



World Heritage UK

## **WORLD HERITAGE UK**

### **Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 7th October 2019 at The Pavilion, Llangollen, Denbighshire.**

#### **DRAFT Minutes**

**Voting Members Attending:** Jane Gibson, Durham WHS; Stuart West, Orkney Island Council; Jamie Lund, NT Lake District WHS; Julian Cooper, West Oxon Council; Paul Simons, Great Spas of Europe TLS; Sheena Campbell, City of Bradford; Lynda Slater, Canal and River Trust; Roland Evans, Gwynedd CC; Susan Bain, NT for Scotland; Sarah France, NT Fountains Abbey; Mairi Lock, Lake District NPA; Ian Wray, Trustee; Rebecca Hartley, Torfaen BC; David Holroyd, Trustee; Don Gobbett, Trustee; Lesley Garlick, Max Bryant, NT Giants Causeway; Joe Perry, Peat Partnership; Sam Rose, Trustee; Allan Forest, Wrexham BC; Tessa Anderson, University of Manchester; Graham U'ren, Trustee; Tony Crouch, City of Bath WHS; Beth Thomas, proxy for Cornwall CC; Gillian Clarke, Trustee and proxy for Devon CC and Historic Royal Palaces.

**Apologies** were received from Courtney Fleming, individual member; Stephen Ratcliffe, Lake District WHS; Kirstie Pritchard, Devon County Council.

1. Tony Crouch, Chair of WH UK welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting. He noted that Graham U'ren had been appointed by the Board as a Trustee during the year. This fulfilled the aspiration to have representatives of all home nations on the Board.
2. The Minutes of the 2018 AGM were agreed as a correct record. Proposed: Max Bryant, seconded: Sam Rose. There were no matters arising.
3. The Chairman's Report was received. It is appended to these Minutes.
4. The Resolution to receive the Trustees Annual Report and the Finance Report was proposed by Jane Gibson, seconded by Paul Simons.

5. Under the CIO's Constitution a proportion of the Trustees must step down each year but are eligible for re-election for a further 3 year term. Three of the present Trustees are stepping down on this occasion and offering themselves for re-appointment. They are Tony Crouch, Rebecca Hartley, and Don Gobbett. The re-appointments were agreed, proposed by Lesley Garlick, seconded: Sam Rose.
6. New Trustee. Following a ballot of candidates Stephen Ratcliffe from Lake District NPA had the most number of votes, and is duly elected as the new Trustee.
7. Membership Fees. - Lesley Garlick introduced the report which proposes an increase in the fees charged in line with inflation. There were 2 objections to the rise in individual members' rates. The majority of the meeting approved the report.
8. The Resilience Project. David Holroyd outlined the aims and format of the project and introduced Tiva Montalbano the newly appointed Project Officer. The report was noted.
9. Any Other Business:: - Paul Simons raised awareness of the issues at Liverpool WHS, where possible new development may jeopardise the World Heritage status.

### **Chair of Trustees Report 2019**

This report sets out World Heritage UK (WH:UK) performance over the year 2018/19. It has been a really good year, with the only reason I stop short of saying excellent being that our achievements are part of a continuing long- term plan for the organisation and the true test of excellence will be in their successful implementation.

Last year I set out the long-term plan for WH:UK. This is based upon a transition through four stages. The first is Formation, breaking away from LAWHF in 2015 and setting up WH:UK, then Establishment of the new organisation, then Consolidation and on toward the goals of Resilience/Sustainability. We are now in the final stages of this plan, albeit that this stage may take a number of years.

There have been two headline achievements this year, both of which fit within this long-term plan. The first is the completion of the Review of All Sites. The three aims of WH:UK are Networking, Advocacy and Promotion. With the Review report in hand, plus the full technical report which is to follow, we can now embark in advocacy and promotion

backed by solid evidence. We can demonstrate the different approaches across all UK sites, the lack of a national strategy, the reliance on public sector funding, the disparity between World Heritage Sites and National Parks and many other salient points. It is not difficult to see how this strengthens our position. I would however stress this is not so much a campaigning document as a discussion paper, and that we are not engaged in any take-over bid of others within the sector but rather we are seeking to continue to work together to unlock the significant potential of our WH Sites.

The second headline is the award of Resilience Funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. We are very grateful for the award of £100k, which has allowed us to appoint a project manager (Tiva Montalbano) to ensure we can put in place the range of strategies, skills and competencies we need to grow as an organisation.

