

# Historic England Preview

## Our work in 2015/2016

### About Historic England

This is a very important time for England's heritage. Public support and enthusiasm for the historic environment has never been greater. Its economic benefits and its role in defining our success as a nation are more clearly acknowledged than ever before. But there are significant challenges.

Historic England has a unique role and opportunity – to champion all England's heritage. We will prioritise actions that enable us to make the greatest contribution to sustaining the value of the historic environment to society.

Our corporate plan describes what we will set out to achieve over the next three years. Following are highlights, chosen from all the things Historic England will do in 2015/16, as presented to guests at the event to preview Historic England and the English Heritage Trust on 26th February 2015.

### Understanding

Understanding our historic environment – including landscapes, settlements, buildings, archaeological sites and wrecks that lie on the sea-bed, is one of our most important jobs. We use this understanding to inform people about the significance of historic sites, and how we can look after them. In the coming year our research will include:

#### **The Staffordshire Hoard**

Historic England is the main funder of an archaeological investigation that will enable us and our partners to piece together the Staffordshire Hoard, understand its historic and cultural context and explain it to people. It consists of more than 3,500 items, nearly all martial or warlike in character and includes 5.094 kilos of gold and 1.442 kilos of silver. There is nothing comparable to the treasure-find that was uncovered by a metal detectorist in 2009, in terms of either content or quantity in the UK or mainland Europe.

### Identifying and Protecting

The National Heritage list for England is a remarkable resource. It covers all varieties of designated asset from World Heritage Sites to Protected Wrecks, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields, Listed Buildings and the Register of Parks and Gardens. It is the definitive list of every designated site in England.

## **Enriching the List**

In Autumn 2015, for the first time, we will enable members of the public to upload their own information to the list. People all over England will be able to share their knowledge of the historic places they care about, for everyone to use. The list has is close to getting a million visitors a year, showing the immense appetite people have for finding out about historic places.

## **First World War**

We are on track with our ambitious scheme to list 2,500 war memorials during the centenary years. Working with partners Civic Voice and War Memorials Trust, we will be supported by volunteers to reach our target.

## **Public Engagement**

We help people understand, value and care for historic places. We will work with partners across the country to give people who are interested in their heritage the means to explore it.

## **Exhibitions**

Our exhibition spaces at Wellington Arch in London and Bessie Surtees House in Newcastle, will house themed exhibitions designed to bring the historic environment to life. They will be supported by social media campaigns and free information tools to bring out exciting, informative aspects of the places people love. We will also launch out door exhibitions in other locations.

## **England's Places**

This Summer we will open up our Architectural Red Boxes and provide access online to more than 620,000 photographs dating from the 19th Century, showing all kinds of buildings from a range of periods.

## **Planning and Conservation**

### **Heritage Action Zones**

We will launch Heritage Action Zones across England, in areas that urgently need economic growth. We will work with local partners to establish the zones, and unlock the potential of the local historic environment to contribute to growth. A successful forerunner to this programme is Berwick-upon-Tweed, where we worked General view from the Spittal, Berwick-upon-Tweed. in a partnership to promote regeneration through grant schemes for repair and restoration of buildings, updating the List, supporting Heritage at Risk projects and involving volunteers in recording information about buildings.

### **Heritage at Risk**

Grade II buildings make up 92% of all listed buildings in England but with the exception of those in London, they are not included in the Heritage At Risk Register. The Grade II project will start this summer, and will see hundreds of volunteers take to the streets to examine the condition of their historic buildings. We will continue to reduce Heritage at Risk across the country. This year, we will meet our target of removing 25% of sites from the 2010 Register.

## **Around England**

Our national £11.5m repair grant programme supports many sites, including these:

### **St Luke's Church in Liverpool**

Known locally as 'the bombed out church', St Luke's Church in Liverpool has been derelict since the Second World War. Historic England will work with Liverpool City Council over the next year to consolidate the ruined structure and enable it to be a used space in the centre of the city.

### **The Grand Hotel, Birmingham**

The Grand Hotel, Birmingham was built in the late 19th century and specifically designed to appeal to commercial clients. We have given grant aid to repair the façade and permissions for re-use as a luxury hotel and restoration of the historic shop fronts are in place.

### **Hanwell Flights of Locks, Ealing, London**

Hanwell Flights of Locks, Ealing, London is nearing completion. Works have included clearing vegetation and scrub from the side ponds and carrying out large-scale improvements/conservation works on both the locks and side ponds.

## **Constructive Conservation**

We want people to use, adapt and enjoy historic places in ways that reveal and reinforce their significance. We call this approach constructive conservation. These are a few examples of schemes where we are working with owners to bring buildings back to life, and where we have given grants for repairs.

### **Ancoats Mill Complex, Manchester**

We will soon start work with Manchester Life in the Ancoats Conservation Area, one of the earliest industrial places in the country, to secure the re-use of the Murrays Mill complex and on the development of a series of 'gap sites' within the conservation area.

### **Port Sunlight in The Wirral**

Port Sunlight in The Wirral is one of the largest clusters of listed buildings in the North West of England, being the site of the 'model village' built by Lord Leverhulme for the workers at his Port Sunlight factory. We will support the Port Sunlight Village Trust and Wirral Borough Council in the delivery of a Local Listed Building Consent

Order, which will cover replacements, maintenance work and repairs to such features as the windows in this important conservation area. It is the first case of such an order, arising as part of the Enterprise and Regulatory Act, in the North West.

### **Salts Mill Hydro Scheme, Saltaire WHS, Bradford**

We are working with Bradford Metropolitan District on proposals for a hydro-electric installation on the River Aire at Salts Weir in Saltaire. The site is within the Saltaire World Heritage Site, the Saltaire Conservation Area and Roberts Park (a Registered Park and Garden) as well as within the setting of several listed buildings. Our work will mean that 21st century technology will help tell the story of nearly 400 years of industrial development, securing heritage and education benefits while contributing to Bradford Council's clean energy target for the district.

### **Thank you for your support for Historic England.**

If you would like to find out more about any of these projects, please contact our communications team at:

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