

Regional Profile



PEOPLE

- On Census Day 2001, the South West had a population of 4,928,458. This represents a growth of 12.5% over the past 20 years making it the fastest growing region in England **1**
- With an average density of 2.07 persons per hectare the South West remains the least densely populated English region
- Most settlements in the South West are small villages and hamlets with a population of less than 500 **3**
- A higher proportion of people live in rural areas than elsewhere in England and only a third of the region's population live in towns of over 100,000 residents **4**

PLACE

- At 23,837 sq km, the South West is the largest of the nine English regions covering 18.3% of the total area of England
- The quality of the environment within the South West is recognised as its greatest strength and asset
- Agriculture accounts for 80% of the land use but contributes 2.5% of the regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 1.7% of employment **1**
- The 12 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and two National Parks cover 38% of the region
- Three of England's 15 World Heritage Sites are in the South West

ECONOMY

- The South West contributes nearly 8% towards the national GDP. The regional GDP growth has consistently out-performed the UK average and the regional economy is marked by its diversity **5**
- The former county of Avon contributes one quarter of the region's GDP with Bristol alone accounting for almost half of this. Growth is slower in the western coastal counties of Cornwall, Devon and Dorset **6**
- 10% of the region's GDP results from the £5 billion spent each year by visitors **7**

1 *Regional Economic Strategy for the South West of England 2003-2012*, South West Regional Development Agency (2003) www.southwestrda.org.uk

2 South West Regional Observatory (www.swo.org.uk) and www.statistics.gov.uk

3 *Countryside Character, Volume 8: South West*, The Countryside Agency (1999).

4 *England Rural Development Plan 2000-2006 South West Region*, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (2000).

5 www.southwestrda.org.uk

6 www.southwestrda.org.uk

7 *In search of Chunky Dunsters. A Cultural Strategy for the South West*, Culture South West (2001) www.culturesouthwest.org.uk

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The Historic Environment of the South West Region

The historic environment is one of the key factors that makes the South West an attractive place to live, work and visit. Major attractions including Stonehenge, the City of Bath, Longleat and the National Maritime Museum, Falmouth, stand alongside the relict industrial landscapes of Cornwall. The character of the region's cities, towns and villages has been shaped over many hundreds of years, whilst the history of the countryside can sometimes be traced back to prehistoric times. Many of the 45 million people who come to visit the region each year are attracted by the quality of the historic environment. It is a major educational resource and can help stimulate public and private investment, whilst creating pride and interest in local places. It is a resource that is irreplaceable yet not easily defined.

The South West has a remarkably high number of protected sites. Although the region accounts for just over 18% of the total land area of England it has: 36% of the country's scheduled ancient monuments; 26% of English Heritage properties in care; and 24% of all listed buildings. The region also has three of England's 15 World Heritage Sites. It is estimated that only around 10% of the total resource is protected by statute, but the historic environment embraces far more than these designated assets.

The key highlights for the South West region in 2002-03 include:

- The scientific dating of human remains from Aveline's Hole in the Mendip Hills, the earliest recorded cemetery in Britain. Having been excavated in 1914 the collection was largely destroyed in a bombing raid during World War II. It is only recently that scientists have returned to the surviving bone and teeth samples using modern techniques. The discovery is of international significance and represents the only recorded Mesolithic cemetery in Britain
- Royal William Yard, Plymouth. Owned by the South West Regional Development Agency, the Grade I listed victualling yard is being converted into a range of mixed uses. Urban Splash recently held a public event to market completed apartments in Clarence House and the Brew House. The demand was such that all the properties were sold in a single day

- National Maritime Museum, Falmouth. Opened in 2002 this £28 million landmark building forms part of a much wider regeneration strategy which includes shops, cafes, offices, a cinema and apartments. Attendances during the opening ten weeks reached 112,000, almost three times the forecast estimate
- The acquisition of Tyntesfield House. A £17.5 million grant from the National Heritage Memorial Fund enabled the National Trust to buy the house. The Heritage Lottery Fund has committed £20 million, in principle, to its restoration and ensuring public access

Within the following sections, the contribution of the historic environment to the regeneration of the region's urban and rural communities is examined, together with its important role in education and tourism. An initial attempt is made to quantify the resource, assess its condition, identify key pressures and map the regional skills base. Reliable information is needed in order to establish regional priorities, and gaps in the current state of knowledge are identified and drawn together in a Forward Plan at the end of the report.

The Importance of the Historic Environment

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TOURISM

The South West is the leading holiday destination in the UK. The negative impact of the Foot and Mouth epidemic of 2001 clearly demonstrates its value to the national and regional economy. Of all trips to the South West 78% are motivated by the quality of the environment and it is estimated that about 60% of all paying visits are made to historic buildings, gardens and sites. In 2002, UK residents visiting the region spent £4,519 million and a further £640 million was brought in by overseas visitors. **1** Amongst the top heritage attractions charging admission in the region are the Roman Baths (845,608 visitors) and Stonehenge (759,967 visitors). **2** However, the vast majority of places associated with the historic environment are free for everyone to enjoy. Attractive and distinctive landscapes, villages, towns and cities normally underpin a successful tourist economy and the historic environment plays a key role in this.

