



ENGLISH HERITAGE

HERITAGE AT RISK

2014

NORTH EAST

HALL

HERITAGE AT RISK

Heritage at Risk is our campaign to save listed buildings and important historic sites, places and landmarks from neglect or decay. At its heart is the Heritage at Risk Register, an online database containing details of each site known to be at risk. It is analysed and updated annually and this leaflet summarises the results.

Over the past year we have focused much of our effort on assessing listed Places of Worship, and visiting those considered to be in poor or very bad condition as a result of local reports.

We now know that of the 14,775 listed places of worship in England, 6% (887) are at risk and as such are included on this year's Register. These additions mean the overall number of sites on the Register has increased to 5,753. However, 575 sites have been removed from the 2013 Register, which includes one of our biggest achievements this year, Heather thatch barn in Burncliffe, Tow House, near Bardon Mill in Northumberland.

Graham Saunders, Planning and Conservation Director, North East

Successful partnerships are crucial in tackling heritage at risk; a fact demonstrated consistently in the North East, where our local partners have been vital in improving so many important heritage assets. 27 heritage assets, of wide variety, were removed for positive reasons from the 2013 Register.

When owners take on projects to enhance heritage assets, we'll explain the issues and help formulate options. It can take time to repair assets and it may seem a daunting task - but we are here to help.

Funding is limited but we'll be creative to release maximum value from rationed resources. We'll also bring together people with the energy and vision to deliver sustainable solutions.

We must apply our grant funding where most needed. Project development is important, allowing owners and partners to identify all issues and options before embarking on major repair programmes. At Barmoor Castle, we paid for a Conservation Management Plan to facilitate finding a new use for the building. We also funded a condition survey for Linnels Mill, which led to a successful bid for grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Our successful partnership with Natural England continues, with scheduled monuments included within Environmental Stewardship schemes where erosion and unrestricted growth of vegetation threatens archaeological sites. Recent projects include earthwork repairs at Old Bewick Hillfort, tree-felling on the hillfort in Beanley Plantation and bracken removal on prehistoric sites on Barningham Moor.

We work with the HLF to enable delivery of its Grants for Places of Worship scheme and have increased our understanding of the condition of these buildings by working

with those who manage and care for places of worship.

Similarly, we are exploring the condition of grade II listed buildings that aren't in use for worship, by developing a toolkit for volunteers and professionals to carry out surveys. The results of this work will help us to understand the nature and extent of the problem and so inform a successful long-term local strategy.

Whilst we've been very successful in improving many assets, there is no time to relax - 20 heritage assets were newly assessed and added to the 2014 Register. Over the next year, we'll work to assess the condition of publicly owned and managed parks, gardens and cemeteries, the latter representing over 50% of registered parks and gardens in the North East. We'll also assess rural and privately owned parks and gardens. Though many sites remain sound, investigations have revealed deterioration in their condition, exacerbated by increasing demands on the resources needed to maintain them.

Acknowledging successful delivery of heritage projects by volunteers and community groups, we'll hold a number of events to bring groups together to share experiences, develop best practice and build on our collective knowledge about how to reduce the risks to heritage assets in the North East.



Kate Wilson,
Principal Adviser, Heritage at Risk

HAMSTERLEY HALL, HAMSTERLEY, COUNTY DURHAM

Hamsterley Hall is one of the most interesting and significant country houses in County Durham. Situated in the rural wooded landscape of the Derwent valley, the Hall is an 18th century Gothic house with 19th and 20th century additions. Unfortunately Hamsterley Hall has suffered from decades of decline leaving the property with an estimated repair bill of £4 million. Recent structural failure in the service wing resulted in its controlled demolition. The remaining buildings now require immediate and substantial repair if this important heritage asset is not to be lost forever.

2014 REGISTER: NORTH EAST

27 SITES REMOVED FROM THE 2013 REGISTER

£768k
16 SITES



WHAT'S ON THE HERITAGE AT RISK REGISTER?

27
CONSERVATION
AREAS (9.7%)



NATIONAL AVERAGE

NORTH EAST

IN THE NORTH EAST THERE ARE...



4.0%



6.8%

66
BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES



6.0%



5.3%

26
PLACES OF WORSHIP



15.2% 12.7%

176
SCHEDULED MONUMENTS



5.7%



5.5%

3
PARKS & GARDENS

...ON THE REGISTER



CHURCH OF ST JAMES, BENWELL, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY:

Benwell is a suburb of Newcastle; the site of a Roman fort (on the line of Hadrian's Wall) and a medieval village which was swallowed up by the 19th and 20th century expansion of Newcastle. The Church of St James was built as a chapel of ease in 1832. It became a parish church in 1843 to cope with the huge population explosion in the suburbs of Newcastle as a result of the industrialisation of Tyneside. Re-designed by John Dobson in 1864 in a Norman style of architecture it was added to in the late 19th century by Hicks and Charleswood, both local architects of repute.

