

World Heritage UK Annual General Meeting 2022

7 December 2022

Membership Fee 2023-2024

Background

In December 2021 the AGM agreed to the recommendation from the Board to raise the membership rates for Voting and Associate Members by around 3.25% and to leave individual memberships at the rate of £30 for the forthcoming year 2022/23.

However, since that time there has been a rapid rise in inflation and cost of living due to the war in Ukraine, an unprecedented rise in energy costs and the impact of Covid and Brexit on the economy. The current rate of inflation is over 10% and is forecast to be higher still before April 2023.

WHUK's main source of income is the membership subscriptions supplemented as much as possible by ticketing and sponsorship of the Events Programme, and it does not benefit from any regular Government grant, unlike some comparable umbrella organisations supporting designated assets. Although our overheads are relatively low, and there are no premises to heat or light, other costs such as professional services and IT costs have increased and will continue to do so over the next 15 months.

WHUK's main expenditure is the cost of staff: Alex McCoskrie, General Manager, and Beth Thomas, Business Manager, both of whom work part-time. The work they do is essential to the day to day running of the organisation, in addition to administrating the regular WH Coordinators Forums, the World Heritage Chairs meetings and, this year, webinars such as the successful meeting to discuss the removal of Liverpool from the WH List and the in-person events at Blenheim and the Annual Conference at Jodrell Bank. These meetings are always well received and provide an important resource for WH Coordinators across the UK and Overseas Territories.

The Board would hope to be able to continue this level of service to our members in the future, but this will only be possible if we can sustain and increase our current level of income. We have not been complacent, and the Trustees set up a Fundraising Group at the beginning of 2022 to look for alternate sources of income. Unfortunately, several grant applications for core funding which have been made to date have been unsuccessful, although we were successful in gaining project funding to undertake work to investigate how the membership base might be expanded and income increased. The recommendations from this work will be implemented ready for the coming financial year.

Options

The Resources and Risk (R&R) Committee, who now have responsibility for this area of business, met in October to review the current fees and to make a proposal to the Board. Trustees considered a number of options around rate rises of between 10% and 20% and fully took into consideration that members will have their own budgetary problems. However, if WHUK is to continue doing its work to support the UK's World Heritage community at the current level, the Board is faced with the difficult decision to recommend increasing membership fees by approximately 15% for the year ahead.

Recommendation

The Board of Trustees for World Heritage UK propose the following rates for 2023-24

Membership Category	Current Rate	15%	Proposed Rate 2023/24
Voting Member	£650	£747.50	£750.00
Associate Member	£270	£310.50	£310.00
Individual Member	£30	£34.50	£35.00

Tony Crouch, Chair of Trustees, World Heritage UK

November 2022