

 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	 City of Bath inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987	<h2>City of Bath World Heritage Site Advisory Board</h2>
<b>Meeting held on 11 May 2021. Online meeting using the Zoom platform</b>		

### Minutes

Attendees			
Prof Barry Gilbertson (Chair) BG	Cllr Dine Romero DR	Stephen Bird SB	
Joanna Robinson JR	Caroline Kay CK	Nick Tobin NT	
Joy Roberts Joy	Ainslie Ensom AE	Rohan Torkildsen RT	
Andrew Grant AG	Polly Andrews PA	Paul Simons PS	
Canon Guy Bridgewater GB	Tom Boden TB	Dr Marion Harney MH	
Sarah Simmonds SS	Cllr Robert Law RL	Prof Astrid Swenson AS	
Emma Frayling EF	Henry Lowe HL	Dr Kristin Doern KD	
Paul Saynor PSa	Helen Daniels HD	Mark Evans ME	
Paula Freeland PF	Victoria Thornton VT	Tony Crouch TC	
			TOTAL 27 attendees
Apologies			
Allison Herbert	Henry Owen-John	Lisa Bartlett	
Prof David Goode	Kathryn Davis		

No	Agenda Item	Act.
<b>1</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed all to the Board meeting. After two meetings focussing on Climate Change the meeting today will return to a wider range of issues and provide the opportunity to catch up on news and events.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
2.1	None.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Previous Minutes (23 March 2021)</b>	
3.1	The previous minutes were accepted as a true record. BG highlighted AG's excellent article on protection of the landscape of Bath (circulated with the previous minutes) and encouraged all to read it.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Changes in Board Membership</b>	
4.1	Following a recent Cabinet re-shuffle at Bath & North East Somerset Council, Cllr Dine Romero has taken responsibility for the portfolio of Children & Young People, Communities & Culture. This includes World Heritage and she therefore joins the Board in place of Cllr Paul Crossley. BG welcomed her on behalf of all.	
4.2	Henry Owen-John, Head of World Heritage, Historic England, has been a long-term Board member. Given his responsibilities across all English WH Sites he has infrequently been able to attend Board meetings in person, but he has been highly active and supportive at national level, especially with regard to the Great Spas Project. Henry is due to retire soon and BG said that he and TC would be writing to Henry to express their gratitude and to wish him well.	<b>BG/ TC</b>
4.3	Lisa Bartlett, Director of Development and long-term Advisory Board member,	

	is leaving the Council on 8 June. Paula Freeland has recently been covering Lisa's role on the Board and will continue to do so.	
4.4	Caroline Kay has recently stepped down from her role with Bath Preservation Trust (BPT). Joanna Robinson, Senior Planning and Conservation Officer at BPT attended the meeting in her place together with BPT Trustee Victoria Thornton. Victoria is chair of the Trust's Architecture, Planning and Place Committee, which regularly scrutinises planning applications and policy. The Trust also has an Advocacy and Campaigns Committee. Victoria is a resident of the Paragon and alongside her volunteer BPT work is President of the Architecture Association School of Architecture, London.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Chairman's Update</b>	
5.1	As introduced in the previous meeting, a submission has now been made for the annual national Georgian Group Awards. BG, working with AE and Joy, has made a submission based on the work of the Mayors Corp of Honorary Guides, who play an important role in interpreting the World Heritage Site. Pre-pandemic, the Guides conducted tours for around 50k people a year. No date is currently known for outcome of the result.	
5.2	Work to resurrect the bronze commemorative plaque scheme within the city is being resumed after being paused during lockdown. Draft criteria, group membership and initial proposals have already been discussed but need finalising. The first plaque was erected in 1897 and (reflecting the thinking of the time) there is little gender or racial balance amongst those originally commemorated. Redressing this imbalance is expected to be reflected in the scheme criteria. One proposal for the first plaque under the new scheme is to commemorate Caroline Herschel, sister of astronomer William Herschel and an accomplished scientist in her own right. Herschel's plaque in New King Street was the first erected under the original scheme and it would be therefore be a fitting gesture to add that of Caroline alongside it.	
5.3	Continuing with the plaque subject, BG and TC have been contacted by Tara Jettoo, a Bath Spa University student who has organised a petition (of 16k names) calling for a plaque to commemorate George Bridgetower. Bridgetower was an eighteenth-century violinist, talented from an early age, who played concerts (thought to have been two) at Bath Assembly Rooms. King George III was amongst the audience. Bridgetower was of mixed race and was just 11 years old at the time of the performances in Bath. The reconvened Plaque Committee will look at this proposal and Tara Jettoo welcomed an opportunity to address that meeting. It should be noted that Bridgetower's brief association with Bath as a travelling performer is unlikely to be a close match with the scheme criteria. The National Trust own the Assembly Rooms and in response to BG's invitation to comment, TB said he had also met with Tara and welcomed her approach. The challenge at the Assembly Rooms was that a great number of people had performed there, with the potential for multiple plaques. TB said that the idea of a plaque on Bridgetower's lodgings in Duke Street felt more appropriate. At BG's invitation, TB was happy to join the Plaque Committee and added that the National Trust are keen to share Bridgetower's story, if not by a plaque at the Assembly Rooms then by other means. DR also commented that she chaired a Council Race Panel and that they had also been looking at a plaque proposal. BG invited DR to the Plaque Committee meeting. In the Chat Box AS said that she thought it was very important to integrate diversity into the plaques (as well as reframing the plaques of those who benefitted from the Slave Economy).	TC/ BG  TC  BG
5.4	On 17 <sup>th</sup> June at 7pm BG has accepted an invitation to contribute to an on-line discussion panel on sustainable tourism organised by the Holburne Museum. A representative from Venice WHS will also be contributing. Post-meeting note : the event was changed to a talk, without a panel.	
	(Sarah Simmonds joined the meeting).	

