



World Heritage UK April 2025 – March 2028 Business Plan Summary

Key Priorities for World Heritage UK

World Heritage UK (WHUK) was formed in 2015 and since then has developed successfully to become a respected, knowledgeable and influential voice in the heritage sector, representing the importance of the UK's World Heritage Sites (WHS) at all levels nationally and internationally. In order to build on this and ensure a sustainable future over the next few years, WHUK will need to prioritise its activities and resources to counter the challenging financial and economic environment emerging in the UK.

If WHUK is to continue to meet and further its charitable purposes, it will have to increase its income and become more financially resilient. Identifying and securing financial resources from a wider range of funding partners is the most urgent priority for WHUK.

In order to do this, WHUK needs to focus on sustaining those activities which it already does well and develop those areas which are core to its purposes. A key priority is to sustain its work in CPD, training and development through the medium of in-person workshops and conferences, together with online events. These activities are also critical to sustaining its membership and keeping the “World Heritage Family” together. Supporting its members in facilitating community participation and engagement in World Heritage is an important area for growth and development. Through these activities WHUK has the potential to enhance its reputation with governments and heritage agencies in the UK and use this platform to influence positively national policy and practice in relation to World Heritage.

Vision, Mission and Aims

World Heritage UK (WHUK) is the only organisation exclusively focused on World Heritage (WH) in the UK, and the only one led by the World Heritage Sites themselves, our members. Founded in 2015 as a development of the Local Authority World Heritage Forum, this approach reflects a community-driven approach that has proven effective at many WHS and which is favoured by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Our Vision is that WH and WHSs in the UK are better known and understood, have a coherent approach to their management and protection, and supported through sustainable funding, in order that their Outstanding Universal Values (OUV) can provide inspiration,

learning and enjoyment for all and contribute to the UK's standing in the world.

Our **Mission** is to raise the profile and secure the future of the UK collection of WHSs by advocating for support, resources and recognition, facilitating learning and networking, and promoting WH and the Sites and their values.

Since WHUK was established in 2015 we have worked to deliver three strategic aims centred on advocacy, sector development and engagement. We have developed those aims in response to the changing circumstances in which WHUK operates as follows:

- **Strategic Aim 1**
ADVOCACY – working with partners as appropriate to undertake effective advocacy at all levels for the joint benefit of the UK's WHSs and for the World Heritage Convention
- **Strategic Aim 2**
SECTOR DEVELOPMENT - to facilitate and build learning and networking for and between organisations and individuals within the WH sector, for the benefit of the UK's collection of WHSs, their communities, and the UK as a whole
- **Strategic Aim 3**
ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS - to build awareness and knowledge of, and engagement with, the UK's collection of WHSs and their values, with local communities and stakeholders, and key domestic and international partners

Our **Charitable Aims** are to celebrate and protect our natural and cultural World Heritage; for everyone to enjoy our nation's heritage – by visiting and exploring, volunteering and championing, learning, understanding and valuing, and getting involved.

Strategy Delivery, Action Plan & Operations

This section of the Business Plan Summary outlines the resources required and key actions by WHUK to deliver its objectives – Advocacy, Sector Development and Engagement & Communications, over the coming three years as well as preparing for the operating period beyond March 2028.

External

Advocacy

To undertake effective advocacy at all levels for the joint benefit of the UK's WHSs and for the World Heritage Convention, WHUK will continue

to build on its working relationships across all partners, looking for mutually beneficial activities, project co-creation and delivery, and funding opportunities, in order to support and promote WH, WHSs and Tentative List candidates in the UK and its Overseas Territories.

Sector Development

To facilitate and build learning and networking for and between organisations and individuals within the WH sector, for the benefit of the UK's collection of WHSs, their communities, and the UK as a whole, through:

- Stakeholders: WHS Coordinators' Forums, WHS Chairs meetings, Coordinator 'buddy' scheme
- Events: two in-person hybrid events, year-round WH and WHS awareness building digital events/webinars
- Special Interest Groups (SIGs): Climate Emergency, Learning & Engagement, Industrial Heritage, Northern WHSs, Planning and International
- Projects: supporting and delivering, including Realising the Benefits of WH to Local Communities, Peace – with Newcastle University

Engagement & Communications

To build awareness and knowledge of, and engagement with, the UK's collection of WHSs and their values, with local communities and stakeholders, and key domestic and international partners, through:

- Communications & Engagement: segmented, in-bound and outward

Internal/Operations

Governance

- Compliance: adhering to our Constitution; holding an Annual General Meeting; abide to Charity Commission legal obligations
- Board/Trustees: recruitment/retention as per the Constitution; retain WH strategic and operational expertise; ensure UK-wide representation
- Staff: where financially sustainable, employ a part-time General Manager and a freelance Finance Manager; employ project staff as and when required
- Volunteers: any volunteers should be task-orientated
- Sustainability: WHUK will contribute to the nation's Net Zero; have an Environmental Policy

Finances

- WHUK's Risk & Resources Committee (R&R) will continue to have responsibility for the charity's financial management, policy development and charity compliance
- Annually budget for and work towards profitability at each year end; yearend accounts to be independently checked annually

- Explore opportunities and build plans for long term financial sustainability and growing income streams beyond membership and events; build commercial connections and sponsorships
- Control and monitor all expenditure – WHUK operations, event management etc

Membership

- Offer levels of memberships: Voting, Associate, and Individual
- Benefits: provide clear communications concerning benefits, both pre-purchase and post-purchase; ‘on-board’ new members; retain existing members and grow loyalty
- Non-heritage memberships: explore and seek memberships from Academia and Tourism sectors
- Pricing; implement annual increases across all membership levels, to reflect rising operating costs and inflation
- Manage our membership management through data clarity, smooth systems and efficient communications

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