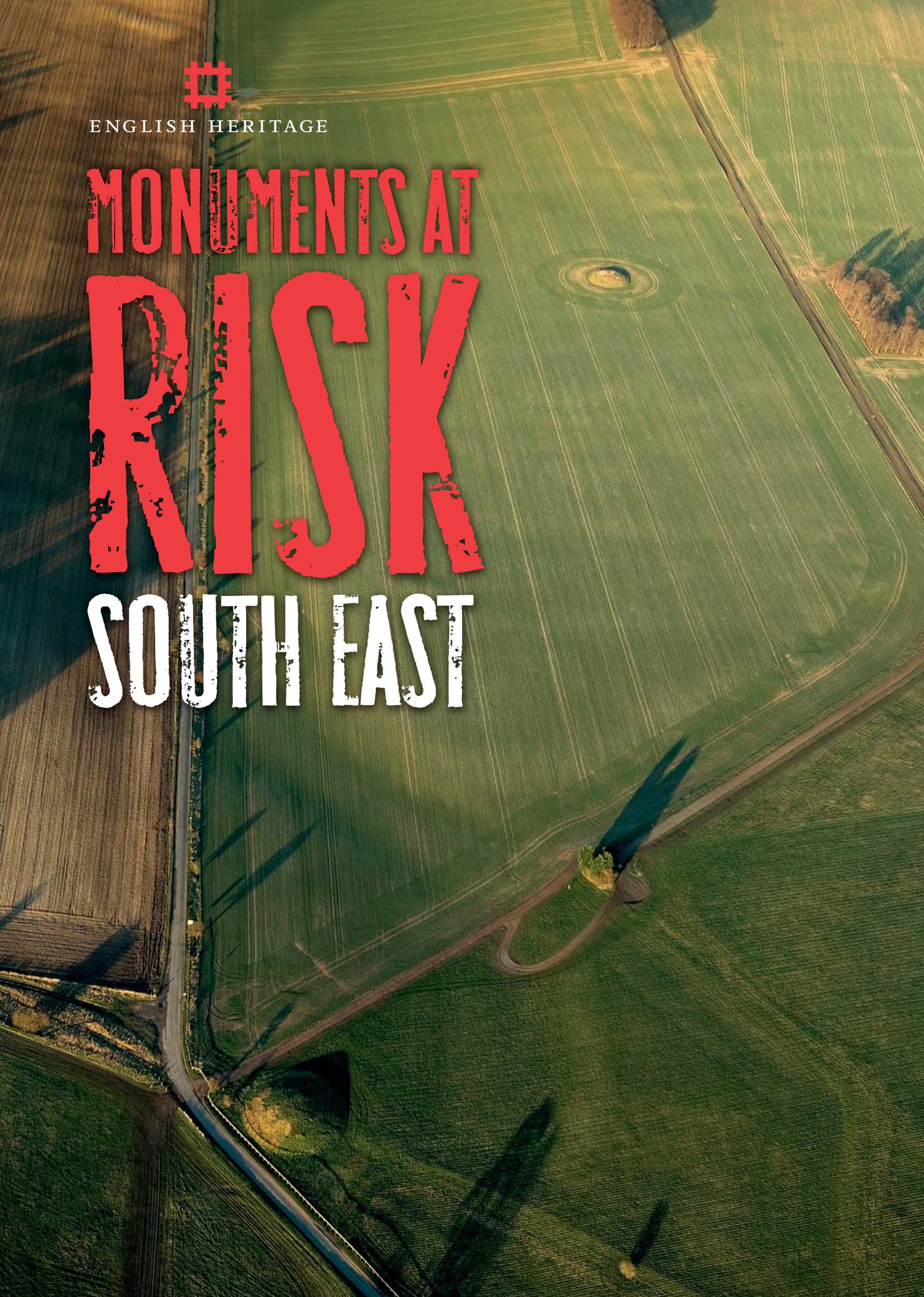




ENGLISH HERITAGE

MONUMENTS AT RISK SOUTH EAST



MONUMENTS AT RISK

Scheduled monuments are our most cherished, nationally important archaeological sites and landscapes. In the South East they include prehistoric burial mounds, flint mines, causewayed enclosures and hillforts; Roman towns, villas and forts; medieval settlements, castles and abbeys, and post-medieval fortifications and industrial structures.

