



In support of



Historic
England



Impact Report

2024



The Historic England Foundation



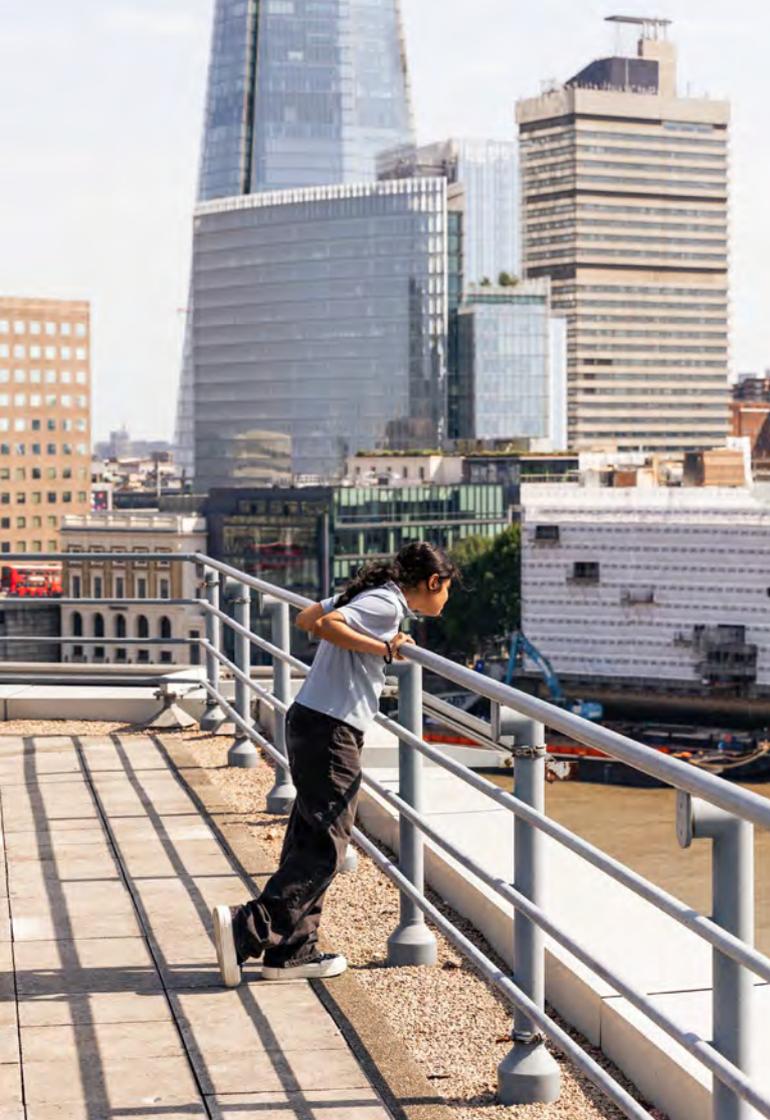
Stonemasonry workshop led by Matthias Garn with trainees
Looking on during Summer School 2024 at Lancaster and
Morecambe College

From the extraordinary to the everyday, our historic places matter – to you, to us, to future generations.

They are the legacy we want to pass on and the stories we continue to tell.

At the Historic England Foundation, we're passionate about ensuring our irreplaceable historic environment is discovered, valued, protected and enjoyed by everyone.

We support and build on the work of Historic England, as well as other heritage organisations, and help people and communities to care for all kinds of historic spaces, from community centres to cathedrals, factories to fairgrounds, homes to high streets.



Young person on
the rooftop of the
Historic England
London office,
attending the 2024
Emerging Talent
Welcome Day

Whether it's giving seed funding for heritage at risk sites, researching underwater archaeology, restoring historic high streets or skills training for future conservation experts, our work changes people's lives through heritage.

Thanks to your support we have already been able to achieve so much. With continued donations and grants from generous individuals and organisations, we can ensure heritage is valued, celebrated and shared by everyone.

Message from the Chair



Dear supporters and friends,

It is with great pride that I reflect on the past year of the Historic England Foundation. Since my appointment as Chair, I've witnessed firsthand the extraordinary impact our supporters have made in helping to protect and celebrate England's historic environment. Last year has been no exception: your generosity has enabled the Foundation's continued growth, which has been all the more important for the projects we support, given the challenging external financial environment.

