

State of the  
Historic  
Environment  
Report 2002

**SOUTH  
EAST**

# The State of the Historic Environment in the **South East** Region 2002

COVER IMAGE:  
Redevelopment of the  
Whitefriars area of  
Canterbury is the  
largest project of its  
kind in the city since the  
war and has required  
major archaeological  
investigations. The  
developers, local  
authority and English  
Heritage have worked  
closely together to  
ensure that this new  
mixed use quarter  
relates sensitively to  
the City's historic fabric  
and to the needs of  
its people. English  
Heritage took the  
opportunity to use this  
for a citizenship project,  
working with primary  
schools looking at the  
future of their city.

The publication of the first annual State of the Historic Environment Report (SHER), of which this regional factsheet forms a part, 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 they can be improved upon in future SHERs.

For this first year it has only been possible to produce a summary of basic information for the South East. In future years it is envisaged that this document will be more comprehensive. The Regional Historic Environment Forum will play a key role in guiding regional content and analysis, and will add to the basic content available from the national SHER data collection process. However, views on the usefulness of this document and what should be in the future regional SHERs are welcomed. All documents can be viewed at [www.historicenvironment.org.uk](http://www.historicenvironment.org.uk)

**Please make your response by 28 February 2003 to:**  
Bill Startin, Regional Director, English Heritage, Eastgate  
Court, 195-205 High Street, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 3EH

Economically the region is superficially the most prosperous after London, generating 16% of the UK GDP, contributing £17 billion to the Exchequer, and undertaking 30% of the UK's research and development; it has the largest manufacturing economy in the UK. This places significant pressure on the historic environment, as shown, for example, by the draft Regional Transport Strategy and the consultation on the development of air transport. Major development areas include the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and Thames Gateway, the largest development zone in northern Europe. Housing targets were a particular issue raised by the Regional Planning Guidance, with areas for substantial growth identified at Ashford and Milton Keynes. The development of the Regional Sustainable Development Framework was an important early initiative by the South East England Regional Assembly.

Conversely, the South East has 119 wards which fall within the 20% most deprived in the country, notably in the areas of east Kent, the Sussex coastal towns and the ports and former defence towns. Although the overall economic strength of the region results in a lower than average number of Grade I and II\* buildings at risk, the English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register includes, for example, a significant number of former defence structures with large repair needs. The 22 English Heritage Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes include towns such as Dover, Ramsgate, Southampton, Brighton & Hove, Hastings, Eastbourne and Southsea, with match funding now appearing as the major stumbling block to new schemes coming forward. Other investment into regeneration and renaissance of historic towns comes from the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative schemes and the Countryside Agency's Market Towns Initiative.

Tourism in the South East is worth some £5 billion annually (5% of the region's GDP) whilst two thirds of overseas visitors to Britain cite heritage as the reason for coming. The region contains the key entry points of Gatwick, Heathrow, Portsmouth, Southampton and Dover. Historic properties, such as Dover, Osborne, Battle, Walmer, Blenheim Palace and Sissinghurst are an important part of this economy, as are the historic towns, with international destinations such as Canterbury, Winchester, Brighton and Oxford, and the historic environment generally. Education and outreach are also important, with, for example, 43% of pre-booked (free) educational visits to English Heritage properties taking place in the South East, and the recognised need to broaden audiences within both formal and informal education and to extend access.

The region is large and has no single urban focus, London having held the dominant position. The consequence is that regional structures and interactions are taking time to develop. In January 2002, English Heritage established the South East Historic Environment Forum. The action plan to support the South East England Cultural Strategy is currently being finalised. And relations with the South East England Regional Assembly, the Government Office for the South East and the South East England Development Agency continue to develop.

## REGIONAL PROFILE

- The South East, at 19,096 sq. km., is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest of the 9 English regions (after the South West and just smaller than East of England) covering 15% of the total area of England<sup>1</sup>. It is nearly a third larger than the average English region.
- The total population of the South East is 8,077,600 compared to an average for English regions of 5,528,100. Its population is the largest for an English Region.
- There are an average of 423 people per sq.km. in the South East, the third highest of all the English Regions. The average density in England is 381 people per sq. km.
- The Gross Domestic Product of the South East in 1999 was £121,956m compared to the average for English regions of £73,300m and a total for England of £660.2m. The South East ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> (after London) in the nine regions. The South East also ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> among English Regions in the GDP per head Index (for which the UK = 100) with an index of 116.4.
- The ILO Unemployment Rate in Spring 2000 for the South East was 3.4%, below the UK average of 5.6% and the lowest of the English regions. However, the absolute number of unemployed stands 6<sup>th</sup> highest of the 12 UK regions.
- The South East has 6406 sq.km of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covering 31% of the region, the highest regional coverage but no land designated as National Park, although the South Downs and the New Forest are in the process of designation. The region has 72km of the 1041km of Heritage Coast in England.

## THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE SOUTH EAST<sup>2</sup>

### SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

- In July 2002 there were 2688 scheduled monuments in the South East compared to 2580 in 2000. The region has 13% of all scheduled monuments in England, the average number of monuments per region being 2204.
- 139 applications for Scheduled Monument Consent were made in the SE in 2001/2 compared to a national average of 88.
- 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 SE this was 5.2% compared to a national figure of 4%<sup>3</sup>.

### LISTED BUILDINGS

- In August 2002 the SE had 88,954 entries on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, which was 23.7% of the national total, the second highest for any English Region.
- In 2002, 2.4% of Grade I and II\* Listed Buildings in the region were classified as being at Risk. This was significantly below the national average of 3.7% and it fell from 2.5% in the base year of 1999. Around two thirds of local authorities have local BAR Registers that cover buildings of all grades. Nationally, the average number of entries on such lists is around 50, in the SE the average was half this<sup>4</sup>.
- 6.3% of the entries in the SE 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 the latter is inflated by the large number of buildings in London capable of economic repair.
- In the SE during 2001/2, 995 listed building consent applications were notified to English Heritage which is consulted on the more important proposals; an average of 1 application for every 77 listed buildings (the figure for all regions except London was 1 for every 64 listed buildings). In 2000/01 there were a total of 6024 listed building consent applications made to local authorities in the region, an average of 1 application for every 13 listed buildings<sup>5</sup>, the same as the national average.

<sup>1</sup> Regional Profile information from *Regional Trends 2001* on [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> All information from English Heritage, except where noted.

<sup>3</sup> As some monuments will have 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 one indicator of relative pressure for change.

<sup>4</sup> Local Authority Conservation Provision, Oxford Brookes University for the IHBC and EH, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> As (3) above.

<sup>6</sup> English Heritage.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> *Local Authority Conservation Provision*, Oxford Brookes University for the IHBC and EH, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> *Local Authority Conservation Provision*, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> *Profiling the Profession* K. Aitchison, for CBA, EH and IFA, 1999.

## CONSERVATION AREAS

- In June 2002 the SE had 1966 conservation areas<sup>6</sup> compared to an average number of conservation areas per English region of 1003.
- During the year 2001/2 English Heritage was notified of 1002 substantial applications in conservation areas<sup>7</sup>. This equates to around 0.5 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. In the SE an average of 9 Appraisals had been adopted per authority by June 2002.

## WORLD HERITAGE SITES

- The SE has two of England's fourteen World Heritage sites: Blenheim Palace (designated 1987) and Canterbury Cathedral, St Augustine's Abbey and St Martin's Church (designated 1988). The latter has an active Steering Committee and an adopted Management Plan.
- Three of the twelve sites in England on the UK Government's Tentative list are in the SE. These are Chatham Historic Dockyard, The New Forest and the Great Western Railway (also in London and the SW).

## HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

- In October 2002 there were 346 entries on the Historic Parks and Gardens Register in the SE, compared to an average per region of 170. Eight sites have been added to the Register since 2000.

## REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS

- Six of England's 43 Registered Historic Battlefields are in the SE Region including one that is also partly in London Region.

## RESOURCES

- In 2001/2, English Heritage offered £4,115,000 in the SE region (15% of the total for England) which included £2,456,000 on secular grants, £724,000 on church grants, £935,000 on area grants (HERS). This represented a 7% drop from the previous year.
- The LACP survey<sup>8</sup> reported that 61% of local authorities in the region had a historic building grant programme, compared with a national average of 51%. The average grant budget for historic buildings for SE local authorities was £32,360 compared to the national average of £19,779.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund offered 85 grants during 2001/2 totalling £30,440,000 in the SE region (12.8% of the total for England). This included £636,000 on Places of Worship and £1,773,000 on Townscape Heritage Initiative and Urban Parks Programme.
- The LACP report<sup>9</sup> found that in the SE the average level of staffing for historic building conservation per local authority was 1.5 compared to a national average of 1.7. An up-to-date figure for archaeologists working for local authorities in a curatorial role is not available, although in 1998 there were 44 such posts recorded.<sup>10</sup>



ENGLISH HERITAGE