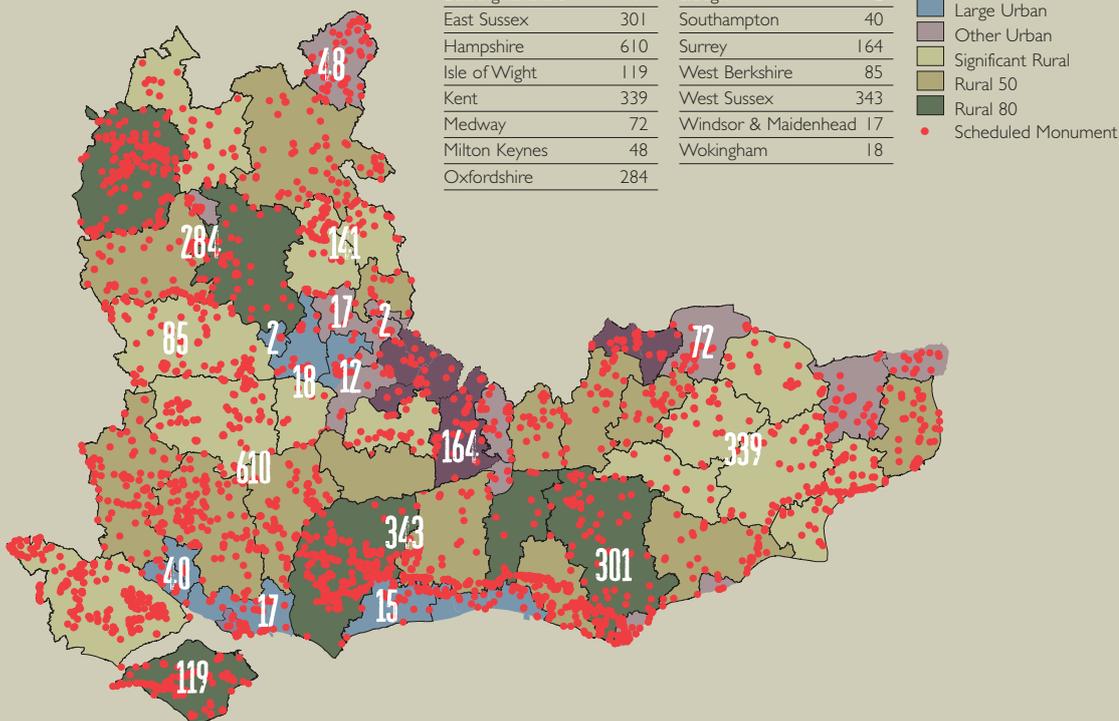
They are a unique inheritance that tell the story of many generations of human endeavour and life. They create our sense of time and place, and add greatly to the distinctiveness of our towns and countryside.

Although protected by law, scheduled monuments are vulnerable to a wide range of damaging human activities and natural processes. Survey in the South East region has shown that 1353 (51%) of its 2629 monuments are at risk from damage, decay or loss, unless action is taken. Arable farming and natural processes, especially vegetation growth, are the main agencies putting monuments at risk.

When damaged or lost, scheduled monuments cannot be replaced; careful management is required if we are to pass them on to future generations in good condition. This requires close co-operation between the owners of scheduled monuments, government and all organisations charged with care of the environment.

NUMBER OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS BY ADMINISTRATIVE AREA

Bracknell Forest	12	Portsmouth	17
Brighton & Hove	15	Reading	2
Buckinghamshire	141	Slough	2
East Sussex	301	Southampton	40
Hampshire	610	Surrey	164
Isle of Wight	119	West Berkshire	85
Kent	339	West Sussex	343
Medway	72	Windsor & Maidenhead	17
Milton Keynes	48	Wokingham	18
Oxfordshire	284		



Front cover Part of the very extensive Bronze Age round-barrow cemetery on Lambourn Downs, West Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The area shown contains at least three bowl barrows, one disk barrow and a prehistoric or Roman field system. Today the monuments, including some of the scheduled ones, are being damaged by ploughing, plough clipping or poaching by cattle.

SCHEDULED MONUMENTS AT RISK: SOUTH EAST

In 1998 English Heritage published a national Monuments at Risk Survey (MARS). This showed that since 1945, an average of one archaeological site had been destroyed every day. These losses include scheduled monuments – historic sites designated as being nationally important. As a follow up, English Heritage has now undertaken a more detailed assessment of the risks currently facing scheduled monuments in the South East region.

