

Local Heritage Listing

Toolkit





Summary

This toolkit aims to provide practical tools and resources for Local Planning Authorities and others involved in the process of developing, revising and maintaining local heritage lists. The resources in the toolkit are designed to be flexible and should be adapted to meet local needs. The toolkit is based on current national policies and guidance at the time of publication.

This toolkit is part of a series of documents about local heritage lists:

Historic England 2026 Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage, Historic England Advice Note 7 (3rd edition)

Historic England 2026 Local Heritage Listing: Case Studies

Historic England 2025 Local Heritage Lists: The National Perspective, Historic England Research Report Series 38/2025

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Front cover: Peace Pagoda, Willen Park North, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. Included on Milton Keynes' New Town Heritage Register. [Steven Baker © Historic England Archive DP235425]



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Hackney Peace Carnival Mural, Dalston Lane, London. Included on the London Borough of Hackney's Local Heritage List. Chris Redgrave © Historic England Archive DP264971



Template Nomination Form

You can copy and paste the wording in this template and edit it to meet your needs. You could use the wording as the basis for an online form or a PDF with editable fields. Ensure nominees are clear on how their data will be used and managed, in line with the Local Authority's data protection policy.

Introduction

This section may include:

- Setting the context for the project (what are the catalysts, who is involved, who can respond, is it a new list or a refresh of an existing one etc);
- Links to further information, such as any guidance documents;
- Link to the existing list, where relevant;
- Whether alternative formats are available, and how to access them;
- Details of any information sessions being organised;
- The deadline for submission;
- Milestones for the project (when will the new list be consulted on, published etc);
- Who to contact with any queries;
- Information on the assessment process;
- Any restrictions, for instance submitting one form per asset;
- An explanation of how personal data will be used.

Eligibility

Nominated heritage assets must meet the following conditions to be considered as a candidate for the Local Heritage List:

- The heritage asset must be situated within the boundaries of [name of local authority area]. A map showing the boundaries is available here: [link];
- The precise location of the heritage asset must be provided;
- The heritage asset cannot be designated. For example: it cannot be a listed building, a scheduled monument, a registered park and garden, or a registered battlefield. You can check this on the National Heritage List for England – using the map search is the easiest way to see if something is already included;
- The heritage asset must be permanent (not a temporary structure);
- The heritage asset must be one of the following: [add to or delete as applicable] a building, structure, monument, item of street furniture, artwork, area, archaeological site or designed landscape.



Local Heritage List Criteria

To be added to the local heritage list, an asset should strongly meet [edit as required] at least two of these criteria:

[Include local criteria here]

Information about the heritage asset

- Name of heritage asset
- Address of the heritage asset, including postcode
- What3Words location or grid reference
- What type of heritage asset is it? (i.e. a bench, a mill, a barn, a cemetery etc)
- Age of heritage asset (if known)
- A brief history of the heritage asset
- Which of the criteria (see above) does the heritage asset meet? Please include all that apply.
- How does the heritage asset meet the criteria identified above?
- Other useful information, including access information and ownership (if known)
- Where can we find more information about this heritage asset? (i.e. books, journals, blogs, podcasts, webpages, archive material)
- Have you attached any photographs, and if so, what do they show and when were they taken? (i.e. the front and back of the fountain, taken in November 2022)
- Have you attached any supporting material (i.e. archival material)? If so, what have you attached?

Information about you

- Name:
- Email address:
- Phone number:
- Are you submitting this nomination on behalf of a group or society? Yes/No
- If so, which group or society?



Tower to former Lewis's Department Store, Humberstone Gate, Leicester. Included on Leicester City Council's Local Heritage List. James O. Davies © Historic England Archive DP571986



Template local heritage list entry

Some local heritage lists are formatted as a simple list of addresses; however more detailed entries will help the list become a valuable resource for the public in understanding the heritage of the local area. In addition, providing details of why an asset is significant will help in managing the asset within the planning system. You can copy and paste the wording in this template and edit it to meet your needs.

Name of asset

For instance, The Golden Lion Public House, The Royal Cinema, St John's Baptist Church, 23 Maple Grove, Banbury House, Gladstone Grammar School, Anytown War Memorial.

