are in the Region, Maldon and Barnet (which is largely in the London Region).

RESOURCES

EXPENDITURE ON THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- In 2001/2, English Heritage offered £2,662,000 in the East of England Region (10% of the total for England) which included £744,000 on secular grants, £663,000 on church grants, £1,255,000 on area grants (HERS).
- Of the total English Heritage grant offered in the Region, £409,000 went on regeneration grants, £413,000 on Buildings at Risk and £282,000 on grants to private owners.
- The LACP report found that 60% of local authorities in the region had a historic building grant programme (compared to 51% nationally), offering an average of £24,193 (compared to £19,779 nationally).
- The Heritage Lottery Fund offered grants during 2001/2 of £28,315,000 in the East of England Region (11.9% of the total for England).
- The LACP report⁷ found that in the East of England the average level of staffing for historic building conservation per local authority was 1.6 compared to a national average of 1.7. Local authority staffing for archaeology will be included in next year's publication.



ENGLISH HERITAGE