

# WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR OUR CONSERVATION AREAS?



**Report on the Big Conservation Conversation**

May 2018

Photo credit

Cover: Warwick Hall Community Centre, Burford. Civic Voice Design Awards 2017, Special Conservation Area Award and New Buildings winner. © Acanthus Clews Architects

## Acknowledgements

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*Planning authorities are working under very difficult conditions at the moment with recent legislation increasing workload, shortage of space and staff, and not being helped by the general effects of cutback in spending.*

**Lord Duncan Sandys, 1969**

# STATE OF CONSERVATION AREAS

<b>1967</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Conservation Area designated
<b>Stamford</b>	
<b>512</b>	Conservation Areas currently 'At Risk'
<b>47</b>	Conservation Areas added to the Heritage At Risk register in 2017
<b>59%</b>	'At Risk' Conservation Areas in 'very bad' condition
<b>10,122</b>	Conservation Areas in England (2017)
<b>6.8 million</b>	People live within Conservation Areas in England (12.5% of the population)
<b>37%</b>	Reduction in conservation specialists within local authorities since 2006 <sup>1</sup>
<b>70%</b>	Do not consider Conservation Areas are being afforded the necessary protection <sup>2</sup>
<b>9%</b>	House prices in Conservation Areas are 9% higher <sup>3</sup>
<b>336</b>	Every local authority in England has at least 1 Conservation Area
<b>2018</b>	Newest Conservation Areas designated in March 2018
<b>Charlton</b>	

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<sup>1</sup> The Ninth report on Local Authority Staff Resources (HE, ALGAO, IHBC, 2017) Available at: <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/ninth-report-la-staff-resources/ninth-report-la-staff-resources.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Respondents to Big Conservation Conversation survey (Civic Voice, 2018)

*Research by Historic England and the IHBC shows that one in five local authorities now have no conservation officer. Many authorities, at best, have limited part-time advice. The scale of the local government cutbacks means that we really must question the capacity of many local authorities to cope with even their statutory conservation duties.*

**Laura Sandys, Civic Voice Vice-President**

## Executive Summary

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance according to Section 69 The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.

In 2017, Conservation Areas across England celebrated 50 years since the introduction of the Civic Amenities Act. A key part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary was Civic Voice's campaign, the Big Conservation Conversation. The campaign arose from feedback from our members that we should celebrate the positive impact that Conservation Areas have made to England since 1967.

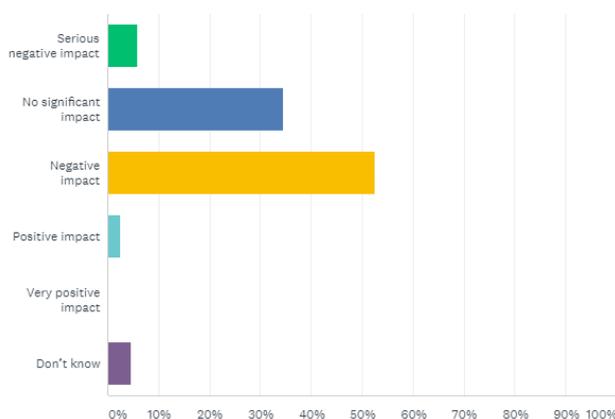
But today, England's Conservation Areas are at risk, greater risk today than ever before. But if Conservation Areas are regarded as an asset, to assist in regeneration of our towns, they require adequate resources to manage them.

In October 2017, another 47 Conservation Areas were added to the national Heritage at Risk 2017 register meaning that nearly 10%<sup>4</sup> of the nation's heritage at risk is a designated Conservation Area. More Conservation Areas are now on the 'at risk' register than ever before.

Undertaking the Big Conservation Conversation campaign alerted us to the fact that many civic societies were experiencing significant challenges with protecting their Conservation Area due to the perceived impact that funding cuts to local government were having on conservation and planning departments.

How are the activities of your civic society being affected by the cuts in funding and loss of staff in your local council?

Answered: 154 Skipped: 9



*Chart 1 – How are the activities of your civic society being affected by the cuts in funding and loss of staff in your local council? (Civic Voice, 2016)*

<sup>4</sup> Heritage at Risk. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/5254/assets-on-register/512=10%>

Responding to this feedback from Civic Voice members, we wanted to further probe this situation and undertook a survey asking the question, “What does the lack of a conservation officer actually mean to the health of a Conservation Area?”

The results of this initial survey highlighted a stark finding, that over 70% of respondents did not consider Conservation Areas were being afforded the necessary protection:

Viewing these statistics alongside IHBC and Historic England research on the decline of conservation staff in local government, it is a sobering picture (see chart 9 page 20).

Critical gaps now exist with 21% of local authorities having no dedicated conservation officer. There is now a clear inability for many authorities to carry out non-statutory functions such as community outreach and Conservation Area character appraisals. This is not the view of Civic Voice, but the view of local authorities and community groups who responded to us.

Local consultation, engagement and participation have a vital role in creating high-quality developments, but this depends on councils having well-resourced planning and conservation departments. These areas are reducing in priority for councils because local councils are now experiencing difficult economic times.

The problem will continue to get worse unless we address the root cause of the problem now. That is that under-funded and under-resourced conservation departments are not being prioritized by national government for funding and support.

We hope this report and its recommendations go towards supporting Historic England in its work as the Government’s advisory arm whilst, at the same time, inspiring communities across the country to step up to the challenge and support local authorities looking at ways of managing Conservation Area for future generations.

## **1.0 The purpose and function of Conservation Areas**

A Conservation Area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.<sup>5</sup> Local Planning Authorities have a duty under the Act to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest. The Council is also under a duty to review existing Conservation Areas, 'from time to time' and to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.

Conservation Areas are not single buildings, but groups of buildings and areas which have special architectural or historic significance. For designation, the significance need not be at a national level: local interest is sufficient. Because the designation covers an area, significance can include the spaces between buildings and natural features. Topography, the historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries, archaeology and landscape features such as gardens, parks and greens, trees and street furniture can all contribute to its significance.

Conservation Area designation does not prevent development from taking place but is a tool to help manage change. The aim of management is to protect the significance which led to the designation and ensure that development preserves or enhances that special interest. In exercising their planning powers, local planning authorities must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

Conservation Areas are an important part of the England's heritage, representing a cross section of the best surviving examples of different phases and types of development from residential to industrial areas, open spaces and town centres. Conservation Areas foster local identity and can be catalysts for social and economic regeneration. Historic areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well-being, and quality of life. They contribute to the quality of urban spaces and add unique character to the places where we live. They add to our cultural identity and to local distinctiveness.

## **2.0 Conservation Areas: The policy and legislative framework**

National planning policy is now almost entirely contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>6</sup>. Chapter 12 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (paragraphs 126 to 141) is of relevance to Conservation Areas. Accompanying guidance to the NPPF is contained in the online Planning Practice Guidance<sup>7</sup>, where there is also a section on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. It is for local authorities to identify and review Conservation Areas within their boundaries. The Government expects local planning authorities to regularly review Conservation Areas, to ensure they are still fit for purpose.

There are three sections of legislation in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which are relevant.

Section 69 relates to the designation and review of Conservation Areas:

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<sup>5</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 69. Available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/part/II>

<sup>6</sup> NPPF (DCLG, 2012). Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

**'69 Designation of conservation areas.**

(1) Every local planning authority –

*(a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and*

*(b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.*

*(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.'*

Section 71 relates to the formulation and publication of proposals for preservation and enhancement of conservation areas (i.e. Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans):

**'71 Formulation and publication of proposals for preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.**

*(1) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.*

*(2) Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.*

*(3) The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting.'*

Section 72 relates to the assessment of planning applications in Conservation Areas:

**'72 General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.**

*(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area... special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'*

### **3.0 The implications of Conservation Area designation**

Conservation Areas enjoy special protection under legislation and both national and local policy and guidance. In determining planning applications, the local authority must consider how the proposed development within a Conservation Area 'preserves or enhances' the character or appearance of the area.

