

# Gedling Borough Heritage Strategy

---

MAY 2018

# Contents

		Page
	Contents	1
1	Introduction	2
2	Executive Summary	4
3	Gedling Borough's Heritage – an overview	6
4	Benefits and Challenges	13
5	Strategic Direction and Themes of Work	18
6	Next Steps and Future Agenda	23
Appendix A	Local and Natural History Groups in Gedling Borough and their websites	25

**This consultation document has been prepared by consultant Stephen Bray.**

## 1. Introduction

The Borough of Gedling is an amalgamation of a number of villages and towns, created by the 1974 reorganisation of local government. Stretching from the River Trent in the south east to Sherwood Forest in the north west, its settlements include once separate communities that have become part of the Greater Nottingham conurbation as well as ten rural parishes incorporating country villages which have retained their rural charm.

The Borough boasts heritage of local, regional, national and international significance.

Newstead Abbey, home of Lord Byron, is perhaps the Borough's most famous landmark. Other less well known but equally important assets include Papplewick Pumping Station and Bestwood Winding Engine. The Borough is the birthplace of William Lee, inventor of the mechanised stocking frame in Calverton in 1589; of Richard Parkes Bonington, the renowned 19th century landscape artist; and of Thomas Hawkesley, who designed and built Britain's first high pressure constant supply water system, preventing the deaths of countless millions of people around the world.

Evidence suggests human occupation of what is now Arnold began in the late Bronze Age, while notable remnants of an Iron Age fort have been discovered near Woodborough at Foxwood, now one of the Borough's nine Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Many of the Borough's villages can trace their origins back to the Anglo-Saxon period.

The Borough's immensely varied natural environment includes the lowland valley of the River Trent, the rare and distinctive landscapes of the Dumbles and former coalfields at the heart of the Borough, and settlements at the edge of Sherwood Forest in the north.

Agriculture, prevalent before the industrial revolution, continues to have a presence, while the Borough has a varied industrial heritage, with framework knitting and mining being particularly important in the story of the Borough and its component settlements. Both contribute to a vibrant strong social history, reflective of the Borough's diversity.

The Borough's towns and villages each have a rich and distinctive heritage, reflected in buildings clustered around fine mediaeval churches, often researched and disseminated by enthusiastic local and natural history groups who have been key in bringing forward the wealth of heritage to celebrate throughout the Borough. Some of that history is interconnected and, in developing this strategy, one of Gedling Borough Council's aims is to bring together those diverse yet overlapping histories to create a Borough-wide view of the area's heritage.

Until recently, the Borough Council had been relatively passive in taking forward heritage. It has always valued the work of the Borough's community Local History Groups, offering them platforms to promote their work at community events like Arnold Carnival, and uses its planning powers to identify and protect historic buildings and landscapes. But the Council had not taken a leading role in bringing together community and voluntary groups to explore and promote the heritage of the Borough as a whole.

With the advent of the Gedling Country Park came a realisation of the value of heritage in promoting community engagement, along with a recognition of the mutual value in community groups raising awareness of and protecting heritage, of which the Park forms a key element. The Council has also recognised the value of heritage in helping to promote regeneration; the local and national tourism economy and community identity and belonging.

The creation of the Gedling Borough Heritage Forum in 2017 was the first step in a fundamental reassessment of the Council's role in heritage and its importance to the Borough in future. The Forum brings together a range of community and voluntary groups with an interest in the Borough's heritage. It also aims to reflect and promote the diversity of the Borough and the diversity of heritage that flows from this.

This Strategy is the next key step in taking forward the Borough Council's renewed commitment to heritage. Drawing on a high-level stocktake of current activity and knowledge, it sets out future strategic direction and identifies a series of high-level actions to take the Borough to the next level. In doing this, it will build a platform from which the Borough's heritage can be better understood, managed, interpreted and explained; in turn promoting individual and community involvement, ownership and engagement.

This Strategy marks the beginning of a journey into our past in ways that will help to shape our future.

## 2. Executive Summary

Gedling Borough's rich and varied heritage is reflected in its archaeology; its built environment, its natural and man-made landscape and its social and industrial legacy.

The built environment features almost 200 listed buildings, at least 400 non-designated buildings and over 800 archaeological sites<sup>1</sup>, nine Scheduled Ancient Monuments and six Conservation Areas, while natural landscape features include four Local Nature Reserves, one site of Special Scientific Interest and four registered parks and gardens, all with particularly significant heritage value.

The Borough's social and industrial legacy is dominated by framework knitting and coal mining but other significant former local industries include the textile mills of the River Lean, brickmaking and railways, many of which are local to specific communities of the Borough. This legacy is also at the root of much of the Borough's 'non-tangible heritage' such as oral traditions, knowledge and skills associated with the industries.

The Borough's history offers a range of benefits and opportunities to raise awareness and interest in heritage and to extend engagement. It also has potential to drive regeneration and renewal and to promote community involvement.

But much of this potential is relatively untapped. Challenges around the extent of Borough-wide knowledge; the sharing and dissemination of that knowledge; the condition of some key local assets; the resilience of arrangements to maintain and promote those assets and the capacity to support future work all currently mitigate against further substantial progress.

Progress has been made recently with the development of the Gedling Borough Heritage Forum. A wide range of active, enthusiastic and vibrant community groups continue to bring the history and heritage of local communities alive successfully. Voluntary groups have secured Heritage Lottery Funding for important works at Papplewick Pumping Station and Bestwood Winding Engine. The activities of such groups represents an excellent foundation on which to make further progress.

This Strategy builds on these strengths and addresses the challenges facing the further progression of heritage in the Borough.

