

HERITAGE COUNTS 2017

Heritage and Society

Heritage:

1. **Heritage plays an important part in our well-being and quality of life** – 93% of residents say that local heritage has an impact on their quality of life.
2. **Heritage supports social cohesion and inclusion** – People can develop much stronger, long-lasting connections with their communities through heritage conservation work.
3. **Heritage improves places** – 80% of people think local heritage makes their area a better place to live.
4. **People value heritage** – 73% of UK adults agree that the UK government has a moral obligation to protect our heritage.

Heritage plays an important role in influencing well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction, and thus represents an important contributor to prosperity and the success of our nation. *Heritage and Society* 2017 puts forward the contemporary evidence that demonstrates the value of heritage to our society's well-being.

Research undertaken by the Centre for Economic Performance has revealed that in European elections since 1970, the life satisfaction of the voting public is the best predictor of whether the government gets re-elected, even more so than the economy, unemployment levels or inflation (Ward, 2015).

Indicative of this growth in appreciation has been the inclusion of well-being inequality in the World Happiness Report for the first time in 2016, as well as the Office for National Statistics adding well-being themed questions to several labour and household surveys as part of the Measuring National Wellbeing Programme. Equally, Eurostat's inclusion of 20 questions on well-being in its statistics on 'Individual Living Conditions', demonstrates this conceptual shift (University of Cambridge, City University London, and NEF, 2016).



Happiness at a Heritage Open Day event, 2016. © Andrew Heptinstall

What is *Heritage and Society*?

Heritage and Society is a product of Heritage Counts produced each year by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum (HEF). The objective of this document is to provide bite sized facts and figures that demonstrate the importance of heritage to society. These are based on detailed technical reports that are fully referenced for anyone requiring further information. These facts can be extracted and used by anyone who seeks to understand and evidence the social values of heritage in order to make the case for heritage.

1. Heritage plays an important part in our well-being and quality of life



...as countries have become richer, many have failed to experience any increase in their average happiness..... Eliminating depression and anxiety disorders would cost less and be a more powerful way of reducing misery than eliminating either poverty, low education or unemployment.

Andrew E. Clark, Sarah Flèche, Richard Layard, Nattavudh Powdthavee, George Ward
The Key Determinants of Happiness and Misery
June 2017



1.1 Visiting heritage sites and happiness.

People who visit heritage sites are happier than those who do not.

In 2015/16 the average happiness score of heritage participants was 8.1 out of 10 compared to 7.6 out to 10 for non-participants (a DCMS, 2016).

People who visit heritage sites a few times a year or more have a significantly higher life satisfaction and happiness score and lower anxiety levels (a DCMS, 2015).

People who participate less often in heritage activities have lower life satisfaction and poorer physical and mental health (NatCen, forthcoming 2017).

