

Conservation and World Heritage

The Historic Context in China and in the UK

This subject concerns all conservation as well as World Heritage.

There are not two systems

Donald Hankey
p/p ICOMOS_UK

Conservation in China

- **Heritage is 6,000+ years old**
- **Foundation of international tourism,**
- **local and national cultural identity.**
- **Seen very rapid growth since 1980**
- Supported by many countries and
 - international funding agencies,
 - UK, Italy, Canada, Australia, the Getty,
 - the World Bank and UNESCO,
 - the World Heritage Committee
 - the World Heritage Convention
 - ICOMOS

China has achieved incredibly quickly:-

- **Conservation management and the supporting administrative infrastructure**
- **Interpretation and presentation,**
- **Tourism planning and management,**
- **Accepting the diversity of culture and custom,**
- **Education and research**
- **Legal frameworks and control.**

Conservation in the UK

Like China – **the UK has**

- **a long archaeological history**
- A Strong **legal framework**
- Good **management of its different grades of heritage,**
- **Professional codes of conduct** for planners and architects
- a **conservation philosophy** going back to the 19th century
- But – there is:- a **fluctuating quality of central direction** from Government, and
- a wide range of competing heritage organisations. that should co-operate (Question?)

The UK and China will I hope build on our shared experience;

- we must **harmonise trade,**
- **protect** the environment,
- **share** education and scientific research,
- **respect** truth, contract and ethical behaviour,
- **respect and enjoy** the great diversity of our cultures,
- **harmonise** our laws and regulatory environments.

The World Heritage Convention 1972

The Convention establishes:-

- The **credibility** of the World Heritage List,
- It ensures the **process** of effective **conservation management**.
- It improves our **capacity** to deal with our complicated modern world,
- It increases public awareness, involvement, and support for World Heritage through effective **communication**,
- It promotes **community participation** and responsibility for the environment.

Through the management model of:-

- **The Operational Guidelines** for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention dated 10 July 2019,
- **The Management Process**
- **The generation of "dialogue**
- **Deployment of appropriate skills**
- **Ensuring authenticity and integrity.**
- "The respect due to all cultures requires that cultural heritage must be considered and judged primarily within the cultural contexts to which it belongs."
- **Measures to manage and protect the heritage**
- **Setting boundaries and protecting the setting.**

But what may not yet be adequately considered is:-

- 1. The creation and management of the records** and contract files for the works so that subsequent faults and failures can be better understood. The methodology should be agreed at the start.
- 2. The interpretation and presentation** of the historic area, building, city or site. Audiences, tourists, and local residents all have their own understanding of the past. A historic environment or museum object means different things to different people. Interpretation and presentation should speak of the artistic, scientific, social, cultural, economic, technological and historic character of the environment, urban conservation area, or museum artefact. Links to parallel subjects and themes should be accessible via the web.
- 3. Where people live and understand** the historic qualities of their environment, their care conservation and appreciation will be that much better.
- 4. The benefits of cooperation and team building** resulting from world-wide networking and built upon a database of ICOMOS members knowledge, skills, and experience.

World Heritage UK

WHUK is the most important driver of World Heritage Site Management, analysing the challenges and benefits, administration and collective management of the UK's 28 WHS.

The 2019 WHUK report, of 222 pages, details the character, history, and challenges of the UK's WH Sites, and Tentative list sites

It is a fine overview, detailing:-World Heritage Site management; diversity and characteristics and management and visitor experience,. key challenges; and sets out a vision fro the future. .

The report notes the central challenges faced by the UK World Heritage Collection that include:-:

- Low public awareness of the UK WHS Collection, and ignorance of OUV.
- The need for increased capacity, resource and diversification of skills in site management and promotion.
- The emerging need for alternative governance, financial and management models,
- The need for improved Government support coupled with alternative funding sources.
- Improved integration of tourism marketing and World Heritage

These questions raised above and the character of the UK's WHS must be among the principal comparisons for this webinar.