It aims to bring together and share the Borough's rich and diverse heritage, to present a more cohesive view of the Borough's heritage as a whole. It seeks to encourage the exploration of areas of common interest and identity, reflecting cultural and social elements, as well as exploring diversity and difference. In doing this, it will promote a greater sense of common ownership and interest in the history of the Borough, as well as of the communities that make up the Borough. It will use

---

<sup>1</sup> Notts Historic Environment Record

heritage as a driver for community regeneration, across the Borough as a whole and in particular in its more deprived communities, and will reflect the value of heritage as set out in Historic England's "Heritage Counts" publication at a local level.

It sets out areas for future action, based around five priority themes, for heritage to be **Authentic**; **Engaging** and **Inspirational**, promoting **Ownership** and **Understanding**. These themes are complementary to English Heritage's "Virtuous Circle" for heritage.

Actions proposed will take forward these priority themes over the next two-three years, while suggestions and areas for future exploration offer potential for further progress in the longer term. Community engagement and involvement are pivotal to securing this progress and a central role is proposed for the Gedling Heritage Forum going forward.

The Strategy has been developed alongside the Gedling Heritage Interpretation project and the two pieces of work are complementary. The aim is for an Action Plan to be developed, drawing on both this strategy document and the work of the Heritage Interpretation Project, owned and driven by the Gedling Borough Heritage Forum with support from the Borough Council.

### 3. Gedling Borough's Heritage – an overview

Gedling Borough is one of seven districts in Nottinghamshire. Formed by the 1974 local government reorganisation, it covers an area of 120 square km from the Trent Valley in the south east to the edge of Sherwood Forest in the northwest. Its urban area adjoins the City of Nottingham and forms part of the Greater Nottingham conurbation, while its rural area covers a number of diverse parishes, ranging in size, function and geography. The Borough is home to 115,900 people<sup>2</sup> - it takes its name from the village of Gedling, once a separate settlement at its heart, but now part of the conurbation area.

Reference to the Borough as a whole entity dates only from its creation in 1974. But its component settlements have a history dating back to Anglo-Saxon times, while there are also many sites of archaeological significance throughout the Borough dating from prehistoric times, such as the Scheduled Ancient Monument site at Fox Wood near Calverton and Woodborough.

Arnold is the Borough's administrative and retail centre, situated on the south-western border adjacent to the City of Nottingham. Evidence of settlement in the area dates back to the late Bronze Age, with defensive earthworks having been discovered in what is now the Killisick area of the town. The Angles settled here around 600 AD giving it the name Ernehale - a place frequented by eagles - while the area was invaded by Danes in 868AD<sup>3</sup>. The earliest written record of Ernehale can be found in the Domesday Survey. The town now functions primarily as a suburb of Nottingham but it has a rich and varied history kept alive by an [active local history group](#).

Other main settlements in the urban area of the Borough include Carlton, Mapperley, Netherfield and Gedling. All are now part of suburban Nottingham but have their own rich histories, often connected to industrialisation and urbanisation. [All Hallows Church](#), a grade 1 listed building at the centre of Gedling village, is one of the most distinctive landmarks in the Borough, with its elegant 180 foot spire. Nearby Colwick is the Borough's only urban administrative parish.

The Borough's area consists of 11 administrative parishes<sup>4</sup>, all of which have their own varied heritage often well-documented by enthusiastic local history groups. Linby is reputedly where the pancake was invented by local women celebrating the defeat of Danish invaders who had enslaved them, while Woodborough is allegedly where the legend of St Swithun originated.

---

<sup>2</sup> ONS Mid Year Estimates 2015 as extracted from Gedling Profile February 2017 -

<sup>3</sup> See The Early History of Arnold on the Arnold Local History Group website <http://www.arnold-history-group.org/29743474>

<sup>4</sup> Bestwood Village, St Albans, Burton Joyce, Calverton, Lambley, Linby, Newstead, Papplewick, Ravenshead, Stoke Bardolph, Woodborough

## **The Built Environment**

The Borough is home to 189 listed buildings. These include six that are grade I (of national importance), 15 grade II\* (of exceptional local importance), with the remainder (168) grade II. A wide variety of buildings and structures are included on the official list from industrial to garden landscape structures, though the majority of grade II listed buildings are in domestic use, cared for by the owners. Gedling Borough Council owns several listed buildings, including Arnot Hill House and the Bestwood Lodge Hotel.

Other well-known listed buildings in the Borough include [Papplewick Pumping Station](#), [Newstead Abbey](#) and [Bestwood Winding House](#), while lesser known examples include Bonington House, Arnold (birthplace of artist Richard Parkes Bonington); Daybrook Almshouses; Mary Hardstaff Homes Almshouses (Gedling); the former Howetts racing stables at Manor Farm Buildings (Woodborough); Gedling House; and more modern buildings including the Vale Public House and Good Shepherd Catholic Church, both in Woodthorpe.

The Borough Council also keeps a list of buildings of historic importance that do not meet the criteria to become 'listed' buildings, but which are nevertheless of local significance. The current list of Local Interest Buildings provided [as an appendix to the Replacement Local Plan](#) will be used as the starting point for identifying potential Locally Important Heritage Assets, with the aim of working closely with local communities to refine and expand this list. The retention of Locally Important Heritage Assets is encouraged through Policy LPD31 in the emerging Local Planning Document.

Architecturally, much of the area is characterised by brick buildings. Pantile roofs are associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century and original village cores, giving way to Welsh slate and plain tiles in the eras of Victorian and Edwardian expansion. In contrast, the villages of Linby and Papplewick are characterised by their distinctive honey-coloured stone that was quarried locally and became a favourite for boundary walls throughout the Nottingham area. As might be expected of a largely residential area developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most recent development is of more contemporary construction and design, with much inter-war and post war development of both public and private sector design and development.