The survey had two main objectives:

- to evaluate the condition, amenity value and setting of scheduled monuments in the region and the extent to which they are at risk
- to establish priorities for action and monument management.

The South East study systematically assessed all 2629 scheduled monuments in the region. Its results demonstrate that with 51% of monuments at risk, there is an urgent need for action before more of our heritage is damaged or lost.

FACTS & FIGURES

There were 2629 monuments in the South East region when the survey was undertaken. The region encompasses 19,096km² of land and has a population of more than 8 million; the average density of scheduled monuments is 1 per 7.26km². The South East has the highest proportion of land protected for its natural beauty (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a National Park) and is the country's most wooded region. There is great diversity in landscape character, which is reflected in 29 Joint Character Areas (see back cover).

The South East of England has been important since prehistoric times as the nearest point of contact with mainland Europe – the gateway to the country for invaders and settlers and for trade and the exchange of ideas. The River Thames and its tributaries give access deep into the region for the spread of such influences. A particular theme of the portfolio of South East scheduled monuments is defence, especially coastal defence, which is in evidence in the late Roman Saxon Shore forts, Henry VIII's forts, Napoleonic Martello towers and the Victorian Palmerston forts around Portsmouth and London.

OWNERSHIP

1788 scheduled monuments (68%) are in private ownership (which includes the Church and National Trust), 466 (18%) are owned by local authorities, 365 (14%) by government or their agencies and 5 by utilities.

FORM AND DATE

52% of monuments are primarily earthworks and mainly of prehistoric date, though they are found for all periods, 32% are primarily buried archaeological sites, mainly of Romano-British date but, again include sites of all periods, and 17% are standing structures, which are predominantly post-medieval, though some are of medieval or Romano-British date. Of course, many monuments comprise more than one sort of remains and may be of various periods.

LAND USE

894 (34%) of scheduled monuments are under grassland cover, 657 (25%) are on developed or urban land, 473 (18%) are in woodland, 263 (10%) are on heathland and 210 (8%) are under cultivation.

1 Buried archaeological remains at Park Brow, West Sussex, seen here from the air as crop marks, were being damaged by ploughing. Now most of the area has been put under permanent pasture under a new traditional farming regime.

2 St Helen's Fort, a Victorian sea fort off the Isle of Wight, experiences a harsh marine environment and like many coastal fortifications in the South East requires extensive and costly maintenance.

3 A Medieval moated site at West Grinstead Park, West Sussex, is regularly 'clipped' by ploughing around its perimeter and is overgrown by scrub and trees on the island.



MEASURING THE RISKS

Despite being protected by law, scheduled monuments are subjected to a number of pressures, both naturally and humanly induced, which damage them and in some cases even threaten their survival. The Scheduled Monuments at Risk programme aims to characterise the risk to monuments by surveying the current state of the monuments (condition), the frequency, duration, scale and trajectory of damage factors (condition trend) and the threat to the condition or survival of the monuments (vulnerability). Taken together with the archaeological significance of monuments and their archaeological sensitivity, these assessments facilitate an evaluation of present and future risk. The data that the project has collected will also be the baseline against which we measure change in the future and monitor our success in managing that change to preserve this valuable and irreplaceable heritage.



KEY FINDINGS

CONDITION

Problems were noted on 83% of monuments, although many are localised. More seriously, 18% are in unsatisfactory condition, half of them with extensive problems.

RISK

16% of scheduled monuments are at high risk and 36% are at medium risk. Consequently just over half need urgent action to prevent deterioration, loss or damage.

RISK AND LAND USE

45% of the high-risk monuments are located on cultivated land and 18% are under grassland, with a further 18% under woodland. In the medium-risk category, 36% are under woodland and the rest fairly evenly divided between grassland (24%) and developed and urban land (21%).

CONDITION TREND

The majority of monuments (64%) are in a stable condition but 30% are declining. Of the medium-risk monuments, 40% are in decline and therefore likely to become high risk if no management action is taken in the near future.

