

# Heritage at Risk



Historic England

**South West Summary** 2017



**H**eritage at Risk is a key element of Historic England's strategy to preserve our rich and diverse national heritage. Approximately 25% of the sites on the national Register are in the South West region, therefore our Heritage at Risk team and their colleagues are particularly busy helping owners and partners improve the condition of heritage sites such as the Lundy Fog Battery, one of our case studies below. The good news is we have already managed to meet our three-year target, removing 15% of sites from the 2015 baseline Register one year early. Over **160 sites** have been conserved and are no longer considered at risk. In the last year we have awarded grants of £1.76 million to 69 sites across the region, and we have also helped to secure significant additional grants and resources from our partners: the Heritage Lottery Fund, Natural England, trusts and private individuals.

### Andrew Vines Planning Director, South West



We have had a very successful year with **91** heritage assets removed from the South West Register for positive reasons. These include **13** buildings or structures, and one such example is the Deer Park boundary wall at Dartington

Hall which, thanks to a successful Heritage Lottery Fund scheme, is no longer at risk. In addition, over **59** archaeology sites have been removed for positive reasons in our region, although **40** new sites have been added to the Register, including Worlebury Camp, Weston Super Mare, which has had its Iron Age rampart walls damaged and disturbed in the last year.

The South West has a number of fascinating historic sites, especially those related to our maritime history, including ship wrecks, ancient Cornish cliff castles and Palmerston forts around Plymouth. We are especially delighted that the last remaining protected wreck on our Register, HMS *Colossus* – an 18th-century warship off the Isles of Scilly – is no longer at immediate risk following pioneering stabilisation work to the seabed.

A priority case for the coming year is the Cleveland Pools, Bath. We have offered expert advice and grant aid towards a £3.9m scheme to restore and reuse

this outstandingly important Georgian lido, and the application is now under consideration by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Other at risk sites of former leisure industry remain challenging and none more so than Birnbeck Pier at Weston Super Mare, which continues to deteriorate since its closure in the 1970s. We are in active discussions with the local authority and Birnbeck Pier Regeneration Trust to try to find solutions for this iconic pier.

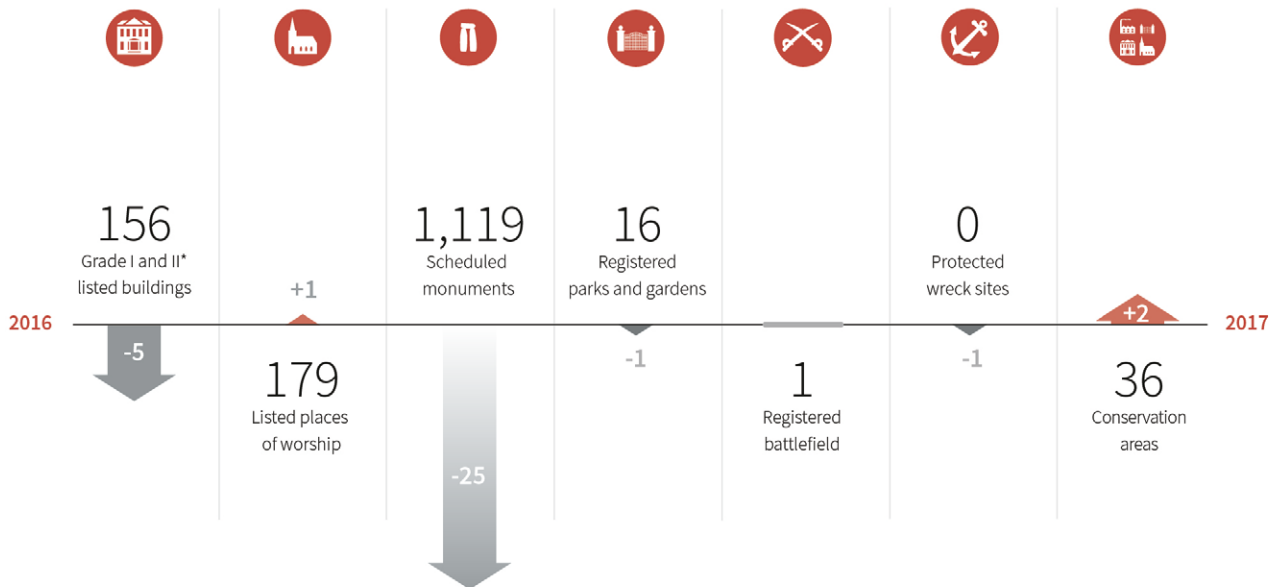
Challenges for the year ahead also include industrial heritage. We are working with the local authorities, trusts and developers to improve the condition of difficult sites, including The Mechanics Institute in Swindon and the Tonedale Mills in Wellington where we are helping to fund a Project Officer's post.

