



LEADER and the Historic Environment



ENGLISH HERITAGE

This publication describes some of the important work carried out by the LEADER+ Programme to realise the potential of the historic environment. The work relies on direct community involvement and has secured other economic, social and environmental benefits. Examples of good practice are published here to encourage and inspire Local Action Groups during the delivery of the 2007 – 13 Rural Development Programme for England.

LEADER ■ is a European Commission initiative to support the development of rural areas across the European Union (EU). First introduced in 1991, it is designed to complement other rural development programmes. There have been three 'rounds' of LEADER as a programme in its own right – LEADER I (1991 – 1994), LEADER II (1995 – 1999) and LEADER+ (2000 – 2006). All have been EU co-financed programmes focused on the economic, social and environmental regeneration of rural communities.

Under the new Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) 2007 – 2013, LEADER will become one of the main ways of distributing funding for rural development programmes with its delivery being managed by the Regional Development Agencies (RDA). The key difference is that the LEADER approach will no longer be a discrete programme in itself, but must be used to deliver at least 5% of EU funds (£110m based on current budgets) within the RDPE.

LEADER is an area-based approach to rural development, organised and managed locally and focused on local needs. Within the LEADER model and regional priorities there is flexibility to develop strategies in a way that is appropriate to local circumstances.

There are seven principles which encapsulate the LEADER approach and it is the combination of these principles that give LEADER its particular benefits, opportunities and style as a rural development initiative:

- An area-based approach.
- Managed and implemented by a local partnership, the Local Action Group.
- A multi-sectoral strategy – integrating different sectors, stakeholders and projects.
- A 'bottom-up' approach with decision-making at the local level through the involvement of local stakeholders.
- Encouraging innovation and experimentation at project and programme level.

- Incorporating the opportunity for inter-regional and trans-national co-operation projects as well as local projects.
- Using networking to stimulate co-operation and exchange of experience from the local to the trans-national level.

The LEADER Programme shows how grass roots, community-led rural development makes a significant contribution to the regeneration and renewal of rural communities. By working with partners and stakeholders at the national, regional and local level, rural communities can come together to identify their own needs and solutions.

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The interaction through time between people, places and the natural environment has created the historic environment of today. It is an important asset that can help in the economic development and regeneration of our rural areas.

The historic character of landscapes, villages and market towns creates a strong sense of place and contributes to community cohesion. It underpins the tourism industry and by enhancing quality of life the historic environment also stimulates inward investment.

- An attractive environment can help draw in external investment as well as sustaining businesses of all types. The distinctive character of historic market towns and villages is a major asset.
- Tourism is an important economic driver in rural areas and the historic environment attracts visitors from within the UK and overseas. It can create jobs and helps underpin local economies.
- Historic buildings present opportunities for adaptive reuse that are sustainable and reduce the need for new building materials.

■ LEADER is a French acronym for 'Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de L'Economie Rurale'.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- As well as maintaining local distinctiveness, traditional craft skills provide important training and employment opportunities.
- People are proud of their local history and the historic environment is a powerful focus for community action.
- Involving communities at a grass roots level in their local heritage can bring communities together through a shared understanding of their diverse histories. Heritage plays an important role in local cultural activities.
- The historic environment is a major educational resource for people of all ages. Learning raises people's awareness and understanding of the heritage and encourages informed and active participation in caring for the historic environment.
- By fostering civic responsibility and citizenship the historic environment can have a positive impact on community well-being and problems of anti-social behaviour.
- The historic environment contributes to quality of life and improved health by creating opportunities for leisure and recreation.

English Heritage encourages Local Action Groups, working alongside RDAs and other partners, including Natural England and the Forestry Commission, to build on this good work. Together they can deliver projects in which the historic and natural environment are fully integrated to bring economic, social and environmental benefits.

JOINING IN AND GETTING ADVICE

Individuals, local communities or local organisations can become involved in planning and projects relating to the historic environment through LEADER by:

- Representing their local community on the Local Action Group.
- Commenting on and putting forward ideas to the Local Action Group on their development plan.
- Suggesting and becoming involved in projects.