The £5 billion spent by visitors accounts for 10% of the region's GDP. **3** Research carried out by the National Trust indicates that conserved landscapes in the South West – the coast, moors, woods, villages and similar rural attractions – support 97,200 jobs or 43% of all those related to tourism in the region. **4** The National Trust is one of the major landowners in the South West having 71 historic houses, castles and other buildings together with a further 210 sites in the countryside. The Historic Houses Association represents 250 properties in the region, of which 69 are open to the public. It is estimated that they employ 4,000 people, and provide £450 million to the regional economy. There are a further 100 English Heritage properties in the South West attracting 2,600,000 visits per annum.

Action

Further information is needed on the number of historic visitor attractions, estimated visits, employment levels and revenue generated by heritage tourism within the region.

HERITAGE-LED REGENERATION

A high quality built environment has a positive impact on the economic and social vibrancy of an area, whereas the physical deterioration of land-mark buildings can often lead to a loss of pride and status. The quality of the historic environment in places such as Bath and South Devon has undoubtedly contributed to high commercial and residential values.



Stonehenge, Wiltshire

Proposals are being progressed to remove the A303 from the core of the World Heritage Site and to develop new visitor facilities on the edge of the designated area. When complete, the scheme will reunite Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments in their natural chalk downland setting and provide radically improved visitor access. Visitor numbers are predicted to rise by 6% to around 850,000 per year which will lead to a rise in tourism spending of an additional £1.5 million compared to current levels. Those involved in the project include the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Trust, English Nature, Highways Agency, Wiltshire County Council and Salisbury District Council. This strongly led and co-ordinated approach will help to ensure that Stonehenge is preserved and managed in a way befitting its international importance.

The appeal of the historic environment can help to stimulate commercial investment such as the large-scale development around Bristol Harbourside and the redevelopment of Gloucester Docks. The recent regeneration of Swindon's Great Western Railway Works, creating mixed use development with museums, retailing and office space – including English Heritage's own National Monuments Record Centre – provides another example of the historic environment acting as a springboard to economic regeneration.

In certain areas, and for some buildings, public pump-priming grants are often a prerequisite for economic activity. Funding from local authorities, the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and other agencies is often the first element from which larger regeneration schemes are built, in the form of grant aid to individual historic buildings as well as areas. These funding programmes can enhance the quality of life of those living there and encourage others to invest in the areas future.

1 www.staruk.org.uk

2 www.staruk.org.uk

3 *In search of Chunky Dunsters. A Cultural Strategy for the South West*, Culture South West (2001) www.culturesouthwest.org.uk

4 *Valuing Our Environment*, National Trust (1999) www.nationaltrust.org.uk

5 *Heritage Dividend 2002. Measuring the results of heritage regeneration 1999–2002*, English Heritage (2002).

6 *Historic Building Regeneration. The Architectural Heritage Fund Annual Review 2001-02*, Architectural Heritage Fund (2002).



St Pauls Church, Bristol

Bristol Townscape Heritage Initiative

The Initiative covers three areas of high economic need in the north east part of Bristol. Building on the earlier Stokes Croft Conservation Area Partnership Scheme which invested £600,000 over three years, the Townscape Heritage Initiative aims to invest £1.5 million between 2002 and 2004. The joint partnership involving the Heritage Lottery Fund and Bristol City Council seeks to address building disrepair with the Regional Development Agency supporting improvements to the public realm. English Heritage is providing expert advice and project monitoring for the Heritage Lottery Fund on the direction of the Initiative to secure appropriate conservation-based regeneration.

The Townscape Heritage Initiative forms part of a much wider strategy which is attempting to tackle issues of social exclusion, deprivation and security through the use of Objective 2 funding and the Single Regeneration Budget. The built environment of the area is of significant heritage merit, but its quality is undervalued and at risk from low property values and dereliction. One of the most important historic buildings is the Grade I listed St Pauls Church which forms part of the Georgian Portland Square. Identified on the English Heritage *Buildings at Risk Register*, the Churches Conservation Trust has secured a £2.5 million grant award from the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake urgent works which include repairs to its decorative plaster ceilings. By taking an integrated approach to the regeneration of the area these various initiatives aim to raise its profile and secure significant long-term benefits for the local community.

Work done nationally by English Heritage on the impact of regeneration in historic areas was published as the *Heritage Dividend* in 2002. 5 It was calculated that every £10,000 of heritage investment by English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund brings an additional £46,000 of funding from private and public sector sources. Following the launch of Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes in 1999, 18 projects have been awarded a total of £2,746,000 in grants

within the region. This has generated an additional £12 million in local authority and private sector funding. In 2003 grants totalling £1,246,000 were agreed for the next three years for Chard, Hayle, Looe, Paignton, Redruth and Tewkesbury.

The Townscape Heritage Initiative is a scheme run by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It supports projects to address problems of disrepair, erosion of quality, and under use of buildings in historic areas of social and economic need, and is intended to help communities in these areas secure their future. To date, 18 grants have been awarded in the South West totalling £5.6 million.

The regeneration of public parks is another of the Heritage Lottery Fund's targeted initiatives. Over £20 million has been awarded to 14 parks across the South West. These include grants of £3.67 million to Queen's Square in Bristol, £3.6 million for Hestercombe Gardens in Somerset and £3.8 million for Mount Wise Park in Plymouth. The restoration of publicly accessible parks and gardens often forms part of wider programmes of rural and urban regeneration.