In the following pages, you will find stories that demonstrate how your contributions have directly benefited the people and places at the heart of our work. From celebrating the history of local communities

through the National Blue Plaque Scheme to supporting initiatives that use heritage to enrich the lives of young people, your support has had a far-reaching impact.

As we look to the year ahead, I'm excited about the projects we will continue to champion, ensuring that England's rich cultural history remains accessible and relevant for generations to come. I hope you will continue to stand with us on this important mission.

Together with my fellow trustees, I want to thank you for your support, and I look forward to continuing this journey with you.

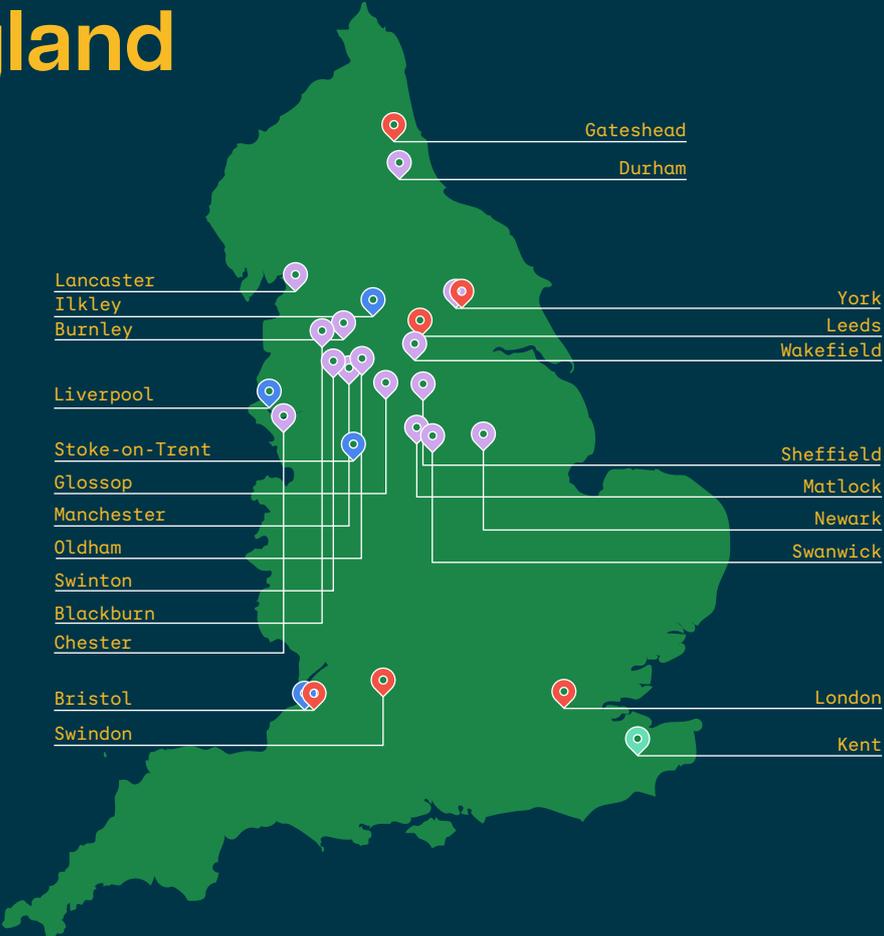
Dr Fabian Richter

**Chair of the
Historic England Foundation**

Our work in England

We support projects across the nation, from helping young offenders experience Kent's historic coast to teaching endangered heritage crafts in an 18th-century church in Lancaster.

-  Rejuvenate (Young people's wellbeing programme)
-  National Blue Plaque Scheme
-  Emerging Talent programme
-  Heritage Building Skills programme



2024 at a glance

Our supporters are at the heart of the success of the Historic England Foundation. Their contributions enhance our impact and reach, enabling us to achieve key milestones that would otherwise be beyond our capability.

16

Emerging Talent placements

in Historic England offices across the country



12

young people

benefitted from participation in Rejuvenate schemes in Kent



4

blue plaques unveiled

in Ilkley, Stoke-on-Trent, Liverpool and Bristol



The Heritage Building Skills programme entered its fifth year

with 55 apprentices and trainees having taken part so far

21



trainees

participated in the Heritage Building Skills programme



91%

of those who took part in the Emerging Talent programme

have indicated an interest in a career in heritage

The launch of the National Blue Plaques scheme received



1,639

and



1.3 million

pieces of coverage in all major UK news outlets

impressions on social media



Group of young
people at the 2024
Emerging Talent
Welcome Day at the
London office

“

This placement has given me a hands-on experience of what it is to be in this line of work...it has made me realise what it is I want to do further along my path in life.

