

Hull Heritage Action Zone Conservation Area

Hull's Old Town Conservation area covers just 133 acres, situated in the Southeast corner of Hull. Whilst it may be a small conservation area, it is also an area bursting with heritage. Hull's Old Town has been inhabited for more than 700 years; this continuous inhabitation has left its mark with a surviving medieval street pattern, archaeology and fantastic architecture.

The Old Town was designated as a conservation area by Hull City Council in 1973, but it has been extended several times over the years to ensure that the boundary covers the extent of the Old Town. Within the Old Town there are 186 listed buildings, which is 40% of the city's listed buildings. The Old Town conservation area has a mixture of building styles including remnants of medieval timber framed buildings, Stuart architecture, Georgian buildings, Victorian architecture and statuary as well as impressive Edwardian public and civic buildings. It is in a sense partly due to the mixture of building types and styles that adds to the character of the conservation area.



View of the Old Town from the Waterfront. © Historic England

The town also includes two notable scheduled monuments; one is the Beverley Gate where famously King Charles I was denied entry to the city of Hull providing the spark that sent England spiralling into Civil War. The other monument is the remains of Hull Citadel; the citadel was built in the 1540's by Henry VIII who wished to bolster the defences of a vital port city.

The heart of the town is dominated by the impressive, recently re-dedicated, Hull Minster. The Grade I listed Minster was built between 1300-1425. The tower dominates the skyline here, and buildings surrounding the Minster are afforded some spectacular views of the building.



View of Holy Trinity Minster. © Historic England

Hull was bombed heavily during World War Two. Air raids on Hull went on longer than in any other British city, and of Hull's 91,660 houses only 5,945 survived the air raids undamaged. The Old Town saw its fair share of destruction and buildings were lost all across the conservation area. The heavy losses of buildings sustained during World War II and post war neglect, as well as a shift in economic focus led to the number of people living and working in the Old Town to fall dramatically.

Recent years have seen the traditional retail centre pushed out of the Old Town, from its traditional home in Whitefriargate to new purpose built shopping centres. The most recent of those is St Stephens, a shopping centre located near to the bus and train stations. People no longer need to enter the Old Town for shopping. The city centre has been severed from the Humber waterfront by the A63 trade corridor. This further divorces the Old Town from its traditional maritime history.

But it is not all doom and gloom! Hull was awarded the coveted accolade of UK City of Culture for 2017 and the ambitious programme is proving to be popular with residents

and tourists alike. The Old Town boasts a museum quarter which contains four museums: the Hull and East Riding Museum, The Arctic Corsair, the Streetlife museum and the Wilberforce museum. In addition to these there is also the Ferens Art gallery and the Maritime Museum. Just a five minute walk from the Hull Marina and a short stroll from the city centre is the Deep. This is an award winning aquarium, with over 3,500 fish. The location provides a useful connection between the Old Town and the waterfront. Clearly the Old Town has a rich heritage that people are able to visit, explore and understand.

The Fruit Market area of the Old Town has undergone a transformation and is now a vibrant quarter offering digital and creative industries fresh new spaces to work. It is also the home to quirky eateries and fantastic cultural events.



Businesses in the Fruit Market. © Historic England

Change is happening in the Old Town but some parts are still under used. The Heritage Action Zone will bring partners together to increase the awareness of what the Old Town has to offer. The projects will help to transform and find new uses for historic buildings by providing residential developers with support, funding and guidance to improve the availability, quality and affordability of housing in the area.

There is also an opportunity to get people excited about the heritage that is contained within the Old Town, the unveiling of the newly revamped Beverley Gate and the open days at Henry VIII's South Blockhouse have received much public enthusiasm. The

programme will help to strengthen links to the waterfront, city centre and museum quarter, drawing on Hull's maritime heritage.



Schoolchildren at the marking out of the South Blockhouse. © Octo Vision Media and Hull City Council

Hull's Old Town Conservation Area has a rich and varied heritage; the Heritage Action Zone will build on this legacy and help to make it a place where people want to live, work and visit.

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