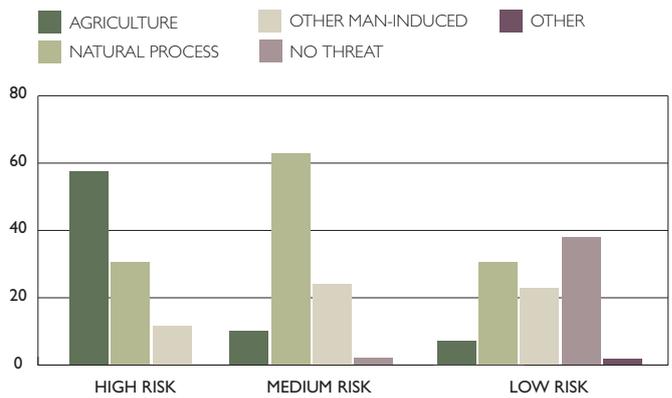
30% OF
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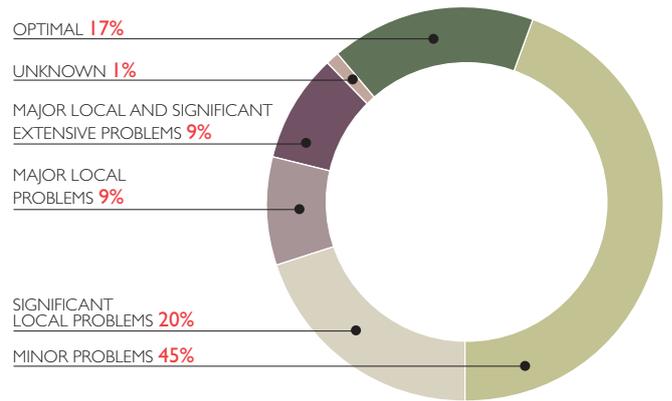
Of the 16% of the region's monuments at high risk, the single most damaging factor is arable farming, which affects 58% of them. Vegetation growth (including trees, scrub and plants) accounts for 16% and animal burrowing 11%. Deterioration from neglect accounts for 8%. Of the 36% of the region's monuments at medium risk, the single most damaging factor is vegetation growth (53%).



PRINCIPAL THREAT AS A PERCENTAGE OF EACH RISK CATEGORY



PERCENTAGE OF MONUMENTS BY OVERALL CONDITION



- 4 At St Helen's Medieval Church, Ore, East Sussex, heavy vegetation growth has caused collapse of the stonework and burrowing animals have severely disturbed the burial ground.
- 5 The Neolithic causewayed enclosure at Whitehawk, Brighton, heavily eroded by vehicular traffic.
- 6 Holden's Firs Barrow, West Berkshire, is now partially cleared of vegetation. This protects the archaeological remains and improves its visual amenity. Note that the encircling ditch is now visible.
- 7 The Neolithic Longstone, Mottistone Down, Isle of Wight, suffered ground erosion from pedestrian traffic and graffiti, but has now been repaired by the National Trust.
- 8 Belle Tout Camp, Birling Gap, East Sussex, is in multiple ownership and benefits from various management actions including an Environmentally Sensitive Area scheme and scrub and rabbit-damage prevention programmes. However it also suffers severe cliff erosion.

LEGISLATION

Current ancient monument legislation (Class Consent 1) permits potentially damaging activities (such as ploughing, horticulture, forestry and gardening) on 19% of the region's scheduled monuments. More specifically, of the monuments to which such a Class Consent could apply (ie earthworks and buried sites, but not standing structures), 53% are at risk as a result of the activities it permits.

AMENITY VALUE

90% of the region's monuments have some remains visible above ground and 68% are highly visible. Although 35% are fully accessible to the able-bodied public, 26% are not accessible at all. Developed interpretation is available at only 4% of monuments and of those that are in any way accessible, only 24% have even basic interpretation. 81% of monuments have no on-site interpretation at all.

DESIGNATION

37% of the South East region is designated for its natural beauty, and 52% of the monuments lie within those areas. Surprisingly, 17% of those within AONBs and 7% of those within the National Park are at high risk. 22% of the monuments lie within Sites of Special Scientific Interest, of which 9% are at high risk.

OWNERSHIP

20% of privately owned monuments are at high risk, 38% are at medium risk and 42% are at low risk.

90% OF MONUMENTS ARE **VISIBLE**

UNDERSTANDING RISK

Change in the historic environment is inevitable, whether caused by natural processes or by people responding to social, economic and technological change. Continued monitoring is thus required even for apparently low risk monuments because if neglected they may advance to medium or high risk.