Extra controls are placed on development within a Conservation Area. Planning Permission is needed to demolish a building in a Conservation Area, and there is a planning presumption in favour of the retention of buildings which make a positive contribution to a Conservation Area. Certain types of more minor development, are subject to Permitted Development rights (under the General Permitted Development Order, 2015, as amended). Permitted Development rights are, however, more limited in Conservation Areas, and may be removed partially or completely using Article 4 Directions. Trees above a specific size are protected in Conservation Areas. Applicants must give a council a notice period (usually six weeks' notice) in writing before any work is carried out to lop, top or fell a tree in a Conservation Area. There is also greater control over advertisements in Conservation Areas.

*I wanted the local authorities to designate many and large areas... So, we advised the local authorities to designate first and think later, and this broadly speaking, is what they did.*

**Lord Kennet, 1972**

#### **4.0 How popular are Conservation Areas as a planning tool?**

In 1967, at the time of the introduction of the Civic Amenities Act, the Civic Trust estimated that as many as three thousand Conservation Areas might be designated in Great Britain – an estimate which was realized in 1974, with the designation of the Gladstone Pottery at Longton, Stoke on-Trent as the 3,000th Conservation Area.

Today, in 2018, all local authorities in England have at least one Conservation Area with there now being 10,122. It is fair to say the need for 3,000 Conservation Areas was a serious underestimate.

Wiltshire Council manages the most – with some 246 Conservation Areas across the county.

400 Conservation Areas were designated in the first three years of the legislation and a database documenting this was published by Civic Voice in December 2017.<sup>8</sup> Notable designations include:

**Stamford, Lincolnshire (1<sup>st</sup> Conservation Area)**

**Ashburton, Devon (1500th)**

**Bridge, near Canterbury, Kent (2,000th)**

**Gladstone Pottery at Longton, Stoke on-Trent (3,000th)**

Amongst the early designations were also important developments of the early 20th Century: Welwyn Garden City (Hertfordshire); Hampstead Garden Suburb (London Borough of Barnet); and Chester, which was selected by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government for a special study on the implications of a conservation policy for the historic centre. This had the broad objective of preserving and, where possible, promoting or enhancing the architectural and historic character of the area in order to maintain its life and economic buoyancy.

Of the first 3,000 Conservation Areas designated in the United Kingdom, the majority were located in the South-East, where Greater London alone, with a total of 263 areas, had more than Wales (152). Interestingly, in 1974, 147 outstanding conservation areas were designated. The idea of “outstanding



Chart 2 – Location of Conservation Areas (Historic England, 2017)

<sup>8</sup> Civic Voice Conservation Area designations 1967-69 database. Available at: <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/the-big-conservation-conversation/>

conservation areas” came from the Government who were anxious to encourage enhancement or improvement schemes of Conservation Areas leading up to 1975 and the European Year of Heritage. To support the “outstanding conservation area” title, local authorities had to prove that they had an “outstanding conservation area” and if they could, the Government allowed them to apply for Conservation Grants from the Historic Building Council.

A future Civic Voice report will be asking “Whatever happened to the Outstanding Conservation Areas?”

There are currently 10,122 Conservation Areas in England which include; town and city centres, suburbs, industrial areas, rural landscapes, cemeteries, and residential areas. They range in size from a quarter of an acre (Heath Passage in Hampstead) to over 25 square miles (Swaledale and Arkengarthdale, North Yorkshire). Not surprisingly, the number of new designations has gradually decreased over the years.

Changes in the estimated size of Conservation Areas in England is mostly due to local authorities adopting new areas and extending current Conservation Area boundaries.

According to Historic England’s website, ‘They form the historic backcloth to national and local life and are a crucial component of local identity and community cohesion.’<sup>9</sup>

The implementation of conservation policies involves much more than preservation alone. The Civic Amenities Act, and subsequent legislation, does not and never did require Conservation Areas to be “frozen” into museum pieces; it does, however, require special attention to be given to their enhancement and improvement.

The marriage of the old and the new – so that new development pays due regard to the character, scale, proportion and materials of its neighbours – is an integral part of the conservation process. It calls for: sensitivity on the part of the designer; understanding and tolerance on the part of the building owner or developer; and co-operation from the outset from all partners with the local planning authority.

Examples of successful new development within Conservation Areas include Cedars Hall, Wells; Warwick Hall, a new community centre in Burford; and in Bradford, the conversion of a subterranean network of tunnels into bars, restaurants and pop-up shops at Sunbridge Wells.

Each of these schemes has been recognised through the Civic Voice Design Awards, highlighting high quality



*Image 1 – Cedars Hall Wells, Civic Voice Design Awards 2017, Special Conservation Area Award winner. © Eric Parry Architects*

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<sup>9</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/selection-criteria/>

development in Conservation Areas. These awards will again be run in 2018 via [www.civicvoicedesignawards.com](http://www.civicvoicedesignawards.com)

## 5.0 Are Conservation Areas still needed?

The role of Conservation Areas is well established. Conservation Areas include historic town and city centres such as Grainger Town, Newcastle upon Tyne, conserved in 1995 as one of the best examples of classical Victorian architecture in the country. In the north west, Vulcan Village in the Newton-le-Willows area of St Helens was declared a Conservation Area in 1986 in recognition of the village's special characteristic as a model worker village and for representing a housing ideology of the 19th century.

The designation can cover historic transport links and the surrounding environment, such as Regent's Canal, Hackney, which became a Conservation Area in 2007, in view of its role in the country's industrial development. Conservation Areas such as Grainger Town and Regent's Canal have often been in a state of dereliction; however, through conservation efforts and funding from Historic England, they have been successfully regenerated.

While new areas continue to be designated, there is now a perception that the majority of areas that will become Conservation Areas have been identified.

The need for Conservation Areas to protect the special character of our towns has been needed. Their future is not so clear. With the increasing pressures on local authorities, it is important that the civic movement continues to make the case for conservation areas. It is why we are pleased to see areas including Chester, Grimsby and Greenwich all designate Conservation Areas within the past 12 months.

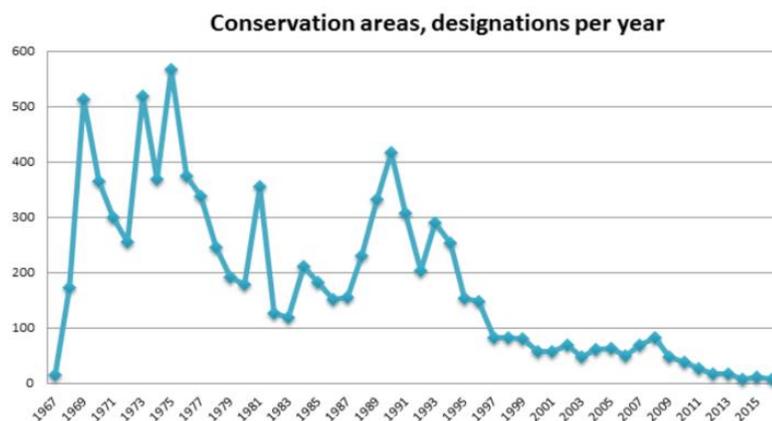


Chart 3 – Conservation area designations per year since 1967.