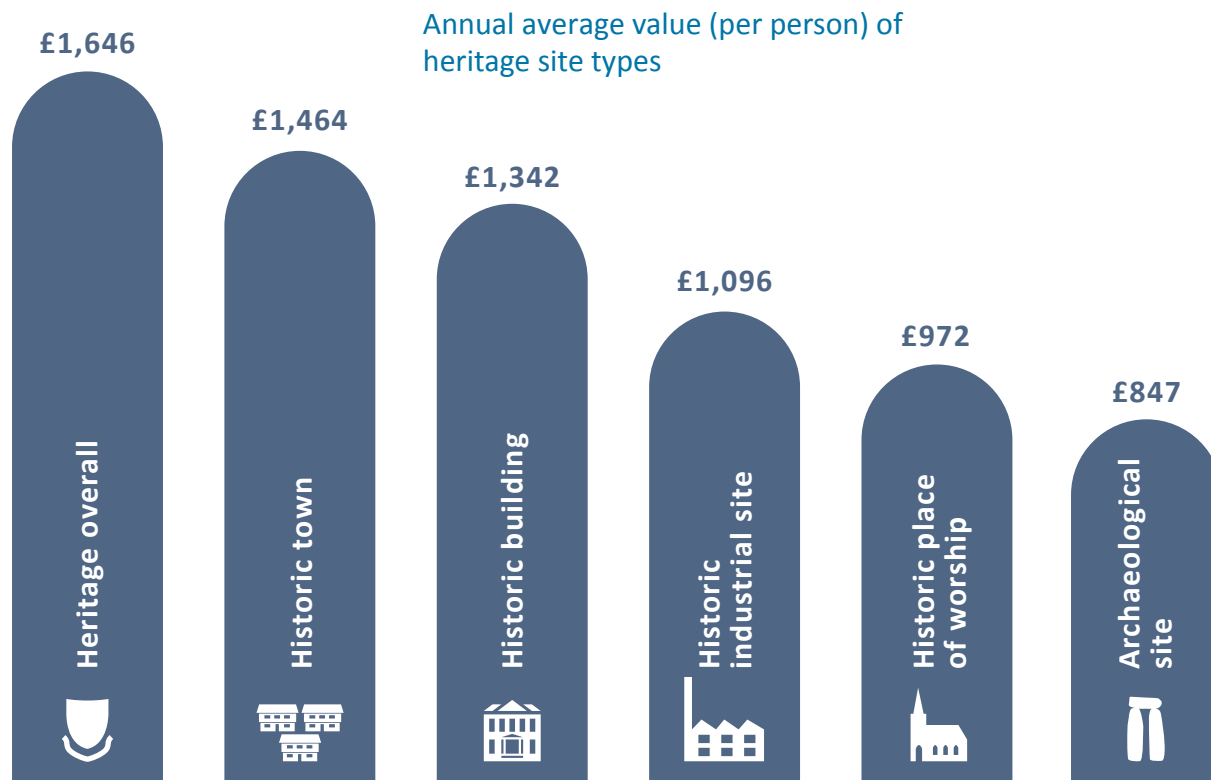
A 2017 study found that people who reported lapses in visits to heritage sites also reported the greatest declines in physical health, mental health, and life satisfaction (NatCen, forthcoming 2017).

Research undertaken by Age UK which identifies various factors and their contribution to well-being (as a percentage out of 100%) revealed that engagement with creative and cultural activities including heritage, makes the highest contribution of 5.75% to one's overall well-being out of all other factors (Age UK, 2017).

The well-being value of visiting heritage sites has been calculated as equivalent to £1,646 per person per year.

This is the amount of money that would have to be taken away from a person to restore them to the level of well-being they would have had had they not visited a heritage site. This figure is more than participating in sports or the arts. Visiting a historic town or city was found to be the most beneficial (Fujiwara et al, 2014).

Chart 1 – Annual average value per person of heritage site types (Fujiwara et al, 2014)



1.2 Volunteering in heritage makes you happy.

Heritage volunteering represents 6% of all voluntary work undertaken in England (b DCMS, 2016).

Research undertaken for the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) revealed that HLF volunteers reported levels of mental health and well-being that are far higher than for the general population, or for the general volunteering population. This is particularly apparent regarding their ability to 'play a useful part in things' – an indicator that combines a measure of self-worth with social connectedness (BOP Consulting, 2011).



Glastonbury Tor © Historic England, James Davies

Weoley Castle, Birmingham

Weoley Castle ruins are over seven hundred years old and constitute the remains of a moated medieval manor house that once stood on the site. Volunteer Castle Keepers have been recruited in order to care for the site, doing everything from practical maintenance, research, to running activities for the local community to enjoy.

Owing to the heritage work undertaken, many of the volunteers have report increased well-being, with one individual commenting "I enjoy the company, the variety of things that we do and the fact that we are out in the open and doing something valuable".