Historic England removed 15 places of worship from the South West Register this year, many of these as a result of our partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund. We are also working closely with both the National Trust and Natural England, and we have continued effective relationships with the Architectural Heritage Fund and Princes Regeneration Trust, building the capacity of local trusts to take on problematic buildings and archaeological sites. Partnerships are critical for our region and allow us to tackle heritage at risk.

### John Ette Principal Adviser, Heritage at Risk

**Cover image: The Gun Battery at Brazen Ward, Lundy Island**, perched on cliffs above the Atlantic Ocean and pounded by extreme weather conditions, has been repaired by conservation masons as part of a partnership project with the Landmark Trust, the National Trust and Historic England. During foggy weather the guns, manned by the Trinity House Service, warned shipping of the presence of the island. Conservation of such coastal archaeological sites is an on-going challenge in the South West. These buildings have been secured and will be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register after conservation of the rare Crimean cannon is completed.

## Designated assets on the 2017 **South West Register**



There are **1,507** assets on the **South West Register**, **29** fewer than in 2016

## Devon and Exeter Institution **Exeter, Devon**



The Devon and Exeter Institution sits in the heart of Exeter in the Cathedral Close and is listed grade II\*. Founded in 1813, the Institution took over the lease of its existing building in 1814 and altered an earlier medieval building to create a subscription library with two new galleried rooms with domed elliptical

lantern lights. The building still retains this layout.

In the winter of 2009, following heavy snowfall, cracks developed in the plasterwork of the domes. Conservation engineers found recent failure to the roof beams and that the previous attempts to strengthen the original undersized roof had not been that successful. Supporting internal safety scaffolds were immediately installed beneath both domes, removing all daylight, and the building was put on the Heritage at Risk Register.

Eight years on, these scaffolds were removed allowing the lanterns to once again light the libraries of the Institution.

This followed the completion of carefully planned and executed extensive roof repairs which were grant-aided by Historic England. The length of this project indicates its complexity and challenges. The domes of both lanterns and the main roofs have had new copper roofing installed, the structure supporting them has been carefully strengthened and the lantern windows and plasterwork repaired. This work has resulted in the building being removed from the Register.

The project also attracted partnership funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund which, although a minor funder, had a big impact on the Institution's engagement with the public. Weekly tours to see the works via a staircase on the scaffold were extremely popular and the Institution now engages with a wider audience, including young people and children. Visit [www.devonandexeterinstitution.org](http://www.devonandexeterinstitution.org) to see opening times for the public, or to become a member.

# Llanthony Secunda Priory Gloucester

A large scheme to repair the vacant and derelict scheduled Llanthony Secunda Priory site is progressing thanks to grant aid from Historic England and Heritage Lottery Fund. Two vacant medieval buildings and the surrounding landscape are all being restored to create educational and assembly facility that will be used by the adjacent Gloucestershire College and by the wider community.



The Medieval Range building is a 15th century timber-framed building surviving from a longer Priory courtyard range. It has a close-studded upper floor on a lias stone ground floor. A Victorian farmhouse abuts one end. This will form a two storey facility with a large hall at first floor.

The second building is a late 15th century stables or guest range, notable for the earliest use of brick in this area. This is having a new modern roof and will form a single storey assembly space.

## 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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