

Heritage at Risk



Historic England

North East Summary 2015



For the first time, we've compared all sites on the Heritage at Risk Register – from houses to hillforts – to help us better understand which types of site are most commonly at risk. There are things that make each region special and, once lost, will mean a sense of our region's character is lost too. Comparing the North East to the national Register shows that 32.3% of all cemeteries and 15.4% of all types of cairns are in our region. There are 292 entries on the North East 2015 Heritage at Risk Register, making up 5.3% of the national total of 5,478 entries. The Register provides an annual snapshot of historic sites known to be at risk from neglect, decay or inappropriate development. Our local HAR team, led by Kate Wilson, continues to work with owners, funders and other stakeholders to find the right solutions for sites on the Register.

Carol Pyrah
Planning Director, North East



The historic buildings and landscapes of the North East provide a tangible link to the exhilarating tale that is our local history. It is a story in which we all play a part but this shared legacy is under constant attack from an array of implacable

enemies, natural or otherwise. With an army of partners, Historic England continues to fight for our heritage. This year we successfully removed 13 assets from the Register by providing, and attracting, partnership investment to deliver solutions.

Critically, we help identify issues and options before repair programmes start. Using limited funding, we bring together individuals and organisations to deliver sustainable solutions. At **Marsden** limekilns, we funded work to identify the urgent repairs needed to stabilise this monumental example of our industrial past. Other assets being grant-aided range from the World War I acoustic mirror at **Fulwell**, medieval chapel ruins at **Low Friarside** and a rare glasshouse at **Felton Park**.

The Countryside Stewardship scheme is re-launched this year and will bolster our successful partnership with Natural England. Funding research to find new, effective ways of controlling bracken, which threatens to overwhelm our upland landscapes, is a key joint project.

Successful clearance has already occurred on **Harehaugh hillfort** in the **Northumberland National Park** and sites in the **Ingram valley**.

We continue to work with those who manage and care for places of worship. We provide expert advice to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable delivery of its Grants for Places of Worship scheme. We welcome the Fund's support for projects like **Inspired Futures**, which build local capacity to tackle heritage at risk. With a third of all cemeteries on the national Register in the North East, we must consider how we can reduce risk to them.

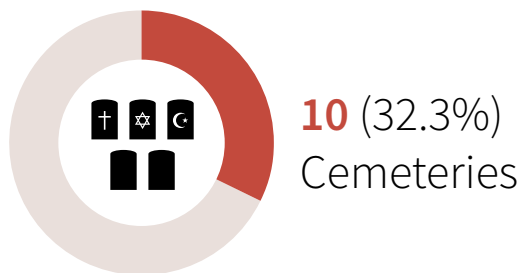
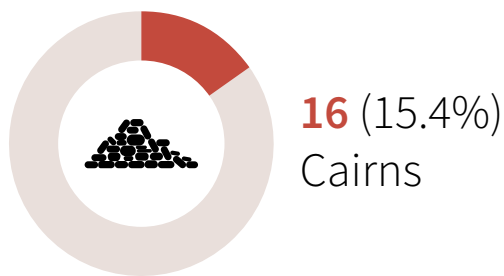
Encouragingly, there is increasing awareness amongst community and volunteer groups that their contribution in the fight to reduce risks to heritage has a lasting legacy. We will continue to support the development of best practice, skills and events that build on this success and enable more people to get involved.

There are many challenges for the year ahead and we will be working with owners to find solutions. Our priorities will include urban cemeteries in **Newcastle** and industrial heritage sites in **Corbridge** and **Whinfield**. We'll also focus on our rich railway heritage by tackling issues affecting the **Stockton and Darlington** and **Bowes** railways. Coastal heritage assets in **Hartlepool**, **Seaton Delaval**, **Woodhorn**, **Cresswell** and the **Northumberland Coast AONB** will also be supported.

