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A seventh report on Local Authority Staff Resources

Produced by Historic England, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation
July 2015

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the beginning of 2015 there were 841.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) historic environment specialists providing advice to local authorities in England. This comprised:
 - 527.4 FTEs working on building and area conservation and
 - 314.2 FTEs providing archaeological advice.
- 1.2 In the past 12 months:
 - the number of archaeological specialists advising local authorities in England has increased by 4.5% (13.7 FTE) and
 - the number of conservation specialists has fallen by 1.4% (7.2 FTE).
- 1.3 Since 2006:
 - the number of archaeological specialists advising local authorities in England has fallen by 23% and
 - the number of conservation specialists has fallen by 35%.
- 1.4 In the last 12 months, against a backdrop of a very small increase (0.8% overall) in specialist advisers, the number of planning application decisions (an indicator of workload) has decreased by 3.9% and Listed Building Consent decisions (also an indicator of workload) increased by 3% (see *table 1* and *figures 5 and 6*).

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This report compares the levels of historic environment staff resources in local authorities in the early months of 2015 with those available since 2003.
- 2.2 This report has been produced by Historic England in partnership with the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO), the forum representing archaeologists working for local authorities and national parks and advising on all aspects of the historic environment; and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC), the professional body for building conservation practitioners and historic environment experts, many of whom work in local government.
- 2.3 The data collected for this report is not limited just to those FTEs directly employed by a local authority, and so reflects the advice provided via the variety of different models of service. These alternative models include buying in advice from other organisations, such as neighbouring authorities.
- 2.4 This report updates the position recorded in its predecessor report (published in July 2014) on the changes in levels of expert staffing resources in local authorities and includes data available on the numbers of planning application decisions. The source of that data is the Department for Communities and Local Government <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics> and it covers the 2014/15 financial year.

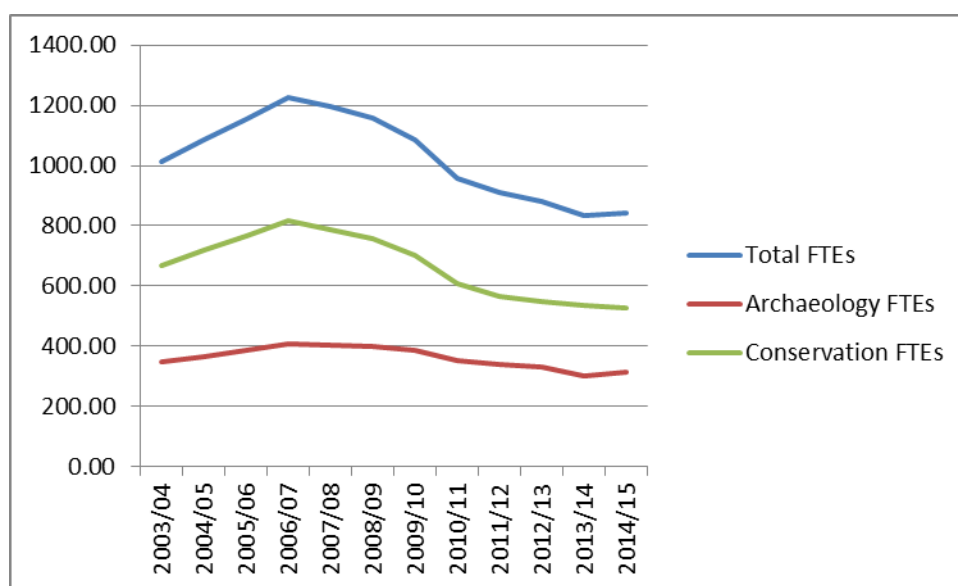
3 Local authority specialist provision

- 3.1 In early 2015 there were 841.6 FTE historic environment specialists providing expert advice to local authorities in England. This was made up of 314.18 providing archaeological advice and 527.4 providing advice on building and area conservation.
- 3.2 These figures are for permanent, temporary, and consultancy full- and part-time staff (shown as full-time equivalents). The posts are those for which a related historic environment professional or academic qualification is required and for other staff, not qualified, who are engaged on equivalent work. Administrative staff are not included. Time spent directly managing staff is counted, as it has a direct consequence for the management of the historic environment. The management time of the head of a historic environment team is therefore included, whereas that of the head of a group which includes the historic environment team is not.
- 3.3 The data was collected by ALGAO and IHBC. ALGAO has been collecting figures on local government archaeological staff resources on an annual basis since 1998; IHBC has also produced figures in 2006, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 with broadly equivalent figures available from the Local Authority Conservation Provision Survey of