Where the asset is a business (such as shop or restaurant) that may change name or use in the future, you could refer to it by its street address instead, or by the street address with the business name in brackets i.e. 17 London Road (Pets and more).

Ward or area

Local heritage lists are often organised by smaller areas such as wards, towns or parishes, making it easier for people to find what is of interest in their part of the local authority area.

Typology

Some local heritage lists may be organised by type, such as street furniture, commemorative, industrial, domestic etc. Even if the list isn't organised by type, this could be included in the description.

Location information

As well as a street address with postcode and any additional information (such as adjacent to, in front of etc) this could also include digital identifiers such as What3Words, Unique Property Identifiers (UPRNs) or grid references, which are now easy to locate using Google maps or similar, to improve accuracy. Your local HER is able to provide help and advice on the easiest and most accurate way to record location

Criteria

Which criteria does the heritage asset meet, and how does it meet those criteria? The criteria could be allocated a simple code with a full list included at the front. Then, the codes that correspond to the relevant assets can be included in each description.

Short description

The description needn't be long, a few sentences to a short paragraph or two will be sufficient, and for simple heritage types (such as a post box) this may be even shorter.



The description could include: the type of building (WW2 pillbox, railway station, aqueduct, lido etc), key dates (date of construction, dates for any major phases of development), architect/artist/designer/engineer, materials, brief history, original use and any subsequent uses, important associations with prominent people, groups, events or important moments in history (such as a new invention, or a 'first').

Photographs

High quality photographs can bring a local heritage list to life as well as supporting in the identification of the asset. As well as the principal elevation, any interesting details such as date stones or original signage can help to illustrate the interest of a building. Always take photographs from a public right of way.

Historic England's Architectural Photographers offer the following advice on taking good photos:

- Before taking a picture, walk around the asset, if it is safe and legal to do so, and acquaint yourself with the site;
- Try to keep the composition simple. Try not to over-complicate the frame;
- Look for even illumination across an elevation and avoid photographing an elevation that's half in shadow. Try to shoot either early morning or late evening when the light is more sympathetic;
- If shooting whole elevations, don't truncate the building, step back, use the space and let the building breathe;
- Photographs don't always have to be taken from eye level. Look for elevation, this will give a better sense of proportion;
- If you're photographing a building, use your phone in portrait mode (to gain more sky), and try to keep it level. Don't succumb to standing too close to the subject;
- Flat, overcast conditions are beneficial for even illumination. If you're shooting in bright sunlight, time your photography so the elevations in question maximise the sun's position. Quick checks on Google Earth or apps like Sun Surveyor or SunCalc.net can help with this.

Other information that could be included

- Whether an asset is within a conservation area (and potentially which conservation area);
- The date the asset was added to the local heritage list;
- A link to the location on GIS or google maps, and/or a thumbnail map;
- Some local heritage lists include supplementary information on assets added to the NHLE from the local heritage list.



Abingdon Street Market, Edward Street, Blackpool, Lancashire. Included on Blackpool Council's Local Heritage List. James O. Davies © Historic England Archive



Todmorden Market, Burnley Road, Todmorden. Included on the Todmorden Neighbourhood Plan List of Non-Designated Heritage Assets. Alun Bull © Historic England Archive DP233857



Template press release

You can copy and paste the wording in this template and edit it to meet your needs.

[Name of LPA] announces new local heritage list, invites nominations from public

[Name of LPA] has announced a [new/revised] local heritage list for [area]. Our local heritage list will include heritage assets nominated by the public, including buildings, monuments, sites, archaeology, open spaces, artworks, gardens, landscapes and more [edit based on the types of heritage to be included].

[OR]

[If the local heritage list is a revision of an existing one] The local heritage list currently includes a range of heritage assets that help to make [name of LPA] unique, including [include some examples of interesting or quirky local assets].

[Name of Conservation Officer] says: [‘quote’].

Local heritage lists are a crucial way of identifying those buildings which are of value to the local community and giving the local community a voice in the process. A local heritage list is different from listing through the National Heritage List for England (the NHLE). Each local heritage list is unique to the area, and whilst there isn't a separate system for getting consent to make changes, the significance of the heritage asset will be considered in any planning applications.

