



**World
Heritage UK**

**World Heritage UK's Year
April 2021 to March 2022**



The past 12 months have seen much upheaval – war in Ukraine, the UK losing one but gaining two World Heritage Sites, Covid continuing to cause disruption, and more. **World Heritage UK (WHUK)** has adapted to the times, to continue to deliver on behalf of our members and the World Heritage sector.

WHUK's strategic aims are threefold – here's how we've done across those objectives.

Advocacy

a. WHUK works **internationally** – WHUK advocated solutions for the At-risk Site Liverpool with **UNESCO**, as well as supporting UNESCO's sustainable tourism department with WH-focused cruises to the UK. WHUK has continued to be represented at and supportive of the **European Association of World Heritage (EAWH)** whose members are the equivalents of WHUK across Western and Eastern Europe. WHUK's President gave a paper on UK good practice remotely at the annual meeting in the Loire Valley. He has also been advising the **Southern Ireland government** on their preparation of a 10- Year National World Heritage Strategy to be launched in 2022/2023.

b. WHUK works with and has continual dialogue with all key **national** stakeholders – **Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport** (new team of Phil Foxwood and Henry Reed), **Historic England** (new team led by Alexandra Warr), **Cadw**, **Historic Environment Scotland** (new WH department led James Bruhn), **Northern Ireland Environment Agency**, **UK National Commission to UNESCO** (supporting the UK's stand on Ukraine and the scheduled World Heritage Committee meeting in Kazan), **ICOMOS-UK** (with whom WHUK signed a MoU for greater collaborative working) and **IUCN**. WHUK has continued to participate in Government/Ministerial roundtables putting the case for enhanced World Heritage awareness raising and support set out in the WHUK's "*UK World Heritage - Asset for the Future 2020 Report*". WHUK also contributed to Heritage Alliance's national level forums and debates concerned with future of heritage, Covid recovery, climate change and planning reform.

c. We work directly with all **33 WHSs in the UK and its overseas territories**, their coordinators, chairs and steering groups – WHUK presented at **Hadrian's Wall's 1900** Networking Days; supported promotion of new WH products (**Scotland's UNESCO Trail**), visitor centres (**Bath's new Visitor Centre**) and conferences/seminars; we supported **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion work by Jurassic Coast Trust**.

d. WHUK also supports **tentative** (prospective) WHSs, to help them understand processes and requirements; over the past 12 months this has included providing advice and guidance on development proposals and supported preparation by potential Tentative List candidates such as **York City, Shetland, Bedford Park Garden Suburb, Port Sunlight, the Barbican, Stockbridge Water Meadows** etc., in readiness for the upcoming Tentative List review by DCMS and Historic England.

e. **Other bodies** we've worked with include **Heritage Alliance, Charity Digital**, and **VisitBritain**. WHUK has increasing links with universities that include heritage management courses and provided an annual lecture to some such as **Durham University** and **University College Dublin**.

Learning & Networking

WHUK works on behalf of the UK's 33 WHSs. We deliver a key hub role, linking the frontline with government and heritage NDPBs. We provide **knowledge, training** and **networking** opportunities for WH professionals to share and learn from each other. This year has seen Covid restrictions come and go, and come and go again, with face-to-face meetings restricted.

a. **In-person events**: none in this year due to Covid; we do however prepare for our first in-person/hybrid event at Blenheim in April and in-person annual conference at Jodrell Bank in October later in the year.

b. Online events and seminars:

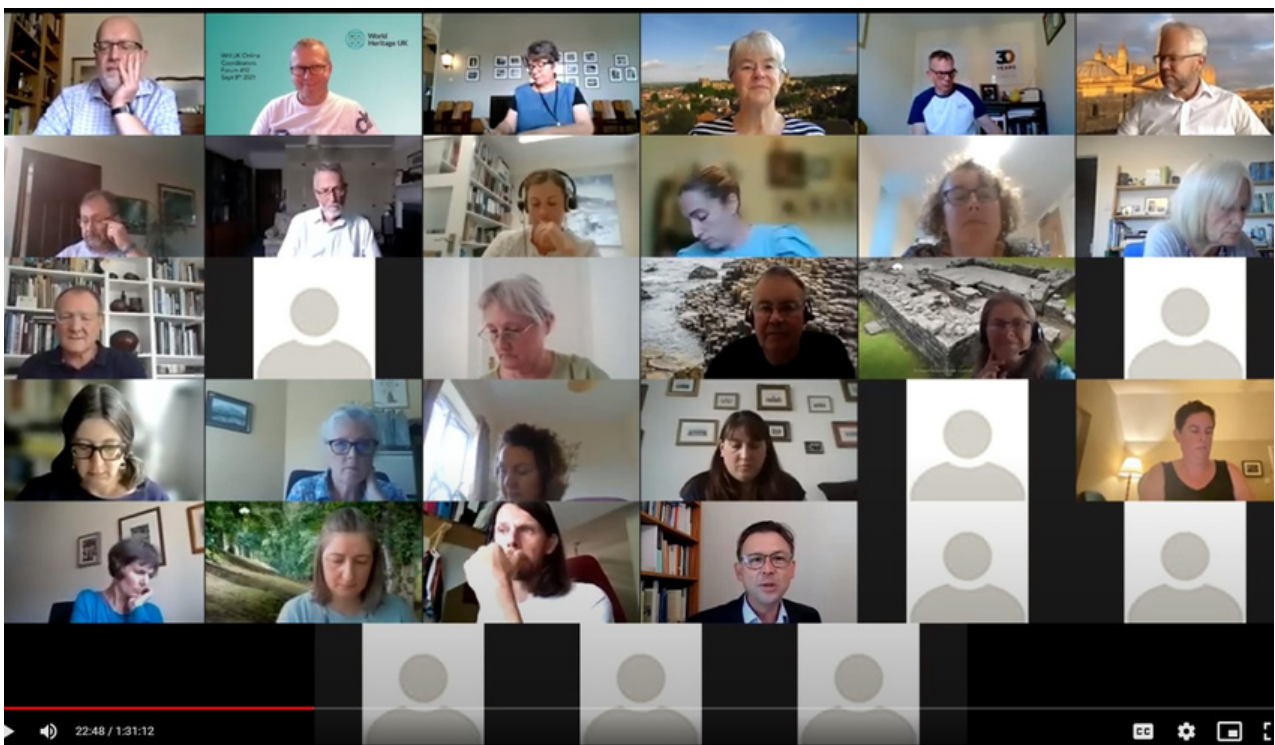
i. ***“The Changing Nature of World Heritage Designed Landscapes”*** by Dr. David Jacques, a landscape historian and conservationist who was instrumental in revising UNESCO’s criteria to include cultural landscapes.