2003. Although there is more data for the archaeological resource, this report looks at the years for which both archaeological and building conservation data is available. These are 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009/10, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

- 3.4 The data shows an increase (for the first time since 2006) in the number of archaeological FTEs advising local authorities (by 13.7). The number of conservation specialists providing advice fell by 7.2 FTEs (*figure 1*). At the aggregate level there has been a very slight increase in specialist advisers since 2006 and the steady decline appears to have plateaued.

Figure 1 Conservation, archaeological and total specialist advice expressed as FTEs

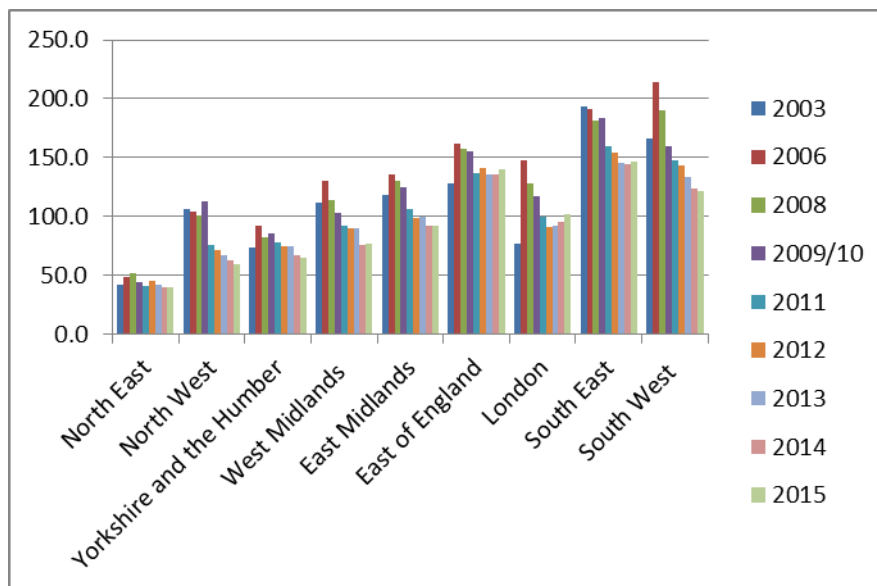


NB For the benefit of a clearer graphical representation, in Figure 1 the totals 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2007/08 have been extrapolated as data on combined staffing was not available for those years.

4 Regional breakdown

- 4.1 The regional breakdown of the data highlights a major feature of the impact of the recent local authority budgetary cuts. It is clear that their impact and how authorities have responded to them has varied from place to place.

Figure 2 All specialist advisers combining conservation and archaeological FTE broken down by Historic England local office area (referred to as 'regions' in previous reports)



- 4.2 The breakdown shows that in some areas the national trend of a slight upturn in FTEs is not followed. There have been small drops in the North West, Yorkshire & Humber, and South West regions whilst the West Midlands, East of England, London and South East have seen a slight increase. Archaeological FTEs increased very slightly in all regions except Yorkshire and the Humber, the North West and the West Midlands (figure 3). Conservation FTEs decreased in all regions except the East of England, West Midlands and London (figure 4), with some regions taking a significant cut, the South West for instance losing over 8.6% (6 FTEs).

