

Restarting Industrial Tourism in England: The Impact of COVID-19

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1. UK ERIH Regional Routes



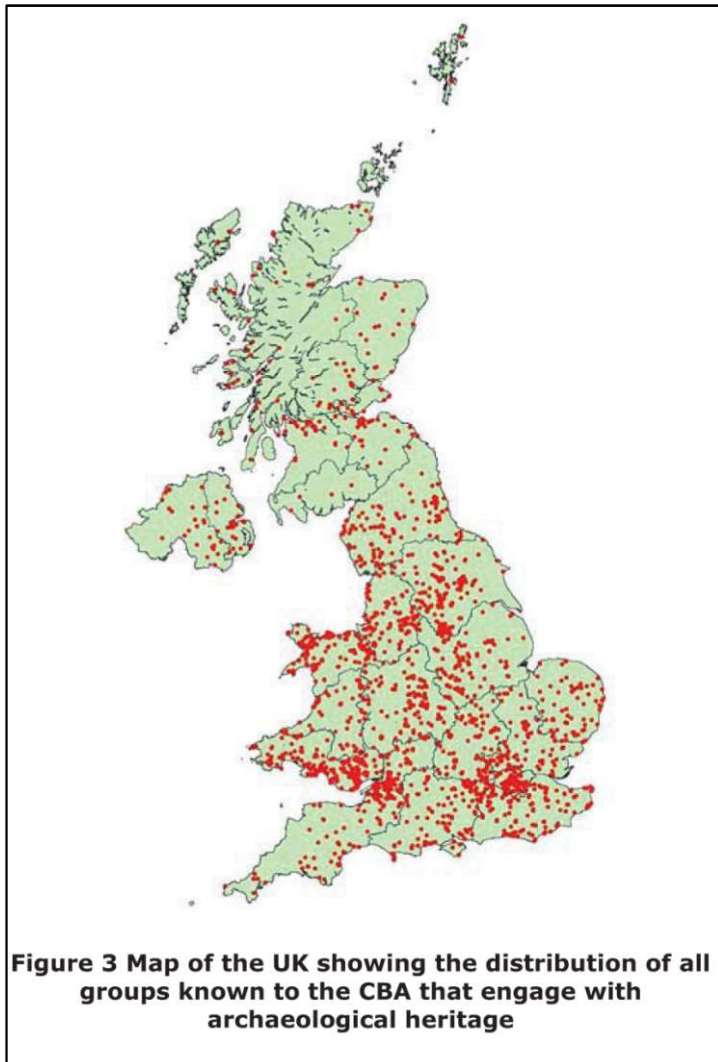
Regional Routes

Each region has its own speciality. In this respect European industrial heritage is just like food. Its strength lies in the fact that it unites many different traditions within a single idea.

The Regional Routes link landscapes and sites which have left their mark on European industrial history. Germany's Ruhrgebiet, for example. Or South Wales, a key region in the "world's first industrial nation". Both these areas comprise a number of less significant industrial monuments - the small cogs in the large machine.