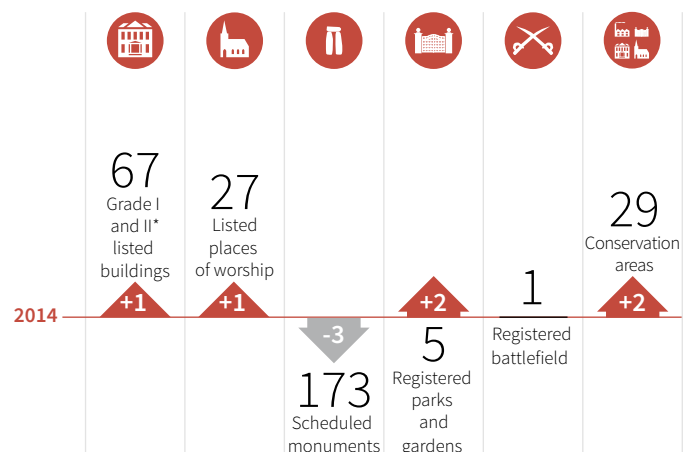
Kate Wilson
Principal Adviser, Heritage at Risk

Cover image: Comprising a Tudor-style arch with octagonal piers and gabled pinnacles, the principal entrance to **St John's Cemetery, Newcastle upon Tyne** fronts on to Elswick Road. Beyond the arch lies an important funerary landscape suffering from sustained neglect and vandalism. The burial grounds are satisfactorily maintained but the buildings are vacant. This acts as a magnet to vandals who further damage the deteriorating fabric. Yet these buildings have great potential and community ownership of the landscape could open this green space to a variety of uses.

Entries on the 2015 national Register in the **North East**



Designated assets on the 2015 **North East** Register



There are **302** assets on the **North East** Register, three more than 2014

Acoustic Mirror **Fulwell, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear**



Background and history

Aircraft, including airships, began to be used as offensive weapons in World War I, triggering the development of new systems of defence for the UK. One such early warning system utilised acoustic detection.

Several experimental

sound-detecting acoustic dishes were built at strategic locations around the south and east coasts of England. The acoustic mirror at Fulwell is one of only four known survivals in the North East of England.

The system works through a receiving dish reflecting and transferring the sound of distant aircraft engines to a focal point where a listener can detect the sound.

The operator can then give the signal to evacuate the area. Under ideal conditions the sound of approaching aircraft and ships could be received from 20 miles away. Fulwell acoustic mirror is a fairly typical U-shape in plan and was built in the last two years of World War I to defend the Tyne and Wear estuaries.

Is it at risk?

Following an extensive repair and landscaping programme managed by Sunderland City Council and funded by the council, Historic England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, the acoustic mirror has been removed from the Heritage at Risk Register and is now open to the public.

What's the current situation?

Now the mirror has been rescued, it can be visited to appreciate its location and function. The site is managed by Sunderland City Council and is open to the public at any reasonable time. Access is from the A1018 or from the Fulwell Quarry Nature Reserve.

Tarset Castle **Tarset, Northumberland**

Background and history

Tarset Castle is a fortified house dating back to the 13th century. It is situated on a steep-sided promontory overlooking the Tarset Burn. Sited in the heart of the Northumberland borderlands, the castle was at risk for many centuries due to wars with the Scots and endemic lawlessness and banditry. An 18th century sketch shows the castle as a long, narrow rectangular building with corner turrets surrounded by a wall.

Is it at risk?

The castle has been on the Heritage at Risk Register since 2009. A combination of river erosion and groundwater pressure is destabilising the upper levels of the castle mound, causing it to slide towards the river. An engineer's report in 2013 concluded that structural failure will increase in the future with the resultant loss of archaeological deposits.

What's the current situation?

Today, the fortified house is largely visible as a



grassed-over mound. An archaeological evaluation has helped to clarify the nature of the surviving, threatened archaeological deposits. Whilst engineers have concluded that failure will increase, a number of options are being considered to stabilise the mound and protect the vulnerable archaeology.

Historic England Angel Awards

The Historic England Angel Awards were founded in 2011, co-funded by the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation. They celebrate local people's extraordinary efforts to save historic buildings and places. Over the past five years, the Angel Awards have showcased inspirational friends groups, communities, worshippers, owners and craftspeople.

From 2016, we'll be looking for projects that champion the historic environment in many ways. These could include:

- community action projects
- heritage research, survey or education projects
- heritage professionals
- lifetime achievements
- and of course, rescues of heritage sites

Shortlisted Angels will continue to be put to the vote in the ever-popular People's Favourite Award.

Look out for news at www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/AngelAwards

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Find out what's at risk by searching or downloading the online Heritage at Risk Register at:
HistoricEngland.org.uk/har