There are six Conservation Areas, all of which are in the Borough's rural areas. All are the subject of conservation area appraisals. Those appraisals undertaken more recently include a management plan to guide future development in these locations.

[Bestwood Conservation Area](#) includes a prime example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century purpose built industrial settlement, including a colliery (1872-1967) and ironworks (1881-1928). Bestwood Winding Engine House, the only remaining example of a colliery building in the Borough, is unique, containing the only 'vertical winding steam engine' still in its original location anywhere in the UK. The nearby Bestwood Country Park



was once part of a much larger royal deer park and has strong association with Charles II, who granted the park to his mistress Nell Gwynn in 1681.

[Calverton Conservation Area](#) covers the heart of the village where William Lee invented the mechanised stocking frame in 1589, a development that went on to transform the industry. Framework knitting grew as a cottage industry in the village and the conservation area includes examples of framework knitters' cottages. After the Second World War, Calverton became the last of the Borough's mining communities and expanded rapidly.

[Lambley Conservation Area](#) covers part of the village which can trace its origins back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Flemish weavers are mentioned in the village as early as 1434, and in common with other nearby areas, the knitting trade reached its height here in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Along with examples of framework knitters' cottages, the village also includes a range of public buildings including Wesleyan and Methodist chapels.

[Linby Conservation Area](#) covers most of this pre-Norman village, which grew considerably in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the development of cotton mills on the nearby River Leen. Key features include its two village crosses, known as Top Cross and Bottom Cross, which lie at either end of Main Street; and the unusual Linby 'Docks', where the village streams run either side of Main Street before disappearing into culverts (to re-emerge as one from under Bottom Cross).

Papplewick Conservation Area covers the historic core around the main street of this agricultural village, which once formed part of the main road between Nottingham and Mansfield. The village lies on a bed of magnesian limestone, a material used in the construction of 18<sup>th</sup> century cottages, farmhouses and outbuildings, many of which survive and give the village its distinctive appearance. Papplewick Hall and parts of its estate are included in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The Conservation Area has recently been the subject of a [Conservation Area Appraisal](#).

[Woodborough Conservation Area](#) covers an area largely to the north of the Main Street of this linear development village that can trace its origins back to the Iron Age. Surrounded by a rolling agricultural landscape, its origins are largely agricultural, though it too became an important framework knitting centre from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, evident in cottages converted to provide knitters workshops and combined dwellings and workplaces. Following the decline of the cottage industry, there was a move within the village to the development of countryside allotments which led to the growth of a local market gardening industry, providing fresh vegetables for Nottingham through the nearby Sneinton Market.

## **The Natural Environment**

The South East of the Borough lies in the Trent Valley, but land rises sharply to the North West to Dorket Head at the centre of the Borough which, at 146m above sea level, is the highest point in Greater Nottingham. The Borough's northern parishes now border on Sherwood Forest, though historically much of the Borough was part of the forest, with local areas of woodland forming part of many of the Borough's settlements.

*"Each parish had their own areas of woodland, usually at their edges. In the more populated southern 'Thorneywood' area they occupied the high ground between parishes, such as on the ridges between the villages of Lambley, Woodborough and Calverton. These woods often joined together to form giant woods that could cover miles, but they each had names reflecting to whom they belonged. Carleton Wode, Gedling Wode, Basforde Wode (named after villages)..."<sup>5</sup>*

There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Gedling Borough at Linby Quarries, a biological site featuring one of the most important calcareous grasslands in Nottinghamshire. It also features broad leaved, mixed and yew woodland and has a varied breeding bird community.

The Borough's four designated Local Nature Reserves are [Gedling House Wood and Meadow](#); [Netherfield Lagoons](#) and The Hobbucks (to the north of Arnold). There is strong community ownership of and engagement with these sites, with all four being managed by local conservation groups.

Other notable landscape features include [Lambley Dumbles](#) and [Moor Pond Woods](#), each of which are of historic importance with considerable heritage value. Parts of Sherwood Forest to the north of the Borough may be classified as a Special Protection Area for its breeding bird (nightjar and woodlark) interest. As at 2017, there were 1,268.12 ha of Local Wildlife Sites in the Borough, 28% of which were under positive conservation management.

The Borough's four areas of park land over 10 hectares include [Bestwood Country Park](#); [Gedling Country Park](#) and Newstead Abbey, all of which have significant heritage connections. Opening in 2015, Gedling Country Park is the most recent of these – with its strong links to the Borough's mining heritage, this Country Park is being promoted as a future focal point for the Borough's heritage activity.

## **Social and Industrial Landscape and Legacy**

Prior to the industrial revolution, the Borough was largely agricultural in nature and farming is still very much evident in the Borough's rural areas. The 18<sup>th</sup> century saw framework knitting develop as a dominant cottage industry in the East Midlands and the history of many of the Borough's towns and villages reflects that development.

---

<sup>5</sup> Sherwood Forest Archaeology Project

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, coal mining came to greater prominence across much of the Borough, though there are also other more localised industrial activities – the railway is key to the development of Netherfield, while brickmaking was important in Carlton and Mapperley and quarrying played a role in Linby. Many of these industries are closely tied to particular communities and knowledge and awareness of them and their legacies is not always widely known or shared.

This legacy is also at the root of much of the Borough's 'non-tangible heritage' that contributes to the local sense of place and to cultural heritage through traditions, food & drink and language, as well as rituals and superstitions. Local examples include colliery dialect; Colwick Cheese and Linby pancakes.

Perhaps unwittingly, Gedling Borough played a key part in the mechanisation of what was to become one of its two main industries. William Lee's invention of the stocking frame in Calverton in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century was "the first manifestation of mechanisation in the production of clothing"<sup>6</sup> and its development went on to have huge implications for the Borough's communities, the region and more widely.