Advice and support on the historic environment is available from local authority historic environment specialists based at Historic Environment Records or through local authority historic buildings conservation officers. A full list of Historic Environment Records is available at: www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway.

LEADER AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Culture and the historic environment have been common themes in previous LEADER Programmes and there are many examples of community-based rural development projects which have conserved and enhanced heritage assets to the benefit of the local area. These projects include survey and recording, building conservation, site and landscape management, public participation, training, interpretation and education. The delivery of Axis 3 measures within the RDPE through LEADER now offers new opportunities for heritage-based projects including:

- Encouragement for tourism activities.
- Village renewal.
- Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage.

With its emphasis on direct local action, LEADER has been particularly successful in helping local groups identify and care for their heritage, with partnerships of public, private and voluntary organisations and individuals contributing to successful projects. These previous LEADER projects have often formed part of wider partnerships, with encouragement, support and funding from a range of other organisations, including those in the heritage sector.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

The following case studies demonstrate how LEADER has been used to secure benefits for the historic environment. This diverse range of projects illustrates the strength and breadth of the LEADER approach. They show what can be achieved successfully, whilst addressing wider economic, social and environmental agendas. We hope these examples of good practice will inspire others during the delivery of the 2007 – 13 RDPE.

LEADER+ IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND

Cultural heritage was one of five themes which made up the LEADER+ North Northumberland Programme. The aim of the theme was to increase public participation through festivals, heritage trails, interpretative schemes, community archives, local and living history projects, cultural visits and the promotion of local writers and the arts. Membership of the Local Action Group included local community groups and statutory agencies with the 'bottom-up' ethos of LEADER+ being reflected in the support given to projects. Grants of between £10,000 and £50,000 were awarded, often in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund or through funding sources associated with sustainable tourism. The local authorities of Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed together with the Northumberland National Park and the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lie within the area.

Projects included the *Union of the Crowns Festival* at Berwick-upon-Tweed and the commemoration, through exhibition and film, of the first recorded Viking attack in Britain. The landscape heritage of the area has been celebrated by creating a 160km heritage trail, *The St Oswald's Way*, to improve facilities for visitors. A programme of archaeological research, conservation and interpretation has enhanced the spectacular Iron Age hill forts associated with the prehistoric landscapes of the Northumberland Cheviot Hills. *Discovering Our Hill Fort Heritage* was funded in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, the Universities of Durham and Newcastle and local archaeological societies. Public understanding, access and engagement with the monuments has been improved and their long-term conservation enhanced by the creation of management agreements with land owners.

A *Union of the Crowns Festival.*
Re-enactment of the ceremonial entry of James VI of Scotland coming into Berwick-upon-Tweed en route to his Coronation at Westminster Abbey as James I of England.
© John Crombie

B Iron Age hill fort at Mid Hill, Northumberland National Park.
© English Heritage



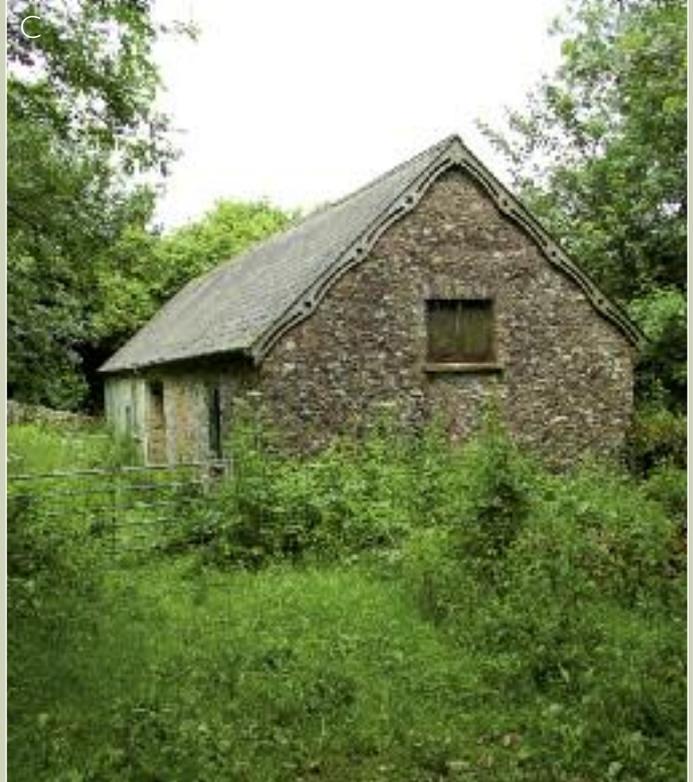
OTTERHEAD ESTATE, BLACKDOWN HILLS, SOMERSET