ii. ***“Reopening of WHSs to new and existing audiences”*** chaired by Lake District National Park Authority with speakers from Derwent Valley Mills WHS, the English Lake District WHS, Wordsworth Trust and the National Trust.

iii. 2021’s Annual Conference – ***“Climate Change & World Heritage”***; a 3-day event exploring the impacts of climate change on WHSs and showcasing how some WHSs are managing these impacts; the conference ended with WHUK delivering a position statement to COP26 and the government.

c. Special Interest Groups – WHUK works with and supports SIGs: Learning & Engagement Network; Northern England WHSs; Industrial Heritage WHSs; and the Climate Emergency Group.

d. WHS Coordinators’ Forums – WHUK hosted 4 (in Jun, Sep, Nov & Feb), providing Sites the opportunity to hear the latest from government and NDPBs, and from each other.



e. **WHS Chairs** – WHUK hosted 1 in Nov.

f. **Projects** – WHUK has supported and contributed to: Newcastle University's "WH & Peace" project; we have supported and contributed to CCGHT's ask for guidance on communications strategy development.

Over the past 12 months, WHUK's membership has remained steady. No mean feat in these challenging times of Covid and austerity. Our memberships figures are:

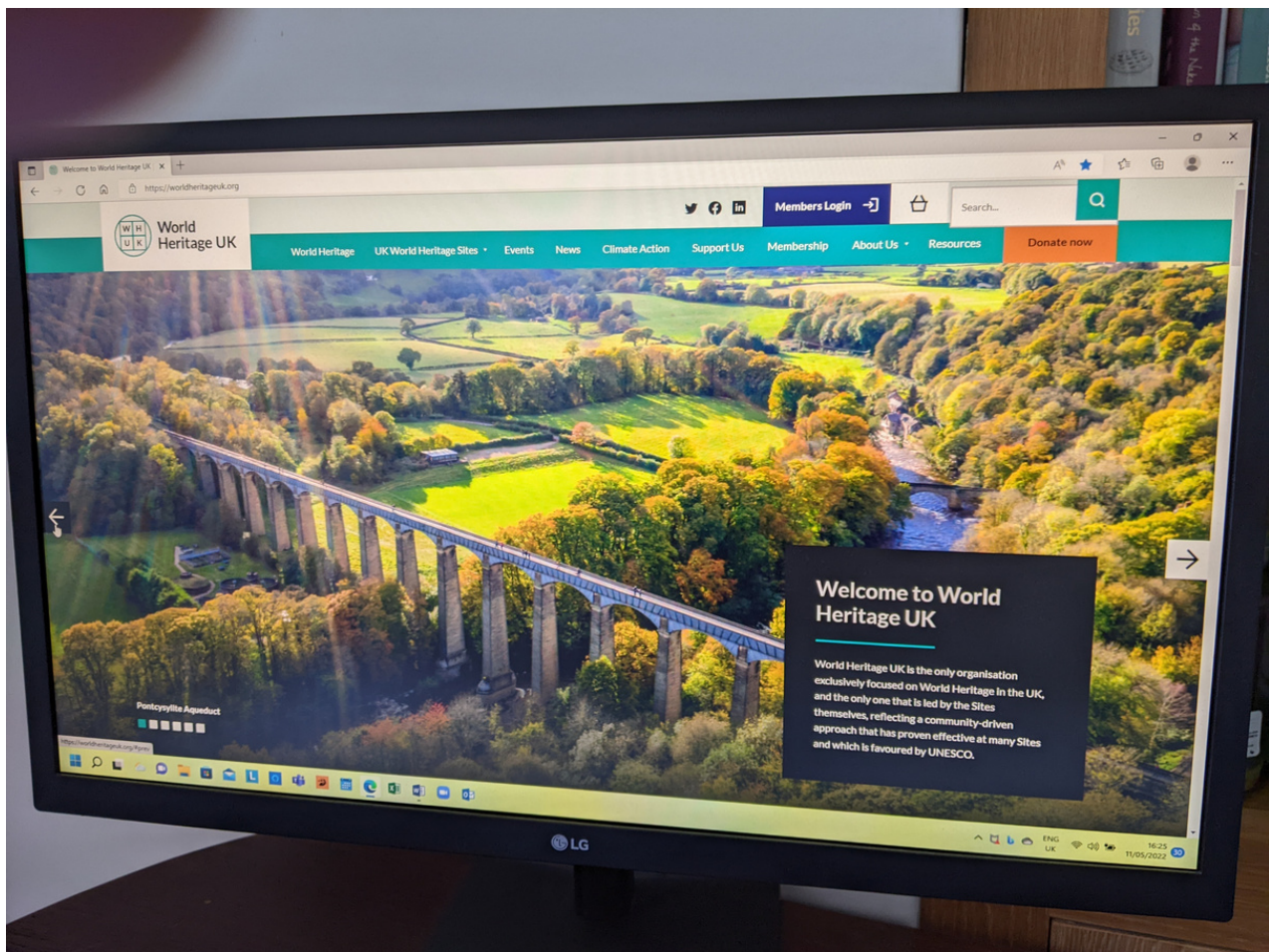
Voting Members = 38

Associate Members = 4

Individual Members = 55

YOY our membership numbers remained the same. A key challenge for WHUK is how to grow our membership. 2021/22 saw WHUK start to explore growing its membership outside of its immediate heritage circles. WHUK's "World Heritage in the UK Review" identified that there are sectors just outside of heritage that benefit from and influence World Heritage in the UK. WHUK successfully secured funding from Steps to Sustainability, a NLHF-funded project, to research potential new audiences within three of these new sectors – tourist boards, local enterprise partnerships and academia. This research will give WHUK better insight in what these new audiences might want from a membership with WHUK.

Promotion



Following the Jan 2021 launch of the new WHUK website, we've embarked on a year-round marketing and communications programme, to build awareness and knowledge of, and interactive with, World Heritage in general and World Heritage Sites specifically.

- a. **Website** – 3 new sections added to the website including: an introduction to World Heritage (UN, UNESCO, Convention, WHC, World Heritage List, OUV etc.); Climate Action; Support Us.
- b. **Website** – 35 news articles published over a range of topics including new Sites, delisted Sites, World Heritage Day, conferences and webinars, job opportunities, new WH products, climate change and the Tentative List.