2. Industrial Archaeology & Heritage Research in the UK: Who Does What?



Thomas 2010



Voluntary Archaeology & Heritage Groups

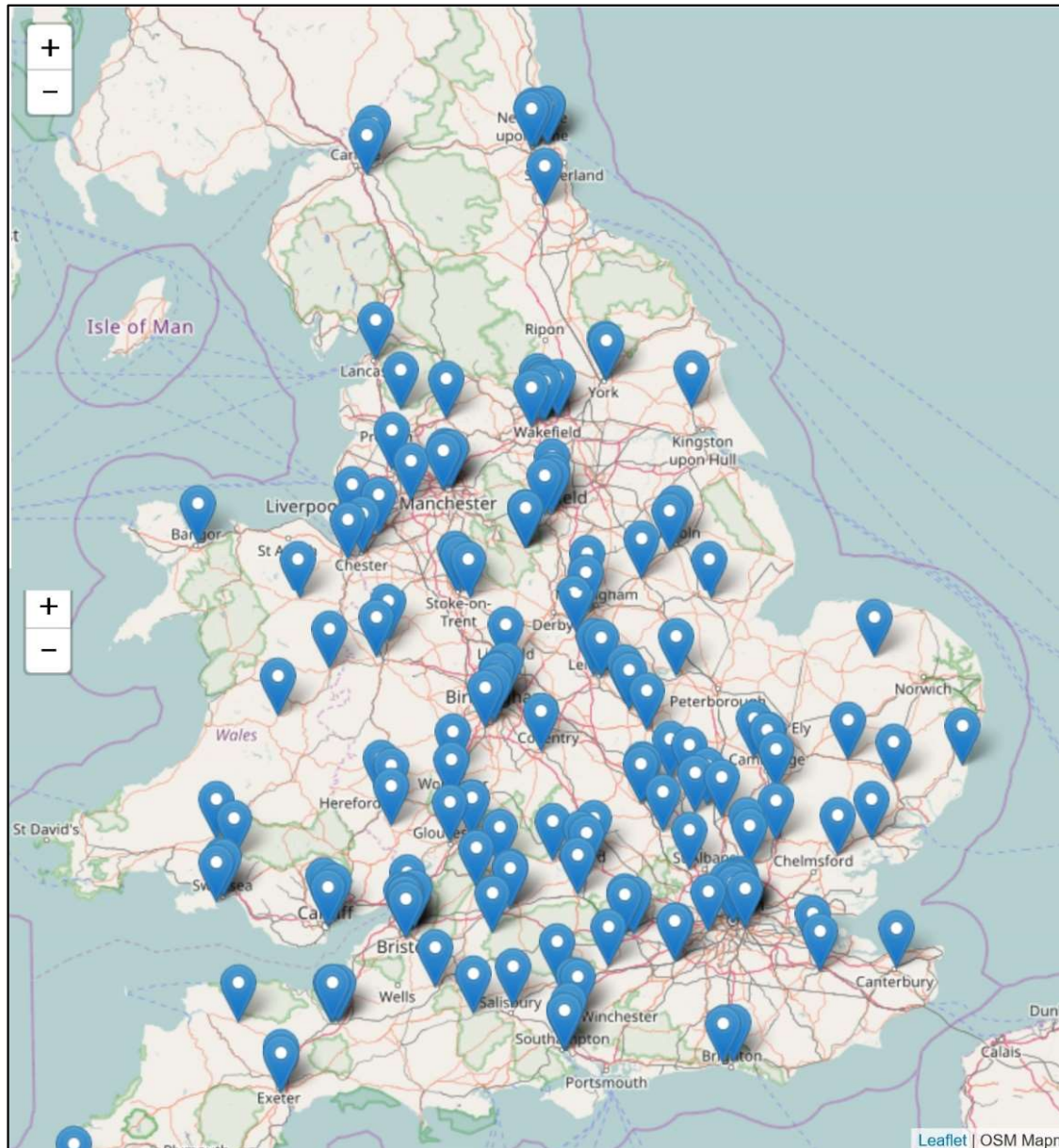
Community and Public Archaeology engagement is difficult to measure meaningfully, so has led to several detailed studies in 2009 and 2016 on some aspects of participation and research:

- The number of archaeology volunteers has risen from c. 100,000 in 1985/86 to c. 215,000 in 2009 in 2,030 organised groups/societies (Thomas 2010).
- Between 2010 & 2015 it is estimated that 12,000 voluntary archaeology & heritage projects were undertaken in England (Hedge & Nash 2016).
- There are around 600 independent Industrial Archaeology & Heritage Museums
- It is not clear how many of these projects & societies undertake industrial archaeology and heritage research.

UK Commercial Archaeology Organisations in 2020

- 350+ archaeology units, consultants & sole trades according to BAJR
- 81 ClfA registered archaeological organisations

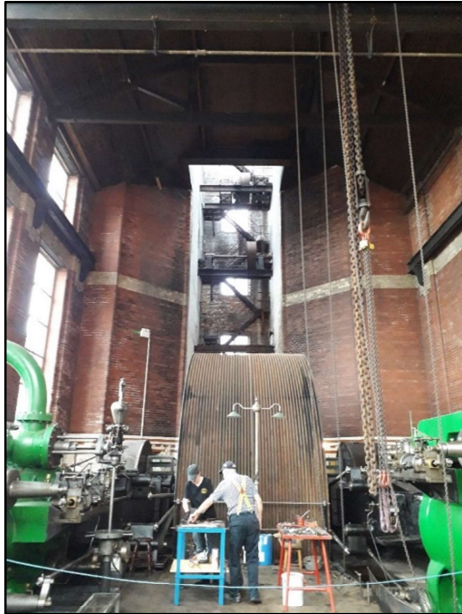
Source: ClfA & BAJR websites, September 2020



