

Alison is based in our Leeds office. She has been with the Heritage Fund since 2005, starting out as a Development Officer and progressing to her current role.

What does your role involve?

The core of my job involves assessing large applications for grant funding, monitoring the delivery of successful applicants' projects and line managing an Investment Manager. This work gives me great opportunity to develop relationships with organisations throughout the heritage sector, colleagues across the Heritage Fund and numerous specialist consultants on our Register of Support Services.

What do you enjoy about working here?

My job offers me an amazing insight into all kinds of heritage and the people who work hard to protect and share it. In the space of one week I might be assessing an application about a priority habitat for wading birds, monitoring the ongoing restoration of a steam locomotive, chairing a meeting about the development of a museum project and attending the opening event for a completed historic park restoration. This is a significant responsibility and a privilege.

What’s the most rewarding part of your job?

Seeing the transformational impact that our funding has for heritage, places, people and communities. It makes all the hard work worth it.

What motivates you at work?

At university I studied geography, the ‘bridging science’ between social and natural sciences, which is essentially rooted within the context of place. I feel passionately that when we are given the opportunity to become rooted in the heritage of our place, our community and our culture, not only does that nurture our sense of belonging and wellbeing, but it can also foster our sense of personal responsibility for the world and people around us. The projects we invest in provide that vital opportunity, and knowing that I play a role in that is a huge driver for me.

What’s your favourite type of heritage?

I really love historic parks. They showcase amazing landscape design and horticulture, provide a window into the social history of a place, host valuable habitats, act as wildlife corridors, provide space for quiet reflection and give us great opportunities to play and make memories. For me, they encapsulate the tremendous benefits heritage can offer everyone. The two parks projects that I currently monitor, Scarborough’s South Cliff Gardens and Sheffield General Cemetery, have recently been removed from the Heritage at Risk Register, thanks to the incredible work funded by our grants. This really is an enormous achievement.