The Otterhead Estate was developed by William Beadon, a Taunton surgeon, in the early 19th century and included a manor house, coach house, carriageway, formal gardens and two lakes. The lakes were extended between 1860 and 1890 and by the early 1900's the estate was fully formed. It went into decline after World War I and in 1952 the house was demolished.

Lying within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Estate retains a number of surviving historic features (including the former fish ponds and walled gardens), together with a rich variety of habitats and species of local and national importance. Owned by Wessex Water, it contains a local nature reserve which is leased by the Otterhead Estate Trust Ltd. The reserve is a popular area for walking, bird watching and picnicking.

A LEADER+ project facilitated by the Blackdown Hills Rural Partnership, the Local Action Group, has helped to further enhance and conserve the estate. Having prepared a restoration plan and a survey of the walled garden, work has recently been completed on the coach house which required re-roofing, masonry repairs and general refurbishment. The coach house is to be used by the Forest School which, in partnership with the Otterhead Estate Trust Co Ltd, will help to improve the management of the Otterhead Estate.

C Otterhead Estate. Coach house before repair.
© N. Griffiths



D Otterhead Estate. Former fishponds which are now a haven for wildlife.
© N. Griffiths



EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE LOCAL ACTION GROUP

Covering the Yorkshire Wolds and the East Riding of Yorkshire, the Local Action Group supported new local enterprises which sought to enhance and conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the area and strengthen market towns as a nucleus for rural regeneration.

Work and Play: Life on the Yorkshire Country House Estate was an exhibition project developed through the Yorkshire Country House Partnership, a collaborative venture between the country houses of Yorkshire and the University of York. The exhibitions and other activities examined the lives of the men and women who lived and worked on these estates using previously unseen photographs, archive material, models, restorations and oral histories. Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project was part-financed by LEADER+.

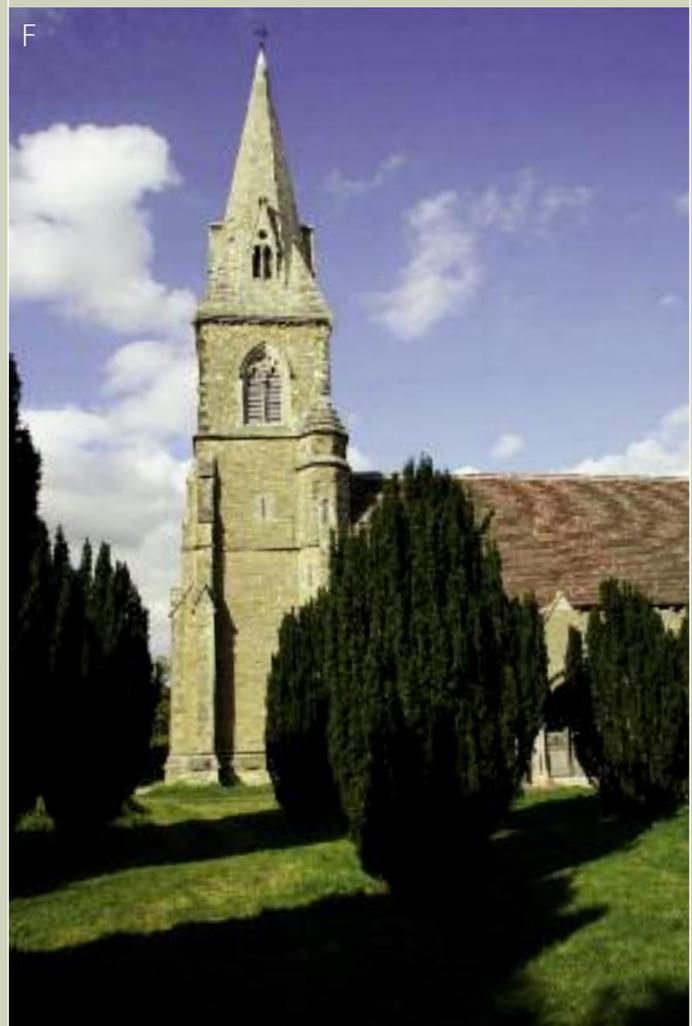
Trails have been established at the country houses of Burton Constable, Sledmere and Burton Agnes. They include a series of walks and excursions through the grounds, parkland and estate villages. Visitors are invited to explore the surviving landscapes and buildings that document the history of these estates and the trails are illustrated in a small booklet. Oral history recordings of people who once lived and worked on the estate have also been made. Other country houses that have participated in the exhibition project include Brodsworth Hall, Harewood House and Temple Newsam House.