As well as providing an opportunity for the local community to celebrate their heritage, the local heritage list provides a tool through which the community can help guide sustainable growth through the reuse of assets that they care about.

To be included on our local heritage list, an asset must be [include summary of LPA's eligibility requirements]. The criteria for local heritage lists vary between local authorities, and the criteria for [name of LPA]'s local heritage list includes [provide examples, such as communal or aesthetic value]. The full criteria can be found here [link].

[Name of LPA] invites nominations from individuals and groups between [date and date]. To get involved, visit [link].



Template social media posts

Building a social media presence can be a positive way to attract nominations to a new or updated local heritage list. To get you started, we've produced some ideas for social media posts, which can be used across most platforms.

- We're excited to announce that we're [developing a new local heritage list/reviewing our local heritage list]! We're looking for nominations for [asset types] that mean something to you. Visit [link] to nominate something that makes our local area special.
- What is a local heritage list? In short, it's a list of heritage assets that have been identified for their value to a particular place and the community who live or work there. Heritage assets can be as varied as tombs, tors, sculptures, city walls, town squares or train stations (and many more!). Nominate a locally important heritage asset here: [link]
- What can be included on our new local heritage list? If it's part of our local history, we want to see it nominated! We're looking for post boxes, benches, milestones, temples, village greens, cobbles, ghost signs... The list just keeps growing. Surprise us! [link]
- If you're thinking about making a nomination for the local heritage list but aren't sure of the criteria, here's what we're considering [list of criteria].
- We've had some really interesting nominations for the local heritage list already. If you'd like to add yours, please visit [link].
- Local heritage lists are becoming increasingly popular all over the country. To provide some inspiration for your own nominations, here are some amazing assets from local heritage lists elsewhere. Do you know of something just as special in our local area? Nominate it here: [link].
- We're getting lots of great nominations so far. What do you think of this [asset], which was added to the local heritage list for [LPA]?

Make sure to adjust these to the local context, scope of the local heritage list and to the different platforms you use. You may want to lengthen/shorten posts, add hashtags as appropriate, or choose photos of local heritage assets. You may also wish to tag local news outlets, civic societies, or other groups or high-profile local individuals who might publicise the project.



Obelisk by Sir Frederick Gibberd, Broad Walk, Harlow, Essex. Included on Harlow's Local Heritage List. Patricia Payne. © Historic England Archive



Potential groups to engage in the local listing process

This list is not exhaustive but aims to provide ideas for the sorts of groups to engage with when undertaking a local heritage list project, perhaps as part of a stakeholder mapping exercise. You can explore some useful umbrella organisations for working with communities here: **Community sector organisations**.

- Archaeology groups and associations
- Arts & cultural groups and associations
- Charities and community organisations
- Civic societies
- Community centres, arts venues, libraries, local studies libraries, local history centres, local archives and their staff, volunteers and visitors
- Councillors and Local Leaders
- Disability and Inclusion groups and associations
- Education, employability & skills groups/projects
- Environmental groups
- Groups and associations for older people or veterans
- Groups for families, children and young people
- Groups representing local historic buildings, parks, green spaces, cemeteries etc (i.e. 'friends of' groups)
- History, conservation & heritage groups and associations
- LGBTQ+ groups and associations
- Local faith communities and their leaders or representatives
- Local historians
- Local museums and their staff, visitors and volunteers
- Mental health and wellbeing support groups
- Migrant and refugee groups and associations
- National amenity societies or their local branches
- Neighbourhood forums
- Schools and FE colleges
- Social inclusion groups representing particular communities
- Tenant's and resident's associations
- Tourism and regeneration groups and associations
- Town & parish councils
- Universities: students, student societies and academics/researchers



Sources of further information and advice

Assessing significance: [Statements of Heritage Significance \(HEAN 12\)](#)

Community ownership and Assets of Community Value (ACVs): [Pillars of the Community](#)

Evaluating the social impact of your local heritage list project: [Understanding the Social Impact of Heritage](#)