Building Preservation Trusts also play an important role in the conservation of buildings especially where commercial solutions cannot be found. The 36 Trusts in the South West depend on the support of funding agencies such as English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake their work. During 2001/02 five projects were completed with a total investment value of £11 million. These include the Museum of Empire and Commonwealth Trust, Bristol Old Station, and the renovation for residential use of 20 Lower Bore Street, Bodmin, by the Cornwall Buildings Preservation Trust. 6

Other sources of Government and European funding have a major impact on the historic environment of the region. A range of initiatives are being promoted by the Regional Development Agency which include the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative, Rural Renaissance and Civic Pride. These often involve the regeneration of historic town centres, reuse of historic buildings, public realm improvements and the promotion of high quality urban design.

Within Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly the European Commission is investing £300 million in regeneration projects through its Objective 1 Programme between 2000 and 2006. These often involve settlements where funding has already been secured from English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund for the restoration of historic buildings and areas.

Action

Determine the level and quality of historic environment regeneration activity and the economic impacts of this work.

LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The historic environment has many educational benefits. The national curriculum provides opportunities for school children. There are many local learning initiatives across the region and the larger historic sites and properties offer a range of teaching activities.

By engaging with local communities, the historic environment can stimulate pride and interest in the locality and support for its future conservation. England has an active heritage volunteer workforce of some 155,000 individuals who give their time to at least 113 voluntary bodies and associations. These volunteers contribute an estimated £25 million per year to the historic environment in unpaid work. ⁷

Working closely with the Countryside Agency, the Heritage Lottery Fund has funded 101 Local Heritage Initiative projects in the South West, with grants totalling over £1.085 million. These projects cover a wide variety of local community heritage projects, such as the restoration of a Victorian bathing pool in Torridge by the Women's Rural Workshop.

The Heritage Lottery Fund also provides grants to community projects through its Your Heritage scheme. Almost £3 million has been awarded to 55 projects across the region under this scheme. It has also recently launched its Young Roots grants scheme, which is designed for organisations that work with people aged between 13 and 20.

Of the many societies, trusts and projects across the South West the Civic Trust campaigns for high standards of planning, conservation and regeneration within the regions historic towns and villages, and arranges the annual Heritage Open Days.



Forest of Dean Survey

The Archaeology Service of Gloucestershire County Council is undertaking a survey of the Forest of Dean, the least well researched area of the county. Desk-based collection of information and field survey are being carried out by a team of archaeologists over a five year period with funding from English Heritage, the Countryside Agency, the Forestry Commission and the County Council. The area has a number of active local archaeological and historical groups and there is a high level of public interest in the local historic environment. The project is therefore working closely with these groups through regular workshops and survey projects. Involvement of the wider community is being engaged through radio, newsletters and events like National Archaeology Day. This photograph shows a workshop session at Moseley Green where local enthusiasts are examining the archaeological remains of coal mining activity and their associated tramways. (www.gloucestershire.gov.uk)

These offer free access to a range of sites and properties across England attracting 800,000 people for four days during September. In 2003 there were 294 events organised throughout the South West to visit places that are otherwise closed or charge an admission. ⁸ There are also 104 archaeological bodies which operate in an official, educational or voluntary capacity across the region. ⁹

Action

Examine the membership of historic environment organisations.

Establish the number of formal education visits and teacher training facilities at historic sites.

Undertake research on voluntary sector involvement with the historic environment in the South West.

⁷ Unpublished research undertaken by Heritage Link for *Heritage Counts 2003*.

⁸ *Heritage Open Days Event Directory*, The Civic Trust and English Heritage (2003).

⁹ *The Archaeology Handbook 2003-04*, Current Archaeology.

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The Historic Environment in the South West: An Audit

1 *Historic Environment Records Consultation Paper*, Department for Culture Media and Sport (2003), www.culture.gov.uk

2 www.staruk.org.uk

Heritage Counts aims to assess the condition of all facets of the historic environment, to consider pressure, measure change and identify gaps in the existing research base. The following section provides an overview of the resource and establishes priorities for future action.



Newquay Harbour

Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey

The Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey (CSUS) was set up to be a key contributor to regeneration in the region. It is funded by English Heritage, the Objective 1 Partnership for Cornwall and Scilly (European Regional Development Fund) and, in 2002/03, by the South West of England Regional Development Agency. The project is investigating 19 historic towns and creating for each the information base and urban character assessment which will provide a framework for sustainable action within these historic settlements.

CSUS is a pioneering initiative aimed directly at cutting across the boundary that traditionally divides conservation and economic development. Nationally, it is the first such project carrying out a characterisation-based assessment of the historic urban environment specifically to inform and support a regional economic regeneration programme. Future regeneration initiatives in other historic settlements, both in Cornwall and further afield, will benefit from the new approach developed by the project.