Owned by the Yorkshire Wolds Historic Buildings Preservation Trust, the redundant Church of St James at Warter has been repaired and is now the Yorkshire Wolds Heritage Centre. Erected in 1862 the church is listed Grade II and lies on the site of the 12th century Warter Augustinian Priory, a nationally important monument. Grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners including LEADER+ have secured the future of the building. The LEADER+ funding was awarded under the Local Action Group theme of 'making the best use of natural and cultural resources'.

The conserved church is helping in the wider social and economic regeneration of the area by enhancing tourism, providing training in heritage interpretation, producing environmental and historical trails and supporting local businesses including the village post office. It also forms part of the East Yorkshire Church Tourism Initiative, an area based strategy, which enables individual projects to work more closely together.

E Burton Constable Hall.
© Burton Constable Foundation

F The restored Church of St James at Warter.
© D. Neave



AVALON MARSHES HERITAGE NETWORK, SOMERSET

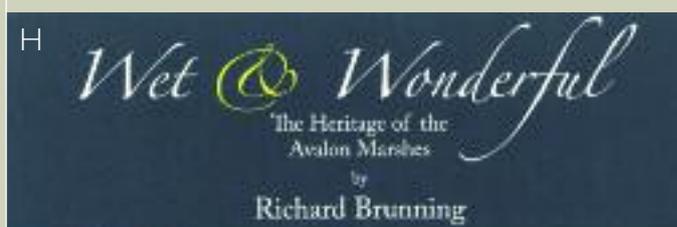
This area is famous for its prehistoric wooden trackways and lake villages whose archaeological remains were first discovered during peat extraction. Little is now visible of the sites on the surface and the complex landscape history of the area is not widely understood by the general public. Funded by the Somerset Levels and Moors LEADER+ and other partners, including Somerset County Council and English Heritage, the *Avalon Marshes Heritage Network* presents the unique heritage of the Brue Valley, near Glastonbury, in a way that is accessible to both the local community and visitors.

Ten heritage panels that are accessible by wheelchair have been installed in local nature reserves, a visitor centre and next to pubs. These contain information in braille with raised images for blind people. The nature reserves provide an ideal location for the panels. They are positioned in a wetland landscape similar to how the valley would have appeared during the prehistoric period.

Information was also provided in the form of a colour booklet *Wet and Wonderful: The Heritage of the Avalon Marshes* and on an audio CD. This was given to the local library service, whilst 530 copies of the colour booklet were also supplied to nearby primary schools, who requested them as teaching aids.

G *Avalon Marshes Heritage Network* information panel.
© R. Brunning, Somerset County Council

H *Wet and Wonderful: The Heritage of the Avalon Marshes* produced as part of the *Avalon Marshes Heritage Network*.
© Somerset County Council



WEALDEN AND RURAL ROTHER LEADER+ PROGRAMME

Based in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the *High Weald Smallholders Project* was set up in 2006 by the Kent and Sussex Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG). It aimed to give conservation and land management advice to landowners with fewer than 20 hectares who are often small producers, part-time farmers or new to land ownership.