9 Quarrendon deserted medieval village, Buckinghamshire. Sheep grazing on the monument is beneficial to its management, provided stock levels and feeding areas are managed to avoid erosion. Management is an ongoing process though, and gains can easily be lost if good management lapses. © Sandy Kidd, Buckinghamshire County Council



While coastal erosion only affects 1% of the sites in the South East, its impact can be devastating. Some factors are also unpredictable, such as the slumping of an earthwork after adverse weather or a single act of vandalism. Other damaging activities, such as ploughing or animal burrowing, cannot be readily gauged from surface inspection and are therefore difficult to quantify.

Conservation is the process of managing change in ways that sustain the significance of a place in its setting, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce its values for present and future generations. The heritage values of landscapes and buildings are quickly lost if long-standing management regimes, often closely linked to the original design concept, are discontinued.

Archaeological deposits, earthworks and masonry need continuous management to limit degradation by plant and animal action.

Good management requires understanding and regular monitoring of the physical condition of a place. Monitoring the risk to monuments should be carried out by those who have a stake in maintaining them in good condition, including owners, local groups, agencies such as English Heritage and Natural England, and local authorities.

In some cases the risks to scheduled monuments will be reduced simply by good land management, or through planning decisions that take account of their importance.

However, some monuments will require significant resources to stabilise their condition, to carry out repairs or to change the way in which the land on and around the monument is used.

Practical advice on the management of scheduled monuments is available from the Historic Environment Local Management website at www.helm.org.uk

10 The Second World War ammunition store at Sinah Common gravel pit, Hayling Island, Hampshire, was underpinned to prevent its collapse into the lake, funded by the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund.



11 The Roman villa at Brading, Isle of Wight, has been protected with a new cover building and visitor centre with the aid of substantial grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and private donors.



12 A partnership between the National Trust, English Heritage, Defra (Countryside Stewardship Scheme) and the Heritage Lottery Fund restored lowland heathland at Lavington Plantation, West Sussex. Forestry work and grazing by Belted Galloway heifers have improved the management of scheduled round barrows. © Defra



THE RISKS TO SCHEDULED MONUMENTS CAN BE REDUCED BY GOOD LAND MANAGEMENT

Moat Place, Iden, East Sussex. East Sussex County Council and Defra (Countryside Stewardship) supported the production of interpretive signage at this medieval moated manor house.

THE WAY FORWARD

There will be no easy solution to the issues identified by the South East Scheduled Monuments at Risk study. If we are to pass on this fragile heritage to future generations, the level of risk to scheduled monuments in the South East must be reduced. Just over half are in need of management action to prevent further deterioration, loss or damage. English Heritage believes that no monuments legally protected in the public interest should be at high risk.

Although English Heritage has a statutory duty to promote the conservation of ancient monuments, our resources can only solve a small fraction of the problems. Other partners will therefore play a vital role in improving the condition of these important sites, for example, through good management by private and local authority owners and by the application of Rural Development Programme resources.

We believe that reducing the risk to scheduled monuments should be accorded a similar priority to the achievement of biodiversity targets, and that these efforts can often be mutually supportive.

One of the impediments to efficient and effective management of scheduled monuments has until now been England's overly complicated system of heritage legislation. We therefore welcome government's commitment to reform the current arrangements for the protection of the historic environment in the context of the draft Heritage Protection Bill presented to Parliament in April 2008.

In the South East, English Heritage wishes to build on partnerships with bodies such as the National Parks, AONB units, the Defence Estates and the Forestry Commission and with volunteers who monitor publicly accessible sites or undertake conservation work, such as clearing scrub.

English Heritage is committed to measuring its success as an organisation by securing a year-on-year reduction in the number of monuments, buildings and designed landscapes at risk. As part of our Heritage at Risk strategy we will set targets for reducing the types and degree of threats to scheduled monuments in the South East.



The distribution of scheduled monuments at risk in the South East analysed using Countryside Character Areas. The Joint Character Areas, defined jointly by the statutory conservation agencies, are used alongside other datasets in the targeting of environmental farming schemes.