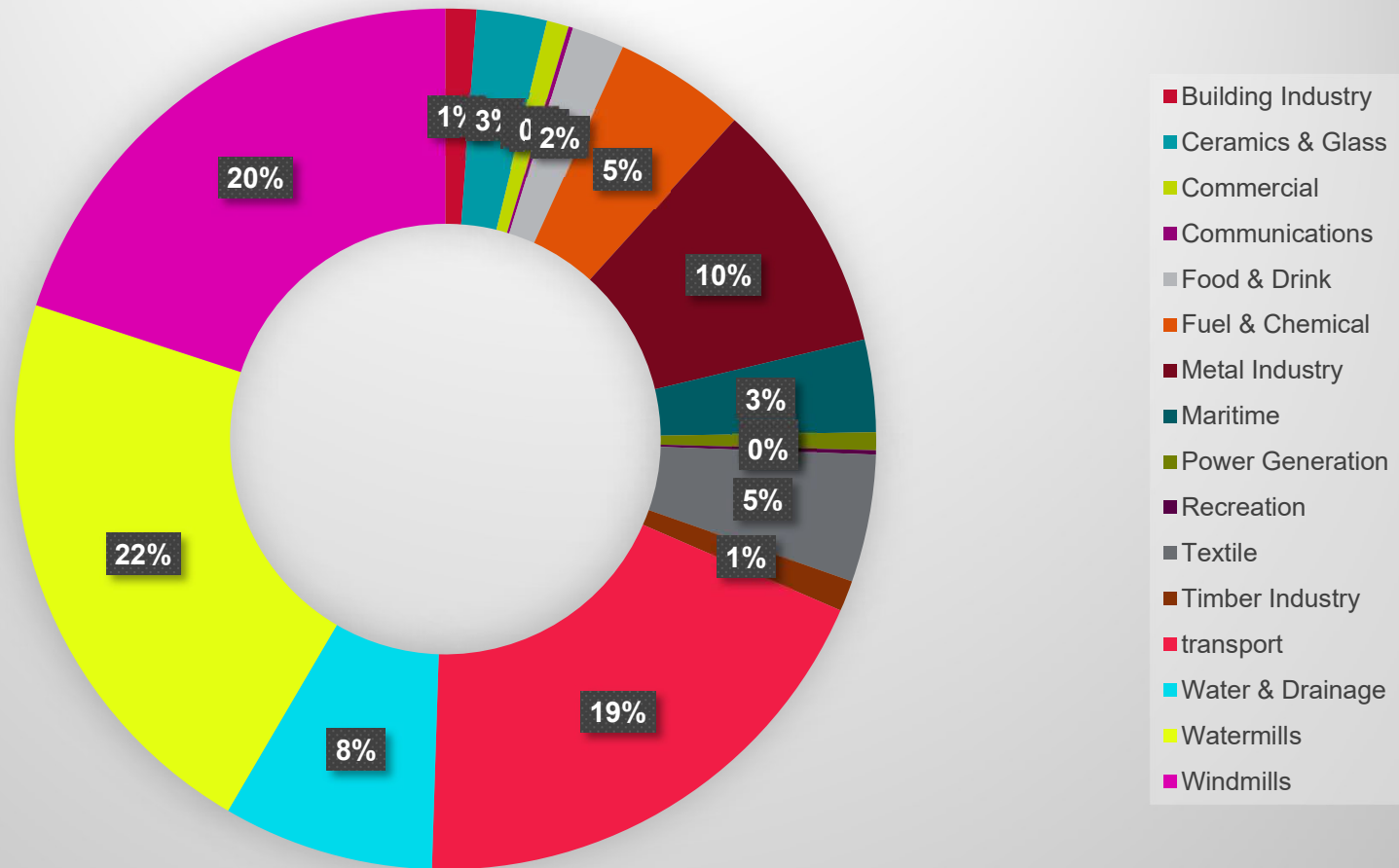
Above: commercial archaeology offices in England & Wales
Right: commercial archaeology offices in UK & Irish Republic