Framework knitting shaped the social and economic development of the Borough's villages and towns. The population of many of the Borough's villages grew significantly as the industry developed – at the height of the industry at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Calverton was home to around 400 stocking frames, with its population rising to 1,427 by 1851, while Lambley hosted 381 knitting machines in 1844 in a village with a population of less than 1,000. Woodborough's population leapt from 250 in 1750 to 800 in the 1830s - its speciality was the production of stockings, including silk hose - and the industry survived here until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Framework knitting was also a major employer in the Borough's larger settlements – in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century over three-quarters of the population of Arnold were employed one way or another in the production of stockings.<sup>7</sup> The textile mills on the River Leen at Moor Pond Wood were also significant, being some of the earliest in the world.

The decline of the cottage industry and the move to factory production also left its mark on the Borough – there is evidence of depopulation in some villages (Linby's population almost halved from 515 in 1828 to 271 in 1841 following closure of the local mill), while the Borough also played its part in rebellion against the changes being brought about by this move to greater industrialisation - one of the earliest examples of resistance in the Luddite rebellion [occurred in Arnold](#) in 1811.

The architectural legacy of the industry is evident in the survival of a number of framework knitters' cottages, typified by long horizontal windows to let in light, in many of the Borough's villages and also in Arnold. Sometimes these were converted for this use but in the 18<sup>th</sup> century cottages were often purpose built with long windows as a feature as people lived in the same buildings alongside the frames

---

<sup>6</sup> Woodborough Conservation Area Appraisal – Gedling Borough Council - 2017

<sup>7</sup> Arnold Local History Society website

they used to work on - a proper 'cottage industry'. Windles Square in Calverton is an excellent example of a purpose built set of framework knitting cottages.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of larger premises (frame shops), an example of which survives in Woodborough (Desboroughs on Shelt Hill). These were more like a small factory and were the forerunners of full scale industrialisation of the process.

Clothing production remained a feature of the Borough as industrialisation progressed, with clothing factories and associated industries built primarily in the Borough's urban areas, often employing a high proportion of female workers. These too largely disappeared in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as clothing manufacture moved to the Far East.

Coal mining grew in importance from the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with five deep mines being developed in what later became the Borough. The 1870s saw the first collieries open in Bestwood, [Newstead](#) and Linby. Those at Bestwood and Newstead saw the allied development of new colliery villages to house the miners and their families, both of which remain well preserved. 1899 saw the opening of Gedling Colliery, while the Borough's newest colliery, at Calverton<sup>8</sup>, opened in 1952. This was the last colliery privately developed before the nationalisation of 1948, first producing coal four years later.

Increasingly, mines brought diversity and change to the communities where they were opened. The opening of Calverton Colliery transformed the village, seeing massive physical expansion with the building of new houses for the miners, many of whom were transferred from other coalfields. Calverton's population rose from around 1,000 to over 4,000 between 1951 and 1961, with new shops, schools and facilities built to serve the growing population. Gedling Colliery was described as a "pit of all nations" in the *Daily Mirror* in 1967, employing men from 15 countries. There was particularly strong representation of miners from the Caribbean – 10% of the 1,400 workforce in the 1960s – and black miners were thought to have made up a quarter of the workforce between the 1950s and 1980s. Recent research on what life was like for those miners has been included in a [wider project on the experiences of black miners in the county](#).<sup>9</sup>

Colliery closures began in the 1960s with the closure of Bestwood in 1967 and accelerated rapidly in the 1980s and 90s with Newstead closing in 1987, Linby in 1988 and Gedling in 1991. Calverton was closed by the National Coal Board in 1993, then reopened by RJ Budge (later UK Coal) before its final closure in 1999, bringing

---

<sup>8</sup> The colliery itself was laid out to plans by Geoffrey Jellicoe in 1936, a notable architect and landscape designer who set up and was the first president of the Landscape Institute.

<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.blackcoalminers.com/>

to an end over a century of mining in the Borough. Bestwood Winding Engine House<sup>10</sup> is now the Borough's only remaining example of a colliery building.

Colliery closures did have social and economic impact, with some communities particularly badly affected. But the Borough was never a mono-economy built around a single industry and has generally recovered well. Calverton now functions largely as a commuter village for Nottingham, while the former Gedling Colliery site is now being developed as part of the Borough's largest new housing development, as well as forming the Gedling Country Park.

Allied industries developed alongside collieries, the most notable being Colwick Railway sidings at Netherfield, constructed for the transfer of coal traffic from the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Coalfield to other marshalling yards. The 20 miles of track and accompanying engine sheds for the operation covered 15 acres<sup>11</sup>. The sidings were also an important locomotive servicing depot and the whole site was a key local employer and driver of the development of Netherfield. The sidings declined from the 1950s onwards in line with the decline of coal and closed in the early 1970s. The land now forms the Victoria Retail Park.

Other local industries included brick making, with quarries in Carlton and Mapperley. The tradition continues to this day at Dorket Head, Arnold. Stone quarrying was also evident in Linby. This was the last working building stone quarry in Nottinghamshire and its closure meant there was no longer a local source of the area's distinctive local Magnesian limestone.

The legacy of this varied industrial history links strongly to wider intangible heritage, drawing on the social history arising from industrial development, the growth of dialect and the wider stories of workers in the industry and the effect that both their development and closure had on the communities around them.

---

<sup>10</sup> Bestwood Winding Engine House is grade II\* listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The nearby Dynamo House is a community resource and both are opened by a team of volunteers throughout the summer.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.nottshistory.org.uk/books/colwick/colwick9.htm>

## 4. Benefits and Challenges

### **Benefits and Opportunities**

The Borough has a number of Unique Selling Points, many of which have the potential to be more fully exploited.

