

What is “heritage” and why does it matter so much?

Heritage can refer to a number of physical things, or the characteristics of a person, or where they are from. Others might describe it as a sense of belonging. For most people, heritage consists of memories from their past, along with buildings and places that exist in the present.

The Royal Society for the Arts (RSA) along with the Heritage Lottery Fund, recently commissioned a survey into British Heritage. The results were very interesting, and from that data, a Heritage Index was produced. This listed every town and city in the UK, and quantified what made up their heritage, alongside their prospects to improve their standing in the heritage league.

Some locations were bound to score highly. Established tourist destinations such as Chester, York and even Liverpool did particularly well. The RSA produced a full dataset and written report, from which we have pulled the following relevant points.

The full report and interactive maps can be found here:

<https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/public-services-and-communities-folder/heritage-and-place#>

RSA

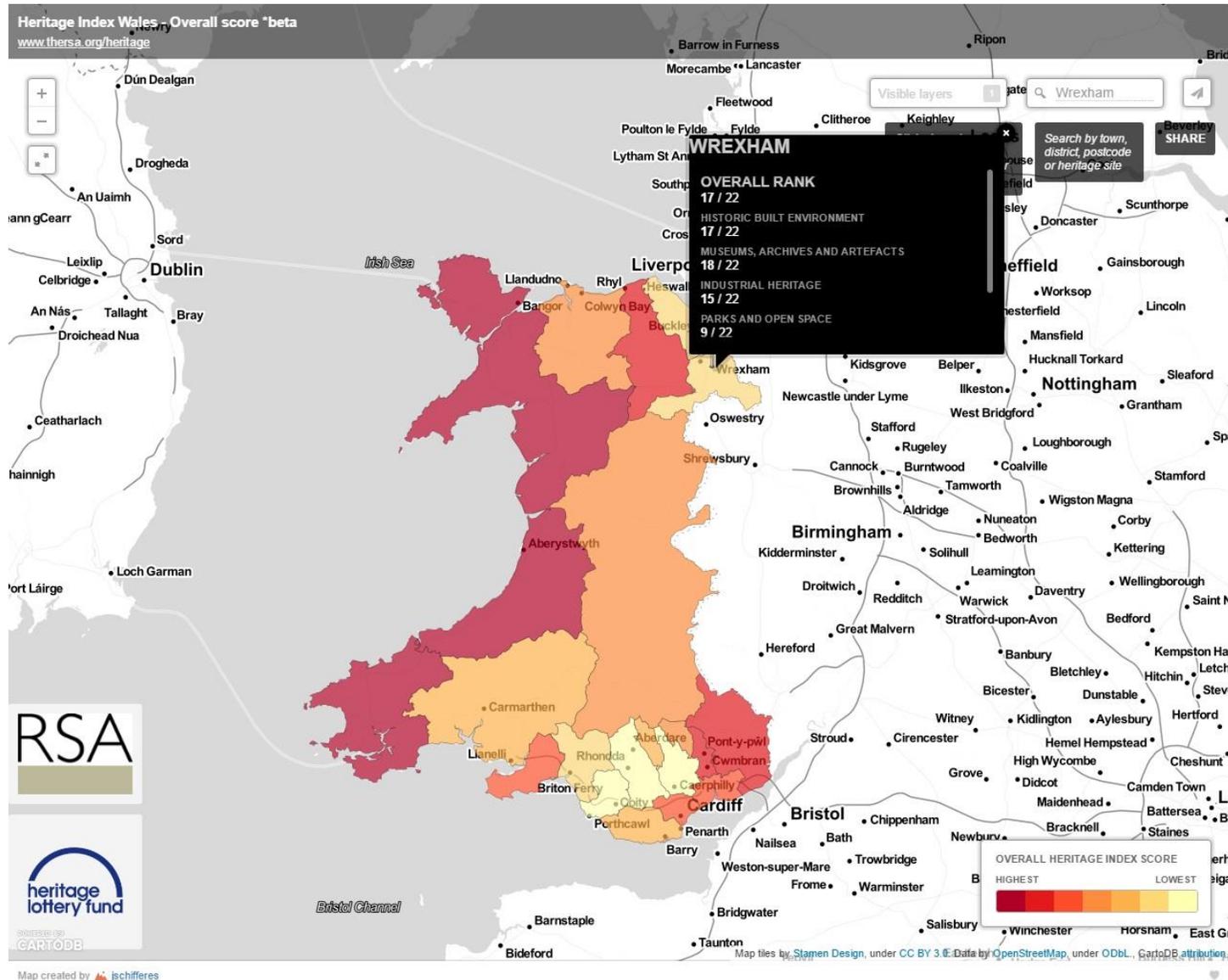
21st century enlightenment

heritage
lottery fund

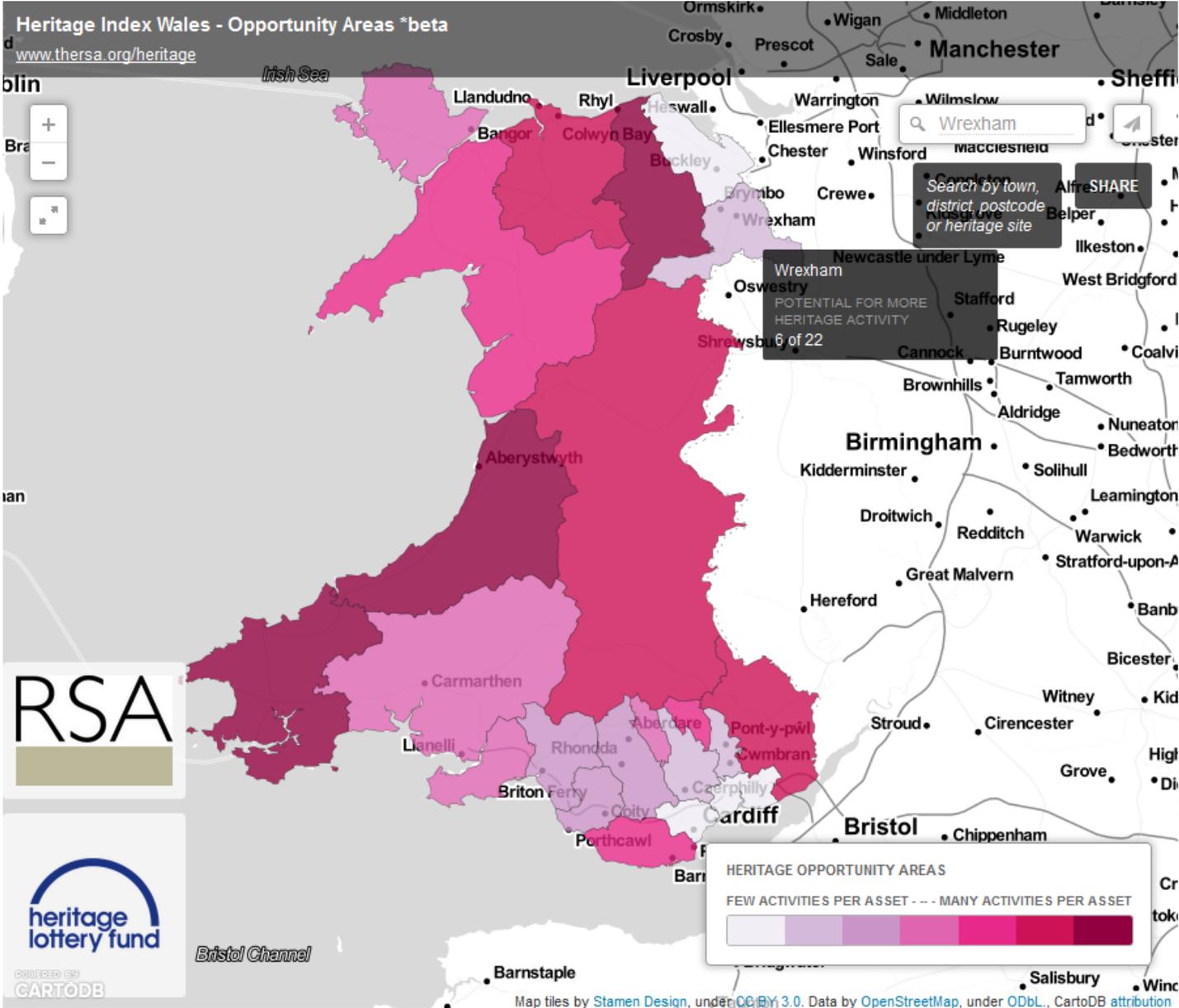
There are six domains of heritage:

- Historic built environment**
- Museums, archives and artefacts**
- Industrial heritage**
- Parks and open space**
- Landscape and natural heritage**
- Cultures and memories**

“Wrexham County Borough comes next only to Rhondda Cynon Taff at the bottom of The Heritage Index for Wales”



Heritage opportunities in Wrexham are very low on the national index



Communities Minister Marcus Jones MP said:

Britain has a history envied across the world and it's great to see that – through the Heritage Index – communities can now discover how to make the most of that history to drive growth in their local area.

What's more, I would encourage local people to use the protections provided by community rights to list their local heritage assets and ensure that the next generation can continue to enjoy our past.

We recommend that:

Local leaders – including leaders of government, public services, major institutions and major corporations – should use the Heritage Index as evidence to inform local strategies.

The Index shows relative strengths and weaknesses across a broad definition of heritage and brings attention to where strengths could be consolidated and capitalised upon, or areas where under-performance might be addressed.

Heritage should be placed at the centre of the place-making debate:

It can provide the 'USP' that helps places realise their social, economic and environmental aspirations.

WCBC Council Plan 2016 – 2017

Strategic Theme: Economy

E1 : People want to live, work, visit and invest here

What we will do to support this priority objective:

Preserving the distinctive character of our built heritage