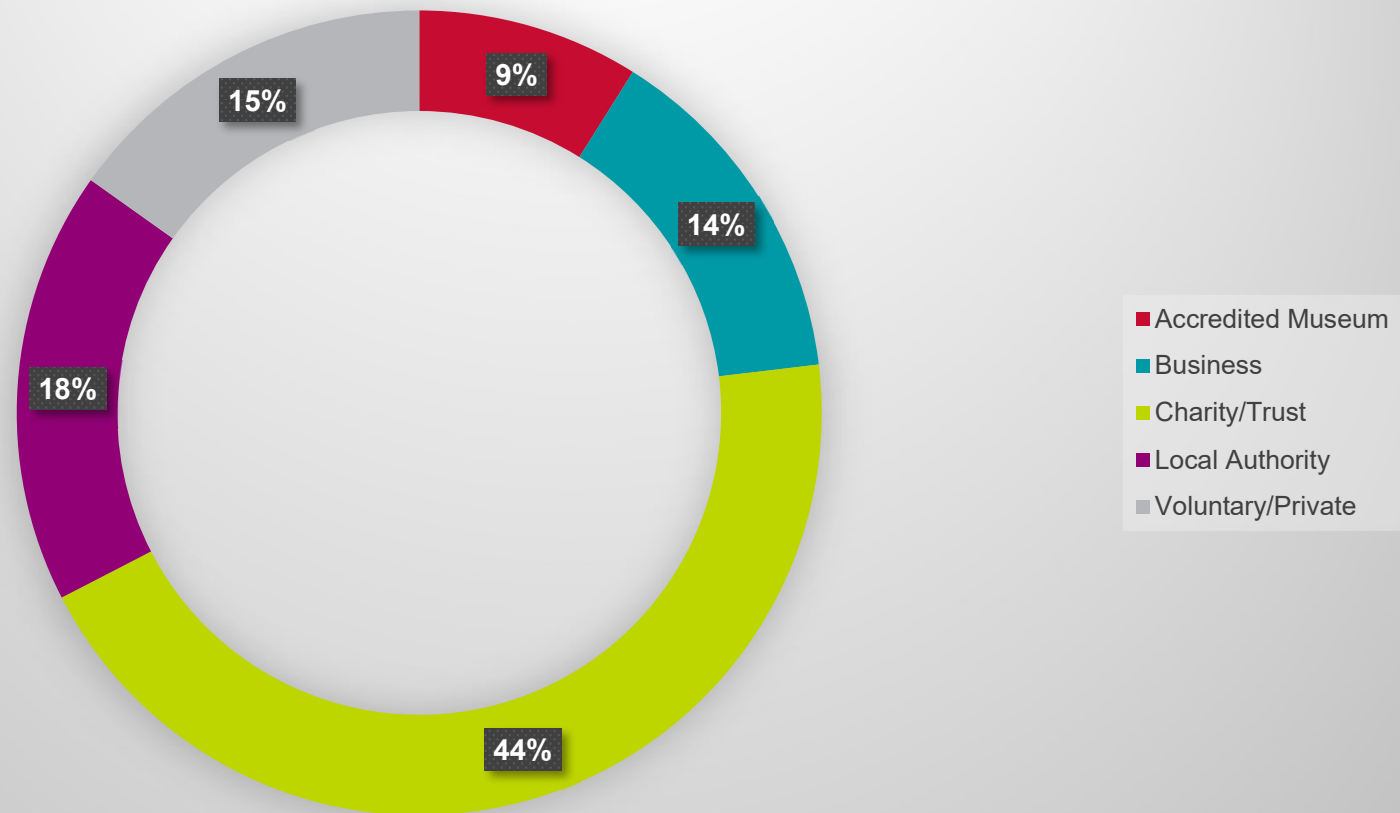
The location of the c. 600 preserved industrial heritage sites open to the public in England, 1998 to 2020



606 Preserved IH Sites in England



Types of Organisations Running Industrial Heritage Sites (June 2021)