It is the birthplace of the famous and of pioneers in their field, perhaps most notably of Thomas Hawkesley (1807), the greatest water engineer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century whose work to develop pressure water systems had worldwide influence and saved millions of lives. Other leaders born in Gedling Borough include William Lee, Richard Parkes-Bonington, born in Arnold in 1802, and Lord Ralph Cromwell, Treasurer of England in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Those of more recent fame from the Borough include Olympic and World Champion Ice Skater Christopher Dean (who grew up in Calverton in the 1960s) and comedy actor Richard Beckinsale, born in Carlton in 1947.

The Borough is home to iconic buildings, most notably Newstead Abbey. Other less well known but no less interesting examples include Papplewick and Bestwood Pumping Stations (both the work of Hawkesley) and Bestwood Winding Engine and Dynamo Houses, the last remaining parts of the colliery and “a relic of Victorian industrial engineering”<sup>12</sup>. Its parks all have strong heritage links – [Bestwood's](#) role as a Royal Hunting ground dates back to medieval times and was later closely associated with Charles II. More recently, the Lodge played an important role as headquarters for Northern Command in World War II.

Heritage in the Borough has the potential to drive and promote regeneration and renewal of its most deprived communities. Netherfield, the former railway town, is linked by a disused mineral railway line to the former Gedling Colliery site now being transformed by the Gedling Country Park and the creation of over 1,000 new homes. The scope to promote heritage, particularly the interrelationship between the colliery and railway centre whose work was intricately associated with coal production, is significant, as is the potential improved access to employment and the countryside and the development of more sustainable transportation. Heritage also offers more employment and volunteering opportunities to complement those already in place if the potential of the Borough's undoubted assets can be realised.

Heritage has already proved to be an immensely valuable means of promoting and stimulating community engagement and ownership and has the potential to expand further. The emerging work of the Gedling Heritage Interpretation Project will significantly increase the number of volunteers working to support and promote heritage across the Borough and in doing so improve access to heritage to all age groups.

---

<sup>12</sup> Nottinghamshire County Council website <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/country-parks/bestwood/bestwood-winding-engine-house>



Volunteers working on this and other projects will also learn new skills for community engagement and involvement, offering further opportunities to the Borough's growing ageing population and helping to address loneliness and isolation. But interest in heritage goes beyond that age group and the Heritage Interpretation Project aims to build on this, reaching out to engage with young people in particular.

The potential for heritage to act as a driver for learning and education and promote inter-generational work is also recognised. The Gedling Heritage Interpretation Project is looking to engage with local schools and there is potential for Gedling Country Park to become a Centre for Learning and Education for both heritage and nature.

Many of these opportunities link closely to the themes set out in Historic England's ["Heritage Counts"](#) publication (September 2017) which quantifies many of the economic and social benefits that accrue from the heritage sector. There is potential in Gedling to contribute to many of the themes set out in the document, in particular to those relating to tourism (especially domestic visitors); regeneration; construction work on historic buildings; increased volunteer involvement and wider social benefit.

## **Challenges**

**The extent of knowledge** – The Borough's local history groups (listed at Appendix A) do an immensely valuable job in researching and promoting the heritage of their communities. Their enthusiasm and breadth of knowledge has already done much to raise interest and awareness of key heritage issues in the local area.

But it is also the case that the history of these communities is not well known outside of the immediate communities and as a result the overall picture of Borough heritage is fragmented. This may be due to the diverse nature of the communities that formed the Borough in 1974 - but there is considerable amount of common heritage and interest that relate to the whole Borough (or at least to significant parts of it) that has not been fully explored. Issues such as the cottage industries of 19<sup>th</sup> century and their decline do not seem to have been considered on a Borough-wide basis, though there is undoubtedly potential for this to be examined more fully. Equally, a number of currently local projects have great potential for wider promotion and understanding within and beyond the Borough, the work of Thomas Hawkesley and his creation at Papplewick Pumping Station being a prime example. Existing community run ventures like Calverton Folk Museum, are likely to benefit from greater support that has the potential to widen their appeal locally and nationally. A better understanding of what we know, more widely shared, would help put together a wider history of what is now the Borough of Gedling.

**The sharing and dissemination of knowledge** – Current knowledge is shared well amongst those with an interest in heritage, through local groups and via the internet. There have been attempts to reach out more widely – for example, through local history groups having a presence at events such as Arnold Carnival – but much

more could be done to broaden the reach of the Borough's heritage and engage interest beyond the enthusiastic. New techniques for communication and engagement could be used to capture new interest amongst different age groups and from more diverse backgrounds, with a view to developing more active involvement. Improved engagement with the Nottinghamshire County Historic Environment Record could ensure that current knowledge feeds into future research and that such research is informed by up-to-date thinking.

**Bringing together diverse interests** – As outlined above, much of the Borough's heritage to date has been explored on a geographical basis, around local communities. Comparatively little has been done to explore themes on a Borough-wide basis, though there is a good deal of work that has been done to explore potential themes (such as mining and framework knitting) within local communities. Developing and promoting enthusiasm for the Borough's heritage as a Gedling Borough "whole" (as opposed to Arnold's or mining's, for example) is a key challenge.

