

HERITAGE COUNTS 2013

SOUTH WEST

Heritage Counts 2013 is the twelfth 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 skills in the historic environment. 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. Please see www.heritagecounts.org.uk.

SKILLS IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

This year, Heritage Counts focuses on skills; since the beginning of the financial crisis many parts of the sector have seen significant reductions in budgets and staffing numbers, causing concerns that specialist knowledge is being lost. For the 2013 report, a number of research projects were undertaken to assess these skills provisions, including a survey of the whole cultural heritage sector in the UK. One of the key findings from this study was that the majority of respondents (60%) indicated that they did not have a training budget, which means that initiatives like those outlined in the case studies below are essential for developing skills across the sector. Please see the national Heritage Counts 2013 report for more analysis and further details.

SKILLS IN THE SOUTH WEST

The South West has a rich and distinctive historic environment, including a quarter of England's listed buildings and a third of its scheduled monuments. Managing and protecting this precious resource requires a wide range of skills, from professional and technical, to business enterprise and visitor services management. Investing in these skills not only protects the environment, but maintains the South West's highly skilled workforce - a key economic asset. Fifty seven per cent of working age people in the region are qualified to NVQ level 3 or above, and 34 per cent to NVQ level 4. Only London and the South East have higher attainment rates.

Here, we consider recent research findings and highlight some current heritage skills issues in the South West.

TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION CRAFT SKILLS IN THE SOUTH WEST

In 2005, the National Heritage Training Group (NHTG) completed the first skills needs analysis of the built heritage sector in England. It found that just over half of the 2,344 traditional building crafts practitioners in the South West were struggling to recruit due to a lack of applicants and a lack of skills, with shortages of carpenters, slate and tile roofers and stonemasons. New research carried out for English Heritage, Historic Scotland and the NHTG shows that the subsequent economic downturn has compounded these issues, not least

Public sector skills support: bursary schemes

The Heritage Lottery Fund's Skills for the Future programme has funded a number of bursary schemes, including the Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme (TBSBS). Luke McEnroe is a trainee bench joiner, one of 20 apprentices currently enrolled on the scheme. He is gaining experience from working with a team of highly skilled craftspeople to maintain the National Trust's Buscot and Coleshill estate on the Wiltshire and Oxfordshire border, and has already completed an NVQ level 2 in his chosen trade. He is now working towards a Heritage NVQ Level 3 in Wood Occupations.

For the full story go to www.heritagecounts.org.uk and see www.buildingbursaries.org.uk.



Trainee bench joiner Luke McEnroe working on traditional windows at the National Trust's Buscot and Coleshill estate. © National Trust TBSBS.

as many traditional construction crafts businesses and sole traders across the country have ceased trading. Of those remaining in business, few intend to take on apprentices and trainees in the foreseeable future. In turn, training providers are reporting a drop in demand, with some courses at risk of closure. This makes public-sector funded schemes and employer-led initiatives such as those featured here as case studies even more important to support and sustain workforce skills in these challenging times.

Private sector skills support: Perran Foundry, Cornwall

Although new research shows that traditional construction companies are struggling to train and develop their staff in the current economic climate, David Ball Construction Ltd of Cornwall is bucking the trend, creating training opportunities as part of a major heritage regeneration scheme. The complex of former foundry buildings at Perran, which includes a number of grade II* buildings on English Heritage's Register of Heritage at Risk, were purchased by a private investor in 2005. David Ball was appointed to carry out the repair and regeneration of the site 2010. A former apprentice himself, David currently offers six training placements to construction students at Cornwall College and offers a range of other on-site learning opportunities.

For the full story, go to www.heritagecounts.org.uk.



Learning traditional skills through the regeneration of Perran Foundry, Cornwall.
© Toby Weller

SKILLS IN THE WIDER HERITAGE SECTOR

Research commissioned for Heritage Counts this year provides an insight into the skills needs across the UK's cultural heritage sector. The following points are of particular relevance to the South West:

- Reported skills gaps in key professions including architectural historians, conservation engineers and landscape architects

are significant in the South West as a region with a large number of heritage assets.

