



City of Bath World Heritage Site Advisory Board

Meeting held on 18 June 2019 in the Brunswick Room, Guildhall, Bath

Minutes

Attendees					
Prof. Barry Gilbertson (Chair)	BG	Cllr Paul Crossley	PC	Revd. Canon Guy Bridgewater	GB
Prof. David Goode	DG	Nick Tobin	NT	Dr Marion Harney	MH
Cllr Robert Law	RL	Rebecca Barratt	RB	Rohan Torkildsen	RT
Andrew Grant	AG	Polly Andrews	PA	Caroline Kay	CK
Sarah Simmonds	SS	Dr Kristin Doern	KD	Alice Palfrey for TB	AP
John Wilkinson	JW	Adrian Amber	AA	Joy Roberts	JR
Betty Suchar	BS	Allison Herbert	AH	Helen Daniels	HD
Tony Crouch	TC				
Apologies					
Stephen Bird		Henry Owen-John		Ainslie Ensom	
Lisa Bartlett		Tom Boden			

No	Agenda Item	Act.
1	Chairman's Welcome	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, particularly new Board members.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	None declared.	
3	Adoptions of previous minutes (13 February 2019)	
3.2	RL pointed out a reference in the Minutes that read RL instead of RT. (TC to correct).	TC
3.3	Otherwise, the minutes were accepted as a true record.	
4	Board membership and new members	
4.1	The Chairman outlined changes to Board membership, which are mostly as a result of the recent local government elections. In view of the changes, and new members, he invited all present to introduce themselves.	
4.2	New Board members attending for the first time were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Paul Crossley. PC is Liberal Democrat Councillor for Southdown and Liberal Democrat Councillor for Southdown. He is Cabinet Member for Communities, which includes Communities, Parks, Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Tourism. • The Revd. Canon Guy Bridgewater is Rector of Bath Abbey. He joined Bath Abbey in November 2018. • Sarah Simmonds joins as the representative of the International Council on Sites and Monuments (ICOMOS UK). ICOMOS International are the advisory body to UNESCO on cultural heritage matters and ICOMOS UK is the national body. Sarah is a member of the ICOMOS UK Executive Committee and is also the long-standing WHS Partnership Manager for Stonehenge and Avebury. 	
4.3	The Chairman also welcomed guests:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becky Barratt. Recently appointed Historic England Divisional Director (SW England), who at the invitation of the Chairman had spent the morning visiting Bath projects, with BG, CK and RT. • Alice Palfrey, Head Gardener at the National Trust, who was deputising for Tom Boden. Alice recently accompanied Tom on the 123 mile sponsored walk, raising £6k for the Prior Park Dams project. • Betty Suchar is Chair of Trustees at Bath Royal Literary & Scientific Institution (BRLSI) and Adrian Amber, former member of this Board. 	
4.4	On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked Cllr Paul Myers and Cllr Peter Turner who have stepped down from the Board following the recent elections, and Cherry Beath who has retired from politics but continues to work with the WH Enhancement Fund.	
4.5	BG re-iterated the importance of regular attendance at the Advisory Board, of sending substitutes if attendance was not possible and of the policy of standing down members who failed to attend for 3 consecutive meetings.	
5	Review of previous minutes and matters arising	
5.1	BG is to deliver his talk on World Heritage on 19 June 2019 to members of the B&NES planning, conservation and parks departments.	BG
5.2	TC will ensure that World Heritage is included on the schedule of training for new Planning Committee members. No date yet fixed.	TC
5.3	BG asked if there was any reaction from UNESCO with regard to the notification regarding the potential development by Bath Rugby. TC confirmed that besides an acknowledgment nothing had been received and UNESCO were likely to wait until the formal submission of a planning application before making any comment.	TC SS
5.4	HD reported on the World Heritage Day event held on Thursday 18th April. For the first time, due to Easter dates, the event was held on a Thursday rather than a weekend. It was held at Green Park Station with talks held across the road at the Salvation Army Hall on the theme of architecture and engineering. HD thanked the 17 partner organisations who had contributed to the success of the day. Approximately 700 people had attended the event. Next year's WH Day will be held on Sunday 19 April 2020 .	All
5.5	CK noted how successful WH Day had become after having been instigated by the Bath Preservation Trust and Council in 2009.	
6	Chairman's Report	
6.1	BG introduced his report, which had been circulated in advance and highlighted some key items.	
6.2	35 World Heritage awareness talks have now been delivered, to an audience of 1143 people. 16 further talks are already booked.	
6.3	CK asked BG about the 'Ad hoc Discussion Group'. BG explained that this gathering had grown from audience members at the awareness talks who had expressed an interest for further involvement. It was functioning as an informal sounding board, so that people had a chance to air their views and BG could inform the Advisory Board of the nature of comments arising.	
6.4	The Nelson Trail initiative continues to progress well. 5k copies of the leaflet were originally printed in June and had gone by November last year. A further 20k have now been re-printed (at a cost divided 60/40 between The Nelson Society and WHEF) and a recent series of guided walks have been undertaken with BRS LI : 4 walks averaged 22 people per walk, each paying £5. Bath Festivals have also expressed an interest in staging walks as part of the 2020 festival.	
6.5	There was no significant progress to report on the adjudication process for recognising locally listed buildings. B&NES Conservation team were still looking at technical issues surrounding the integration of local list entries onto the 'Uniform' computer software system used to manage planning and listed building processes.	