**Condition of assets** – Gedling Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council work together to review the condition of the Borough's heritage assets and keep a register of Buildings at Risk. The register classifies the condition of the Borough's listed buildings and structures into six categories and also notes where a potential "heritage crime" may have been committed, for example through unauthorised alterations. The latest register shows that there are no buildings of immediate concern, but that the Borough has a comparatively high percentage (11%) of listed building assets in a poor condition - these include a number of buildings and structures in and around some of the Borough's most notable heritage assets, including Newstead Abbey and Papplewick Pumping Station. A high number of the Borough's designated assets are also assessed to be vulnerable. The Borough Council is looking to use planning processes, including the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans where they exist, to identify ways to address these issues and help protect these assets further. Conservation Area Appraisals also have a key role to play in describing the special architectural and historic interest of an area, while the accompanying Management Plans, which are a feature of more recent appraisals, set out broad planning guidance by which the objectives of preserving and enhancing the unique character and appearance of the Conservation Area can be pursued through the planning process. However, in many cases, funding is also likely to be required to allow for restoration works to be carried out.

**Vitality and resilience of current assets** – The Borough's flagship assets are largely dependent on volunteer support to open up for access to the wider community and to deliver education and positive visitor experiences. While the work of volunteers is highly valued and appreciated, an over-reliance on volunteers can impact on the sustainability and resilience of the assets. There is huge potential to do more with a number of the Borough's heritage assets, improving access to the facilities and promoting understanding and enjoyment. But to do this is likely to



require a greater time commitment from more volunteers, as well as access to specialist expertise and management support in some areas.

**Capacity to support** – While there is willingness from the Borough Council to support heritage, budgets continue to be squeezed. This makes it increasingly difficult to secure additional resource to support provision of this important service when overall funding is under pressure. Securing external funding is likely to be key to the delivery of improvements, both to directly support provision and to build capacity and expertise within the voluntary sector to take forward developments.

**Quality of new development and of restoration** - The need to maximise new housing development against the backdrop of greater pressures for growing housing demands should not be at the expense of fully informed decision taking. This includes an understanding of site or place history, its origins, patterns of settlement over time and how this knowledge may be drawn upon to enhance and improve the quality of place and the wider historic environment, creating sustainable developments that make significant contributions to towns and villages across the Borough. This approach is perhaps nowhere more apparent than at the development of the former Gedling Colliery site, the largest single development site in the Borough which will see the development of over 1,000 new homes, as well as providing the site for the adjacent Gedling Country Park.

### **Current work to address these challenges**

The Borough Council has recently facilitated the introduction of the **Gedling Borough Heritage Forum**, bringing together a wide range of community and voluntary sector stakeholders with an interest and involvement in heritage from across the Borough. It has also secured £75,000 Heritage Lottery funding to take forward a **Heritage Interpretation Project** which aims to bring together and expand a diverse range of materials and groups, widening participation and increasing engagement with and enjoyment of the Borough's heritage.

The opening of **Gedling Country Park** in March 2015 at once managed to preserve a key part of the Borough's local historic landscape and environment, reflecting its industrial legacy and the wider social history of the area, and to improve access to and awareness of that legacy. The aim is for the Country Park to form the hub of the Borough's heritage activity for the future and this is reflected in the work being carried out for the Heritage Interpretation Project.

The Borough Council is coming towards the end of the process of updating its **Local Plan**, a key tool in managing its work to preserve and enhance the historic environment. The Plan sets out policy to drive future conservation and preservation and to ensure sensitive regeneration and redevelopment. Chapters 7 and 9 of the [Emerging Local Planning document](#) include detailed proposed policies relating to the Natural Environment and Historic Environment respectively. The Council has also

recently strengthened its staff resource to support heritage by reintroducing dedicated planning support for conservation. The postholder also works in partnership with other organisations to ensure access to specialist advice and skills.

All of this work shows a welcome rejuvenation of interest in heritage and a renewed prioritisation of the issue. This strategy aims to build on this and take the issue to the next level, with strategically focused priority themes and a set of high level actions which in due course will lead to the identification and delivery of detailed actions and outcomes.

## 5. Strategic Direction and Themes of Work

### **Strategic Direction**

We want to bring together and share the Borough's rich and diverse heritage, to present a more cohesive view of the Borough's heritage as a whole.

We want to explore areas of common interest and identity, reflecting cultural and social elements, as well as exploring diversity and difference.

We want to promote a greater sense of common ownership and interest in the history of the Borough, as well as of the communities that make up the Borough.

We want to use heritage as a driver for community regeneration across the Borough as a whole and in particular in its more deprived communities.

### **Themes of Work**

Our future Heritage work will be built around five main themes. These themes reflect the Borough's strategic direction for heritage and are also complementary to the heritage "Virtuous Circle", as set out in the 2011-15 [English Heritage Corporate Plan](#).

**Authentic** – We will ensure that visitors to the Borough's heritage assets enjoy a real experience of the Borough's heritage. We will actively manage the preservation and enhancement of the Borough's heritage assets, ensuring that original features and landscapes that reflect the Borough's heritage are retained and that restoration and improvement work is carried out sympathetically and in keeping with original design, ensuring the assets are and remain in excellent condition. We will actively work to preserve key historic features of the Borough's natural environment. This theme links closely to the Virtuous Circle priorities of Caring and Excellence.

**Engaging** – We will broaden the range of participants in heritage throughout the Borough, using a range of community engagement techniques to bring in currently under-represented groups including young people. We will broaden the audience for the Borough's heritage, using various media to improve access to the Borough's heritage in all its forms. We will reflect, promote and celebrate the diversity of the Borough's heritage experience. We will continue to support the numerous heritage groups in the valuable voluntary work that they do to promote the Borough's heritage. This theme links closely to the Virtuous Circle priorities of Enjoying and Caring.

**Inspirational** – We will promote the stories of the Borough's heritage to the widest possible audience so that people want to find out more about how their lives and communities have been shaped by events and people of the past. We will encourage people to find out more about their communities and, in doing so, help residents feel a sense of pride in their community and enhance personal well-being. This theme links closely to the Virtuous Circle priorities of Enjoying and Valuing.