John Dobson was a notable northern architect who built a national reputation practising in the north east of England. He is especially linked with the city of

Newcastle, where he designed many public buildings and laid out several new streets for the speculative builder Richard Grainger. Interestingly, Grainger is buried in St James' churchyard.

Unfortunately, the church suffered for many years from maintenance issues and vandalism that had left it in a very poor condition. However, a very enthusiastic congregation was instrumental in tackling the need to understand the problems with their leaking roof. Their efforts resulted in the replacement of the roof covering and valley gutters along the full length of the building.

IS IT AT RISK?

No. The church of St James was removed from the English Heritage Heritage at Risk Register in 2014.

WHAT'S THE CURRENT SITUATION?

A comprehensive package of works to the roof was completed at the end of 2013. Following the re-plastering of the interior the building is once again in full use as a place of worship and community centre. The church now serves as a centre of heritage and culture for the Benwell area with a packed events programme throughout the year.

The work was carried out with funds raised through a "Raise the Roof" campaign launched in 2012, along with considerable financial and technical support from English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The innovative Raise the Roof campaign asked people to sponsor a slate for £5.00 to raise the necessary cash for the roof work. This in turn has built support for the church and contributed to the re-use of this valuable community asset.

HELP HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic buildings are irreplaceable; they give us our sense of place and contribute to our quality of life. These precious buildings need to be looked after for future generations, but how do we know what needs our help the most? English Heritage is encouraging community groups, volunteers, building owners and local authorities across the country to come together to record the condition of grade II listed buildings in their area. Volunteers will visit a selection of grade II buildings local to them and answer questions, in the form of a survey, about the condition of the building. This information will be collected together and shared with local planning authorities to help identify those grade II buildings most at risk. Visit www.english-heritage.org.uk/help/historicbuildings to find out more.

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MONASTIC CELL AND MEDIEVAL TOWER ON COQUET ISLAND, HAUXLEY, NORTHUMBERLAND

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY:

Coquet Island is one of a number of remote islands off the Northumberland coast that has a long and fascinating history. The first occupants were monks in the 7th century seeking solitude and isolation away from everyday life. They built a small monastic settlement here in order to focus on religious activities and contemplation. The most famous early resident was St Cuthbert who was visited here by kings and queens seeking his council. Later, it became a hermitage attached to Tynemouth Priory and we know that a hermit by the name of Martin lived here in the early 13th century. After the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century the island was

abandoned and the monastic buildings fell into ruin. The unsettled and war-like conditions in the Borders during the medieval period meant that a defensible tower house was also built on the island alongside the monastic buildings. In the 19th century the medieval buildings were re-developed by Trinity House as a lighthouse and adjacent cottage for the lighthouse keeper. The lighthouse is still operational and the island is now a bird sanctuary and protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. What survives of the medieval buildings is probably 15th century in date, but they overlie a series of structures built on the island since the 7th century. The archaeological potential is immense.

IS IT AT RISK?

No. Parts of the structures, including the important medieval buildings, had become structurally unstable and extremely dangerous and were in need of comprehensive repair. This included the lighthouse keeper's cottage, built in the 19th century into what remained of the medieval chapel and adjacent domestic buildings. However, a successful repair programme has resulted in Coquet Island being removed from the English Heritage Heritage at Risk Register in 2014.

WHAT'S THE CURRENT SITUATION?

The island belongs to the Duke of Northumberland. The RSPB and Trinity House operate all year round on the island and are frequently cut off from the mainland for weeks at a time by bad weather. Following the successful programme of repair carried out over a number of years and in challenging weather conditions the island can now be left to the protected colony of Roseate Terns, the RSPB and Trinity House. The repair project was 'highly commended' in the building conservation category of the North East RICS Renaissance awards in 2014.

The project required the cooperation of a number of organisations all with competing priorities and limited budgets. Financial support was secured from English Heritage, RSPB, The Northumberland Estate and Trinity House, with technical advice from English Heritage and project-managed by the North of England Civic Trust. The result is that none of the structures are on the Heritage at Risk Register and the RSPB has comfortable accommodation for the warden and volunteers in the refurbished lighthouse keeper's cottage which has been brought back into use after many years of neglect.

Find out what's at risk by searching or downloading the online Heritage at Risk Register at www.english-heritage.org.uk/har

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