

New project to investigate vanishing pubs in England

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The disappearance of pubs in England is to become the focus of a new research project led by the University of Leicester.

Take a walk through a typical town centre or [village](#) in England and the chances are you will stumble across a King's Head, Rose & Crown or a Red Lion for a pint of ale or a bite to eat. But how would you feel if the traditional public house were to disappear from our streets?

Pubs are amongst the most common and well-loved buildings in the country, but have recently been identified as 'a severely threatened building type' by English Heritage.

Academics from the University of Leicester are now looking into pubs in Leeds as part of a research project funded by English Heritage.

Having been the hub of the social life of many communities for centuries, the pub has played a key role in shaping English national identity. However, pubs have been closing in large numbers each week over recent years and are disappearing from our city centres and their outlying areas, often being demolished or converted into housing, shops or restaurants.

A team from the University of Leicester will focus on 19th and 20th century pubs in Leeds with an aim to identify and highlight significant and threatened buildings and increase understanding and appreciation of urban and suburban pubs.

The in-depth area study will involve assessing the buildings themselves and also talking to pub users, owners and local residents about the buildings and their histories.

Emma Dwyer, Business Development Executive for Heritage at the University of Leicester, said: "This is a great opportunity to combine expertise from our School of Archaeology and Ancient History and our Department of History of Art & Film in a project that will have an impact on public understanding of how the pubs of Leeds have developed, and the risks they face from conversion and redevelopment."

Emily Cole from the assessment team at English Heritage said: "Across the country, the number of pubs has been falling steadily for over a century and those dating from 1918-85 are, in particular, increasingly threatened with closure or demolition. They are therefore a high priority for English Heritage and this project in Leeds is one of a number we are carrying out to increase our knowledge of the architectural style and development of these [pubs](#) and their historical and social significance, and to gauge the level of protection that already exists or that it is felt that they deserve."

The results of the project will be presented at a public workshop in Leeds in autumn 2014 and the findings will be written up as a report, forming part of English Heritage's work on historic towns and suburbs for the National Heritage Protection Plan.

A second study also funded by English Heritage will focus on Bristol.

It is hoped that this will also prove of use and interest to local authorities, community organisations and other local groups in understanding and protecting these culturally important buildings.

Provided by University of Leicester

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