

Scheduled Ancient Monuments at Risk

Indicator

Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments at Risk within the County.

Status



Performance against Scheduled Ancient Monuments at risk in Worcestershire is fair and stable. (note that this indicator has yet to be updated. A new historic environment indicator is expected to be published in autumn 2011).

Overview

A schedule of Ancient Monuments is compiled and maintained by English Heritage on behalf of the Secretary of State. Once included in the Schedule, monuments are protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Such monuments are designated as protected archaeological sites or historic buildings of national importance.

Performance

As at May 2009, English Heritage holds records of 179 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) in Worcestershire. Present figures suggest a similar picture to that in 2008. In Worcestershire 35% of Scheduled Ancient Monuments are at high risk, 36% at medium risk and 29% at low risk.

For all SAMs classified as being at risk, there are four condition categories, as follows:

Improving – there is a visible improvement in condition since the last inspection, typically as a result of ongoing management.

Declining – Monument deterioration as a result of ongoing damage, causing loss of fabric which may be gradual (e.g. repeated cultivation, scrub encroachment) or rapid (severe animal burrowing, structural collapse).

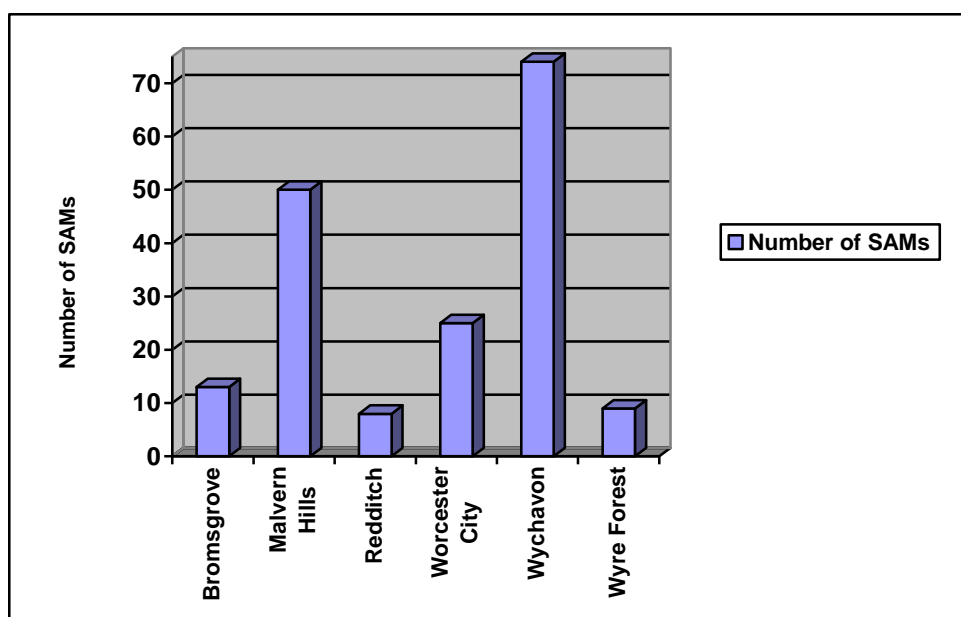
Stable – Monument shows no signs of active deterioration either recent or midterm.

Unknown – Not possible to assess trend in condition of fabric as field assessment not made recently or is not known.

Of the Scheduled Monuments at risk in Worcestershire, 12% are improving, 39% are stable, 29% are declining and 18% are unknown.

The local authority breakdown of scheduled ancient monuments is shown below.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments by Local Authority



District	Number of SAMs
Bromsgrove	13
Malvern Hills	50
Redditch	8
Worcester City	25
Wychavon	74
Wyre Forest	9
Worcestershire County Total	179

Source: English Heritage data, 2009

Geographical Context

Of the 1444 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the West Midlands, 12% are in Worcestershire.

29% of the region's Scheduled Ancient Monuments are at high risk, 34% at medium risk and 37% at low risk. In Worcestershire 35% of Scheduled Ancient Monuments are at high risk, 36% at medium risk and 29% at low risk. The regional outlook is therefore slightly better than that for Worcestershire.

Actions

35% of Scheduled Ancient Monuments are at high risk in Worcestershire (compared with 29% at low risk). In addition, 29% of Scheduled Ancient Monuments are declining (compared with 14% that are improving).

Virtually all archaeological work in the region is undertaken as part of development proposals. Local authority archaeological advisors appraise every planning application and make recommendations on requirements for preservation or for an appropriate level of recording if preservation is not feasible. Within the planning system, a sequential process begins with assessment and evaluation of the archaeological impact of a proposed development before a planning application is determined. Further recording, consisting of excavation, watching brief, or building recording as appropriate, may be required as conditions of planning permission.

Further information

For further information on Scheduled Ancient Monuments see Worcestershire County Council's Archaeology pages at: <http://worcestershire.whub.org.uk/home/wcc-arch> and at English Heritage's web site, at: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/smr-wm-acc-web-final.pdf?1242132521>