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World Heritage UK

July 2024 newsletter # 2



Insider's Report from 46COM...from Dr. Sam Rose

Congratulations to [The Flow Country World Heritage Site](#) and all who worked so long and so hard to make this inscription happen. Below is ex-WHUK Trustee Sam Rose's personal thoughts on the experience of being at 46COM.

'Going with the Flow...(pun intended)'

"So after a long flight, minimal sleep and waking up to Delhi's monsoon season I finally arrived at the 'oh so grand' conference centre that is home to 46com. If you are not in the know, 46com is the 46th Meeting of the World Heritage Committee, the annual gathering to decide World Heritage Policy, ask a few countries to do a better job at looking after their Sites (State of conservation reports) and - most importantly - decide new inscriptions onto the list. I was

addressing.

To backtrack a bit, for those who don't know me, I looked after the Jurassic Coast for 15 years, and also was instrumental in founding World Heritage UK. I went freelance in 2019 and since then have worked on a very part time basis to help the Flow Country bid team progress fairly through the UK's Technical Evaluation team and subsequently the nomination process. It has been a joy to do - the team is excellent and very passionate about their place and their heritage.

So back to Delhi...the committee is (technically) where all of the WH decisions are made, although there are a lot of behind the scenes negotiations happening before and during the event. There is also a certain amount of geopolitics, but happily not nearly as much as with Eurovision. That is the nature of international diplomacy!

In essence, by the time of the Committee meeting, IUCN (or ICOMOS for cultural sites) will have given their recommendations about the proposed sites, and considered any factual errors within their evaluation, and then it is up to the Committee who can make amendments and overturn recommendations if they wish to. So nothing is certain until the gavel is banged.

The recommendation for The Flow Country was for inscription under Criterion ix - ecosystem quality - but not Criterion x, biodiversity. We accepted that as fair and IUCN also commented on how good a bid it was, which was nice to know.

So we arrived with an expectation that the bid would be considered by the Committee on Friday the 26th, then we were pushed back to Saturday, then back to Friday! As you can imagine, despite a strong bid, the nerves were jangling and Graham, who's job it was to respond to the Committee with a speech, was sweating in his kilt, despite the AirCon. Phil and Alex in the UK delegation were excellent, calm and professional, having just reached a good position with Stonehenge, and reassured us that they had not heard a single problematic word from the floor.

Eventually it was up, and with no questions, comments or amendments - and a glowing endorsement from IUCN - it was all over. The gavel went down and the first peatland World Heritage Site was inscribed. Graham did his speech, we

This article was not intended to be about the Site (go to the [website](#)), nor a list of those people involved (see my [LinkedIn post](#)) but just to give you an idea of the culmination of what is in some cases (this one) more than 40 years since the idea of World Heritage is first mooted.

All bids take many years of preparation, careful and meticulous, and everything has to be right - the case for OUV, the protection, the political support, the finances, the people doing the work, and most importantly, the communities. If one bit is wrong, it can all fall apart at the Committee stage, so the combined efforts of many people over time are all important, no matter how small or large.

Also, make no mistake, World Heritage is a big deal, and for the Flows, the hard works starts now. Well done all!!"



Our thanks to Sam for giving us this insider view of being at the World Heritage Committee meeting.



Gracehill Moravian Church Settlement World Heritage Site

Congratulations to Gracehill and the team behind their successful inscription as a new World Heritage Site.

Gracehill Moravian Church Settlement becomes Northern Ireland's second UNESCO World Heritage Site and the 34th UNESCO World Heritage Site in the UK.

The Site was nominated as part of a transnational effort led by the United States to achieve World Heritage Status for Moravian Church settlements founded in the 18th century, alongside other sites in [Herrnhut, Germany and Bethlehem in the United States](#).

Each of these settlements exemplifies the Moravian Church's spiritual, societal, and ethical ideals that aimed at the creation of a religious community and found expression in a distinctive style of town planning and architecture.

Founded in 1759, Gracehill includes distinctive Moravian buildings, including a particular type of congregation building known as Gemeinhaus, a church, choir houses and a cemetery. There is an active congregation present at the site today, who continue Moravian traditions.



World Heritage UK's 2024 Cathedrals and Abbeys World Heritage webinar series

Starting in September, WHUK is hosting a series of 4 webinars, exploring the UK's Cathedral and Abbey World Heritage Sites.

The webinars are from 7 to 8pm, and on Zoom. Attendees will be sent Zoom details usually the day before the talk.

Tickets for individual webinars are £5. A series ticket for all 4 webinars is £15. You can book your tickets by clicking [here](#).

The talks will be:

- **Canterbury Cathedral**, on Tuesday 17th September
- **Westminster Abbey**, on Tuesday 15th October
- **Durham Cathedral**, on Tuesday 19th November
- **Bath Abbey**, on Tuesday 17th December

All talks are recorded. These recordings are then uploaded to WHUK's YouTube channel. Attendees will be provided with a link to the webinar recording. Series ticket holders will receive links for all 4.



World Heritage UK's 2024 Annual Conference

Tickets are now available for the WHUK annual conference on **Monday 7th and Tuesday 8th October**.

Tickets available are:

- In-Person, National Trust member £138
- In-Person, non-National Trust member £150
- Digital £100
- Monday night social £22

To book your ticket(s), please click [here](#).

A full programme is currently being developed with the theme of ***“Making the Most of World Heritage: Growing the Benefits, Avoiding the Pitfalls, Thinking Long Term”***. We are expecting a wide range of topics and speakers, that will be relevant to all World Heritage Site and heritage professionals. The programme can be seen at the link above.

Tickets include buffet lunches and refreshments both days, and site visits to the Cornish Mining WHS - Geevor and Levant Mines.

Full details of the Monday night social to follow, but it will include a hot buffet at the Penventon Park Hotel in Redruth.

Please support the work of World Heritage UK

donations.

If you aren't a member, or know someone who would like to be a member, please go to our [Membership page](#) to join.

If you or a friend or colleague would like to make a donation to WHUK, please go to our [Donation page](#), to help us support the UK's WH community.

Thank you!



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