Newquay's harbour was a key element in the town's development before it became a major tourism centre. It retains evidence of its former significance for fishing and as an industrial port. The harbour does not have a high profile in Newquay's present character, but the CSUS report identifies opportunities for both improved interpretation and for enhancing economic activity in the area. (www.historic-cornwall.org.uk)

THE INFORMATION BASE

Information on the local historic environment is generally held within local authority Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs). (Table 1.) These were originally developed to inform the conservation of the archaeological heritage, but in recent years their scope has been broadened to include historic buildings and landscapes. Increasing numbers are using computer databases linked to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) with public access being facilitated through the use of electronic media. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport launched its consultation on the role and scope of local Historic Environment Records in July 2003. The renaming is just one indication of the broader role now undertaken by such records and draft benchmarks for good practice are also being agreed. 1

A number of initiatives have been undertaken to improve the content and quality of information within SMRs. These include the English Heritage Urban Archaeological Database (UAD), Extensive Urban Surveys (EUS) and Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC). UADs and EUS seek to map the surviving archaeological resource within the region's historic towns and cities. Bath, Bristol, Cirencester, Exeter, Gloucester and Plymouth have UADs whilst EUS has been undertaken in Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire and the former county of Avon. HLC usually covers whole counties and is a methodology that enables a generalised assessment of the historic character of an area – its settlement patterns, the size and shape of fields, the extent of industrialisation, woodlands, boundaries, tracks and roads. Characterisation has been completed in Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Exmoor, and the former county of Avon; it is underway in Devon and is about to start in Dorset. English Heritage has, with its regional partners, developed a draft regional HLC map for the South West, with the aim of having complete regional coverage by 2004, whilst in Cornwall the methodology has been used to inform a series of regeneration activities.

The National Monuments Record Centre at Swindon contains further information on the historic environment of the region. This, the public archive of English Heritage, is a source for the archaeology, buildings and aerial photography of England. In 2002, the NMR welcomed 13,283 visitors which represents an increase of 108% on the 2001 figure. 2

1 SMR entries within the South West

| SMR ENTRIES WITHIN THE SOUTH WEST | NUMBER |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| FORMER AVON ^[A] | c.23,000 |
| CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY | c.45,000 |
| DEVON | ^[B] c.63,000 |
| DORSET | c.18,000 |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | c.25,000 |
| SOMERSET | c.22,000 |
| WILTSHIRE | c.21,000 |
| SOUTH WEST TOTAL | c.217,000 |

Notes : ^[A] Includes the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

^[B] Excludes the unitary authorities of Plymouth and Torbay.

2 Scheduled ancient monuments within the South West March 2003

| COUNTY COUNCILS | NO. OF SAMS | NO. OF SAMS BY AREA (SQ KM) | NO. OF SAMS PER 10,000 POPULATION |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| FORMER AVON ^[A] | ^[B] 175.5 | 0.1 | 1.8 |
| CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY | 1576 | 0.4 | 31.4 |
| DEVON | 1,722.5 | 0.3 | 16 |
| DORSET | 1,038 | 0.4 | 15 |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | 465 | 0.2 | 8.2 |
| SOMERSET | 581 | 0.2 | 11.7 |
| WILTSHIRE | 1,345.5 | 0.4 | 22 |
| SOUTH WEST TOTAL | 6,903.5 | 0.3 | 14 |

Source: English Heritage

Notes: ^[A] Includes the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The figures for the unitary authorities of Bournemouth, Plymouth, Poole, Swindon and Torbay are included in the county totals.

^[B] The .5 figures are the result of monuments overlapping into another county.

■ MPP2000 A Review of the Monuments Protection Programme 1986 to 2000, English Heritage (2000).

Action

Examine the number of local Historic Environment Records which meet the draft benching marking scheme set out in the 2003 Government consultation.

Promote the use of Historic Landscape Characterisation and Urban Characterisation within the region and assess its effectiveness in monitoring change, and informing rural and urban regeneration, and planning policy.

WORLD HERITAGE SITES

The resource

World Heritage Sites are selected (or 'inscribed') by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's World Heritage Committee (UNESCO) on the advice of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). Three of England's 15 World Heritage Sites are within the South West; Stonehenge and Avebury (inscribed 1986), the City of Bath (inscribed 1987), and the Dorset and East Devon Coast (inscribed 2001 for natural heritage interest). The region also contains three of the 12 sites in England on the UK Government's 'Tentative List' for future inscription. These are the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, the Great Western Railway and the New Forest.

Condition and management

There are no additional planning controls over development in, or affecting, a World Heritage Site. However, the existence of a World Heritage Site is a material consideration which must be taken into account by local planning authorities when considering development proposals. The UK Government has decided that every UK site should have a Management Plan to meet its obligation to ensure that policies are in place to protect the outstanding universal value of its World Heritage Sites. The World Heritage Committee also monitors the condition of sites.

Management Plans are in place for the three World Heritage Sites in the South West region. The draft nomination bid and Management Plan for the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape is to be completed in Spring 2004 and sent out to public consultation during the Summer. It will be agreed with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in September before being submitted to UNESCO in 2005.

Pressure

For the three existing World Heritage Sites many of the pressures are related to tourism, especially during the summer months when the sites are almost full to capacity. Major progress has been made at both Stonehenge and Avebury in the last year in reverting arable land to pasture through a Defra Countryside Stewardship Scheme, whilst condition surveys of all the known archaeological sites have been completed. Stabilisation works following the appearance of an old mine shaft at the top of Silbury Hill are ongoing.