6.6	The issue of a tourist tax/visitor contribution levy was still being pursued and is likely to require national legislation changes, unless our new Council is prepared to mandate a voluntary Heritage Levy of, say, £1 per bed night to help fund and protect our public realm. NB : 2016 = 760,000 bed nights so even if 50% paid the levy that would be c£380k pa.	
6.7	On behalf of World Heritage UK, BG is organising a meeting for all Chairs of WHS Steering Groups/Advisory Boards from across the UK to explore issues of common interest. 27 of the 31 Chairs have accepted an invitation to attend a meeting in Birmingham in November 2019, with only the overseas territories not able to be there.	
7	World Heritage Manager's Report	
7.1	TC talked through his report, a copy of which was circulated in advance of the meeting.	
7.2	Following discussions with representatives from Blaenavon WHS (S.Wales), Bath has agreed to be a pilot scheme in their Lottery funded Youth Ambassador Programme. This will use heritage as a theme for engaging hard to reach youth groups (13 yrs+). TC is confident that this can be blended with existing learning activities and help reach new audiences with a World Heritage message. Blaenavon are currently in stage 1 of their lottery bid and will submit their stage 2 bid in September 2019.	TC
7.3	With regard to the Great Spas of Europe project, TC reported that discussions are underway regarding the 'Evaluation Mission'. This inspection visit would comprise of a day of walking tour and bus tour, and evening reception and a second morning of meetings with key personnel. The purpose is to ensure that the inspectors have all the information that they need to convince them of the merits of our nomination. TC said that this was similar to a planning inspectors visit, in that the inspectors actively discouraged publicity, media and social media interest surrounding their visit. The assistance of some AB partners is likely to be needed in terms of attendance at a reception, providing information, meeting the inspectors, opening up buildings and minor enhancement works. AB offered the services of Bath BID with regard to clean-up works associated with the inspection walks, which was noted with thanks.	
7.4	POST MEETING NOTE: The date of the Evaluation Mission to Bath has been confirmed as the 10,11,12 September 2019. An evening reception at The Roman Baths is planned for Wednesday 12 th September. As soon as these dates were announced, it was known that BG would be in South Africa during the short period of the visit.	
7.5	A Bath Great Spas 'Local Management Plan' (as well as an overarching plan for all 11 spa towns) has been produced. As far as possible, this aligns with actions in our existing WHS Management Plan. It remains a draft but will have to be ratified soon by the Advisory Board as the Great Spas project progresses. TC said he would circulate the draft plan before the next Board meeting.	
7.6	BG asked PC for his views on the Great Spas project. PC said that he was well aware of it and supportive, as he was Council Leader in the early days of the project and had secured the budget (circa 2011) which remains today.	
7.7	SS asked whether the proposed Bath Rugby scheme would be discussed at this meeting. BG confirmed not, as there was no significant news since the last meeting.	
8	World Heritage Site Enhancement Fund	
8.1	An update report was circulated with the agenda papers. BG highlighted a few projects.	
8.2	The refurbishment of Walcot Steps is now underway and as previously reported includes conservation work to the listed properties, repair works to	TC