It has taught me many skills from leadership to event planning and the importance of heritage and the preservation of it that I know will be a key point along my journey.

Emerging Talent participant

Skills



Two young people on the rooftop of Cannon Bridge House, attending the 2024 Emerging Talent Welcome Day at the London office

We empowered and inspired the next generation of heritage professionals.

The heritage sector is constantly growing and changing. A diverse range of skills is essential to its resilience, from traditional craft skills used to restore and maintain historic buildings to research, cataloguing and public engagement. We support a range of programmes to address these needs and help young people into the sector.

The Heritage Building Skills programme, designed to address the critical shortage of skilled craftspeople, achieved significant milestones as it entered its fifth year, supported by generous funding from the Swire Charitable Trust.



Heritage Building Skills trainees take part in a mud masonry workshop during Summer School 2024 at Lancaster & Morecambe College

“

The programme and the traineeship have been life changing. I feel so much more confident in my skills and career choice.

Heritage Building Skills participant

During the summer school, participants gained valuable hands-on experience at St John the Evangelist Church in Lancaster, as well as attending a range of workshops with master craftspeople at Lancaster & Morecambe College.

The Future Talent programme focuses on supporting young people who face under-representation or disadvantage through short-term placements in a range of roles at Historic England and within the broader heritage sector. Through targeted training and hands-on experience, the programme enables them to take their first steps towards a heritage career.

This year, our skills work meant that:

- 21 trainees participated in the Heritage Building Skills programme, carrying out vital conservation work and developing skills in plastering, joinery, slate roofing, hot lime mortar mixing and stone masonry
- 16 Future Talent placements took place in Historic England offices across the country, with 62% from minority ethnic backgrounds and 33% with a disability
- Future Talent placement opportunities are now available in the wider heritage sector, expanding the reach of the programme
- 91% of those who took part in the Future Talent programme this year have indicated they are interested in a career in heritage and 100% would recommend the scheme to others

Wellbeing

We built on the success of the Rejuvenate pilot.

Research by Historic England has demonstrated that heritage has a significant role to play in improving wellbeing, demonstrating the importance of conserving and protecting historic places. Whether through visiting, volunteering, learning or creative practice, engaging with heritage can strengthen confidence, resilience, hope and social connection.

The Rejuvenate programme is the first of its kind to test archaeology and heritage's ability to improve young people's wellbeing. It uses inspiring historic places to support young people who are struggling at school and vulnerable to the influences of crime and anti-social behaviour, or who are already in the criminal justice system.



Young participants in Rejuvenate examining the finds of a test pit.
© Wessex Archaeology

In 2024, following the success of the first pilots, two additional programmes were delivered in Kent, the first over an eight-week programme in the summer of 2024, with additional sessions delivered in October and November. Attendance and participation in the now 15 session programme were 4 times higher than for the 2023 pilot.

The small group size allows for a better individual experience for the young people taking part. The approach is based on their specific needs and enables them to build deeper relationships with those around them.

The programme saw evidenced wellbeing benefits in areas of confidence, self-acceptance, feeling heard and social connection. During the first session, an experienced case worker said this was the best reparations programme they had attended, and another, who had been on the 2023 programme and had been involved in social services for over 40 years, reiterated his sentiments from the last year.

One of the participants was extremely closed off when he first came to the programme and did not speak a word to anyone, engage, or even take his hood down.

By the final session in July, **there was a marked difference in his attitude to everyone**, so much so that another participant hadn't realised he was the same person from the initial session!

When he returned to the October sessions, **he was a completely different person**. He was chatty, and keen to get to the excavation. His personality was shining through in these sessions.

Project delivery lead

Communities

In February 2024, we launched the National Blue Plaque Scheme.

Involving communities in their local heritage is crucial for ensuring that our historic environment is more culturally sensitive, socially inclusive, and economically beneficial.

The National Blue Plaque Scheme expands on the success of the London initiative, run by English Heritage. The scheme recognises the unique stories of communities throughout the country and ensures greater representation of local heroes from all walks of life.