It could be argued that most historic places worthy of Conservation Area status have already been designated and that the policy has been successful; 2.2% of land is now covered by a Conservation Area designation. Should we now be asking, where are the Conservation Areas of the future? What are we building now that will form the next generation's Conservation Areas? Should the first large scale Barratts or Redrow now be considered for Conservation Area status?

It was pleasing to see work undertaken by The Twentieth Century Society, in partnership with Historic England, which identified more than 50 areas across the country as potential future Conservation Areas. These included post-war public and private housing schemes, university campuses, an aerodrome in Salford, a former children's holiday camp in Lancashire and Coventry city centre.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> C20 Conservation Areas Project (C20, 2017) Available at: <https://c20society.org.uk/publications/c20-conservation-areas/>

Two areas, Plymouth Inner City Centre and the northern section of the Eaglestone Housing Estate in Milton Keynes, have been selected as exemplary projects, researched in detail and put forward to their local stakeholders and councils with recommendations that they be considered for designation. Detailed draft Conservation Area appraisals for these areas have been prepared to aid discussion.

A future Civic Voice report will ask, 'What are we building today that will form the next generation's Conservation Areas?'

## **6.0 The Big Conservation Conversation Research**

During 2017, Civic Voice members organised over 300 events across England to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civic Amenities Act. This celebration featured events, workshops, walks and talks and helped The Big Conservation Conversation come alive within communities. These events all helped contribute to our thinking and were the basis for Civic Voice to investigate Conservation Areas further in this report.

At the end of our celebrations in December 2017, Civic Voice undertook a national survey which was sent out to 200 civic societies that had participated in the Big Conservation Conversation campaign. A similar survey was issued to 100 conservation officers that had shared contact details with Civic Voice throughout the year. Surveys were completed by 120 civic society members and by 50 local authorities. Of the conservation officers that responded, they collectively covered 917 Conservation Areas within their areas, approximately 8% of the total number of Conservation Areas in England.

Conservation officers were required to submit contact details with their response, however, for confidentiality purposes, we have given anonymity throughout this report. Across the local authorities that responded, they had a total of 47 conservation officers between them.

After the survey was submitted, telephone calls were then undertaken by the Civic Voice campaign team, to allow respondents the opportunity to elaborate on the response further.

This report is the first of a series of publications which highlights some of the key findings from Civic Voice's Big Conservation Conversation research and brings together other public sources of information including:

- Heritage Counts 2017<sup>11</sup>
- Heritage at Risk Register 2017<sup>12</sup>
- Heritage at Risk: Conservation Areas at Risk database<sup>13</sup>
- Local Authority Profiles for 2017<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Heritage Counts 2017. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/>

<sup>12</sup> Heritage at Risk. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/>

<sup>13</sup> Accessed via Local Authority Profiles 2017. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/2017-conservation-areas/indicator-data/>

<sup>14</sup> Local Authority Profiles 2017. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/2017-conservation-areas/indicator-data/>

Bringing together these data sources, local authority perspectives and community viewpoints Civic Voice presents a picture of the current situation and the state of the nation's 'At Risk' Conservation Areas.

The full results of the Big Conservation Conversation survey will be shared by Civic Voice in a series of reports throughout 2018.

*Of particular concern is the high number of Conservation Areas on the Register in the 50th anniversary year. 47 Conservation Areas were added this year, making a total of 512 at risk.<sup>15</sup>*

**Historic England, October 2017**

## 7.0 Conservation Areas At Risk

Conservation Areas are located across the country. So too, are Conservation Areas ‘at risk’. According to Historic England’s Heritage at Risk database, 512 Conservation Areas are now known to be ‘at risk’.

A Conservation Area is deemed to be ‘at risk’ by Historic England if it has either deteriorated in the last three years or is expected to do so within the next three years. It is also considered to be ‘at risk’ if it is in danger of losing its historic significance. Issues such as development pressures, erosion of historic detail, insensitive highway schemes, empty buildings and lack of investment are factors which are considered when assessing whether an area is improving, stable or declining.

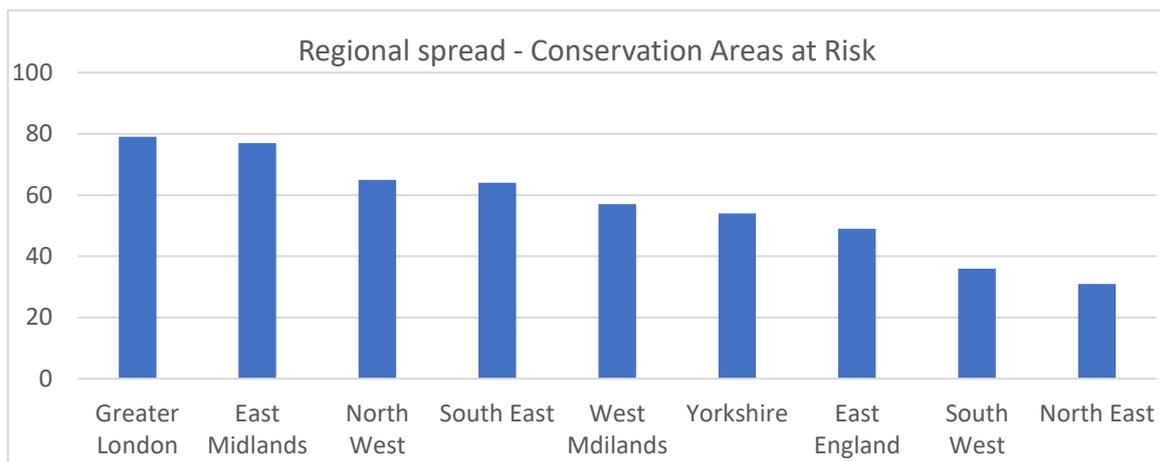


Chart 4 – No. of Conservation Areas at risk, by region (2018)

According to Historic England, ‘Of England’s 336 local authorities, 308 (91.7%) have carried out surveys of their Conservation Areas, a slight improvement over 2016, despite the continuing pressure upon resources. Historic England has aided and encouraged local authorities in this process, to help ensure the surveys continue to be completed.’

<sup>15</sup> Overall national picture of Heritage At Risk - Conservations Areas, Historic England, 2017. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/news/heritage-at-risk-2017#Section4Text>

Of the 91.7% of local authorities who submitted returns, they collectively cover 8,500 Conservation Areas across England.

The 8.3% of local authorities who did not submit the annual return, collectively cover approximately 1500 Conservation Areas. Clearly, therefore, the data is not complete. Through Civic Voice's research, we were also told that certain local authorities do not submit the annual return as they do not want to highlight the "heritage at risk" for political reasons and a danger of negative public relations. Through anecdotal evidence, we were also told that Conservation Areas can also conflict with council priorities for development.

If we know that there are approximately 10,122 Conservation Areas, and approximately 8,500 have been surveyed, it means that approximately 6% of all surveyed Conservation Areas remain 'at risk'.

According to the National Heritage at Risk database, 5254 heritage assets are listed on the 'at risk' register. This means, therefore, that 10%<sup>16</sup> of the nation's heritage at risk is a designated Conservation Area.

Within the 512 Conservation Areas 'at risk', there are over 11,000 Listed Buildings, 140 Scheduled Monuments and 10 Registered Parks and Gardens<sup>17</sup>.

## 8.0 What does an 'at risk' Conservation Area look like?

Since 2009, Historic England has asked every local authority to complete (and update as appropriate) a survey of its Conservation Areas, highlighting current condition, threats and trends.

In completing the survey, local authorities are expected to make an assessment on the Conservation Areas within their boundary. Any Conservation Area that is classed as 'deteriorating' or are in 'very bad' or 'poor' condition and are not expected to change significantly in the next three years, is defined as 'at risk'.

