

Heritage at Risk





Our West Midlands Heritage at Risk team continues to work hard to reduce the number of heritage assets on the Register. This year the figure has been brought down to 416, which is 7.8% of the national total of 5,290. While we work to decrease the overall numbers we do, unfortunately, have to add individual sites each year and recognise the challenge posed by a number of long-standing cases. We look to identify opportunities to focus resources on these tough cases. This year we have grant-aided some £1.5m of conservation repairs, Management Agreements and capacity building, covering a wide range of sites. We are particularly pleased to have jointly funded a Places of Worship Support Officer with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham; the first Catholic Diocesan Places of Worship Support Officer in England.

Veryan Heal Planning Director, West Midlands



The 2017 Heritage at Risk Register for the West Midlands reflects the hard work of the local team, our partner organisations and owners of our locally designated heritage. We continue to follow the national trend and have reduced the overall

number of heritage assets on the West Midlands Register.

In last year's published Register we identified a number of priority sites for the regional team and we are encouraged with the progress made. Snodhill and Clifford castles have received significant grant aid and will be removed from the Register in the coming year. Conservation work is due to start at 31 High Street, Droitwich. Bedlam Furnace, in the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, has been removed from the Register.

We have also made significant progress on a number of long-standing cases. Pitchford Hall, Shropshire, has new owners and we are working closely with them as they carry out extensive conservation work. We are exploring options with the City of Stoke-on-Trent to tackle the issues at Price and Kensington Teapot Works and Chatterley Whitfield Colliery. The city walls of Hereford and the town walls of Shrewsbury have been removed from the Register. We have negotiated with

Birmingham City Council to keep Moseley Road Baths open until April 2018 and we are working with the City Council, the Moseley Road Baths Action Group, the Friends of Moseley Road Baths and The National Trust to explore potential options for the future use of the building. Curzon Street Station, Birmingham, is another major building where we expect to see significant works commence in the coming year.

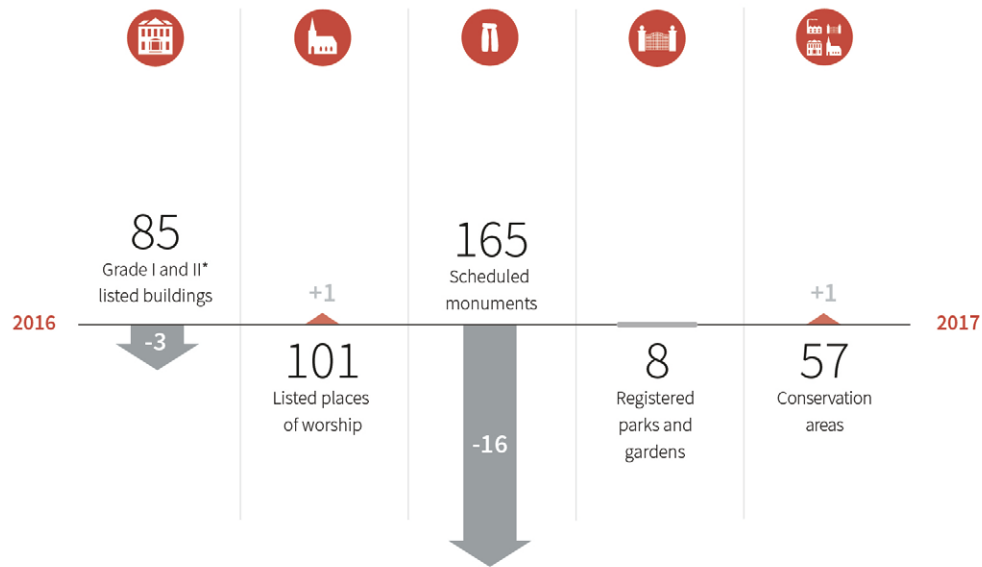
Using our grant aid, the Heritage at Risk team also develops and implements solutions for heritage at risk through Management Agreements. This approach provides owners with the support needed to achieve positive change in the management of archaeological sites at risk. In 2016/17 this funding has resulted in the removal of Nadbury Camp, Warmington, the moated sites at Baxterley and Moorgreen Farm, Alvechurch and the Roman Settlement at Bays Meadow, Droitwich Spa from our Register.