3. Direct COVID-19 Impacts on Industrial Heritage Sites

- All c. 600 protected Industrial Heritage Sites in England closed between 23 March and 4 July 2020, and again between 3 November and 2 December 2020, and from January to April/May 2021
- Historic England guidance on re-opening industrial heritage sites issued in June 20.
- By end of September 50% of IH sites had re-opened (based upon a 100% sample).
- November lock-down saw all sites closed again and sites closed for the winter.
- Less than 25% of sites, mainly larger ones, such as open air museums & heritage railways, re-opened in December 2020.
- All heritage sites closed between January 2021 and April 2021 for the third lock down

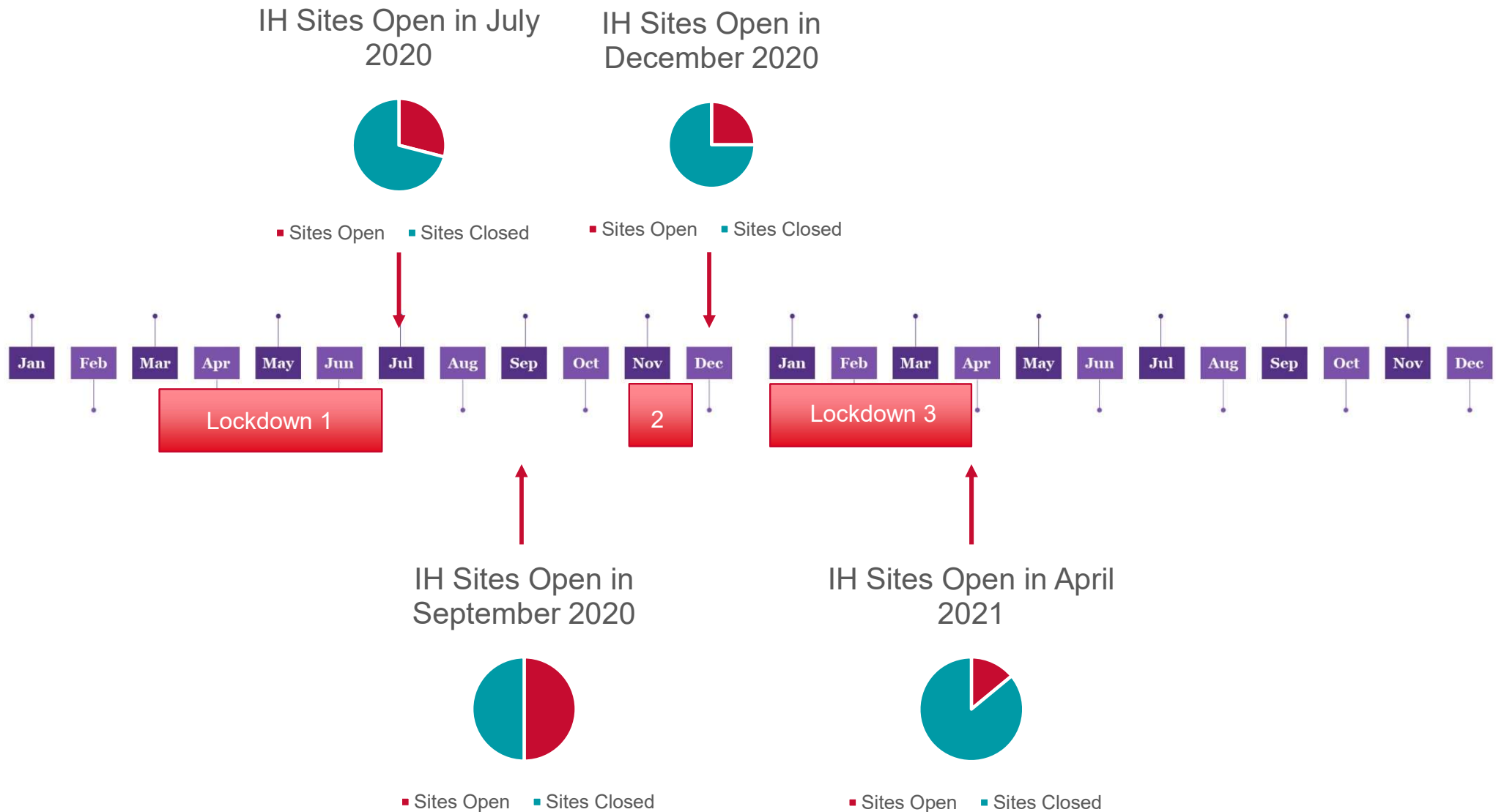


Above: Crofton Beam Engine had a shorter season in 2020, re-opening in mid-July 2020 and closing at the end of September 2020. Re-opened May 2021.



