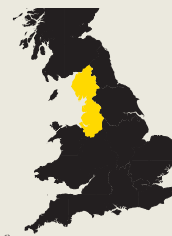


HERITAGE COUNTS

NORTH WEST



Heritage Counts 2010 is the ninth annual survey of the state of England's historic environment. It is prepared by English Heritage on behalf of the North West Historic Environment Forum. Visitors to the *Heritage Counts* website are able to download the full set of regional indicators and maps detailing the historic environment in their region. For more information on the North West please see www.heritagecounts.org.uk

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HERITAGE

Investing in the historic environment brings real economic benefits to local places. New research for *Heritage Counts* shows that on average £1 of investment in the historic environment generates an additional £1.6 in the local economy over a ten year period; while investments in 72 historic visitor attractions have generated £197 million of additional spend in regional economies. The research also found that half of all jobs created by heritage tourism are in the wider economy surrounding historic sites.

The historic environment is important to local economies because it attracts businesses, residents and visitors. One in four businesses surveyed agree that the historic environment was a factor in deciding where to locate, as important as road access. 91% of respondents regarded the historic environment as an important part of decisions on where to visit, live (74%) or work (68%). Staircase House and Covered Market Hall in Stockport was assessed as part of this research and is discussed below.

STAIRCASE HOUSE AND COVERED MARKET HALL, STOCKPORT

The Market and Underbanks area is a designated conservation area, comprising Stockport town centre's historic core. It represents an area of substantial historic, architectural and archeological interest and includes a number of listed buildings and historic properties including Staircase House, a Grade II* listed medieval town house and the Covered Market Hall.

INVESTMENTS IN THE HOUSE AND COVERED MARKET

By the 1990s many of the buildings in the area had become vacant and were in a state of severe disrepair. A regeneration initiative scheme was launched in the mid 1990s that sought to make the Market and Underbanks a more attractive place to visit, work, live and invest. The initiative has involved a number of interrelated actions aimed at restoring the area's key heritage assets and bringing vacant or underused space back into use, in the form of viable residential and business facilities. Key to the regeneration scheme was the repair and restoration of Staircase House (£3.5 million investment) and the renovation of Stockport's Covered Market Hall (£1.8 million).

Staircase House is now a Tourist Information Centre and museum and the market has been restored to its original design and includes a community and events space which has increased use of the building.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

It is estimated that the investment will add £3.2 million to the local economy in terms of Gross Value Added over the next ten years and create 16 new jobs. This is above and beyond what would have happened without the investment in the historic environment and is in addition to the jobs safeguarded in the businesses based in the market area. Local businesses estimate that the investment will directly contribute an additional £10 million to local businesses turnover over the next ten years. Business confidence has increased with two thirds (64%) of businesses surveyed recording an increase in customers since the investment and



Image Stockport Covered market after refurbishment © James Davies, English Heritage

a quarter (23%) of visitors stating that they spend more on shopping, eating and drinking in the area since the project ended.

The improvements to the physical appearance of the area have made it a more attractive place to live, work and visit. 95% of visitors to the area agree that more locals and tourists visit now as compared to before the investment and 96% agree that it has made a positive contribution to the local environment.

For more information on the research including further facts and figures on the benefits of investing in the historic environment please see the website www.heritagecounts.org.uk

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSETS

NORTH WEST	2010
WORLD HERITAGE SITES	2
SCHEDULED MONUMENTS	1,316
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE I	485
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE II*	1,519
LISTED BUILDINGS GRADE II	23,471
REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS	130
REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS	3
PROTECTED SHIPWRECKS	0
CONSERVATION AREAS	865
DESIGNATED COLLECTIONS	17
ACCREDITED MUSEUMS	142

CARING AND SHARING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS TREND

During the last decade the pattern of planning applications and consents for work on heritage assets shows a similar picture; namely a steady increase up to a peak in 2005, a sharp drop then a slight recovery in 2007, but since then a steady decrease in applications. This is particularly noticeable in the number of listed building applications which have shown a 28% drop in the region in the last two years (2,158 in 2007/08 and 1,537 in 2009/10) and conservation area consents which show a 29% decrease in the same period (272 in 2007/08 to 192 in 2009/10). This trend is not unexpected as it matches the recent decline in the UK economy triggered by the financial sector.