Action

The key priority is to carry the World Heritage bid for the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape through to inscription. Support will also be given in preparing the submission for the Great Western Railway and New Forest.

SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The resource

Scheduled ancient monuments are designated by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on the advice of English Heritage. The process of scheduling is normally reserved for nationally important archaeological remains and structural monuments that cannot be adapted to alternative uses without comprising their significance. There are currently 19,446 scheduled ancient monuments in England, but this number is growing as progress is made on the national review of the archaeological heritage through the Monuments Protection Programme. ■

The South West has 6,903.5 scheduled ancient monuments – 35.5% of the national total. (Table 2)

The diversity of sites protected by scheduling in the South West is enormous and includes the internationally recognised prehistoric sites and landscapes associated with Stonehenge and Avebury, the extensive evidence for prehistoric and medieval activity on the moorland areas of Exmoor, Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor and West Penwith, and sites associated with the preparation for D-Day in 1944. The largest numbers are concentrated in those parts of the region that are poorly populated and characterised by rural and upland landscapes.

Condition and management

Any works that might have an impact on the archaeological deposits associated with a scheduled ancient monument or that might affect its character require the consent of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, as advised by English Heritage. Development affecting non-designated archaeological remains is managed by local authorities through the use of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*.⁴

There is no reliable information on the condition of archaeological sites in the South West. Following the completion of the pilot 'Scheduled Monuments at Risk' project by English Heritage in the East Midlands, work will soon begin in the South West. The risk assessment is likely to take over two years to complete and will include an evaluation of the condition and setting of all the region's scheduled monuments.

Increasing numbers of archaeological sites and historic buildings are being sympathetically managed through environmental schemes. During 2002/03 agri-environment schemes spent over £13 million nationally in protecting and enhancing the historic environment. Focussing on the restoration of traditional farm buildings and boundaries, the South West received 35% of this funding. Archaeological sites tend to have a higher level of protection on land holdings with agri-environment schemes in place and these schemes contain 33% of the regions scheduled ancient monuments.

Pressure

In 2002/03 there were 193 scheduled monument consent cases logged by English Heritage in the South West. This is an increase of 11% on the previous year and represents 2.8% of all monuments in the region.

The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers maintains a national database on the number of planning applications with an archaeological constraint. An analysis of the results for the period 1997-99 shows that between 2.3% and 3% of all planning applications had significant archaeological implications.⁵



Cleeve Toot Hillfort

Cleeve Wood, North Somerset

Cleeve Wood and the scheduled Hillfort of Cleeve Toot in North Somerset was purchased by North Somerset Council using funds from the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund and a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Through a jointly developed management plan, the site is to be used as an environmental, educational and recreational resource. The Hillfort will be cleared of trees, the Site of Special Scientific Interest enhanced, and the resources of the wood utilised by the local community.

Action

The need for further information on the condition of all scheduled ancient monuments is a key priority for the South West and the Scheduled Monuments at Risk Survey should be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

Further research is needed on the number of archaeological investigations undertaken by local authorities as part of the planning function.

⁴ *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning*, Department of the Environment (1990).

⁵ *Planning and Conservation Casework Survey 1997-1999*, Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers and English Heritage (2003).

6 Local Authority Conservation Provision, Oxford Brookes University (2002) www.english-heritage.org.uk

7 English Heritage Register of Buildings at Risk 2003, English Heritage (2003).

8 Local Authority Conservation Provision, Oxford Brookes University (2002) www.english-heritage.org.uk

9 Local Authority Practice and PPG15: Information and Effectiveness, Oxford Brookes University (2000) www.english-heritage.org.uk

10 Local Authority Conservation Provision, Oxford Brookes University (2000) www.english-heritage.org.uk

LISTED BUILDINGS AND LOCAL LISTS

The resource

The list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest is compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on the advice of English Heritage. They are classified Grade I (of outstanding interest), Grade II* (of more than local interest) and Grade II, which includes over 90% of all listings.

In 2003 the South West had 88,865 entries on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest which represents 23.8% of the national total, the highest for any English region. (Table 3) Of these, 2.3% were listed Grade I, 5.7% Grade II* and 92% Grade II. The numbers vary considerably across the region with the largest concentrations being found in the historic settlements of Bristol, Bath, Wells, Salisbury, Exeter and Plymouth. They include the fine medieval cathedrals of Wells and Salisbury, the military defences of Portland and Plymouth, the important country houses of Longleat and Wilton together with the many hundreds of late-medieval domestic houses which characterise the rural landscape.

Many local authorities also maintain a local list of historic buildings that are important to the locality. Although the buildings have no statutory protection the desirability of their retention is often identified in local plan policies. A recent national survey found that only six of the 21 authorities who maintained a local list in the South West had suitable development plan policies. The average number of locally listed buildings per authority was 26.5. **6**

Condition and management

Once a building is listed, listed building consent is required for any works, both internal and external, which affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. In most instances, local planning authorities determine applications for Grade II listed buildings, whereas English Heritage must be consulted on those that are listed Grade I, II* or involve substantial alteration.

Since 1998, English Heritage has published an annual *Register of Buildings at Risk*. **7** This Register lists details of all Grade I and II* listed buildings and structural scheduled ancient monuments known to be 'at risk'.