- c. **Database** – WHUK communicates regularly to the sector, with ~700 currently in our database.
- d. **E-communications** – 18 e-newsletters sent over the year, to a total audience of 11000; averaging 22% open rate (cf. industry norm 22%) and 7.2% click through rate (cf. industry norm of 3-5%).

e. **Social media** – the past 12 months has seen WHUK’s Twitter activity and followers grow (3000+ followers on Twitter, with the most successful tweet achieving 5297 impressions, and 1000+ followers on Facebook)

f. **Media** – WHUK received much coverage of our thoughts on Liverpool’s delisting; WHUK's President appeared on BBC Countryfile (14 Nov) discussing Liverpool at Derwent Valley Mills WHS, and the need for World Heritage to be given statutory/national designation status.

g. **Print** – the “*World Heritage in the UK*” map and leaflet updated and redesigned; digital version made available for all; 10 Sites ordered printed copies; Cadw ordered a Welsh translation.



The coming year will continue to be challenging – war continues in the Ukraine; the Cost of Living increases; Covid variations arise, impacting workforce availability; Governmental changes from the top down, will only add confusion, insecurity and potential changes in departmental decision makers and budget holders; and we see the continuous impacts of the climate emergency.

On the positive side there is much to look forward to; 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention is in November and together with the “*WH & Peace*” project from Newcastle University, will go some way to remind all of what World Heritage’s founding principles are.

Governance

In order to deliver our strategic aims, WHUK manages internal changes. After last year’s Resilience and Covid Recovery Funding which provided foundations for WHUK’s operations (Business Plan, CMS-powered website, CRM system for database management and e-communications etc.), this year we:

- a. Said goodbye to WHUK’s Development Manager Chris Mahon after 6 years’ service.
- b. Welcomed new General Manager Alex McCoskrie who started Jul 2021 on a part-time 2-year contract.
- c. Established a new Fundraising Working Group, to look at opportunities for funding from charitable grants, project funding, and government/NDPB funding; Steps to Sustainability success has funded research into new audiences for membership.
- d. Held our 2021 AGM online for the second time, and it was efficient and successful.
- e. Welcomed 2 new Trustees (Jane Masters and Justin Scully) and said goodbye and thank you to 1 (Graham U’ren).
- f. Started work on finding a new Chair.

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