SCHEDULED MONUMENTS RISK CATEGORY

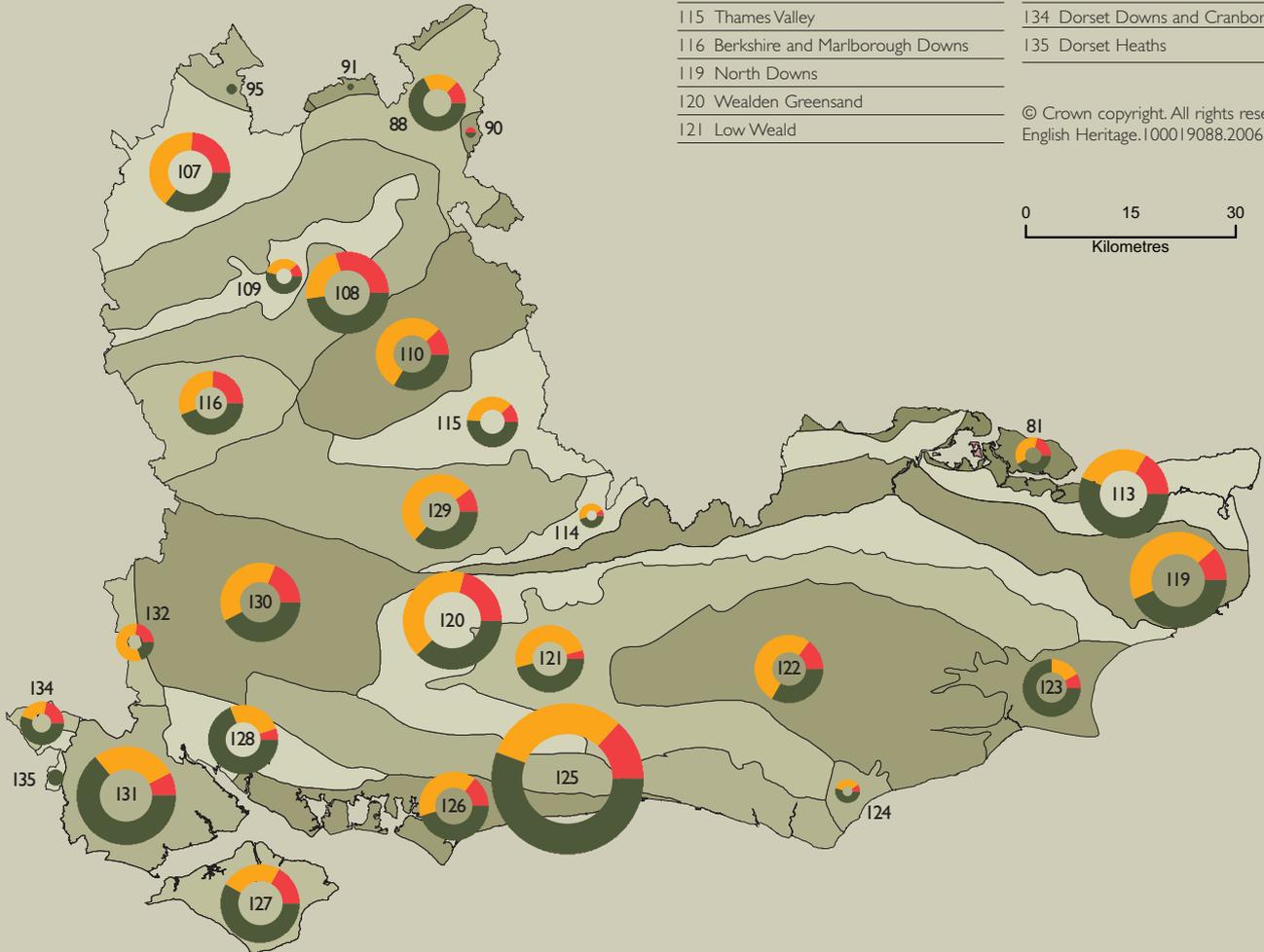
- High Risk
- Medium Risk
- Low Risk

COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER AREAS
Number refers to CCA reference code

81	Greater Thames Estuary	122	High Weald
88	Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands	123	Romney Marshes
90	Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge	124	Pevensey Levels
91	Yardley-whittlewood Ridge	125	South Downs
95	Northamptonshire Uplands	126	South Coast Plain
107	Cotswolds	127	Isle of Wight
108	Upper Thames Clay Vales	128	South Hampshire Lowlands
109	Midvale Ridge	129	Thames Basin Heaths
110	Chilterns	130	Hampshire Downs
113	North Kent Plain	131	New Forest
114	Thames Basin Lowlands	132	Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs
115	Thames Valley	134	Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase
116	Berkshire and Marlborough Downs	135	Dorset Heaths
119	North Downs		
120	Wealden Greensand		
121	Low Weald		



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This document is one of a series of publications produced as part of English Heritage's new national Heritage at Risk campaign. More information about Heritage at Risk and other titles in the series can be found at www.english-heritage.org.uk/risk

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