Figure 3 Total FTE Archaeology

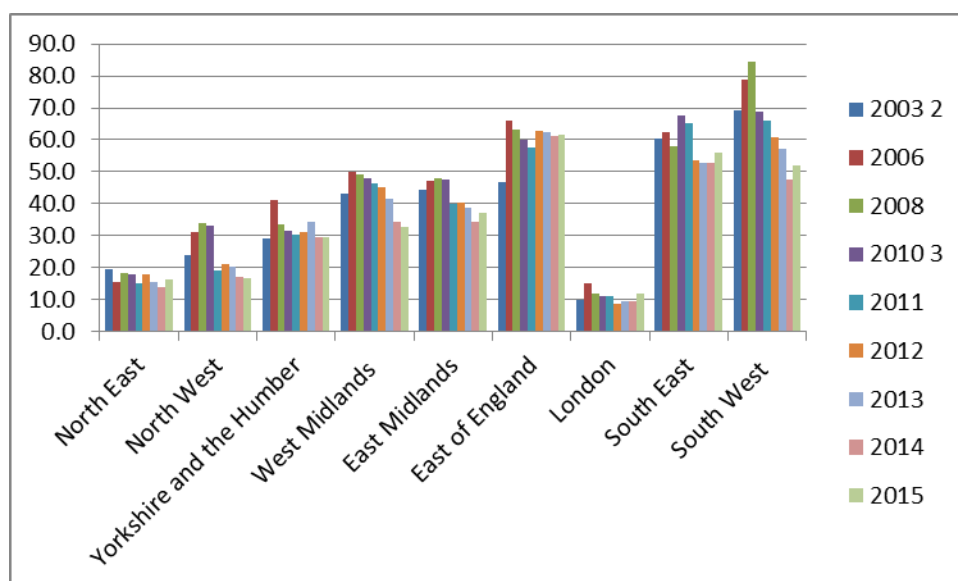
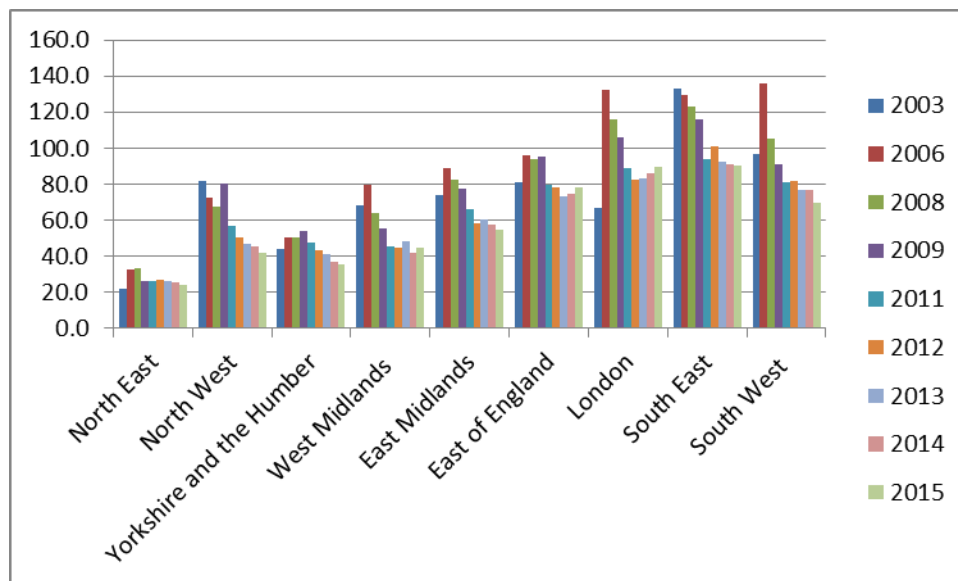


Figure 4 Total FTE Conservation



5 Planning data 2013/14

- 5.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) planning data shows that the number of planning application decisions over the last year has fallen while the number of Listed Building Consent application decisions has risen.

Table 1 Planning and LBC decisions 2014 and 2015

	2013/14	2014/15	% change
Planning Application decisions	426,500	409,800	-3.2%
Listed Building Consents decisions	29,160	30,005	+2.95%

Source - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/planning-applications-in-england-january-to-march-2015>

As can be seen from Figure 5 there has been an overall decline in the number of planning decisions since 2003/04 and 2014/15, with a marked dip in numbers in 2009/2010.