The project was funded by the High Weald Sustainable Development Fund and the Wealden and Rural Rother LEADER+ Programme. It enabled FWAG to produce smallholder information packs, provide technical advice, arrange farm walks and training days and raise awareness of potential grant funding from agri-environment schemes.

As well as promoting better environmental practices and sustainable land-use to encourage biodiversity, the project also sought to raise awareness of the historic environment. The one-to-one farm visits, reinforced by a short report, helped landowners to understand their holdings within the context of the wider landscape. The project was a great success, with requests for visits outstripping available funding.

Tourism and the benefits to the area from increased visitor numbers were important aims of the Wealden and Rural Rother LEADER+ Programme. This enabled the creation of an interpretation centre at the Windmill, Windmill Hill, Herstmonceux. Grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, Wealden District Council, East Sussex County Council, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Friends of the Windmill enabled major repairs to be carried out on this Grade II* listed building. The restoration of the windmill began in 2003 and in November 2005 the new sails were attached.

I The importance of historic landscape features such as veteran trees and traditional boundaries was highlighted by the *High Weald Smallholders Project*.
© S. Podd, FWAG

J Farm walks and training days formed part of the *High Weald Smallholders Project*.
© S. Podd, FWAG

K The repaired Windmill, Windmill Hill, Herstmonceux.
© Z. McMillan



HEREFORDSHIRE RIVERS LEADER+

The Herefordshire Rivers LEADER+ Programme provided funding to support local communities to find new ways to enhance, interpret, utilise and record the natural and historic environment of the countryside.

As part of the LEADER+ Programme, Herefordshire Archaeology has completed three projects in the river valleys of the Arrow, Frome and Lugg. Through landscape survey, site-based studies, conservation works, guided walks, seminars, exhibitions and publications these projects have considerably enhanced the knowledge and appreciation of the county's archaeology. Much of the work was carried out with the help of local residents, landowners and farmers, thereby enabling members of the public to gain knowledge and learn new skills. The training programme for the Lugg Valley project involved site-based field investigation and training in the use of earthwork, woodland and geophysical survey. Enhanced management has also been achieved with whole-farm studies and monument management work. The nationally important castle earthworks of Staunton-on-Arrow motte have been considerably improved through limited clearance works involving volunteers. This has re-established the site as a key feature within the surrounding landscape.

Learning from our Heritage was another project funded by the Herefordshire Rivers LEADER+. Based in Lugwardine, the project aimed to restore and make safe, an historic walled garden, redesigning it as a Victorian kitchen garden and using traditional organic husbandry. It is being run by Workmatch, an organisation that benefits and supports a variety of people with disabilities and disadvantages. Volunteering opportunities are also available to the general public.

L Staunton-on-Arrow motte (the motte is the tree-covered mound in the top left corner).
© Chris Musson

N The restored walled garden at Lugwardine.
© G. Tunstall, Workmatch

M Volunteers undertaking clearance work at Staunton-on-Arrow motte.
© Herefordshire Archaeology



TEACH (TRAINING, ENTERPRISE AND ASSESSMENT IN CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE) AT WAXHAM BARN, NORFOLK

Dating from the 1580's the Grade I listed Waxham Barn was acquired through compulsory purchase by Norfolk County Council in the 1990's. Significant repairs were carried out on the 16th century building after acquisition, but the 18th and 19th century single-storey wings were still in need of extensive works.