Conservation Areas are removed from the Register once plans have been put in place to address the issues that led to the Conservation Area being designated 'at risk', and once positive progress is being made.

The condition of the 512 'at risk' Conservations Areas presents a worrying picture.

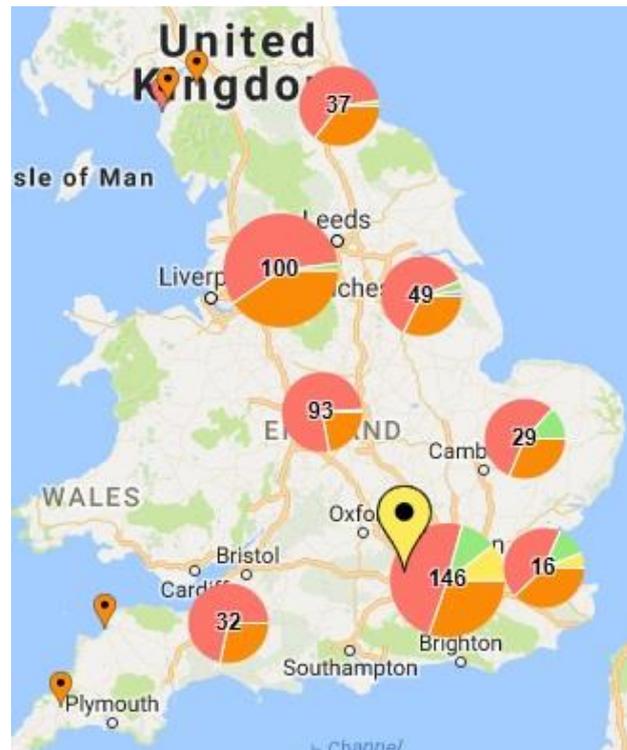


Image 2 – Map showing the location of Conservation Areas At Risk (Civic Voice, 2018)

<sup>16</sup> Heritage at Risk. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/> 5254 assets on register / 512 = 10%

<sup>17</sup> Heritage Counts 2017. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/>

59.2% of the Conservation Areas are classed as being in 'very bad condition'. However, when added to the number of Conservation Areas deemed as being in 'poor' condition, 31.6%, the findings are stark. 9 out of 10 Conservation Areas 'at risk' are in a very poor state. Civic Voice would argue that these Conservation Areas are not simply 'at risk', they are in danger. The 'at risk' list could, and should, be more accurately named as a 'critical list'.

We should also question, what are Conservation Areas 'at risk', at risk of? Are they 'at risk' of de-designation? For some of the Conservation Areas listed on the 'at risk' list, has their special interest already been destroyed?

When considering the data, we must also remember that 9% of local authorities, covering 1500 Conservation Areas, did not submit the annual return. One must assume that if a local authority consistently does not submit the annual return, they have something to fear.

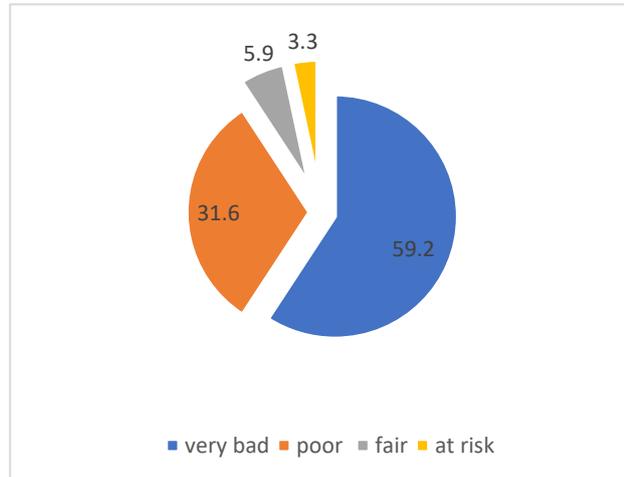


Chart 5 – Condition of Conservation Areas 'at risk'.

The 512 Conservation Areas 'at risk' figure is, therefore, not a true and accurate reflection of England's Conservation Areas.

The question must, therefore, be asked, is this the tip of the iceberg? Is the state of our nation's Conservation Areas bleaker than the data shows?

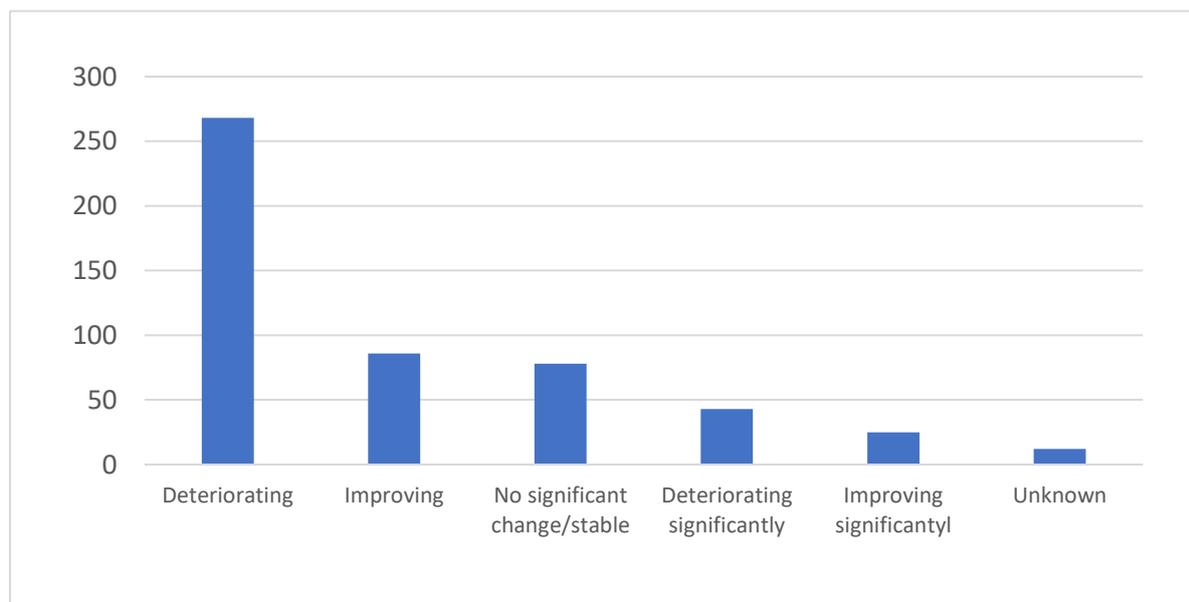


Chart 6 – Condition of Conservation Areas 'at risk' by number. (Civic Voice, 2018)

The current trends present an even worse picture with over 300 of the 512 Conservation Areas classed as either 'deteriorating' or 'deteriorating significantly'.

Whilst a small proportion of Conservation Areas 'at risk' are improving and some such as Derby Cathedral Quarter Conservation Area have been removed off the 'at risk' list in the past year, there is still a worrying trend of continued deterioration.

The message is clear, the vast majority of Conservation Areas 'at risk' are in a very poor state and are getting worse.

### **Derby Cathedral Quarter Conservation Area**

Over the last eight years, Derby City Council has worked with Historic England to restore Derby's Cathedral Quarter. The restoration has been hailed as an example for other cities to follow.

In 2009, when Historic England found the Conservation Area to be 'at risk', Derby topped the national table of towns and cities with the highest proportion of empty shops (22%). Many historic shop units were empty and falling into disrepair. Now, the 'at risk' status has been lifted.

Together, the partnership has refurbished 97 properties, mainly in the Cathedral Quarter. The scheme has brought 2,800 square metres of floor space back into use, created 42 new jobs, and helped Derby win a national award. In fact, it now sets an example for other cities to follow. It shows how, with care and attention, the character of a city's streets can be used to unleash an economic revival.