Above: Spa Valley Railway had a shorter season in 2020, re-opening in Aug 2020 and closing in November, but re-opening in December, before closing from January to May 2021 (re-opening 22 May). The railway raised money directly from the public in an emergency Online COVID donation call.

The Impact of Lockdown on English Industrial Heritage Sites in 2020 and early 2021





Above: Avoncroft Tollhouse & museum vandalised in April 2021.



Above: South Tynedale railway in the North East suffered minor vandalism in January 2021.

- Vandalism and trespass at preserved railways ie Bowes, Churnet, Peak Rail, South Tynedale
- Buildings at Avoncroft Open Air Museum damaged in April 2021



Above: Charlecote Corn Mill milled flour throughout 2020. Below: Winchester City Mill (NT) has not opened since March 2020.



- Vandalism and trespass at preserved railway ie Bowes, Churnet and Peak Rail.
- 46 industrial heritage sites announced in the summer of 2020 that they would remain closed until 2021, as well as 9 NT sites and 2 EH sites.
- 50% of Industrial Heritage sites did not open in 2020.
- Visitor numbers down 70% across Industrial Heritage Sites in 2020.



Historic England

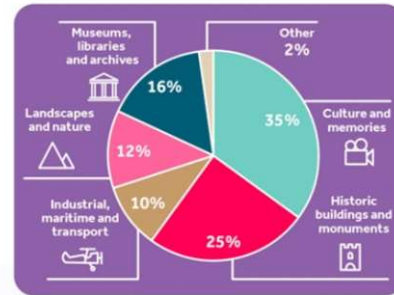


Rebuilding
Heritage

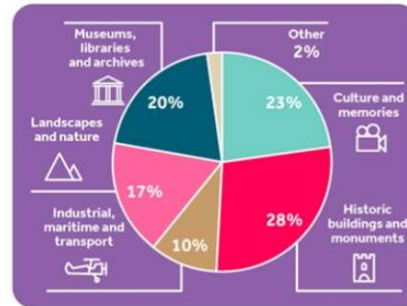
- £3.6 million raised from the public for preserved heritage railways (including £13.8K by the Avon Valley Railway, £349K by the Swanage Railway, and £900K by the North Yorkshire Moors Railway) between April 2020 and April 2021.
- Cultural recovery Fund launched in summer 2020. £50 million heritage fund administered by Historic England with larger funds from Arts Council England & NHLF in 2020 to 2021. Across these funds £34,283,066 was distributed to 131 Industrial Heritage sites in the First Round in October 2020.
- In the Second Round of Grants in April 2021 HE distributed £8,093,800 to 64 Industrial Heritage sites and ACE supported a further 72 industrial heritage sites through grants of £13,595,884.
- A Third Round of funding opened in September 2021 with applications for additional funding closing in October 2021.

National Funds for Industrial Heritage Sites in England, Oct 2020

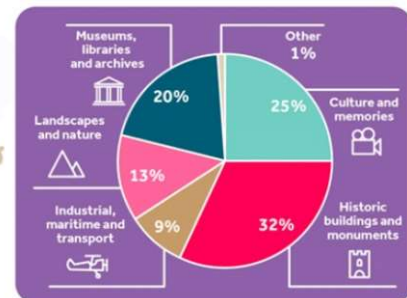
North of England Heritage Emergency Fund grants by heritage area



Midlands and East of England Heritage Emergency Fund grants by heritage area

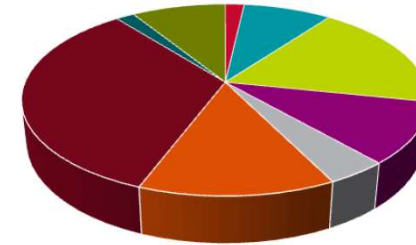


London and South Heritage Emergency Fund grants by heritage area



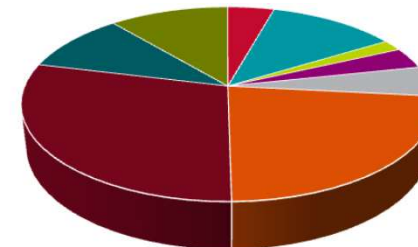
UK Government Funds for Cultural Sites in October 2020