Exploring Diverse Histories: [Inclusive Heritage Advice Hub](#)

How to find local community organisations: [Community Advice Hub](#)

How and why to engage with local communities: [Why Engage with Communities and How to Do it Effectively](#)

Local plans: [The Historic Environment in Local Plans](#)

Recording heritage assets: [Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice](#)

Stakeholder mapping and analysis: [Guide to doing a Stakeholder analysis](#) (East Suffolk Council), [Ensuring Effective Stakeholder Engagement](#) (Government Communication Service)

Surveying and researching the local historic environment: [Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management \(HEAN 1\)](#) and [Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments](#)

Understanding and Working with Diverse Audiences and Participants: [Inclusive Heritage Advice Hub](#)

Understanding different heritage values: [Conservation Principles](#)

Understanding different types of heritage assets: [Introductions to Heritage Assets](#)

Understanding the material available in the HER: [A Guide to Historic Environment Records \(HERs\) in England](#)

Valuing community contributions: [Community Advice Hub](#)



Grove Park Community Centre, Marvels Lane, Lee, London. Included on the London Borough of Lewisham's Local Heritage List. Chris Redgrave © Historic England Archive DP528693



Frequently asked questions

Can a local civic society or other group initiate the local listing process?

Where a civic society or other local group wants to initiate a local heritage list for their area, they should engage early on with the LPA as to the scope of the project. Where a civic society takes the lead, they should work closely with the LPA and/or neighbourhood forums so that NDHAs are properly recognised and considered appropriately within the planning system. The process for signing off and (where relevant) adopting the local heritage list should also be agreed from the start to avoid delays later in the process.

A potential risk with this approach is that a local heritage list developed for a smaller geographic area can result in unequal coverage across an LPA area. For instance, one town within the local authority area might benefit from an active, well-resourced civic society capable of running a local heritage list project, whereas a neighbouring town might not. Likewise, if a local voluntary sector group running the project has a particular specialism, this might limit the types of heritage included, if the nomination process isn't widened out to the public and other local groups.

It is therefore important that the LPA is involved and encouraged to work in partnership with other organisations, with an ambition for a local heritage list with coverage across the administrative area of the local authority.

Can local heritage lists include archaeological remains?

The majority of archaeological sites and landscapes remain undesignated. **Scheduling** (statutory designation for archaeological remains) is at the discretion of the Secretary of State, who may decide that scheduling it is not appropriate, even for sites which are found to be of national importance. Some archaeological sites cannot be designated because they are outside the scope of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 due to their physical nature, such as lithic scatters. Local heritage lists can include archaeological remains in their scope, providing a tool to identify and highlight archaeological sites, and provide them with the appropriate level of consideration in planning decisions. In order to include assets with archaeological interest, the local heritage list will need to have relevant criteria for assessment. The HER will be an important source of information, along with, where they exist and/or are separate from the HER, local authority heritage or archaeological services.

How can the LPA or other groups involved in local heritage listing engage positively with homeowners?

The proactive involvement of homeowners and occupiers is essential to the success of a local heritage listing project. Ensuring owners are aware of the significance of their



property and the implications of local listing will also help with the asset's long-term management.

Providing information about what local heritage listing means in practice and having an open dialogue is essential, as there may be misconceptions. For instance, clarifying that inclusion on a local heritage list does not require homeowners to apply for Listed Building Consent for future works. Some LPAs include information about what the local heritage list means for homeowners alongside the list, for instance as an appendix or accompany document.

Where possible (noting that there may be difficulty in tracing owners), owners should be made aware that their property has been nominated and given adequate time to respond to consultation, as they may be able to contribute useful information about the history of the property or its significance.

There should also be an agreed, proportionate process in place (such as an appeals process) if there are objections to the inclusion of an asset on a local heritage list. This should be clearly communicated as part of the consultation, explaining how such objections will be handled and allowing the opportunity for owners to ask questions about the process. Acceptable reasons for appeal should be clearly communicated, for instance factual errors or the asset not meeting the criteria.

Should the local heritage list include date criteria?