**Ownership** - We will encourage and support the widest possible community ownership of heritage. We will promote and drive forward community ownership and management of assets and support community groups to become stronger and more resilient to ensure that the Borough's heritage assets are more accessible and well managed. We will actively seek out collaboration with other areas, funders and partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors where it makes sense to do so in order to take forward our priorities. This theme links closely to the Virtuous Circle priorities of Caring and Understanding.

**Understanding** – We will increase understanding and awareness of the role the Borough played in key historic events. We will improve understanding and awareness of the work of the Borough's pioneers as well as what day-to-day life was like through the ages for people living and working in the Borough. We will promote awareness of the Borough's industrial legacy - from framework knitting through to railways and mining - and seek to better understand and protect that legacy. We will increase awareness of the Borough's key heritage assets. We will use this approach to ensure the Borough's heritage overall is better interpreted and explained. This theme links closely to the Virtuous Circle priorities of Understanding and Valuing.

### **High-level Actions**

A range of high level actions are already planned or in progress, each of which addresses one or more of the five priority themes.

**Deliver Gedling Borough Heritage Interpretation Project** – Funding has been secured for the delivery of this project which aims to begin the process of bringing together the Borough's varied and diverse heritage in a single (physical and virtual) location. The physical location at which the work will be based is the Gedling Country Park, with use being made of the existing cafeteria building. Various virtual tools are to be used, including improved and more co-ordinated web presence alongside use of film and video. Other outputs will include oral histories, leaflets and guides, guided walks and a treasure trail. Encouragement of walking and cycling and of use of public transport aims to minimise environmental impacts. The project works on the "attract and disperse" principle and is due to be completed by March 2019. Further works are likely to be identified as the project progresses. The project is key in taking forward the key strategic direction to bring together and share the Borough's rich and diverse heritage.

**Strategic themes addressed** – Engaging; Inspirational; Ownership; Understanding

**Support Delivery of Local Plan** – The Local Plan is the key tool to enable the protection and enhancement of the historic and natural environment. It will include policies on heritage assets; listed buildings; conservation areas; historic landscapes,

parks and gardens; archaeology; locally important heritage assets and landscape character. The Borough Council continues to work actively in these areas but adoption and delivery of the plan will ensure the most up-to-date policies are in place to guide its work and inform those associated with heritage and development of the Council's approach, leading to more robust action and enforcement.

**Strategic themes addressed** – Authentic; Engagement; Understanding

**Develop plans and funding options for Gedling Country Park Visitor Centre –**

Valuable though the work of the Gedling Heritage Interpretation Project will be in bringing the Borough's heritage together in one place, its work could be compromised by sharing accommodation with the current Gedling Country Park cafeteria. A more lasting benefit will be achieved if a dedicated physical facility can be developed as a long-term Heritage Hub for the Borough, and the development of a purpose-built Visitor Centre for the Country Park would secure this key benefit. Such a facility would provide a permanent physical base for the Borough's heritage activity going forward, with dedicated education and learning facilities to promote the Borough's industrial and cultural heritage to a wider audience including schools and colleges. The Visitor Centre would be at the centre of the "Attract and Disperse" principle for the future. The cost of such a facility would be prohibitive for the Borough Council to pursue independently so partnership and funding opportunities are being pursued to take the project forward.

**Strategic themes addressed** – Engaging; Inspirational; Ownership; Understanding

**Work with owners and operators of key historic assets to explore**

**improvements to fabric of and accessibility to the Borough's main historic**

**assets** – The Borough's key historic assets, including (but not exclusively) Newstead Abbey, Bestwood Colliery and Papplewick Pumping Station have great potential which at present is arguably untapped. Bestwood's Winding Engine is an excellent example of industrial heritage while the village itself is a fine example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century purpose built industrial settlement. Newstead Abbey is a potential world-class destination, while Papplewick Pumping Station is a regionally significant destination which could celebrate and share the pioneering work of Thomas Hawkesley with a far wider audience.

Yet at present, all are relatively under-utilised and aspects of both Newstead and Papplewick sites appear on the Borough's list of "at risk" heritage assets. The aim over the next few years is to address these issues, making these and other assets more accessible and available for public access, with a fuller programme of activities, and promoting renovation and improvement works where these are needed.

In addition, there are other assets considered as historically important by local communities, such as the former Gedling station and former Severn Trent Social Club in Stoke Bardolph. We will offer support to local groups as they form their own future plans to develop such assets.

All are significantly dependent on volunteer work to improve access and take forward improvements. Work to improve resilience and support volunteers is likely to be key in taking this work forward, alongside seeking out external funding opportunities to deliver physical and other related improvements.

To focus work in this key area, it is suggested that key partners involved with the Heritage Forum identify the main priority issues to be addressed, outcomes to be secured and actions to secure them in an Action Plan, which will inform future work in this area.

**Strategic themes addressed** – Authentic; Inspirational; Ownership; Understanding

**Update the Buildings at Risk register** – The Buildings at Risk Register is a key tool in reviewing the state of the Borough's heritage assets and targeting required improvement and remediation works. The Borough Council will continue to work with Nottinghamshire County Council to ensure the list remains up to date and will use its Annual Monitoring Report to review progress. It will also work closely with the owners of at risk buildings and structures with a view to eliminating those risks where possible, using a balance of advisory and enforcement powers.

Following adoption of the Local Plan, the Borough Council will use the current list of local interest buildings as the starting point for the identification of 'locally important heritage assets'. The supporting text to Policy LPD31 sets out the expected process that the Council will adopt to identify these assets following the adoption of the Local Planning Document. The Borough also has several neighbourhood plans emerging, of which at least one is intending to prepare a local list of heritage assets at the parish level, and this approach will be encouraged further.