Arts Council England IH Grants in % £ Oct 20



- East Midlands
- East of England
- London
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and The Humber

Historic England IH Grants in % £ Oct 20



- East Midlands
- East of England
- London
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and The Humber

4. IHSO: Supporting The Industrial Heritage Public Sector in England During & after the Pandemic

Key objectives since 2012:

- Tangible improvement in sustainability & conserved standards of c. 600 preserved publicly accessible industrial heritage sites in England
- Helping to enhanced capacity and operating practices
- Lasting support arrangements to sustain this legacy



Bottom left to right: Ditherington Flax Mill; Blue Bell Railway

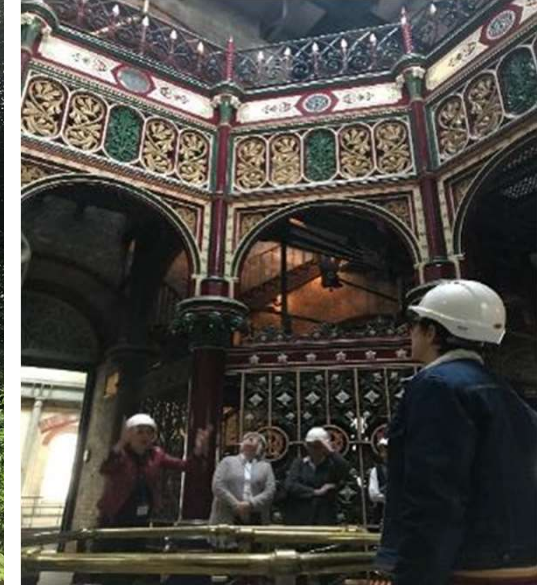
Industrial Heritage Networks in England:

These went online in March 2020 in response to the pandemic



The project has developed links with bodies such as the Canal & Rivers Trust, APPG on Industrial Heritage, ERIH, and provides support to voluntary groups and local authority museums where needed.

IHN Meetings Went Online in 2020 and will stay Online



- Host picks a date
- Host picks a theme
- Host offers facilities (catering is NOT a requirement)
- Host delivers a talk based on the theme and a site tour

Meetings are 'igniters' for further discussions and partnership working throughout the year.

Online and Social Media Industrial Heritage Information Service During & Post-Pandemic



Industrial Heritage Networks
Industrial Heritage Networks



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Industrial Heritage Networks ▾

IHSO

Contact



- website (industrialheritagesupport.com) for initiatives & latest guidance
- Website (industrialheritagenetworks.com) for stories & member news
- facebook (facebook.com/IHSOengland) for news
- twitter (@IHSOengland) for immediate help/news

These online media provide a regular flow of updates to engage, and inform volunteers and owners of sites.

- Developing a private communications platform for use by the regional networks on Facebook

Industrial heritage sites

General advice

You should follow all relevant government guidance and updates, including those in relation to cleaning, social distancing and what you allow visitors to touch. These include:

- The government's [coronavirus hub](#)
- [Guidance on working safely](#) during the coronavirus outbreak is available from the Health and Safety Executive.
- For advice on reoccupying buildings, including working safely, ventilation and other building services, please see advice from the [Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers](#).

VisitBritain has launched a [resource centre](#) and a new industry standard and consumer mark to increase consumer confidence that venues adhere to government guidance.

Special considerations for opening an industrial heritage visitor attraction

If your site includes listed buildings and/or a scheduled monument, this is highly unlikely to inhibit to any significant degree how you can use them to get your business back up and running. With some careful thinking, you can flexibly plan how your site can best function to comply with Covid-19 regulations.

It is only if there are direct physical works to a listed building that you might need [consent](#), and normally ways can be found to achieve a safe building without such changes. For proposals affecting scheduled monuments, the requirements are stricter.

If you are unclear about whether listed building consent is needed please contact your local authority historic building conservation officer and for scheduled monuments, the relevant [Historic England local office](#) will be able to offer advice.

Industrial heritage sites can include mine sites, textile mills, waterworks, furnaces, kilns, those associated with various forms of transport, and wind and water mills. Many visitor attractions containing mobile heritage, for example steam railways, often include designated heritage assets, such as listed buildings.