GRANT SPENDING CHANGES

English Heritage increased its grant spend to £3.2 million in 2009/10 in the North West, up 61% over 2008/09 (£2 million). Since 1994/1995 the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has made £503 million worth of grants in the North West, which represents 11% of the total HLF spend in the UK. £173 million has been spent on historic buildings and monuments, £26 million on industrial, maritime and transport, £120 million on land and biodiversity, £170 million on museum, libraries, archives and collections and £14 million on intangible heritage. A combination of grants spent by the HLF, EH and Natural England (via the Environmental Stewardship Scheme) on the historic environment of the region since 2005 comes to a substantial £167,362,116.

USING AND BENEFITING

IMPRESSIVE VISITOR NUMBERS

Participation levels in the historic environment remain stable in the North West, with the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) *Taking Part* survey showing that 67.9% of adults had visited at least one historic site over the past 12 months. Data from the National Trust in the North West however shows a steady increase in visitor numbers to its pay for entry sites with a 34% increase over the last four years – with visitor figures exceeding one million for the first time ever in the North West (1.02 million visits to its paid for sites). English Heritage also recorded an increase in the numbers of visitors to its seven staffed sites in the region. In 2009/10 there were 188,000 visits (an increase of 7% on 2008/09). Visits to museums in Liverpool and Manchester are slightly down on last year's totals, but still comfortably exceed 2 million per year in each city.

POLICY UPDATES

HERITAGE TOURISM

The North West has had a pioneering Heritage Tourism scheme for the past five years – financed jointly by English Heritage and the NWDA it aimed to develop the potential of heritage to contribute to the region's successful tourism sector. The scheme also administered an annual grant fund of some £100,000 towards project capital costs which would promote and enhance the visitor experience at historic attractions around the region. With the abolition of the NWDA this well regarded scheme is coming to an end. Data in this year's *Heritage Counts* indicates that since 2005, around £476,000 public investment has levered in a further £2,000,000 of private spend on these heritage projects. An example of the work of the scheme is the project at Liverpool Cathedral where visitor numbers have steadily increased following the investment in improved signage and visitor facilities.

BLACKPOOL HERITAGE CHAMPIONS

Blackpool Civic Trust, with support from English Heritage, is promoting the heritage of their community with 'Blackpool Heritage Champions'. This project started in early 2010 with funding from the Community Learning Champions scheme. The aim is to train local people as champions to promote, inspire and engage others in Blackpool's heritage. Each champion is involved in a heritage project ranging from protecting and promoting a local windmill to providing support for the annual Heritage Open Days event in September. Champions are offered a training programme that includes learning about local heritage, presentation skills and supporting others into learning and heritage.

NWDA VOLUNTEERS RESEARCH

The EH/NWDA Heritage Tourism scheme has commissioned research into volunteers in the heritage tourism sector in the North West. The intention is to use the information to support the training and management of volunteers involved in heritage. The aim ultimately is to improve the visitor experience of heritage in the region by having more good quality volunteer guides across the North West who engage with visitors to deepen the quality of their experience, encouraging them to return and spend more time in the region.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH IN RURAL AREAS

Evidence published in March by the Country and Community Research Institute (report to be found on the DEFRA website) showed the economic benefits of the Environmental Stewardship Schemes which pay farmers for work including the management of the historic environment on farms. For Higher Level Stewardship schemes for every £1 paid to the scheme holder a further £1.43 is generated in the local economy. The report also indicates the increase in local employment as a result of the scheme – and particularly the positive impact on farmers' families and on traditional skills.

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