In 2003, the South West had 151 Grade I and II* buildings at risk. This represents 2.2% of the regional total, the second lowest percentage in England. Of all the buildings and structures on the Register in the South West, 38% are capable of beneficial reuse and 32% of low-key use if repaired. In total, the region has a conservation deficit of £36.4 million or 10.5% of the national total. Conservation deficit is the extent to which the cost of repair, and where appropriate, conversion to the optimum viable use compatible with maintaining the special character of the building, will exceed its value after repair and conversion. With only 6.5% of the entries capable of economic repair, the vast majority (93.5%) will require some form of subsidy to bring them back into use. For many of these buildings the availability of grant aid provides the only viable solution.

The Local Authority Conservation Provision Survey (LACP) provides the only meaningful statistics for Grade II listed buildings at risk. **8** In 2002, the average number of listed buildings at risk per authority in the region was 93, almost twice the national average, whereas local authority grants for the repair of these structures are just above the national average.

Pressure

During 2002/03 decisions were taken on 7,481 listed building applications in the South West. (Table 4) This represents 9% of all planning decisions and equates to one application for every 12 listed buildings. Of these, 6,628 or 89% were granted consent. In 2002/03 English Heritage was consulted on 1,134 listed building applications; an average of 1 application for every 78 listed buildings.

These figures demonstrate the considerable pressure on the listed building stock in the South West. With an average of 89% of all listed building applications being granted consent concerns have been expressed at a national level about the quality of listed building applications and the resulting impact of these schemes on the resource. **9**

The LACP Survey found that on average 6 Enforcement Notices were served in 2001 per local authority in the region compared to a national average of 5.4 per local authority. **10** The number of prosecutions per local authority in 2001 was 0.3 compared to a national average of 0.4 per local authority.

3 Listed building entries within the South West September 2003

| COUNTY COUNCILS | GRADE I | GRADE II* | GRADE II | TOTAL (KM ²) | NO OF LBS BY AREA POPULATION | NO OF LBS PER 10,000 |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| FORMER AVON ^[A] | 244 | 546 | 7,458 | 8,248 | 6.2 | 83.8 |
| CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY | 228 | 587 | 11,814 | 12,629 | 3.5 | 251.9 |
| DEVON | 424 | 1,248 | 19,094 | 20,766 | 3.1 | 193.2 |
| DORSET | 263 | 521 | 9,182 | 9,966 | 3.8 | 143.8 |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | 259 | 698 | 11,841 | 12,798 | 4.8 | 226.7 |
| SOMERSET | 311 | 765 | 10,547 | 11,623 | 3.4 | 233.4 |
| WILTSHIRE | 288 | 714 | 11,833 | 12,835 | 3.7 | 209.4 |
| SOUTH WEST TOTAL | 2,017 | 5,079 | 81,769 | 88,865 | 3.7 | 180.3 |

Source: English Heritage

Notes: ^[A] Includes the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The figures for the unitary authorities of Bournemouth, Plymouth, Poole, Swindon and Torbay are included in the county totals.

4 Listed building consent decided by county 2002/03

| COUNTY COUNCILS | LISTED BUILDING DECISIONS | LISTED BUILDING CONSENTS | PERCENTAGE GAINING CONSENT |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| FORMER AVON ^[A] | 1,067 | 901 | 84% |
| CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY | 710 | 630 | 89% |
| DEVON | 1,758 | 1,585 | 90% |
| DORSET | 758 | 652 | 86% |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | 1,154 | 1,036 | 90% |
| SOMERSET | 960 | 857 | 89% |
| WILTSHIRE | 1,074 | 967 | 90% |
| SOUTH WEST TOTAL | 7,481 | 6,628 | 89% |

Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Notes: ^[A] Includes the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The figures for the unitary authorities of Bournemouth, Plymouth, Poole, Swindon and Torbay are included in the county totals.

Local Authority
Conservation Provision,
Oxford Brookes University
(2002) www.english-heritage.org.uk



Court Farm Barn, Winterbourne, Northavon

This Grade II* listed barn was acquired by South Gloucestershire Council with support from English Heritage. The repairs to the barn will be completed in 2003 and it will then be removed from the *Buildings at Risk Register*. The management of the building is to be placed in the hands of a trust, providing a mix of uses including a Sustainable Food and Farming Centre, heritage education centre and small business units.

The pressure for change is greater amongst certain categories of historic building and in the South West redundant farm buildings are a major concern. These are increasingly seen as a valuable economic resource which can aid rural diversification, but the continued pressure for residential conversion often prevents the use of such buildings for more desirable purposes. English Heritage, Devon County Council and other agencies have completed an initial survey of the historic farmsteads in Devon with a view to undertaking further detailed research. Work has also been completed on the historic farmsteads in the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Future projects are being considered for the Dartmoor National Park and the area of Cornwall which is receiving European Objective 1 funding.

Action

Further research on local authority Buildings at Risk Registers and the provision of local authority grant aid.

Establish the number and effectiveness of local lists of historic buildings.

Assess the quality of listed building applications and the impact of approved schemes on the historic fabric.

Aid the conservation and beneficial reuse of historic farm buildings through a rapid characterisation study.