In 2016, 40,000 volunteers took part in the annual national Heritage Open Days (HODs), with 5293 events being organised across England. The impact report (heritageopendays.org.uk, 2017) revealed that:

- 100% stated that they enjoyed volunteering for the event
- HOD volunteers reported an increased sense of well-being due to their involvement with the festival with 69% feeling 'more relaxed' and 64% more active and healthier
- 84% of volunteers said that as a result of their involvement they were more likely to volunteer for a heritage place / organisation in the future



Heritage participation at 2016 Heritage Open Day events © Heritage Open Days, Andrew Heptinstall

Jigsaw, Cambridge

Jigsaw Cambridgeshire is a HLF five year project which supports local archaeology and history groups across the county, as well as reaching out to fresh audiences by creating new archaeology groups. It was set up to address the great interest in archaeology in the local area which was previously only met on an ad-hoc basis when time and funding allowed.

As a result of the heritage work undertaken new community links, friendships and collaborations have been formed amongst the members, as



Warboys Archaeological Group © Oxford Archaeology

well as the creation of new groups and increased publicity of existing groups.

Heritage develops connections between people and groups in local areas.

Over 90% of HLF volunteers benefitted from socialising on heritage projects, and 35% sustained these friendships outside the project (BOP Consulting, 2011).

Volunteering in heritage aids personal development.

A 2013 review by the HLF noted that 'the strongest evidence for the benefits of culture for individuals is found in 'personal development' e.g. new skills, new experiences, improved confidence, changed attitudes, education support' (HLF, 2013).

All Souls, Bolton

All Souls Church has been regenerated from a neglected state into a modern, multi-purpose building for the local community and people of Bolton. A key part of the overall regeneration project was to improve the life chances of people in the local area by equipping these individuals with various skills.

Six bursary placements were created using local networks and partnerships which helped raise awareness of the opportunities within the local area. Many of the individuals selected for the placements had no experience of heritage or historic buildings but have used the project to acquire skills that will provide them with more choices in their future careers. The trainees have also delivered high quality conservation work deepening the reserve of skills available to the rest of the heritage sector.



Developing skills has formed an important part of the work at All Souls © Andy Marshall

1.3 The presence of heritage increases well-being

The social and cultural heritage embodied in landscapes can provide a sense of continuity across generations and contribute to healthy identity construction, which can in turn have a protective effect on health and well-being. In the North East, pockets of health resilience can be partly attributed to historical links to place (Lovell, 2017).

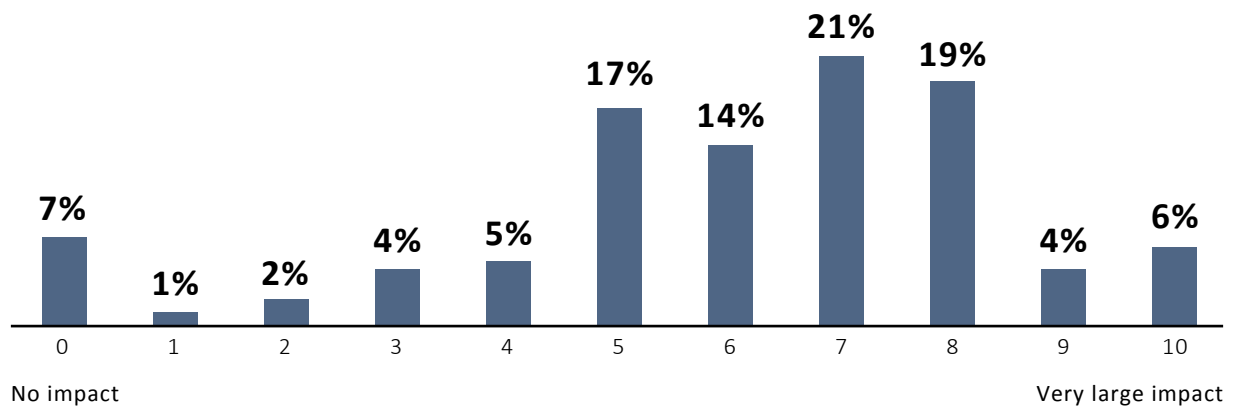
93% of residents say that local heritage has an impact on their quality of life. 50% answered 7 or more out of 10 when asked to rate the impact local heritage sites have on their personal quality of life (HLF, 2015). See Chart 2.