<b>6</b>	<b>Board Member updates</b>	
6.1	<p><b>Stephen Bird</b>, B&amp;NES Heritage Services. The Roman Baths re-open on Monday May 17<sup>th</sup>. The Fashion Museum and Victoria Art Gallery open on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>. The World Heritage Centre in York Street is poised to undergo the exhibition fit-out and work on both an App and self-guided tours are progressing. The windows have been restored with the street appearance being much enhanced. The Clore Learning Centre is also undergoing fit-out, with new classrooms being named Sulis and Minerva. The new Watertank roof room provides a lunchroom and meeting space, and is so called as the style mimics that of the laundry tank formerly in that location. The WH Centre and Clore Learning Centre should both open in early September. The below ground Excavation Zone gives children the opportunity to (digitally) manipulate large stones and dig for artefacts. The Laconicum area will form part of the Roman Baths and as such add extra floor space to the existing visit. This area is due to open in the summer. SB said he would investigate opportunities for Board members to visit. In the Chat Box RT said that Historic England would be happy to promote the opening of these facilities.</p>	<p><b>SB</b></p> <p><b>RT/ SB</b></p>
6.2	<p><b>Paul Simons</b>, Cleveland Pools. BBC and ITV are filming on-site this week, in response to a press release announcing the start on site of construction work. Emergency funding had been secured with contracts being signed at the last possible minute, and PS thanked funders including Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It is a very challenging construction site, with no road access. Consequently, a boat and barge will be operating on the river for 15 months. An upstream building compound has been created and cranes are required at both ends of the journey. The historic pool has been dredged and cleared of debris with 800 x 1 tonne sacks of silt removed. The sides of the pools have been exposed and are over 1 metre thick. The river deliveries are designed to minimise impact on the neighbours. Multiple handling of materials has added £1m to the construction costs. PS was keen to point out that starting on site did not mean that all necessary funds have been secured and fundraising continues. The Pools should open to the public in late Summer 2022. BG congratulated PS on reaching this significant milestone in the project.</p>	
	(Guy Bridgewater and Marion Harney joined the meeting).	
<b>7</b>	<b>World Heritage Manager's Report</b>	
7.1	<p>TC delivered a verbal update on four main items. The Queen's speech in Parliament today includes a proposal for a planning bill. A response was made to the White Paper consultation last year stating that this comprehensive review of the system was an opportunity to include World Heritage status within primary legislation and give it statutory status 37 years after the UK signed the UNESCO Convention. It also highlighted concerns, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The potential removal of the duty for local authorities to co-operate in plan making was considered undesirable. The setting of Bath WHS abuts Wiltshire and co-operation between authorities is one reason that a formal buffer zone was not required.</li> <li>• A return to centrally imposed housing targets would be unwelcome.</li> <li>• It is difficult to see how the proposed simplistic threefold categorisation of land (growth areas, renewal areas, protected areas) would work in Bath as land within the City will not fit easily into any single category. Presumably the entire City would be classified as a protected area and all planning applications handled accordingly.</li> </ul>	
7.2	<p>As mentioned in the previous meeting, a bid has been made to the World Monuments Watch Programme. <a href="https://www.wmf.org/watch">https://www.wmf.org/watch</a> The Watch is a global programme which highlights challenges sites are facing, publicises their stories and opens them up to outside help and (potential) funding. Our approach is that Bath is a heritage icon and a living city which needs to adapt</p>	