Regionally, there are 101 places of worship on the Register. This is an increase of one in the overall number, which doesn't reflect the fact that we have worked to remove 15 from the Register in the last year. Even with the dedication and hard work of congregations, volunteers and the Historic England funding for Places of Worship Support Officers, these numbers illustrate the pressures on this particular aspect of our heritage.

Rhodri Evans Principal Adviser, Heritage at Risk

Cover image: The Toll House, Stratford-upon-Avon, is a grade I listed building on Clopton Bridge. Built in 1814, it had sat empty for many years. With grant aid from Historic England and the Heritage Lottery Fund urgent conservation work has been carried out to the roof and stonework. Employing skilled craftsmen, the Stratford Historic Building Trust has breathed new life into the building. The Toll House has been transformed from an empty, dilapidated building with an unclear future into a modern office space. The project demonstrates how heritage conservation can be at the heart of supporting local communities, businesses and jobs.

Designated assets on the 2017 **West Midlands Register**



There are **416** assets on the **West Midlands Register**, **17** fewer than in 2016

Curzon Street Station **Birmingham**



Curzon Street Station, the original terminus of the London to Birmingham railway, was built in 1838 and has been unused for over a decade. It has become isolated on the eastern side of the city, a proud and intriguing relic of Birmingham's 19th century civic pride, welcoming visitors to the city as their trains come

into Birmingham New Street Station.

Considering the origins of the building at the cutting edge of railway technology, it is fitting that Curzon Street Station will be given a new lease of life as part of the developments that will see HS2 arrive in Birmingham.

While building works begin on the new HS2 station, Curzon Street Station will come back to life as a shared office building. In a wide ranging partnership HS2 Ltd will

lease the building from the City Council, and will share its use with Birmingham City University and Historic England, who will occupy one floor as its West Midlands Regional Office. Historic England looks forward to being part of the medium term future of the building.

This new plan will ensure that the grade I listed building will come back into use while the wider area is redeveloped. The project will provide a striking example of how heritage conservation can play an integral part in major redevelopment projects by providing a short term solution while demonstrating a long term sustainable use.

An application for listed building consent has been submitted to Birmingham City Council and it is hoped that the building will be back in use by the end of 2018.

The Nag's Head Engine House **Pontesford, Shropshire**

The Nag's Head Engine House is the oldest and only surviving example of a group of early pumping engines built in the village of Pontesford. They were constructed to exploit the local coal field to facilitate the lead smelting industry which, in the late 18th century, was centred on this small Shropshire village. The Nag's Head is the only remaining engine house to survive demolition or significant alteration

The Engine House is rectangular on plan, measures 6.3m x 4.7m and was originally covered by a pitched roof where the ridge was 9.5m above ground level. The walls are constructed in squared buff coloured rubble. Apart from the large stone base used to secure the engine cylinder, nothing remains of the steam engine and its component parts. The Engine House became disused in the middle of the 19th century.

A scheme to consolidate the masonry remains was carried out this year with grant aid from Historic England and facilitated by the Stiperstones & Corndon Hill



Country Landscapes Partnership. The works included rebuilding part of one demolished wall to ensure structural stability, stone renewal, repointing and soft capping of exposed wall heads. The works were concluded in April 2017 and the structure removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.

Caring for Conservation Areas

This year we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of conservation areas. These come in all forms, from the quintessential English village to the urban heartland. They are united by a common theme – they are special places full of character and history, much loved by those who live and work in them. Because of their unique character they are also engines for economic regeneration and this is the key to tackling risk in many conservation areas.

This year we have added more conservation areas to the Register than have been removed. But it's also the year we launched Heritage Action Zones, many of which include conservation areas at risk where we will unlock economic potential with our partners over the coming years.

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