Research undertaken by the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) has shown a positive correlation between areas with high levels of heritage activity and those with high well-being among residents (RSA, 2015).

Comparing the RSA's analysis with ONS statistics on well-being revealed that in areas which scored highly for activity in the Heritage Index, residents also on average tended to report higher levels of well-being (RSA, 2015).

Chart 2 - The impact of heritage on personal quality of life (HLF, 2015)

Proportion of residents perceiving an impact on their personal quality of life from having heritage sites and projects in their local area



2. Heritage supports social cohesion and inclusion

Heritage can play an important role in helping people understand more about themselves and others. It can act as a medium in which to bring communities together, engaging all members of society and increasing inclusion.

Heritage experiences can help people to understand more about themselves and others who are different to them.

This can contribute to greater levels of tolerance, respect and increased community cohesion. (English Heritage, 2014).

People can develop much stronger, long-lasting connections with their communities through heritage conservation work.

Despite heritage projects being predominantly led by older people, many in the wider community are able

to participate and benefit too, through the active interpretation of exhibits and other 'products' attached to the history of their local area such as attending talks and school workshops (Power and Smyth, 2016).

Heritage projects can become part of the currency of conversation within a local community which boosts instances of 'co-presence' amongst distantly connected people.

72% of HLF volunteers surveyed increased or significantly increased contact with older adults, and 23% stated that volunteering helped them to increase their understanding of over 65 year olds (BOP Consulting, 2011).

Heritage projects can be seen to contribute to a greater public spirit and mutual understanding in an area (Opinion Leader Research, 2006).

They help people connect with one another.

Jubilee Colliery, Greater Manchester

Jubilee Colliery: Preserving the Past was a six-month project funded by the HLF. The principal aims were to increase awareness of Oldham's rich mining heritage through engaging local communities, providing a unique learning and training opportunity for the participants, and developing a plan to preserve and interpret the site for future generations. A core component of the project was to enable local volunteers to carry out the excavation of key elements of the colliery.

The volunteers who have been involved in the project were drawn largely from groups of people who do not normally participate in heritage projects, and the project has created many



Holycross School visit to Jubilee Colliery © Oxford Archaeology

opportunities for greater involvement by ethnic minorities, disabled groups and young people.

Heritage also engages young people.

Historic England's Heritage Schools programme currently involves 250 schools, and has reached approximately 100,000 children since the programme began in 2012 (Historic England, 2017). The programme also specifically targets schools with high numbers of BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) students and children receiving free school meals.

A 2016 evaluation of the programme found highly encouraging results –

Chart 3- Achievements after one year of involvement in the Heritage Schools Programme (Historic England, 2017)

Achievements after one year of involvement

Teachers who know 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' about local history and heritage



Teachers who know 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' about how local history connects to national heritage



Children who have a good knowledge of local history and heritage



Research illustrates that childhood exposure to historic sites has an enduring legacy and adults who have visited heritage sites as children are more likely to do so into adulthood (DCMS, 2010).



A Heritage School explores Great Yarmouth © Kate Argyle

3. Heritage improves places

Our heritage plays a fundamental role in both defining and creating the identity of our cities, towns, and countryside. To many it also increases the aesthetic value of a place as well as the pride in a local area. Heritage often acts as a stimulus to encourage people to find out more about the area in which they live, and can contribute positively towards a creating a sense of place as well as nurturing and reinforcing local identity.

3.1 Heritage improves perceptions of place and increases pride

Heritage contributes to increased civic pride, encouraging people to feel more positive about their local area (CABE, 2002).

Heritage is important to local communities. Research by CABE found that 85% of English adults surveyed agreed that “the quality of the built environment makes a difference to the way they feel” and that “better quality buildings and public spaces improve people’s quality of life” (CABE, 2002).

86% of visitors reported that Heritage Open Days made them more proud of their local area and 75% reported it made them feel more a part of their local community (heritageopendays.org.uk, 2017).

