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World Heritage UK

June 2026 newsletter



Welcome World Heritage UK's new Chair Steve Ratcliffe

Steve is Director of Sustainable Development and Assistant Chief Executive for the Lake District National Park Authority and was instrumental in the establishment of the Lake District National Park Partnership. He chairs the English Lake District World Heritage Site Steering Group and has overseen the development of the Partnership Plan (the statutory Management Plan for the Park and WHS). He considers his acceptance of the WHS inscription for the English Lake District at the 41st World Heritage Committee in Krakow, to be one of his most humbling and proudest moments in his career. Steve has been a trustee of WHUK for six years and has chaired the Events Committee for the last three years.

due to personal reasons but will remain a Trustee for the foreseeable future. WHUK thanks him for all his sterling work as Chair.



World Heritage Webinars - Overseas Territories

WHUK's next series on World Heritage Sites will look further than any previous series, and will welcome speakers from two of the UK's overseas territories.

First up is the **Historic Town of St George and its related fortifications WHS in Bermuda**, on Tuesday 09 June 2026, at 7pm UK-time. We shall hear from both the National Trust for Bermuda and the St George's Foundation.

And then on Tuesday 14 July, we shall be hearing from the **Gorham's Cave Complex WHS in Gibraltar**.

Tickets for each webinar is £5 and can be booked by clicking on the following:

[Bermuda](#)

[Gibraltar](#)

As with previous webinars, each talk is recorded and uploaded to WHUK's private YouTube channel. All ticket holders will receive a link to their talk afterwards.

Image: Bermuda WHS John Singleton



2026 Annual Conference - programme now live

This year's WHUK Annual Conference is on **Monday 5 & Tuesday 6 October**. The conference will be held in Portrush, Northern Ireland, just down the coast from [Giant's Causeway WHS](#).

This year's conference theme is "**Connections through World Heritage**". Speakers include the International National Trust Organisation, the European Network of World Heritage Associations, the Great Spa Towns of Europe WHS, Queens University Belfast, Ireland's National Monument Service, Frontiers of the Roman Empire, plus more. In-person delegates will also enjoy site visits to the Giant's Causeway and [Gracehill Moravian Church Settlements](#) WHSs.

As the conference will involve travel by air or sea for most, WHUK do encourage delegates to book transport and accommodation as early as they can.

Conference tickets are now available. Prices reflect the additional financial burden of attending in person. To book and for suggestions for accommodation in Portrush and information on travel please go to [World Heritage UK 2026 Annual Conference](#) | [World Heritage UK](#)

We hope to see you there, and help to celebrate Giant's Causeway's 40th anniversary as a WHS, along with the other six Sites that were the first wave of UK Sites to be inscribed back in November 1986.

Image: gluseppe-milo



ICOMOS-UK's 2026 Summer Event

[ICOMOS-UK](#)'s summer event will take place on the evening of **Thursday 25th June** (6pm to 8.30pm), at the historic venue of [St Martin-in-the-Fields](#), by Trafalgar Square in London.

ICOMOS-UK's summer event is always an opportunity to share news and expertise, meet old friends, and make new ones.

This year, they are delighted to invite members to join them at St-Martin-in-the-Fields in London.

Designed by James Gibb in 1726, incorporated into the remodelling of Trafalgar Square by John Nash in the 19th century, the Church is now as much a focal point for social justice as it is for its architectural history.

Speakers at the event include Kathryn Harris, Church Architect at St Martin's, and Matt Turtle, Co-Founder and Director of the Museum of Homelessness. This offers attendees an opportunity to think about a series of juxtapositions – between the Church and its conservation, its role in addressing homelessness in London, and the heritage of homeless people and their own experiences of the city. ICOMOS-UK looks forward to seeing you there – to book tickets please click [here](#).



Heritage Adapts!

Thursday 04 June sees the launch of Heritage Adapts! This is something WHUK proud to support, and that we've helped build.

Heritage Adapts! is a global campaign of local stewards uniting to take adaptation action to protect their heritage sites and cultural practices from climate change by 2030.

At its heart is a collective pledge and an online community of action, a collaborative space to connect, find guidance, and take action alongside others facing similar challenges.

How it works and how you can get involved...

✓ Take the **collective pledge** to adapt your heritage to climate change by 2030.

🌐 Join the **community of action** for support including:

📖 A **self-paced roadmap** through every stage of locally led adaptation—from deepening your climate and heritage understanding, to assessing risk, developing a plan, and taking action—making adaptation accessible, no matter your starting point.

💛 A **peer network** connecting you with others on frontlines to learn from one another, because the best advice comes from those who live it.

📊 **Localised climate data** in an accessible, downloadable format, complemented by training so you stay in control and can weave scientific data with knowledge your community already holds.

As a founding leadership partner, WHUK has been part of developing this from the ground up, because we believe you deserve better support to face the climate crisis. It is too big and urgent to do alone, and we must support one another to adapt together. Heritage is not just a victim of climate change—it is part of the solution, a source of community resilience and time-tested solutions relevant today. Your work matters. This campaign supports it. **Take the pledge. Join the community. Start adapting today.**

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Please support the work of World Heritage UK

WHUK is a small but unique charity. We're always looking for new members or 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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