- Nationally, 51 per cent of respondents expect the number of unpaid staff to increase over the next five years. With high rates of heritage volunteering, the South West should be well placed to respond to this, but training for volunteers may be an issue, given the scarcity of training budgets also noted in the research.
- Recruitment to professional services roles (town planners, conservation officers and chartered surveyors with a conservation specialism) has slowed dramatically in the South West, with less than 25 per cent of employers in this sector recruiting in the last three years, compared to 41 per cent nationally.
- Seventy five per cent of archaeology businesses in the South West indicated that recruitment challenges were affecting their capacity, compared to 35 per cent nationally.

Although these findings are of regional concern, they relate to wider skills gaps and shortages which the national Historic Environment Forum has pledged to address through a sector-wide skills strategy and greater collaborative working.

Skills to care for historic gardens and landscapes

We now know that nationally, there are shortages in skills in heritage horticultural theory, habitat management and monitoring and landscape architecture, which could have impacts on the management of the historic gardens and landscapes so central to the South West's cultural identity. At Minterne in Dorset, Head Gardener Ray Abraham has extensive skills and experience in managing historic gardens and rhododendrons in particular, of which Minterne has an outstanding collection. With some species of rhododendron now extinct in their native China, this historic collection, and Ray's skills and experience, are helping international conservation efforts by producing plants to re-establish Chinese collections.



Skills to maintain historic botanical collections: Head Gardener Ray Abraham at Minterne, Dorset. © Minterne

Digital and IT skills in the sector

New research has revealed skills gaps in IT and digital skills across the cultural heritage sector. Live projects such as the Churches Conservation Trust's 'Hidden Holcombe' provide opportunities for volunteers and community groups to use and develop skills in new technologies, in this case archaeological and geophysical survey. For the full story go to www.heritagecounts.org.uk.



Training in survey techniques as part of the Hidden Holcombe project, Somerset.
© Churches Conservation Trust

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT INDICATORS FOR 2013

South West Assets	2013 totals
World Heritage Sites	4
Scheduled Monuments	7,004
Total Listed Buildings	89,669
Listed Buildings Grade I	2,048
Listed Buildings Grade II*	5,165
Listed Buildings Grade II	82,448
Total Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG)	296
RPG Grade I	28
RPG Grade II*	95
RPG Grade II	173
Registered Battlefields	8
Protected Ship Wrecks	23
Conservation Areas	1537

CARING AND SHARING

In the South West in 2012/13, 154 (2.1 per cent) of the region's grade I and II* listed buildings were at risk, along with 1,396 (19.9 per cent) of scheduled ancient monuments, 18 (6.1 per cent) registered parks and gardens and 57 (4.9 per cent) conservation areas. For full details see www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk/.

Planning

Planning applications and listed building consents in the South West continue to decline in line with the national trend. There were 54,103 planning decisions last year, down 5 per cent on 2011/12 compared with 4 per cent nationally, and the 5,518 LBC applications made in the last year represent a 6 per cent drop on 2011/12 (5 per cent nationally). However, since 2002/03 the drop in LBC applications in the South West is more marked: at 26 per cent it is almost twice the national figure (14 per cent).

Conservation area consents are up by 4 per cent on the previous year, compared to 2 per cent for England, with 435 applications in the South West last year. Scheduled monument consent applications (SMC) have risen by 20 per cent on 2011/12, but remained static at the national level. There were 205 SMC applications in the region last year.

Funding

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) made awards totalling £33,539,762 to 200 projects in the South West last year, bringing the total HLF grant in the region since 1994/5 to £489,634,957. English Heritage offered £1.55m in grants, 11 per cent of the national figure. EH's regional grant expenditure was £1.22m, a decrease of 60 per cent since 2002/03.

Since January 2005, Natural England has invested £22.25m in the South West's historic environment via agri-environment schemes, 19 per cent of the national total.

Staffing

In 2012/13 there were 133.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority historic environment staff in the South West, 9.3 fewer than in 2011/12. This is a loss of 6.5 per cent on the previous year, greater than the average loss of 3.3 per cent for England and the second highest loss of all regions after the North East. Since 2003, the South West has lost 19.6 per cent of its local authority conservation staff, as opposed to 13.3 per cent nationally.