When asked what makes respondents most proud of Britain 37% cite British history and 19% British architecture and historic buildings (b DCMS 2015). See Chart 4

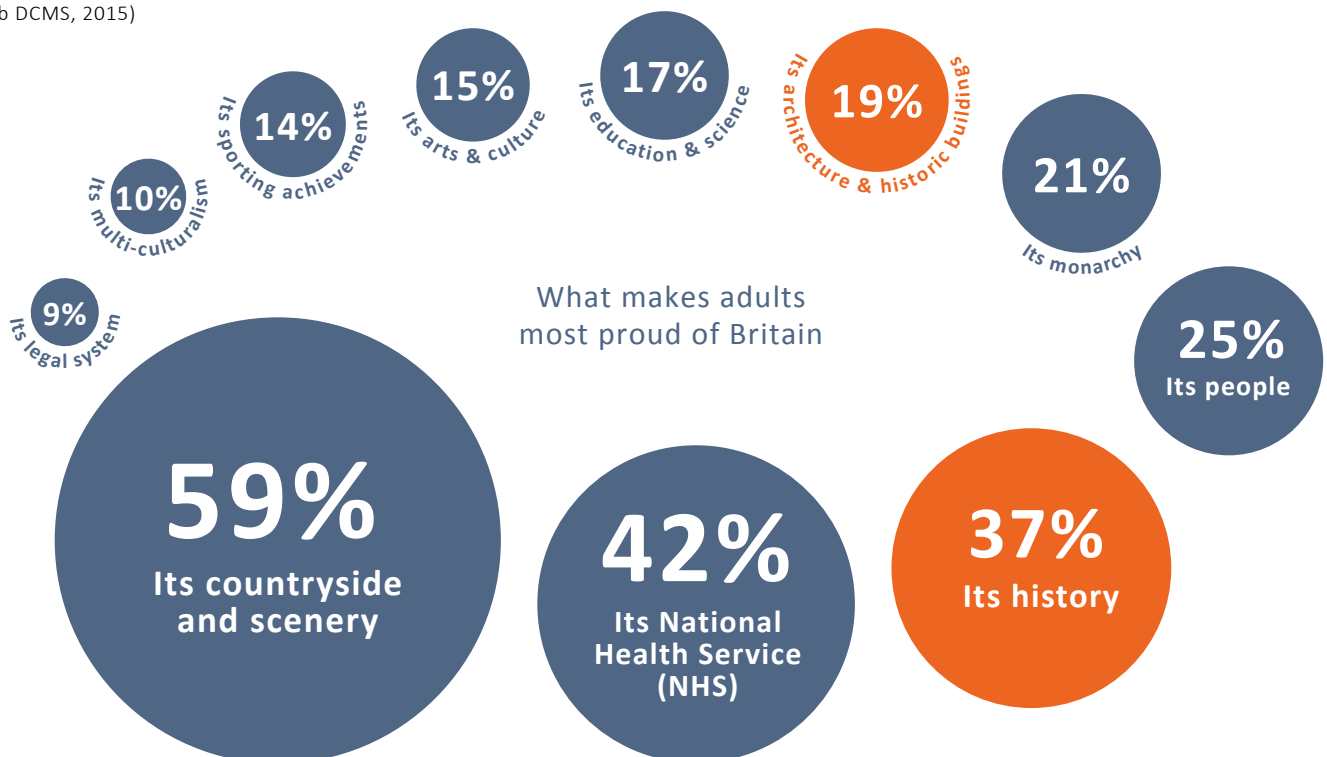
83% of residents visiting or taking part in heritage sites and projects say their activity has helped them understand more about the history of their local area (HLF, 2015).

The built environment plays an important role in how people view the places they live. An IPSOS MORI (2010) report revealed a notable consensus in the value people placed on old versus new buildings. All age groups remarked that older buildings were favoured as being “more beautiful” than newer ones, with the most common explanation for this opinion being that older buildings conveyed a sense of longevity and grandeur.

Recent research from the HLF has found that 80% of people think local heritage makes their area a better place to live (HLF, 2015).