© Derby City Council

So, what is a typical local authority with 'at risk' Conservation Areas? What does an 'at risk' Conservation Area actually look like on the ground? One such Conservation Area is Goitside in Bradford.

### Goitside Conservation Area, Bradford

There are 59 Conservation Areas within The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, eleven of which are classed as being 'at risk'. Except for Keighley Conservation Area, all the local authority's 'at risk' Conservation Areas are located within Bradford. Goitside Conservation Area, adjacent to Bradford city centre, is one such example. It has been identified by Bradford Civic Society as a potential Heritage Action Zone.

Bradford is third on the overall list of local authorities with the most Conservation Areas 'at risk', behind the London Borough of Islington and the City of Nottingham.

Designated in 1993, Goitside is a former industrial area of the city characterised by Victorian textile mills, warehouses and other industrial buildings built in traditional, natural materials forming densely-built urban blocks of development. Following the decline of the wool trade, urban decline has persisted within the city. This has particularly affected Goitside and there are numerous vacant industrial buildings, some of which appear to be totally derelict, which need re-purposing to survive. 'The Goit' and other secondary routes through the area are unkempt and feel unsafe. Inadvertently, an advantage of the area's economic decline has meant that much of the Victorian distinctiveness and detailing remains; Bradford MDC assessed the area as having an authenticity level of 76% in 2007. For how long though? Mass deterioration is evident and in May 2007, a large fire affected several building blocks within the Conservation Area and resulted in total demolition.



Bradford MDC won a national award for its initial work appraising Conservation Areas. To date, however, it appears that none of the Conservation Areas 'at risk' have been re-assessed, or management proposals, designed to help conserve and enhance Conservation Areas' special character, implemented. Goitside's Conservation Area Assessment was published in 2005 and reviewed in 2007, introducing management proposals following community consultation. The review date for the Conservation Area appraisal was due in 2012. No review has since been undertaken and a Conservation Area with huge potential continues to decline.

The issues facing Goitside and Bradford are not uncommon. This example is a typical Conservation Area 'at risk' within England.

*London's Conservation Areas have collapsed into absurdity.*

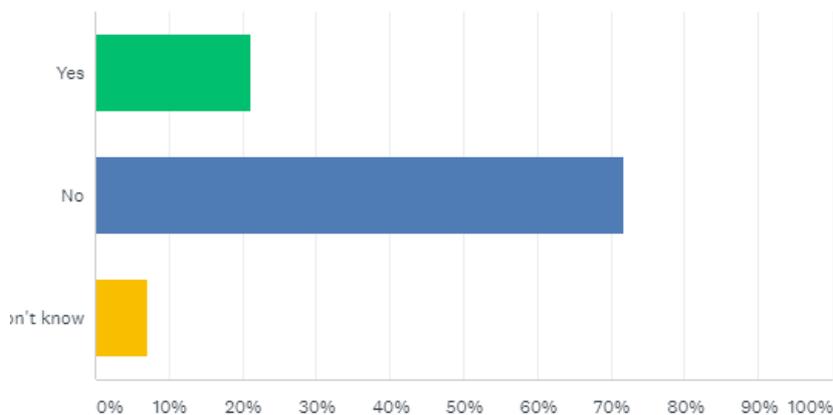
**Simon Jenkins, October 2017**

## 9.0 What are the threats facing Conservation Areas?

Through Civic Voice's Big Conservation Conversation survey, we asked civic societies and local authorities the question, 'In your opinion, are your local Conservation Areas being afforded the appropriate protection by the local authority?'

The results were stark. Over 70% of respondents did not feel that their Conservation Areas were being afforded the necessary protection.

*Chart 7 – Civic Voice Big Conservation Conversation research asking the question, 'In your opinion, are your local Conservation Areas being afforded the appropriate protection by the local authority?'*



When asked to expand on why they did not believe their Conservation Areas were being given appropriate protection and provide specific examples, respondents reported the following key themes threatening their Conservation Areas:

- Lack of resources within the local authority to manage historic environment effectively;
- Lack of, or weak, enforcement against planning breaches;
- Lack of Article 4 directions;
- Incremental change and the 'broken window' effect;
- No Conservation Area appraisals or management plans.

The message is clear, Civic Voice members do not believe that Conservation Areas are being afforded the necessary protection.

It is not just civic societies who are critical. In an article published in the Evening Standard in October 2017, former Chair of the National Trust, Simon Jenkins, attacked recent planning decisions in London that were allowing developers to ride roughshod over conservation policy.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Simon Jenkins: The death of the conservation area is destroying our skyline. October 2017. Available at: <https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/comment/simon-jenkins-the-death-of-the-conservation-area-is-destroying-our-skyline-a3660701.html>

We can also drill down further, exploring what are the key issues on the ground, adversely affecting Conservation Areas? When Historic England (then English Heritage) began to investigate and identify the threats facing Conservation Areas in 2009, they noted the following greatest threats:

- Unsympathetic replacement doors and windows;
- Poorly maintained roads and pavements and the amount of street clutter; and
- Loss of boundary walls, fences or hedges.

Now, nearly ten years on from the first national Heritage at Risk assessment of Conservation Areas, the time is right to review and assess whether these threats continue to be the greatest threats to Conservation Areas, or are new threats emerging?

In December 2016, Historic England, IHBC and Civic Voice asked ahead of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary what threats were facing Conservation Areas today. Respondents were asked to rate issues putting Conservation Areas 'at risk' on a scale of 1 (not a problem) to 4 (a significant problem). The following key threats were noted:

- **Severe dereliction of buildings** was identified by 23% of respondents as 'a significant problem' and by 75% as 'a problem of some degree';
- **Public realm issues** including street clutter and traffic signs (e.g. bins, posts), 77% of respondents stated this was 'an issue';
- **Loss of traditional paving materials** - 73% stated this was 'an issue';
- **Advertisements and signs** - 63% stated this was 'an issue';
- **Lack of maintenance** - 62% stated was 'an issue'.

12 months later, and to coincide with Winchester Conservation Area, celebrating 50 years since its designation as the third Conservation Area, Civic Voice released results from a website poll which asked the question, 'What is the most important issue putting Conservation Areas at risk?'

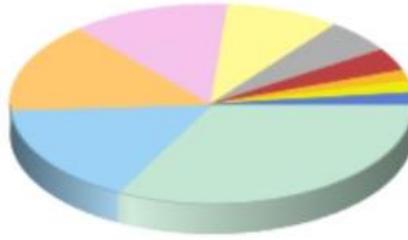
From 1,567 votes, **33% of respondents stated that vacant buildings and the need for new uses** was the number one issue threatening the future of Conservation Areas.

Taking all of the above research into account, it shows that that the issues impacting upon Conservation Areas remain fairly consistent over the last ten years, with **poor quality public realm, unsympathetic alterations** and **vacant buildings** continuing to be the primary threats.

However, it must be acknowledged that this research has primarily gathered the opinions and perceptions of individuals, albeit, individuals with a passion and knowledge for their areas. Going forward, Civic Voice will be undertaking further research on this topic, to objectively assess and identify the challenges facing Conservation Areas and to call for resources to be prioritised accordingly.