CONSERVATION AREAS

The resource

Conservation areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. They are designated by local planning authorities usually after a period of consultation with the local community. The size and diversity of the South West region is reflected in its conservation areas. These include a large number of small villages which focus around the early parish church and medieval market towns like Totnes. The Regency, Victorian and Edwardian character of the conservation areas of Weymouth, Ilfracombe and Bournemouth can be related to the growth of tourism during the nineteenth century, whilst bomb damage during World War II in Plymouth, Exeter and Bristol has led to the creation of conservation areas whose character reflects post-war redevelopment.

In April 2003 the South West had 1,509 conservation areas which represents 17% of the national total, the second highest of any English region. (Table 5) The average number of conservation areas per county was 215 with Devon having the highest number at 329.

Condition and management

Local authorities are expected to ensure that any development within a conservation area does not compromise its special architectural and historic interest, and permission is also required for the demolition of any unlisted building. Through the use of Article 4 Directions planning applications can be required for certain types of development that are normally exempt from planning control in order to retain historic features such as doors, windows, roofs and frontages. Local authorities are encouraged to undertake Conservation Area Appraisals and establish Conservation Area Advisory Committees to assist in their management and guide future development. Conservation Area Appraisals are often adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Approximately 12% of all conservation areas within the South West have a Conservation Area Appraisal compared to a national average of 29%, whilst 15% of all authorities have a Conservation Area Advisory Committee. ■ There is currently no reliable information on the number of conservation areas with Article 4 Directions.

5 Conservation areas within the South West

| CONSERVATION AREAS WITHIN THE SOUTH WEST APRIL 2003 | NUMBER |
|---|--------------|
| FORMER AVON ^[A] | 129 |
| CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY | 155 |
| DEVON | 329 |
| DORSET | 212 |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | 233 |
| SOMERSET | 184 |
| WILTSHIRE | 266 |
| SOUTH WEST TOTAL | 1,509 |

Source: English Heritage

Notes: ^[A] Includes the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The figures for the unitary authorities of Bournemouth, Plymouth, Poole, Swindon and Torbay are included in the county totals.

6 Conservation area consent decided by county 2002/03

| COUNTY COUNCILS | CONSERVATION AREA CONSENTS | PROPORTION OF CONSERVATION AREA CONSENTS PER CONSERVATION AREA |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| FORMER AVON ^[A] | 66 | 1 in 2 |
| CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY | 48 | 1 in 3 |
| DEVON | 108 | 1 in 3 |
| DORSET | 65 | 1 in 3 |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE | 79 | 1 in 3 |
| SOMERSET | 30 | 1 in 6 |
| WILTSHIRE | 50 | 1 in 5 |
| SOUTH WEST TOTAL | 446 | 1 in 3 |

Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Notes: ^[A] Includes the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The figures for the unitary authorities of Bournemouth, Plymouth, Poole, Swindon and Torbay are included in the county totals.

Pressure

There is no detailed information available on the number of planning applications that take place each year, or have an impact upon the setting of the region's conservation areas. In 2002/03 schemes requiring conservation area consent were granted for approximately one in every three conservation areas within the South West. (Table 6.) Local authorities are also required to notify English Heritage of any development proposal within a conservation area that exceeds 1,000 square metres or 20 metres in height. In 2002/03 the regional office dealt with 287 applications which equates to one application for every 5.2 conservation areas. These large schemes are likely to have a major impact on the character and appearance of a conservation area. Concerns have also been expressed about the damaging effects arising from incremental change.

Action

Assess the number and quality of conservation area appraisals in the South West and their adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Consider the adoption and success of Article 4 Directions within conservation areas.

Examine the impact of large scale and incremental change in conservation areas.

HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS**The resource**

The Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest is compiled by English Heritage. Entries on the Register are categorised into Grades I, II* and II. Grade II sites are of national importance, II* are of exceptional historic interest and Grade I are of international importance.

In April 2003, there were 1,563 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens in England. The South West has 287 entries (18%) compared to a national average of 174. Of these, 31 are designated Grade I, 79 Grade II* and 177 Grade II. They cover a total land area of 30,758 hectares and 204 (71%) are in private ownership.

Condition and management

The inclusion on the Register does not bring any additional statutory controls, but the presence of a Registered Park and Garden must be taken into account by local planning authorities when considering development proposals. Work is currently underway in Yorkshire on a pilot methodology for determining whether a historic park and garden is at risk.

Pressure

The Garden History Society is notified of all planning applications affecting a Registered Park or its setting. During 2002/03 there were 90 notifications which represents 31% of all Registered Parks and Gardens in the South West.

Action

The Historic Parks and Gardens at Risk Survey should be implemented as soon as possible and supported by Conservation Management Plans where appropriate.

HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS**The resource**

Established in 1995, the Historic Battlefields Register is compiled by English Heritage. Sites are only included where nationally important battles are sufficiently well documented to be identified on the ground. Eight of the 43 recorded entries on the Register (19%) are in the South West and these cover 1,938 hectares.

Condition and management

There are no additional planning controls for sites that are included on the Register, but the presence of a historic battlefield is a material consideration in determining a planning application. English Heritage will begin a survey to assess the condition of all the Registered Historic Battlefields in 2004.

Pressure

Although English Heritage should be notified of all planning applications that affect historic battlefields, the information base is poorly developed.