	the steps themselves, anti-pigeon netting, cleaning and a trial of new LED street lighting. A report and possibly a presentation to the Board could be made in October.	AE BG
8.3	The street signs restoration project continues, with the 50 th sign (at Pierrepont Street) recently completed. BG asked for suggestions for any further signs to restore.	ALL
8.4	Further to the Nelson walking trail discussed above, a John Wood trail is also being progressed, led by Dr Amy Frost of Bath Preservation Trust and AE.	AE
8.5	With regard to funding, BG confirmed that £20k per year was provided by Bath and N.E Somerset Council with a further £5k from Bath Preservation Trust. The Fund remain grateful to both bodies for this continuing funding. Although the Fund's accounts are healthy, only about one year's income is currently available to spend, with other money already committed to existing projects.	
9	Projects Update	
9.1	AG provided an update on the Bathscape project. 6 months into the project, the 11 core projects were now underway. The 'Landscape on Prescription' project fits well with the Great Spas project. The Advisory Group overseeing the project had been strengthened and expanded, and good links had been made with other lottery funded projects. A student research project had been initiated and the Festival of Nature held. The Forest of the Imagination initiative is imminent.	
9.2	CK reported on Beckford's Tower . The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) have asked that certain aspects of the timetable and project management be adjusted. This will require a re-application in August, with a decision expected in November 2019. This 6 month delay to the project fits well with Claire Dixon's maternity leave. CK said that the Tower would be officially recorded (by Historic England) as being 'at risk' in the next publication of their national register. This is not to say it is in imminent peril, but rather to record the fact that works are required and that until the outcome of the bid is known there is currently no funding. CK asked if any Board members wished to be added to the email update bulletins and circulated a list to sign.	
9.3	AP reported on Prior Park Dams . Preparatory work is underway for a start on site in August 2019. Vehicular access tracks are being prepared and project volunteers are being recruited. A crayfish management programme is also being instigated to prevent on-going damage. The works should take 9 months to a year to complete, resulting in a 2021 completion date. NB: WHEF has already committed £7,500 towards the restoration of the Georgian Cascade from the middle lake to the lower lake.	
9.4	TC reported on Cleveland Pools . The Cleveland Pools Trust were close to securing permission to start from the Lottery Fund. The Council had been working with the team to release previously agreed grant funding at this stage in order to give comfort to the NLHF. A new project director (Anna Baker) has been recruited. It is hoped that Anna will present an update at the AB meeting in October.	BG
9.5	JW gave an update on the Archway project. Conservation works to the arch over York Street have been completed. The main contractor is due to be officially appointed imminently with work on site beginning on 8 July for a 60 week construction period. Archaeologists are already on site working in the under-croft and have unearthed a Roman bath that hasn't been seen since Major Davis's initial excavation in the late Victorian era. The Learning Centre is due to open in late 2020 with the WH Interpretation Centre slightly ahead of this.	
9.6	KD noted that 6 Bath Spa University students, undertaking placements with Heritage Services, have undertaken research and published it on a website	

	entitled 'Bath's Victorian Spa Quarter'. http://bathvictorianspa.co.uk/ She also said that an annual student exchange between Claremont University (Los Angeles) and Bath Spa Uni. was about to take place, with a reception at the Holburne Museum on the 1 July. The Chair apologised that he would be in Scotland, supporting The Flow Country WHS Candidate bid all that week.	
9.7	JW then gave an update on the situation at Visit Bath . Following complaints against the Executive Chairman he has voluntarily stepped aside whilst these are investigated. The Board of Trustees (BoT) remains in place with Pip Galland being the acting Chair. Stephen Bird has kindly stepped in to provide interim management support. The BoT will be looking at future options for Visit Bath. NT asked if there was any update on the production of a destination management plan. JW said not at this stage, with resolution of the current management issues taking priority.	
9.8	PC reported on the Assembly Rooms. The National Trust have confirmed their intention to take back possession requiring the Council (together with the Fashion Museum) to vacate the premises by Spring 2023. Due to dilapidation works in reality this means vacating by Autumn 2022. Options for the Fashion Museum are being considered, but the Council wishes to retain the collection. It is likely that the collection will be put into storage for a period until new premises can be found.	
9.9	NT noted that the National Trust have recently advertised for a project manager in connection with the change of ownership of the Assembly Rooms.	
9.10	BG drew attention to the recently published Heritage Services Annual Report, which shows a surplus of £8.6m and as such is a fantastic performance by the whole team. JW agreed and said it should not be overlooked that this money allows first class conservation of the monument.	
9.11	JW said that funding for an ambitious range of public realm schemes was being pursued. A bid to the West of England Combined Authority for £1.5m was being made, targeting schemes in the north of the City, together with a Future High Streets bid addressing Union Street, Kingsmead Square and York Street. This could be the subject of a future presentation to the Board. RT welcomed this offer.	JW
9.12	AH said that the Bath BID and shop-owners were working with the Council on these initiatives and very supportive of them. New street furniture (a Scandinavian brand) had been ordered for Union Street. Southgate had spent £2m on their recent open space upgrade work. Bath is participating in the Britain in Bloom initiative and new re-useable, water-retaining flower baskets have been erected. The Welcome Ambassadors are on-street, with 2 paid and 11 volunteer staff recruited including the former Mayor Patrick Anketell-Jones. They have been recording their 'frequently asked questions' that AH offered to share. In other news, a Light Festival was planned for 2020, working with Bristol.	AH
9.13	BG reported that an 18 month trial coach ban in The Circus was now in operation. This followed a period of monitoring by the residents showing high levels of coach traffic which at peak times was 1 coach every 8 minutes. Also, carriageway re-surfacing was now underway, representing significant Council investment. BG reported that CARA had written to thanks Councillors, and Highways team.	
9.14	NT asked what the reaction to the ban had been from coach companies. BG said that he was aware of some media reports in the specialist coach industry magazines so the message had got through, and those transgressing the ban are being recorded by residents who then write to operators, with a copy of the ban in three languages. CARA reports that coach traffic has gone from c 45 a day to a total of just 59 in 6 weeks	
9.15	DG said that Bath Natural History Society has a great deal of information and	