So last year I reported that we had a plan, and this year I can report that it is funded and being implemented.

You will see from the finance report which forms part of the Annual General Meeting papers that our finances remain stable. Almost all UK sites are active members and annual subscription income, plus any surplus we make from events and sponsorships, allows us to retain a part-time Development Director and Finance Manager. The resilience funding will enable us to step up beyond subsistence to become a stronger professional body.

With regard to those behind this work, WH:UK is governed by a board of 12 trustees. As is the case elsewhere within our sector, we simply could not operate without the significant volunteer time that they contribute. I thank all my fellow trustees and our President for the significant contribution they continue to make. Two trustees have left the Board this year, these being Anna Brennand and Cllr Nicola Lowery. We thank Anna and Nicola for their work and wish them well in future ventures. We have chosen, as our constitution allows, to co-opt one new Board member. Graham U'ren has joined us and Graham brings business development skills from New Lanark, plus his appointment ensures that the Board is representative of all 4 home nations. The Annual General Meeting also includes the election of a new trustee, and I would like to thank all those who stepped forward to throw their hats into the ring for this.

I would also like to especially thank our two existing members of staff. Not only have they worked 'above and beyond' as usual, but the organisational change associated with funding success does not come without extra stress and strain and I thank Chris and Beth for their hard work and forbearance.

In terms of more 'business as usual' items, we have maintained our range of events during the last year. The 2018 conference at the Tower of London attracted over 150 participants from more than 10 countries. The level of presentation and debate was excellent (as validated by very positive feedback). We also staged two networking events, the Spring event being at Blaenavon on the subject of learning and youth involvement. This attracted a new range of participants and showed a high level of enthusiasm for engaging in this work area. The second Autumn event was at Durham, on the subject of sustainable World Heritage and again was very well attended with the added bonus of a first class tour of Hadrians Wall. The frequency and format of these events continues to work well and attendance and satisfaction remains high, but we will of course keep them under review and always attempt to disperse them geographically to allow access for as many members as possible and to reduce the need to travel.

This report focuses primarily on WH:UK as an organisation but we do not work in isolation and some mention of the wider sector is warranted.

We had envisaged a formal launch of the Review in London. However, conducting any sort of meaningful business with Parliament at the moment is next to impossible and ministers seem to come and go at increasingly short intervals. We have therefore opted for a 'soft' launch at conference.

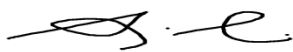
Business and hard work however continues as usual in the real world at the UK sites. Hearty congratulations go to Jodrell Bank, inscribed this year with an excellent nomination and a well-deserved inscription. Best wishes also go to the Welsh Slate Industry bid, who have come a long way with their project and are all set to progress. We wish them every success. And we must not forget the Great Spas of Europe trans-national project, which has recently undergone evaluation of all 11 component parts and which now awaits the inspectors feedback.

It is not always plain sailing in the sector. There has been considerable debate this year over the Stonehenge proposals, but this has without question involved all parties seeking to do their best for the site, with the

key question being what that best approach should be. And there are storm clouds over Liverpool, with the very real and disturbing prospect that the UNESCO World Heritage Committee may progress toward de-listing. It does seem unreal that in the middle-east terrorists have tried and failed to bomb sites off the list, yet in Liverpool, where not one brick of the controversial new development has been laid, there is serious talk of de-listing. World Heritage UK is of course concerned. We are not a lobbying body, but we have this year adopted a policy whereby we would formally ask for call-in if a particular planning application is seriously threatening a site. However, this doesn't necessarily help with Liverpool and we urge all parties to continue to look very carefully for resolution before creating an unfortunate precedent which I believe would be difficult for both the UK and for UNESCO.

Moving away from turbulent waters, WH:UK will continue to work with all partners in the sector, both in the UK and overseas, in maintaining stability and delivering the objectives of the World Heritage Convention. This coming year we will work hard to deliver outcomes from the Resilience Funding and in the spirit of the conference theme and of 'making the most of World Heritage', we will ensure the review document does not sit on the shelf and finds its way onto the desks of all who should see it.

I always emphasise the point that we proudly remain a membership organisation, so I urge all our members not to hesitate in giving open and honest feedback regarding all our events, and please do let us know if you have any suggestions for how we can help and support, or with ideas for future events.



**Tony Crouch**

Chair of Trustees: World Heritage UK