Action

The condition survey of Registered Historic Battlefields is the key priority and should be supported by Conservation Management Plans where appropriate.

WETLAND LANDSCAPES AND THE MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

The resource

The South West has the longest seaboard in the UK and 60% of the country's Heritage Coast. In 2003, 20 of the 39 sites of vessels (51%) lying on or in the seabed of England designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 were in the South West. This Act protects important sites where the wreck, content or cargo may be of historical, archaeological or artistic importance. Other archaeological remains within the coastal zone include submerged sites and landscapes, sea wall defences and military installations.

The organic remains on the Somerset Levels and Moors contain a rich legacy of prehistoric evidence and are amongst the most important wetland landscapes in England.

Condition and management

Given the complexity of the maritime archaeological resource, there is little reliable information on its condition. Wetland landscapes and monuments are now recognised as being under considerable pressure and positive management strategies need to be developed in order to ensure their long-term survival. English Heritage is currently compiling an inventory of significant wetland sites and creating best practice management guidance.

Rapid Coastal Zone Assessments have been commissioned for the Isles of Scilly and Dorset. These will be used to promote a more thorough understanding of the scope and scale of the resource in these areas.

Pressure

Most threats come from natural environmental conditions although problems arise through improvements to sea wall defences, off-shore wind farms, diving activities, drainage schemes and, the extraction of marine aggregates and peat.

Action

Increase the understanding of the maritime and wetland archaeological resource. Further Rapid Coastal Zone Assessments will be commissioned to ensure that the historic environment resource is understood for the whole of the South West.

Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol

Established in 1837 Arnos Vale Cemetery was designed as a Greek Necropolis. It is one of the most important Victorian cemeteries in England and this significance is reflected in its Grade II* entry on the *Parks and Gardens Register* and the listing of four buildings and 26 monuments. In 1987 the present owners suggested that a large part of the cemetery should be used as a residential development. A campaign by the local community with the support of Bristol City Council led to the serving of a Compulsory Purchase Order and on 07 August 2003 the Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust was granted a licence to manage the cemetery. Featured on the recent BBC 2 *Restoration* programme, the Trust aims to secure the conservation, operation and management of Arnos Vale Cemetery and its historic buildings, tombs and ecological interest for the public benefit and as a working cemetery. The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded a grant of £103,000 to develop this project, and committed a further £3.17 million to the project itself. Richard Smith, the Chairman of Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust, is shown on the front cover of this report. (www.arnosvalecemeterytrust.org.uk)



Queens Sedgemoor, Glastonbury, Somerset

A late Bronze Age ritual pile alignment revealed by peat shrinkage in Queens Sedgemoor near Glastonbury. Waterlogged structures such as this and the well-known prehistoric track ways from the Brue valley are at risk from peat wastage which will destroy 0.45 to 0.79m of peat in grassland and up to 2m in arable cultivation over the next 100 years. This is enough to destroy all the nationally important wetland monuments in the Somerset moors including 15 scheduled monuments.

5

Mapping the Regional Skills Base

1 *Heritage Under Pressure: a rapid study of resources in English local authorities*, Baker D and Chitty G (2002) www.english-heritage.org.uk

2 *Local Authority Conservation Provision*, Oxford Brookes University (2002) www.english-heritage.org.uk

Suitably qualified professionals and individuals with appropriate skills are vital for the successful conservation of the historic environment. Conservation officers and local authority archaeologists manage change through statutory and non-statutory processes and offer advice at a locally accessible level. But the distribution of this resource is uneven. It is estimated that nationally up to a third of all planning applications impinge on the historic environment, whereas local authority staff costs for the sector have fallen by 10% in real terms between 1996 and 2000. 1 The LACP survey found that the average local authority has the equivalent of 1.7 full time historic building conservation specialists and in the South West the figure stands at 2.2 which reflects a slight increase in the past three years. 2 The survey concluded that with an ever expanding work-load many local authorities are now operating at the limits of their capacity and the scope for engaging in long-term proactive work such as compiling local lists, conservation area appraisals and undertaking enforcement action is diminishing. The monitoring of the outcome of planning, conservation area and listed building decisions is rarely undertaken and there is no systematic monitoring of the condition of historic assets.

Other areas of concern include the training of elected councillors in local historic environment issues, a shortage of architects with conservation accreditation and the decline in traditional craft skills. The majority of planning applications affecting the historic environment are not submitted by professionals with conservation accreditation and many building contractors have insufficient knowledge of historic building construction and repair. The Association of Preservation Trusts, the national organisation for building preservation trusts, seeks to influence its members to employ both professionals and the use of craft skills of an appropriate standard for projects, whereas the Heritage Lottery Fund are now asking for training plans to accompany all capital projects over £1 million.

In 2003 English Heritage and the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) set up the National Heritage Training Group to promote conservation training and education to meet the needs of the sector. CITB, English Heritage, Historic Scotland and the Scottish Executive intend to undertake research on a region-by-region basis to assess the degree of need and demand for skills and labour locally. Once this information is available it will be used in collaboration with local employers and FE colleges to establish or adapt courses and qualifications to meet demand.

Action

Map the regional skills base for both professionals and building contractors across the region, assess the level of training and identify any gaps in provision.