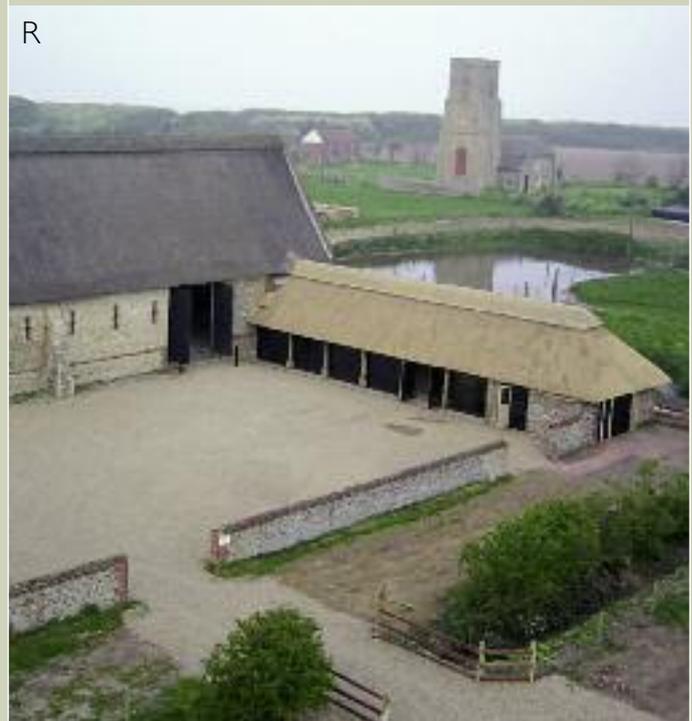
Training formed an important part of the 2003 – 04 conservation project for the repair and re-thatching of the four wings, conversion of one wing into a café and minor works to the barn to create a visitor centre. During repairs to the wings, training and assessment was provided towards NVQ Level 3 and additional conservation units. An office was created on site to provide an area for candidates to work in and store their portfolios and for trainers to deliver seminars. In addition, one of the open fronted wings was set up as a training area with facilities for practicing flint walling, wattle and daub and painting and decorating techniques.

The three training colleges for construction students in the area were also invited to visit the site. Having viewed the works, students were given a short seminar on the repair of historic buildings followed by hands-on workshops. The positive feedback was encouraging as a key aim of the training was to increase the number of individuals who were qualified to undertake conservation work within the county.

Funding partners for *TEACH* included the Heritage Lottery Fund, East of England Development Agency, English Heritage, Norfolk County Council, Broads and Rivers LEADER+ Partnership, Construction Industry Training Board and the Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust.

Q College students receiving training in conservation skills during the project.
© C. Davison, Norfolk County Council

R Waxham Barn following the completion of works.
© C. Davison, Norfolk County Council



FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LEADER

You can find more information on LEADER 2007 – 13 at Defra's web page

www.defra.gov.uk/rural/rdpe/leader.htm.

This also provides a link to the individual RDA websites which give further details on the regional delivery of the RDPE, the LEADER approach and selection guidance.

The England LEADER+ Programme 2000 – 06 has now closed to project applicants, but useful information for 2007 – 13 is available at www.defra.gov.uk/rural/leader and for the UK LEADER+ Network at

www.ukleader.org.uk.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The Historic Environment Local Management (HELM) website (www.helm.org.uk) gives further information on LEADER and the historic environment. The website contains guidance on all aspects of the historic environment together with English Heritage publications, other advice and guidance and case studies.

The National Monuments Record is the public archive of English Heritage (www.english-heritage.org.uk/nmr). It holds over 10 million photographs, architectural and archaeological reports and other items relating to the historic environment of England. PastScape (www.pastscape.org) provides online access to nearly 400,000 records held on the national historic environment database. This includes information on archaeological, architectural and maritime sites, pictures, links to maps, aerial photographs and other websites.

Historic Environment Records (HERs) are local authority based public services for anyone interested in the archaeology, built heritage and history of their area. They are used by local authorities to provide advice

on the conservation of the historic environment and have an important role to play in public education. Details on the location of the local HER can be obtained through the Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway).

Local authority historic buildings conservation officers and archaeological officers also understand local areas and may be able to offer advice on the historic environment. They are generally located in the Planning Department of local planning authorities.

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English Heritage is the government's statutory advisor on the historic environment.

Our role is to champion and care for the historic environment which we do by:

- Improving understanding of the past through research and study.
- Providing conservation grants, advisory and education services.
- Identifying and helping to protect buildings and archaeological sites of national importance.
- Maintaining more than 400 historic properties and making them accessible to the broadest possible public audience.
- Maintaining the National Monuments Record as the central publicly accessible archive for the historic environment in England.

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