The local heritage in one area (such as a New Town) may be much more recent than in another, and therefore any date criteria should reflect this. Placing too many restrictions based on date might prevent the local heritage list from truly reflecting the evolving and multi-layered nature of the local historic environment. Instead, any criteria related to age could focus on important periods of development in the local area.

Can assets on the local heritage list be assessed for statutory listing?

Assets of potential national significance may be identified as part of the local heritage listing process. This might be through new nominations, or the recognition that already locally listed assets could meet the statutory criteria. If you're unsure whether something meets the criteria, take a look at the [**Apply for Listing**](#) webpage where you can find information on the listing process as well as the statutory criteria. You should also refer to the relevant [**Selection Guides**](#) for the designation type and asset, or contact your [**local Historic England office**](#) for advice, before submitting an application Historic England through the [**listing application form**](#). If an asset is added to the list which is hosted on the NHLE it should be removed from the local heritage list – some LPAs provide a supplementary list of previously locally listed assets added to the NHLE on their website, or as an appendix to the local heritage list.



The proposal of an area-based asset or a group of assets may suggest that the area has particular special interest beyond local heritage interest; the local planning authority may then need to consider designating a new conservation area or extending an existing one. Equally, areas falling below the bar for conservation area designation might include assets suitable for assessment for inclusion on a local heritage list. Some LPAs have also begun to designate non-statutory areas of special local character, for instance where an area falls below the bar for designation as a conservation area.

What other tools are there for recognising heritage of local importance?

There are other ways of identifying and celebrating built and natural heritage which is of importance to the local community, including:

Natural environment protections such as Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and local green space designations, which identify and protect important parts of the natural environment;

Plaque schemes which celebrate notable people, groups, events or places. Some plaque schemes are specific to geographic areas (often organised by a local civic or history society), whilst others focus on a particular theme, for instance, LGBTQ+ heritage, film and performing arts, Black and minority ethnic heritage and more;

Collaborative maps such as Layers of London and the Know Your Place maps in the South West of England allow people to identify important local heritage and to share the stories behind those places;

Grants programmes such as those run by Historic England and other heritage organisations allow local communities to discover, interpret, promote and celebrate their heritage. These grants programmes operate in funding rounds, so make sure to check when they are next open for applications;

Assets of Community Value are defined under the Localism Act 2011 as a building or land whose principal use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and is likely to do so in the future. 'Social interests' can encompass cultural, recreational, and sporting interests. While these 'interests' are not specifically 'heritage' interests, there is a high potential for overlap, particularly where the use is long-standing or has involved investment of resource into buildings and their management over time. As such there are likely to be many cases where features of the built environment that are eligible for registration as Assets of Community Value may also be heritage assets, and the two systems should be seen as potentially complementary and non-exclusive.

Are all entries included on a HER considered to be NDHAs?

The inclusion of an asset in a HER does not necessarily mean it is a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). Inclusion in the HER merely records valuable information about the asset and does not reflect the planning judgement needed to determine whether it



does in fact have a degree of heritage significance which merits consideration in planning decisions.

However, the information within the HER will help to identify candidates for possible inclusion in a local heritage list and is an important baseline for understanding the significance of a place or asset. It is advised that local heritage lists are added to HERs so that all available information is accessible from the same source, and that HER colleagues are involved early on in any local heritage list project.

Where can we get specialist knowledge if required?

It may sometimes be necessary to seek specialist advice when assessing a particular asset type. The first source of expert knowledge will usually be the LPA's Conservation Officer or other historic environment specialists, with external specialists supplementing this expertise where necessary. Expertise on archaeology can be provided by the relevant **local authority archaeological service**, which may be part of the HER.

The **national amenity societies** are specialist organisations that have expertise on assets of particular types or periods. The voluntary sector often holds information and expertise of high quality, for instance **County Gardens Trusts**, the **National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces**, the **National Federation of Cemetery Friends**, county archaeological societies and local vernacular architecture and **industrial archaeology groups**.

Digitised **Ordnance Survey maps** (available through the National Library of Scotland) can be a useful resource for understanding the historic development of an area. The relevant **Victoria County History** and **Pevsner Architectural Guide** may also offer a good starting point for research.



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