Losses have been more marked in local authority archaeology staff in the South West, where FTE numbers have dropped by 17.4 per cent since 2003, four-and-a-half times the national figure (4.1 per cent). Over the same timescale, there has been a 21.1 per cent reduction in local authority building conservation staff, just above the 18 per cent national figure.

USING AND BENEFITING

In the past year in the South West there has been a slight drop in visitor numbers to historic properties, possibly due to the poor summer and the effect of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games. There were 1.59 million visits to English Heritage sites, down by 8 per cent on the previous year, and the 4,743,522 visits made to National Trust properties are down by 1 per cent on the previous year. The 146 Historic Houses Association properties open to the public recorded 513,953 visits.

Nonetheless, participation in the historic environment has remained high in the South West, against a slight decline nationally. According to DCMS's Taking Part survey, 75 per cent of adults in the South West visited at least one heritage site last year, the same as for 2011/12. This is higher than the national average rate of 72.7 per cent, which is down by 1.6 per cent on 2011/12.

The picture is also positive for people in the region with a long-standing illness or disability, 75.3 per cent of whom visited at least one heritage site in the last twelve months, higher than the national figure of 69.4 per cent and up by over 11.6 percentage points on the previous year. However, visits by people in lower socio-economic groups has dropped from 67.2 per cent to 64.3 per cent, but remains higher than the national figure of 62.3 per cent.

Despite Heritage Open Days (HODs) experiencing its best ever year nationally, the number of events in the South West fell slightly from 603 events in 2011 to 586 events in 2012.

The 73,013 education visits to English Heritage sites in the region represent a 10 per cent drop on 2011/12, slightly higher than the 7 per cent drop nationally.

KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

The national Heritage Counts 2013 report summarises major national policy developments affecting the sector this year. The following focusses on policy developments and key issues for the historic environment in the South West.

Renewable energy applications	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Total 2010-13	Change over 3 years
Wind Turbine	39	100	197	336	+ 405%
Solar PV (excl. LBC*)	38	82	120	240	+ 216%
Total Renewables	77	182	317	576	+ 312%

*44 LBC applications for solar PV installations were referred to English Heritage between 2010 and 2013.

Renewable energy

Data collected by English Heritage in the South West shows a 300 per cent increase in planning applications for renewable energy schemes since 2010. The figures relate to the number of planning applications and pre-application consultations referred to English Heritage under the terms of its *Charter for Advisory Services*. Whilst the data may include some repeat applications for the same site, they indicate a significant and increasing type of development pressure affecting the fabric or setting of historic assets.

Economic growth

In July, the South West Historic Environment Forum produced a Prospectus for Growth aimed at encouraging the six Local Enterprise Partnerships in the region to consider the historic environment in their strategic investment frameworks. The frameworks are being prepared this autumn to determine priorities for the allocation of the Single Local Growth Fund and the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme.

Heritage crime

There have been a number of high profile heritage crime cases in the region this year. Convictions have been secured for damage to the Neolithic monument known as the Priddy Circles in Somerset, vandalism to the grade I Greyfriars Church in Gloucester, and arson at Sandhill Park, a grade II* eighteenth-century country house in Somerset. Partnerships between heritage bodies and local police continue to grow, with the Alliance to Reduce Heritage Crime holding a successful seminar at Gloucester Cathedral in April and Swindon Borough Council becoming the first authority in the South West to sign up to English Heritage's Memorandum of Understanding on heritage crime in September, reflecting their commitment to preventing, investigating, enforcing and prosecuting criminal acts affecting heritage.

Perhaps the highest profile heritage crime in the region in 2013 was the theft in August of two 15th-century panel paintings from Holy Trinity, Torbryan, Devon, which is in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT). The panels were part of a medieval Rood screen, a rare survival of Reformation iconoclasm, and depicted St Margaret of Antioch and St Victor of Marseilles. A third panel of a female saint was badly damaged in the incident. Devon and Cornwall police pursued several lines of enquiry and notified art and heritage theft agencies nationally and internationally.



The Rood screen panels at Torbryan church, Devon. The two central panels were stolen in August 2013.

Heritage Counts 2013 is edited by Elizabeth Clare and produced by English Heritage on behalf of the South West Historic Environment Forum.

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