**What are the most important issues putting conservation areas at risk?**

- Vacant buildings and the need for new uses (32.73%)
- No up to date appraisal (16.36%)
- Loss of traditional street surfaces and poor quality replacement materials (14.55%)
- Loss of traditional shop fronts / Inappropriate design of new shop fronts (12.73%)
- Unsympathetic alterations to historic buildings (9.09%)
- Front gardens being changed to driveways / built upon (5.45%)
- Loss of traditional features including timber doors and sash windows (3.64%)
- An excess of uncoordinated street furniture / clutter (1.82%)
- Few properties included on the listed building register (1.82%)
- Other (1.82%)
- No local heritage list (0%)



*This poll is still active. To cast your vote, [visit our home page](#).*

*Chart 8 – Civic Voice website poll ‘What are the most important issues putting Conservation Areas ‘at risk’?’*

An example of a local civic society highlighting threats to one of their local Conservation Areas is Lytham St Annes Civic Society.

**Lytham (Town Centre) Conservation Area, Lytham St Annes**

Lytham St Anne’s Civic Society is a forward-looking group who have participated in Civic Voice’s Placecheck campaign; Local Heritage Lists campaign and have also contributed towards the salary of a conservation officer.



Civic Voice recently held a sub-committee meeting in Lytham and we were given a tour of the local town by the very active Lytham St Annes Civic Society. We were appalled at the wholly inappropriate developments taking place in Lytham Square and wrote to the local authority, Fylde Borough Council to highlight the issue. The letter stated:

‘Elegant late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings have been allowed to build incongruous glass extensions, in contravention of Conservation Area rules, and to ours and Lytham St Annes Civic Society’s knowledge, without appropriate planning permissions. It appears that this charming character is being lost in the face of commercial greed by well-heeled developers.

We hope Fylde Council will act robustly to enforce planning rules and take action to ensure the intrinsic character of the Conservation Area is not eroded by inappropriate additions and is preserved or enhanced, as per the legislation. Be assured you will have our full support.’

*I agree with Simon Jenkins' very good article that Conservation Areas are past their sell-by date. A new approach must be found, one where the community is engaged and empowered to take ownership of the character of their area and work together to keep this for future generations.*

**Anon (conservation professional in South West), December 2017**

## 10.0 Key Findings

A number of key findings are emerging through Civic Voice's Big Conservation Conversation research.

### Key Finding 1: Resources Matter

It is critical that we bring more volunteers into the historic environment. Research undertaken by Historic England, IHBC (Institute of Historic Building Conservation) and ALGAO (Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers) in 2017 confirmed that since 2006, the number of conservation specialists in local authorities has fallen by 37%.<sup>19</sup>

*Figure 1, conservation, archaeological and total specialist advice expressed as FTEs (figures for 2004, 2005 and 2007 have been extrapolated).*

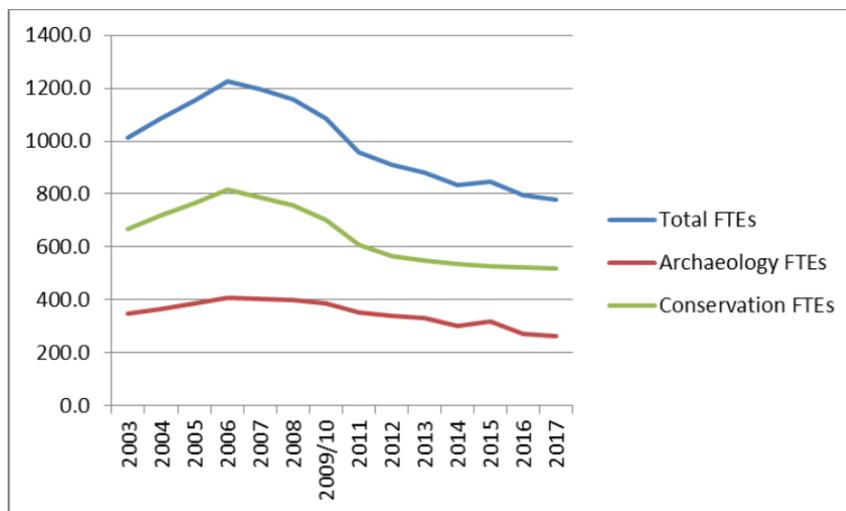


Chart 9 – Chart showing the results of the 9<sup>th</sup> report on Local Authority Staff Resources. (HE, ALGAO, IHBC, 2017)

At the same time, there has been an increase in planning applications.<sup>20</sup> There must, therefore, be a concern that if, as is expected, the number of planning applications continues to increase, that following the reduction in conservation advice within local government, there will not be sufficient capacity to properly and fully assess the implications of those applications on the historic environment.

<sup>19</sup> The Ninth report on Local Authority Staff Resources (HE, ALGAO, IHBC, 2017) Available at: <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/ninth-report-la-staff-resources/ninth-report-la-staff-resources.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Such a lack of understanding of the impact of development on the historic environment puts the ability of local authorities to properly manage and care for its local historic environment at risk.

The number of Conservation Areas at risk is increasing and the number of conservation specialists within local authorities is decreasing. Are the two linked? Is the decreasing amount of local authority conservation expertise leading to a decline in the nation's Conservation Areas? And if so, what can be done about it?

*In 1967 Duncan Sandys responded to the calls from communities. Are today's leaders ready to do the same?*

**Griff Rhys Jones, March 2017**

### **Key Finding 2: Local issue but a national problem**

Conservation Areas are traditionally designated by local authorities and as such, there is a perception that they are only of local interest or importance. This certainly isn't so. Within the 512 Conservation Areas 'at risk', there are 11,000 Listed Buildings, 140 Scheduled Monuments and 10 Registered Parks and Gardens. These are all national designations.

The civic movement recognises that these are difficult economic times, but our research shows that Conservation Areas do not need time-consuming or costly measures, just prioritising as places people cherish. This requires the commitment of the whole council and good-management by residents and local authorities alike.

Launching Conservation Areas at Risk in 2009 was a positive and very ambitious initiative from English Heritage at the time and it has helped to raise the profile and status of Conservation Areas within local authorities and the general consciousness.

But if at least 6% of Conservation Areas are 'at risk' and cuts to local government are expected to continue, it simply cannot be left to local authorities to solve the crisis. Do we need a new approach to managing Conservation Areas?

So, what can we as communities do about it?

### **Key Finding 3: Communities are the eyes and the ears**

Conservation Areas with community support are more than twice as likely to have improved over the last three years as those without.<sup>21</sup> This is not a surprise. Local knowledge and expertise can be of enormous help to local authorities in the active management of Conservation Areas.

Respondents to a joint survey to launch National Civic Day 2017, commissioned between Historic England, Civic Voice and IHBC, put forward some very helpful suggestions about how local civic societies could become more effective in improving Conservation Areas. Advice was also sought from local government conservation officers, as to how local civic societies and community groups could assist in the process. This research identified six main themes:

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<sup>21</sup> Conservation Areas at Risk 2009. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/conservation-areas-at-risk/who-is-responsible/>

- **Form a relationship with the local authority;**
- **Raise awareness** amongst residents and the public, particularly about the benefits of Conservation Areas;
- **Monitor regularly** – be the eyes and ears;
- **Investigate funding opportunities;**
- **Attract volunteers/members** and train them to train them to appraise Conservation Areas
- **Get involved** in character appraisals, neighbourhood planning, and local listing.



Civic Voice responded to this survey by developing a Civic Conservation Area Audit and piloted the toolkit with a number of civic societies in early 2018. The purpose of the audit is to enable local volunteers to be the 'eyes and ears' and undertake a condition survey of their local Conservation Area using a consistent methodology. By carrying out an audit, community groups will then be able to identify key issues affecting the area and start to prioritise action and resources to address heritage at risk at both local and national level. 25 civic societies signed up to the pilot to use the audit.

Bewdley Civic Society was one such society who undertook a Civic Conservation Area Audit of one of their local Conservation Areas in March 2018.

