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REVIEWS

Darvill, T. and Fulton, A. 1998. *MARS: The Monuments at Risk Survey of England, 1995. Main report.* School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University and English Heritage, Bournemouth and London.

This is the report of the English Heritage-sponsored 'Monuments at Risk Survey' (MARS), a programme of broad scope aimed at assessing:

- the scale and rate of physical impact on monuments since 1940 and the reasons and causes for this.
- the present condition and survival of the recorded archaeological resource.
- the effect of measures introduced to improve management of individual monuments, especially the role of designations.
- an investigation into the implications of monument decay in terms of the information preserved at different stages of survival.

The final report:

- contains a number of methodological innovations relating to landscape sampling to establish risk.
- establishes typical decay curves and areal loss factors for field monuments and
- concludes on the principal land classes and causes of damage and destruction such as ploughing, urbanisation and development generally, road building, mineral extraction and natural erosion (Darvill and Fulton, 1998: 16-29, 174-190).
- forecasts the future for networking amongst monuments records including greater use of digital media for records and interchangeability and ready transmission of such records.

Scheduled (registered) monuments have fared well over the last few decades while sites with three adjoining land uses have fared worst of all. English Heritage has produced a strategy for dealing with the problems identified by MARS(http://www.engh.gov.uk/archcom/projects/summarys/html96_7mar_sstrt.htm). Amongst its strategic objectives are better influence on land-use around monuments, specifically improved controls on destruction resulting from agriculture and forest establishment, and more research into the prevention of natural erosion.

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