It is these stories that help us make sense of the world around us, connecting us to our shared past and reminding us that history is not just written in books, it happens in our streets and buildings.

Last year, we achieved some remarkable milestones, including:

- Over 400 suggestions of individuals to be commemorated during the three-month national call for public nominations
- 1,639 individual pieces of coverage in all major UK news outlets and 1.3 million impressions on social media

- 5 new panel members including art dealer Philip Mould and garden designer, writer and TV presenter Arit Anderson.
- Nafisa El-Turke also joined the panel as youth advisor to champion the role of young people in heritage and diversity.

It has been exciting to see the scheme fostering pride and belonging in local communities, keeping their history alive and relevant.

Four blue plaques were unveiled last year, from household names to unsung heroes:

- 1 Daphne Steele** – the first black matron in the NHS
- 2 Clarice Cliff** – the ground-breaking ceramicist and factory director
- 3 George Harrison** – ‘the quiet Beatle’ and humanitarian
- 4 Cary Grant** – the Hollywood legend

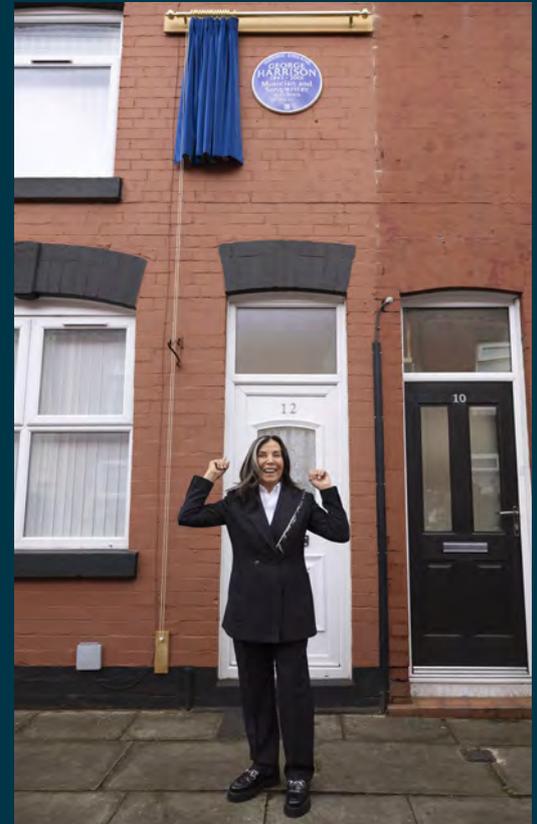
In its first year, the National Blue Plaque Scheme was supported by Delancey and The Earls Court Development Company

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This blue plaque recognition of George’s birthplace is a source of family pride for all the Harrisons... So much of who George was, came from being born and spending his earliest years at 12 Arnold Grove.

He left a footprint on this world, on this country, in this city and on this street.

Olivia Harrison, widow of George Harrison



Olivia Harrison reacting to the unveiling of the national blue plaque to George Harrison at his childhood home of 12 Arnold Grove, Liverpool



New Head of Historic England Archives

Janet Tall joined the Historic England team as Head of Archives and Library. Janet has a wealth of experience in the sector, having previously held the role of Head of Strategic Development and Archives at the South West Heritage Trust.



Royal visit to Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

On 27 March, we welcomed Her Majesty Queen Camilla to Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings. We were immensely proud to showcase the visitor experience and regeneration of the site, made possible with the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and many private individuals and organisations.



Two new Historic England Foundation trustees

We welcomed two new Historic England Foundation trustees: Purnima Mookerjee, Managing Director at Coutts & Co and Will Stratton-Morris, Chief Executive of Caffe Nero.

Flaxmill Creates Festival

Over 6,000 people attended the Flaxmill Creates Festival at Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings to experience the variety of local music, art and dance acts performing. The day even featured a visit from Farrah the Fox, star of the Historic England Hi! Street Fest.





Crystal Palace Subway

The major restoration work of the historic Grace II listed Crystal Palace Subway was completed in September, in time for its 160th anniversary in 2025. Historic England provided expert advice throughout the restoration, which included extensive repairs to the walls, floor, steps and entrances.