### Bewdley Civic Society: Civic Conservation Audit

The civic society is reviewing the condition of the Bewdley Conservation Area because we have been concerned at the deterioration of some aspects of streets and buildings and felt that we should audit and 'flag up' emerging problems in our quarterly newsletters. As an aside, our local authority, Wyre Forest District Council has retained one conservation officer but has reduced the number of enforcement officers to one which means a heavy workload for both posts.

The society conducted 4 audits with the involvement of 7 members of the Executive Committee as part of the Civic Voice pilot.

In carrying out the audit we found that some issues were very important to some members of the group and less so to others. The discussion held was useful in that it enabled the civic society to put into perspective those issues which were serious but infrequent (such as a listed building at risk of collapse) and those which occurred more often but were more easily solved (such as badly



finished street surfaces following work by local authority contractors). We found that the three issues putting the area most at risk are:

1. Poor quality and consistency of highway surfaces
2. The general maintenance of land/buildings
3. Loss of historic features, lamp posts, paving and kerbs

The society is now going to campaign for a management plan as it feels a strategic approach, rather than individual issues will have a greater impact on the Conservation Area.

*Using the Civic Voice audit was helpful to us in ensuring a consistent approach by all participants and in providing a structure to identify the degree of the problem.*

**Barbara Longmore, Bewdley Civic Society**

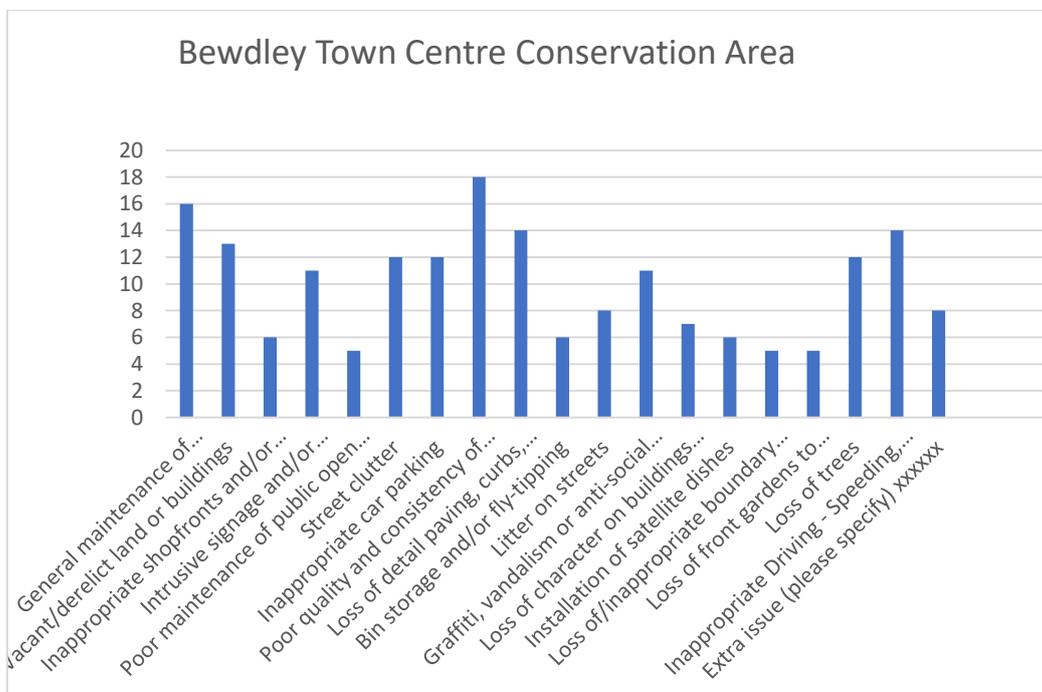


Chart 10 – Results from Bewdley Civic Society Civic Conservation Audit

#### **Key Finding 4: Unlock the potential of Conservation Area Advisory Committees**

Not all local authorities will have the capacity to establish and co-ordinate local groups, but with the continued cuts to conservation departments, they should be urged to work with organisations such as Civic Voice and Ancient Monuments Society to establish Conservation Area Advisory Committees (CAACs). In doing so, the demand on local authority officer time will be reduced but access to knowledge and evidence will increase.

We know that the remit of a CAAC is determined locally and consequently, there will be great variance in their operation through the country. Concern has been expressed regarding the quality of advice CAACs provide to local decision makers and the speed at which this advice is delivered.

When set against the background of the contraction of local government finances and stricter deadlines for determination of planning applications, the CAAC consultation process could be seen as onerous burden on planning authorities rather than a positive process for enhancing our historic environment. Civic Voice research highlights that is an emerging body of evidence to suggest that CAACs are currently under-performing and by extension, there is enormous scope for improvement in current practice.

Yes, there are currently inconsistencies in quality across the country. Nevertheless, Civic Voice believes they are an untapped resource for local planning authorities.

We feel that local authorities require further advice and support on how to maximise this potentially valuable free resource and we envisage a piece of research looking into the benefits both for the community and the profession through harnessing the latent synergy between planning officers and people concerned with conservation. By analysing the different approaches local authorities have towards their advisory bodies such as CAACs, Civic Voice will highlight best practice and inspire more participation with these independent bodies.

### **Key Finding 5: At what point do we de-designate Conservation Areas?**

*The problem is that Conservation Areas are local designations, often driven more by local politics than by genuine heritage status. This is especially a problem with Victorian areas in London - many nice but by no means special streets are designated. There are too many designations as a result - many designated twenty years ago at the demand of residents who are long since gone. HE and the amenity societies must take some of the responsibility for this as, in the past, they have been keen to support designations without proper scrutiny of whether they are worth designation. Spreading our resources thinly over many Conservation Areas often means that the genuinely special historic areas are not managed to the proper standard.*

**Anon (conservation officer in a London Borough), December 2017**

De-designation of a Conservation Area is a not a process to be entered lightly. The need to review an area's Conservation Area is a statutory duty that must be undertaken to satisfy primary legislation but is also important if the Council's planning policy designations are to remain relevant, especially to the residents, organisations and businesses that live and work in these areas. Nonetheless, with 69% of Conservation Areas 'at risk' are in a very bad condition and a continuing theme of deterioration expected over the next three years, is the value of Conservation Areas being diminished by the trend of deteriorating condition?

### **Deepdale Enclosure Conservation Area, Preston**

*It is considered that the area does not possess enough historic or architectural significance to warrant the retention of Conservation Area designation and it is therefore proposed to de-designate the Conservation Area.<sup>22</sup>*

**Preston City Council, July 2016**

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.blogpreston.co.uk/2016/07/deepdale-enclosure-to-lose-special-conservation-status/>

There is always likely to be the need to protect the “special” but are all Conservation Areas truly promoting the best of our historic environment in a positive light, where the designation of a Conservation Area truly reflects the best of an area’s historic environment?

According to the Civic Trust in 1969 it was thought that there would be need for no more than 3,000 such areas nationally. Today the figure is over 10,000. So, we have to ask the question, did authorities go out and according to Lord Kennet, “act first and think later”? Have we resulted in a situation where we have Conservation Areas that are bringing the Conservation Area name down? When designated, Conservation Area status may well have arisen from political or financial incentives, but today, those reasons are less prevalent.

Leaping forward 50 years and in response to a question, “Thinking of your local environment, are there any Conservation Areas that do not deserve to be designated?” 35% of IHBC members responded Yes. It may be regrettable that some of the existing designations no longer meet the standards to be Conservation Areas.<sup>23</sup>

We must ask the question therefore, at what point do Conservation Areas such as Austin Village in Birmingham, (which is ‘at risk’ and deteriorating), give a local authority no option but to de-designate?