This checklist will help you to put in necessary new measures which do not damage the importance of your listed building/structure in heritage terms (what the legislation calls affecting the 'special interest' of the building):

- Have you thought about any physical changes you might need to make (temporary or permanent), and how these might cause damage to the listed heritage asset?
- The interiors of listed buildings are protected as well as the exteriors. If you need to carry out physical alterations, how can you do so in a way that does not affect the building's 'special interest' and so does not require listed building consent? Examples include:

- Putting in screens, partitions, signs or other measures to protect staff or ensure customers can practice safe distancing in a way that does not harm historic fabric.
- Being sensitive to listed structures/buildings when using paint or sticky tape for social distance marking on floors, and so on.
- Putting a marquee in an outdoor space to increase separation between visitors rather than removing old, or inserting new, partitions which perhaps can only be fixed into important historic walls, floors, ceilings or beams.

You will need to try and ensure that any new fixings are placed into mortar joints or modern surfaces rather than stones, old bricks, carved beams, historic plasterwork or other old surfaces.

- It is vital that you minimise the chances of spreading infection by cleaning contaminated surfaces. Are you sure that the cleaning products you propose to use, or their increased use, will not damage sensitive historic surfaces? These may include timberwork, historic surfaces, machinery, and so on. Please follow [our advice on cleaning](#).
- If visitors, staff or volunteers are using the site in a different way, for example using different doors or stairs to normal, can these be made safe and accessible in ways that don't require physical alteration and protect what is special about the building or site?

Volunteers

- If your volunteers are able to continue working on site, have you given them information about plans to access the site safely, including toilets and other structures, and how to raise any concerns they have?
- If their regular tasks are not possible, can your volunteers help with maintenance or other work on site while maintaining social distancing?
- If your volunteers are not currently able to work on site, are there other things they could help with? Can they help enhance your digital offer or strengthen links with local groups remotely?

Other resources for industrial heritage sites

- The Industrial Heritage Support Officer for England, Dr Michael Nevell, based at Ironbridge Gorge Museum, can provide help and support. Please contact him at: mike.nevell@ironbridge.org.uk
- Regular updates are provided through the Industrial Heritage Support Officer project's [Facebook pages](#), Twitter posts ([@IHSEngland](#)) and through [Industrial Heritage Support](#) website.
- [Industrial Heritage Support Networks](#) are also being set up across England to provide information, advice and share expertise. If you would like to join your local network, please contact the Industrial Heritage Support Officer.

IHSO COVID Survey, 2020-21

101 individuals participated in nine online IHN meetings between October 2020 and October 2021. This represented 72 industrial heritage sites or roughly 11% of the industrial heritage sites preserved and open to the public in England. The theme in each meeting was the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on volunteers. These are some of the specific comments:

- 'Catering and shop facilities have had to change' Liz Chard-Cooper, *Coventry Transport Museum*.
- 'Many sites/organisations have been unable to access their collections and there have been small-scale problems, such as blocked drains' Helen Johnson, *West Midlands Museum Development*
- 'Volunteers are keen to return but their numbers have to be limited for safety', Anthony Piling, *Heritage Trust for the North West*.
- 'The museum was closed throughout 2020 but open-air spaces have been open and seen increased numbers', Peter Holdway-Bradley, *Coldharbour Mill*.
- 'There is a need to train younger volunteers to run the machinery....Some of the volunteers are more cautious to return after the second lockdown' Susan Hetherington, *Museum of Carpets*.

Conclusion: IH Sites are Adapting to the Post-Pandemic Environment



- A dozen water and wind mill businesses increased output during lockdowns in 2020 as at Charlecote Mill (left). With successive re-openings outdoor venues and food offerings became more important. Diversifying business models seen by most of 60 sites surveyed Oct 20 to April 21 as important for post-pandemic working.
- The number of Industrial Heritage sites, such as Shrewsbury Flax Mill (left), offering free online resources doubled in 2020. But only c. 10% of sites in England offer these resources.
- Of 60 IH sites surveyed between Oct 20 & April 21, more than 75% said that they were using online meetings to help train and stay in contact with volunteers and staff, and would continue to do so.



Thank you