Figure 5 Number of planning decisions

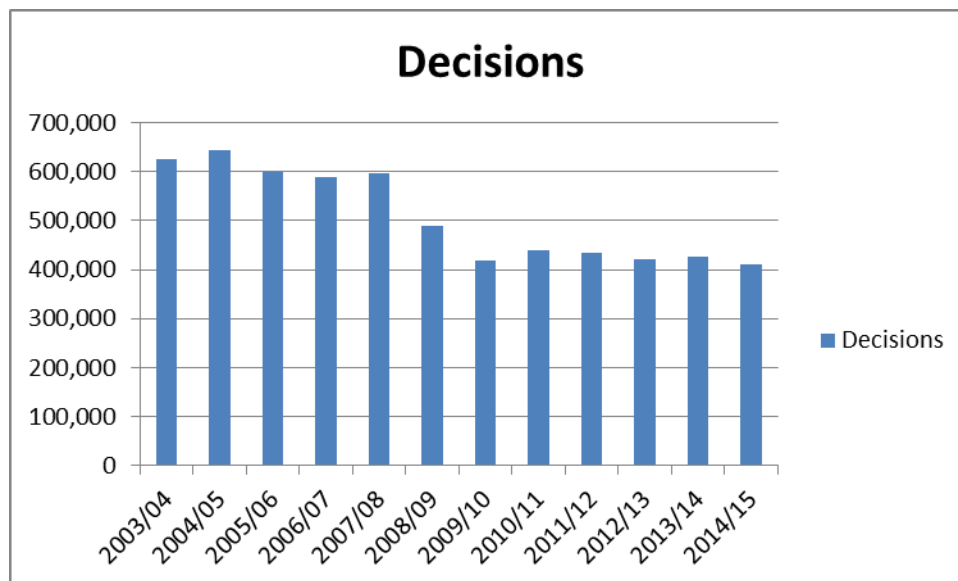
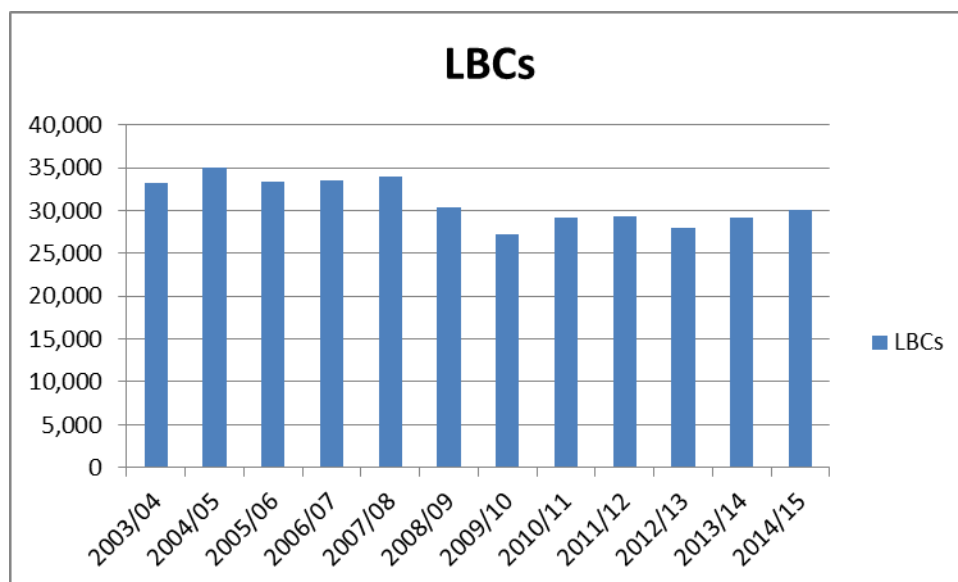


Figure 6 summarises the number of listed building consent decisions between 2003/04 and 2014/15. There was a discernible fall between 2003/04 and 2009/10 and a gradual overall increase since 2009/10 and 2014/15.

Figure 6 Number of Listed Buildings Consents decisions



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