Environmental psychologists have shown that people exhibit the strongest preferences towards more local and historically referenced architecture (Boys Smith, 2016).

Chart 4 – Things that make adults most proud of Britain 2014/15 (b DCMS, 2015)



Volunteer lock keepers, Canal & River Trust

In 2012 the Canal & River Trust launched a scheme to recruit volunteer lock keepers. In London, the Trust attracted 14 volunteers who worked at four locations. In 2013/14, this increased to 40 volunteers many of whom were returning volunteers, working at five locations, all of which are key historic sites.

Having volunteer lock keepers helped the Canal & River Trust to look after the historic environment as volunteers learnt how to operate locks as well as report any damage and wear and tear that required attention. Importantly the volunteers also provide information to visitors and share the areas' rich heritage knowledge, helping to raise awareness and generate pride in the local environment.



Volunteer lock keepers help the public at Caen Lock Hill Flight
© Historic England, James Davies

A report from the Prince's Foundation found that 84% of respondents polled expressed a desire for developments to respect historic form, style, and materials (Prince's Foundation, 2014).

Historic led regeneration increases local pride amongst residents.

Respondents to an on-street survey in areas that had seen significant historic environment led regeneration revealed that:

- 92% felt that heritage projects had raised pride in the local area
- 93% held the view that the project had improved their perceptions of the local area
- 91% felt that it had improved the image of the wider town (AMION and Locum Consulting, 2010)

76% of volunteers taking part in heritage activities felt an increased pride in their local area/heritage (heritageopendays.org.uk, 2017).

3.2 Heritage helps create a sense of place and belonging

Adults who live in areas of higher concentrations of historic environment have a stronger sense of place (Newcastle University's Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, CURDS) 2009).

Adults and young people that live in areas with more heritage assets or cite a local building or monument as special are likely to have a stronger sense of place (after controlling for other socio-economic factors that impact on sense of place) (AMION and Locum Consulting, 2010).

Evidence from the HLF's Community Heritage programme shows that heritage gives a sense of belonging (AMION and Locum Consulting, 2010). 93% of respondents to an on-street survey in areas that had seen significant historic environment led regeneration believed that as a result of the work their sense of place had increased.

A Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) 2013 survey of 2,001 UK adults found that 69%, equating to approximately 35 million people, felt that local heritage buildings and sites are important to their local community. This is particularly felt amongst older people with almost three-quarters (73%) of over 55s agreeing with this sentiment in comparison to 64% of 18-34 year olds (CEBR, 2013).

56% of adults surveyed in a 2015 HLF study agreed that their local area's heritage is important for their personal sense of identity (HLF, 2015).

4. People value heritage

With 99.3% of people in England living less than a mile from a listed heritage asset, heritage is something that surrounds us all (Historic England, 2015). It represents not only a daily presence but also acts as a tangible connection to our past, telling the story of our nation. It also provides us with one of our greatest national assets. For these reasons and more, the English public care deeply for their heritage and its preservation.

95% of adults agree or strongly agree that it is important to them that heritage buildings and places are well looked after (DCMS, 2015).

38% of the public have taken action to protect a local building or local place from damaging change, or from becoming derelict or disused, with action including signing a petition, joining a membership group, fundraising/donating for local heritage and attending a public meeting about local heritage (Historic England, 2015).

73% of UK adults agree that the UK government has a moral obligation to protect our heritage (ComRes, 2015).

A 2015 HLF study found that:

- 93% see heritage as important to 'the country'
- 81% see heritage as important to 'me personally'
- 80% say local heritage makes their area a better place to live
- 86% agree a visiting motivation was to support their local heritage

The majority of listed homeowners in England who responded to a 2016/17 survey appreciate the historic importance of their properties.

94% thought that their listed property was important or very important to the character of the local area (Ecorys, forthcoming 2017).

70% thought that their listed property was important or very important to national history (Ecorys, forthcoming 2017).

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This document has been prepared as part of **Heritage Counts 2017** by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum.

July 2017 – Project Code: 52059

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