	will look to bring it forward in pamphlets and websites. As an example he cited the ancient woodlands study at the American Museum, Claverton.	
10	Presentation: Bath Commemorative Plaque Scheme	
10.1	Adrian Amber and Betty Suchar gave a presentation on proposals to address commemorative plaques in Bath.	
10.2	Bath is thought to be one of the first places in the country to introduce a commemorative plaque scheme. It was the initiative of Alderman Thomas Sturge Cottrell who, on 18 February 1898, tabled a Council report advocating a budget be set aside for 'mural tablets'. He was successful and on 22 April 1899 the first bronze plaque (to William Herschel) was unveiled and a Council grant of £250 was allocated for a scheme. Over the first 14 years of the scheme 33 plaques were erected and a second tranche began in 1914.	
10.3	Jess Mackenzie (former WHEF intern) has undertaken an audit of extant plaques (some were lost in the blitz). 67 bronze plaques to people are in place, with 12 other 'rogue' non-bronze plaques also located. It was acknowledged that there were problems with the existing plaques. They were of their time, with names of people that might not be recognised today. Relatively few (10 out of 67) commemorated women. The bronze material tarnished quickly, was difficult to read and was expensive.	
10.4	The proposal is to re-energize the heritage plaque scheme, by the positioning of new plaques in recognition of other worthy past residents. The Chair has asked BS and AA to lead a small team under the auspices of the Advisory Board (and reporting to the Chair) would produce a proposal for new plaques, covering design, funding and people to be commemorated at two a year for ten years. The aim was to have a first new plaque in place by December 2019.	
10.5	Discussion ensued. CK said that the English Heritage report on plaque schemes praised the Bath scheme and that uniformity was important. BG said that planning and funding advice would be required and AH suggested that maybe a blanket planning permission could be applied for. It was queried whether the existing plaque design and materials would be used or maybe something new. BG pointed to the use of 3D printed plastic (as recently used at Kew Gardens) as a possible option. RB said she would be happy to find a contact at Historic England to advise on the scheme.	BG RB RT
10.6	The Chairman said that he envisaged an update report on the plaque proposal being tabled at the October meeting.	
11	Any Other Business	
11.1	AG asked whether the Advisory Board should be discussing the Climate Change Emergency at a forthcoming meeting. He also invited all Board members to the Forest of the Imagination opening event at the Holburne Museum on Thursday 20 June, 6pm.	AG TC
11.2	BG thanked everyone for attendance and contributions to the meeting, and closed the meeting at almost exactly 4pm.	
12	Date of next meetings: PLEASE DIARISE NOW	
	Tuesday 22 October 2019 2pm – 4pm Drawing Room, Roman Baths	
	Tuesday 11 February 2020 2pm – 4pm TBA	
	Tuesday 16 June 2020 2pm – 4pm TBA	
	Tuesday 13 October 2020 2pm – 4pm TBA	