Historic England reception

The Chair of Historic England, Lord Mendoza, and the Chair of the National Blue Plaque Panel, Professor Ronald Hutton, hosted a reception for existing and prospective supporters of the National Blue Plaque Scheme at the newly reopened Space House in London.

08

August

09

September

10

October

11

November

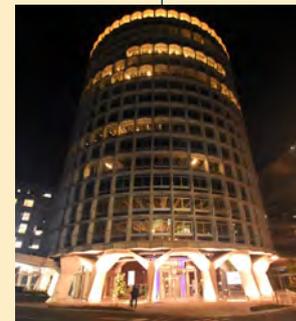
New Director of Strategy and Business Development

Melanie Lewis MBE, former Chief Executive of the Shakespeare North Playhouse, joined Historic England as Director of Strategy and Business Development.



Roman swords on display at the Corinium museum

Swords which were x-rayed using Historic England archaeological equipment funded by the Wolfson Foundation are now on display at the Corinium Museum in Cirencester.



Across the rest of the year

Heritage at Risk Register

The updated Heritage at Risk Register saw several success stories, with historic sites being removed thanks to dedicated restoration efforts. Notable examples include the restoration of St Mary's Church in Norfolk, where roof repairs saved it from structural collapse.

Listing Reviews

Key listing decisions this year, such as the designation of the iconic Gaiety Theatre in Manchester and the historic Stockton & Darlington Railway route, highlighted the ongoing efforts to preserve and celebrate England's built heritage. In total 256 new buildings, scheduled monuments and parks were added to the List in 2024.

Climate Change

Historic England published new advice on adapting historic buildings for energy and carbon efficiency. Keeping historic buildings in use through sensitive repair, maintenance, and adaptation can help reduce carbon emissions, reliance on fossil fuels, and energy costs.

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The National Blue Plaque Scheme celebrates, preserves and creates communities...Communities that have a sense of heritage, as many studies have shown, have less vandalism and violence, better community cohesion, better relations between neighbours. Plaques and heritage create neighbourhoods and preserve them.

Professor Ronald Hutton,
Chair of The National Blue Plaque Panel

Robert Steele smiling from a nearby window at the presentation of the blue plaque honouring his mother



HISTORIC ENGLAND
**DAPHNE
STEELE**
1927 - 2004
Guyanese nurse
and midwife
Pioneering Black matron
in the NHS
lived and worked
here



Thank you to our donors in 2024

Thank you to all our wonderful donors, including the following people and organisations who donated £1,000 or more to the Historic England Foundation during 2024.

Anthony Clarke

Benefact Trust

Delancey and the Earls Court Development Company

Friends of the Flaxmill Maltings

The Mercers' Company

Richard Upton

Simon Wedgwood

The Swire Charitable Foundation

And those wishing to remain anonymous

In Memory of David Laing

It is with great sadness that we remember Mr David Laing, former Historic England Foundation board member, Historic England commissioner and Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire. A dedicated philanthropist and advocate for heritage, Mr Laing played a significant role in supporting the preservation of the nation's built heritage. His contributions to cultural causes, including his work with Historic England, have left a lasting impact. Mr Laing's vision, generosity, and commitment to the cultural sector will be remembered with great respect and appreciation. His legacy continues to inspire all who had the privilege of working with him.

How you can support



Children admire a Clarice Cliff plate at the blue plaque unveiling to the famous ceramicist

Donate online

We count on donations to help us deliver exciting and innovative projects across the country. To donate today, please visit our website.

Partner with us

If you would like to discuss how you, your company or your Foundation can support the work of Historic England or partner with us, please contact us: info@historicenglandfoundation.org.uk

Wills

The Foundation is inviting anyone passionate about heritage to consider leaving a gift in their Will to support

the work of Historic England. For decades Historic England has been protecting England's most important places and will continue to do so long into the future.

Donations left in Wills can have a lasting impact. You can support projects which equip the heritage sector's workforce throughout their career or restore 'at risk' buildings, giving them a sustainable future.

If you are interested in leaving a gift in your will to the Historic England Foundation, please contact us for more information.

Historic England Foundation
The Engine House
Fire Fly Avenue
Swindon
SN2 2EH

020 7973 3700

Registered Charity Number 1178368

historicenglandfoundation.org.uk

info@historicenglandfoundation.org.uk

Front page image: Trainees explore the structure and significance of ceiling joists at St John the Evangelist's Church as part of the Heritage Building Skills programme

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