#### **Birmingham City Council: Proposed de-designation of Conservation Areas**

A radical proposal by Birmingham City Council is the de-designation of several Conservation Areas within the city; Ideal Village, Austin Village and Hagley/ Barnsley Road. These areas have been placed ‘at risk’ and are up for de-designation because of structural decay and changes to the distinct character of the areas; for instance, the removal of traditional timber frames by residents in favour of UPVC windows.



*Image 10 – Austin village Conservation Area © Birmingham Mail*

Mismanagement of the sites has occurred over many years and Birmingham City Council argues that these areas no longer meet the standards to merit their Conservation Area status. Leaving these areas as they are presents many issues for the local authority. The remnants of Town House Hotel in the Barnsley Road Conservation Area illustrate the issues clearly as the Victorian asset has fallen into disrepair and no clear restoration plans have been put forward. The council argues that it is better to release the land so that new development can occur unhindered. De-designation of

<sup>23</sup> Conservation Area Summary Findings (December 2016). Available at: <http://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/conservation-area-survey-findings.pdf>

Conservation Areas that have since lost their special 'significance' justifying their designation in the first place would also bring value back to the remaining Conservation Areas within the city.

Local planning authorities, such as Birmingham City Council have often been accused of short-sightedness in using Conservation Area designation too freely and it can be argued that often, there is a lack of attention paid to incremental changes affecting the historic and architectural characteristics of an area, which, cumulatively, can have a huge impact. While there is no doubt that Ideal Village, Austin Village and the Hagley/Barnsley Road Conservation Areas had unique architectural value originally, the care and delivery of effective management plans never arrived to ensure those areas retained their uniqueness, worthy of conservation status.

The case of Birmingham city council proposing to de-designate several Conservation Areas as they have become devalued, should ring alarm bells for heritage professionals and communities. Conservation Areas need profound and innovative methods to prevent de-designation as a last resort. Clearly, intervention must occur before decay and cumulative incremental change has taken hold. Local authorities must be held accountable to ensure proactive, not reactive plans are drawn up to save Conservation Areas.

Officers in Birmingham are saying that without de-designation the planning department must continue to process planning applications being mindful of heritage implications that are largely now absent. Is this sensible when considering the significant loss of historic character in the two areas. If the 'special architectural or historic interest' has been lost, should it remain a Conservation Area?

Conservation Areas will only survive, and resist de-designation, if more attention is paid by LPAs to preserving and maintaining the historic characteristics that make the area special. For this they need appropriate resources that need to come from national government. Considering the relatively poor condition of 59% of Conservation Areas 'at risk', we must ask, what is the tipping point as to when we say, "this is no longer worthy of the "Conservation Area name"? Lord Kennet said in 1967, "just go and designate first, think later", but this is not evidence-based policy and is not conservation best practice.

We do not know the true extent of authorities de-designating Conservation Areas, but we are aware of examples in Preston, Hackney and Birmingham and the 35% of IHBC members who believe some areas should not have the designation.

Are we facing a time when we need to be reviewing the quality of the nation's Conservation Areas? We believe through the Civic Conservation Audit, communities can support local authorities and do just that.

### **11.0 Communities and councils can work together to collect the evidence**

The data captured through these pilot audits will enable civic societies and local authorities to better understand the condition of their Conservation Areas without the local authority having to undertake assessments of each area. The audits are allowing civic societies to prioritise action and resources to those areas and issues which have been identified as most in need.

We were informed by some conservation officers that there is a genuine belief amongst some councils that communities do not have the potential or resilience to engage in the management of Conservation Areas. This attitude has to change. Through the Civic Conservation Audit, we are

offering local authorities a framework which they can utilise locally to achieve similar results and real evidence of the issues.

A national project would also offer the opportunity to engage with local civic societies and community groups, providing them with a rewarding volunteering experience and strengthening the links between volunteers and historic environment specialists. Civic Voice will be publishing a further guide celebrating the impact communities are making on Conservation Areas for National Civic Day 2018.

## **12.0 Conclusion**

The theme running through our report and with feedback from members and conservation officers is the fact that Conservation Areas and the historic environment make an essential contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, and that at present, changes are required to ensure the short, medium and long-term viability of these areas. The publication of the draft National Planning Policy framework provides an ideal opportunity for the MHCLG to examine how the planning system could respond to proposals in respect of the historic and wider built environment.

We celebrated Conservation Areas during 2017 as they make our towns attractive and distinctive. They are special places. They are not a hindrance to development and regeneration. The heritage qualities of our nation's Conservation Areas offer a stimulus for investment and regeneration of our towns and villages.

Back in 1967, communities were telling Lord Sandys that there was a problem when the country was facing a new planning regime, the historic environment was under threat and local government under pressure. A very similar story to now! He answered by sponsoring a bill that turned out to be the Civic Amenities Act. We should all be thankful to him for this.

50 years on, communities are again telling us this is an issue. How are we going to answer that call?

Right now, we don't have the solutions and don't know where the Conservations Areas of tomorrow are coming from, but there is no more appropriate time than following on from 2017 to now concentrate on the question "What is the future for our Conservation Areas?" as we celebrate 50 years since Stamford, Lincolnshire was designated as the first Conservation Area.

Working with communities, we are confident that the future for our Conservation Areas will be positive.

## **Image Titles and Credits**

Chart 1 – Page 4 - How are the activities of your civic society being affected by the cuts in funding and loss of staff in your local council? (Civic Voice, 2016)

Chart 2 – Page 8 - Image from Heritage Counts 2017 showing the location of Conservation Areas. (Historic England, 2017)

Image 1 – Page 9 - Cedars Hall Wells, Civic Voice Design Awards 2017, Special Conservation Area Award winner. © Eric Parry Architects

Chart 3 – Page 10 - Graph showing Conservation Area designations per year since 1967. (Historic England, 2017)

Chart 4 – Page 13 - No. of Conservation Areas ‘at risk’, in England by region. (Civic Voice, 2018)

Image 2 – Page 14 - Map showing the location of the 512 Conservation Areas ‘at risk’. Data from Heritage at Risk database 2017. (Civic Voice, 2018)

Chart 5 – Page 15 - Condition of Conservation Areas ‘at risk’ by percentage. (Civic Voice, 2018)

Chart 6 – Page 15 - Condition of Conservation Areas ‘at risk’ by number. (Civic Voice, 2018)

Image 3 – Page 16 - Derby City Centre Cathedral Quarter Conservation Area. © Derby City Council

Image 4 – Page 17 - Goitside Conservation Area, Bradford © Civic Voice, 2018

Image 5 – Page 17 - Goitside Conservation Area, Bradford. © Civic Voice, 2018

Chart 7 – Page 18 - Chart showing the results from the question ‘In your opinion, are your local Conservation Areas being afforded the appropriate protection by the local authority?’ (Civic Voice, 2018)

Chart 8 – Page 20 - Chart showing the results from the question ‘What are the most important issues putting Conservation Areas at risk?’ (Civic Voice, 2018)

Image 7 – Page 20 - Lytham Town Centre Conservation Area, Fylde. (Civic Voice, 2018)

Chart 9 – Page 21 – Chart showing the results of the Ninth report on Local Authority Staff Resources. (HE, ALGAO, IHBC, 2017)

Image 8 – Page 23 - Civic Voice Regional Forum testing the Civic Conservation Area Audit. © Civic Voice, 2017

Image 9 – Page 23 – Bewdley Civic Society newsletter article highlighting involvement in the Civic Conservation Audit. (Bewdley Civic Society, 2018)

Chart 10 – Page 24 – Results from the Bewdley Civic Society Civic Conservation Audit (Bewdley Civic Society, 2018)

Image 10 – Page 26 - Austin Village Conservation Area. © Birmingham Mail

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