**Strategic themes addressed** – Authentic; Engagement; Ownership

**Explore and further develop plans for a Gedling Borough Heritage Way** – A footpath and cycle way starting from the Trent and visiting key heritage and natural sites across the Borough is an aspiration the Borough Council would like to pursue. Some of the Heritage Way would follow existing paths but a key stretch, linking Netherfield to Gedling Country Park, would follow the currently disused former mineral railway line between Netherfield and Gedling. The scope to promote key elements of the Borough's industrial heritage through the development of this feature would be significant, given its potential association with both the railways of Netherfield and Colwick and the former Gedling colliery. The scheme would also help bring the Borough's heritage alive in one of the Borough's more deprived

communities and improve sustainable transportation and access to heritage. Funding options are currently being explored.

**Strategic themes addressed** – Inspirational; Ownership; Understanding

**Improve and consolidate governance of the Borough's Heritage** – The development of the Gedling Borough Heritage Forum has brought together a wide range of key stakeholders with an interest and involvement in the Borough's heritage. While there remains a key role for the Borough Council in the leadership and co-ordination of the Forum, there is potential for the Forum to grow beyond being a consultative forum to take a more active role, for example through taking a high-level overview of the delivery of this strategy and in the development and delivery of key heritage related projects in the Borough. The Forum may also be well placed to lead and support the prioritisation and submission of funding bids to secure delivery of the Strategy. Appropriate constitutional arrangements can be explored and introduced to allow for these developments.

**Strategic themes addressed** – Engagement; Ownership; Understanding

## 6. Next Steps and Future Agenda

The adoption of this strategy and the delivery of the Gedling Heritage Interpretation Project are key milestones in developing the Borough's longer-term approach to heritage.

The Strategy sets out some initial ambitions which will need to be fleshed out further following consultation and engagement. The Heritage Interpretation Project is likely to identify further issues for the future.

Taken together, the two initiatives are therefore likely to generate a more detailed Action Plan that will inform and guide future work, including the identification of funding sources and the development of funding bids.

That Action Plan will include a range of projects and initiatives to address the themes in the short, medium and long term, as well as setting out current and ongoing activity.

The Plan is likely to cover a 3 - 5 year period and include projects and ideas from a wide range of groups, shared by and with the Gedling Borough Heritage Forum. Improved measurement of outcomes and engagement are also likely to feature in the Plan, reflecting the themes and issues set out in Historic England's "Heritage Counts" publication. Steps will be taken to secure external funding to support delivery of projects in the Plan where required.

There are also many potential issues still relatively undeveloped for further exploration in the future.

The social history of the Borough offers many more opportunities to raise awareness of the lives of people living in the Borough over time and how those lifestyles have changed with the growing urbanisation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The impact of suburbanisation on formerly free-standing communities is an area particularly worthy of further work.

Local facilities with strong historic connections may benefit from refurbishment and improvement to help re-invigorate their original historic purpose. Conway Road Pavilion and Park, one of the Borough's oldest recreation facilities, is one example of where such an approach is being actively explored.

Historic buildings such as Bonington's birthplace could be made more accessible and their historic significance could be more widely celebrated and shared. Support could be offered to existing facilities highlighting the Borough's heritage, such as the Calverton Folk Museum.

The history of relatively unknown parts of the Borough could be more widely researched and promoted. The village of Stoke Bardolph, for example, has a long history of treating and disposing of waste and a more recent related history in



environmentally friendly energy generation which could be more widely explored and disseminated.

Consideration could be given to the introduction of a periodic Local Heritage Festival, working with the Gedling Borough Heritage Forum to promote the best of the Borough's rich and varied heritage to a wider audience.

These and many other areas are for further exploration in future. The Gedling Borough Heritage Forum will play a key role in identifying and prioritising future activity.

## Appendix A

### Local and Natural History Groups in Gedling Borough and their websites

1. All Hallows Church, Gedling  
[www.allhallowsgedling.co.uk](http://www.allhallowsgedling.co.uk)
2. Arnold Local History Group  
[www.arnold-history-group.org](http://www.arnold-history-group.org)
3. Bestwood Country Park, Friends of  
[www.fbc.org.uk](http://www.fbc.org.uk)
4. Burton Joyce & Bulcote Local History Society  
[www.bjblhs.org.uk](http://www.bjblhs.org.uk)
5. Calverton Preservation and History Society  
<http://nlha.org.uk/society-details/?pdb=12>
6. Carlton & Gedling U3A  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/carlton-gedling/home>
7. Gedling Conservation Trust  
[www.gedlingconservationtrust.org](http://www.gedlingconservationtrust.org)
8. Gedling Country Park, Friends of  
[www.gedlingcountrypark.org.uk](http://www.gedlingcountrypark.org.uk)
9. Gedling House Woods and Meadows  
[www.fghw.org.uk](http://www.fghw.org.uk)
10. Lambley Heritage  
[www.lambleyheritage.co.uk](http://www.lambleyheritage.co.uk)
11. Mapperley and Sherwood History Group, The  
[www.mapperleyandsherwoodhistorygroup.co.uk](http://www.mapperleyandsherwoodhistorygroup.co.uk)
12. Moor Pond Wood, Friends of  
<http://moorpond.papplewick.org/>
13. Netherfield lagoons, Friends of  
See “Gedling Conservation Trust”
14. Papplewick Pumping Station  
<http://papplewickpumpingstation.co.uk>
15. Woodborough's Heritage  
[www.woodborough-heritage.org.uk](http://www.woodborough-heritage.org.uk)