	<p>to meet C21<sup>st</sup> challenges. The key programme themes are addressing climate change, underrepresented heritage and tackling over-tourism. These are issues we must face in the next management plan, alongside existing challenges including development pressures, conserving the landscape setting and improving the public realm. As such an acknowledged and self-contained heritage city Bath provides an ideal test bed for new ideas to tackle key themes with resulting transferrable knowledge. In the bid, a request has been made for a project officer to facilitate a sub-group to progress those 3 key themes. Results of the highly competitive bid will be known in early 2022. TC thanked RT for highlighting the bid opportunity and to KD and Jane Wildblood for contributing information.</p>	
7.3	<p>It has been confirmed that the UNESCO Committee to assess the nomination will be held behind closed doors in China from 16-31<sup>st</sup> July, with the Great Spas agenda item expected on around the 24<sup>th</sup>. The advanced papers containing the ICOMOS recommendation are due for release on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June. Given the complexity of this nomination a recommendation for immediate inscription is considered unlikely, and the question may be how much more work is required. Following the recent Council Cabinet re-shuffle Cllr Sue Craig has passed the political lead for the Great Spas to Cllr Ruth Malloy, and TC will be working with Ruth and DR with regard to press releases, etc. The Great Spas currently has a draft management plan which sits alongside our existing Management Plan. When we come to renew the existing plan later this year, it is hoped that both plans can be rolled in together, as we have done with this Advisory Board which serves both inscriptions.</p>	
7.4	<p><b>Helen Daniels</b> gave a report on World Heritage Day 2021, which (due to Covid-19 restrictions) was once again celebrated on-line. This had however provided an opportunity to improve our on-line presence and offer with good results. Helen's report is attached with these minutes.</p>	TC/ HD
<b>8</b>	<p><b>World Heritage Enhancement Fund Update</b></p>	
8.1	<p>AE delivered an update on recent Fund activities, New lighting has been installed at Walcot Passage Steps. This is part of a 7-year wider scheme which has involved conservation of the stone and ironwork at the top of the steps and restoration of the two incised street names at Bladud's Buildings. Existing modern plastic lighting has been removed and replaced with two new metal heritage lamps, copied from authentic examples outside the Pump Rooms. Replica ornate brackets have also been installed. Appreciation was expressed to Steve Kerss (resident of Sydney Buildings), who undertook the research and design work. Stephen Burrell and Colin Davis from B&amp;NES Highways co-ordinated the implementation. The finished scheme is not only a visual improvement, but it also enhances the quality of light, which has been appreciated by local residents.</p>	
8.2	<p>The Jewish Burial Ground at Combe Down is the only physical reminder of a small Jewish community which settled in Bath from the 1750's onward. There are only 15 such surviving cemeteries in England. The cemetery was established in 1812 on a former quarry site and includes a small cottage which the Friends Group hope to turn into a heritage centre. The Friends have been active in conservation and fundraising and in 2013 the Fund gave £650 toward conservation of 2 Georgian chest tombs. In April 2021 a further £1,500 was granted toward similar work. The next phases will be restoration of the boundary walls and cottage, plus potential archaeological works. HL said one of his members has already been in touch with the Friends, although locating graves is best done with Ground Penetrating Radar but the Society's equipment is unfortunately out of action. MH offered to liaise with the relevant experts in the University of Bath to see if they could help. DR said the council or Uni had equipment which has recently been used to map vaults and she would be happy to liaise here.</p>	

	Mid-meeting break	
<b>9</b>	<b>Presentation on the Hot Springs of Bath – Current Position and Future Challenges.</b>	
9.1	<b>Paul Saynor</b> (Head of Water Resources and Supply Strategy, Wessex Water), gave a presentation. A copy of the presentation will be despatched with these minutes. PS covered the origin and history of the hot springs, including an episode in 1810 when they failed. He also covered threats, protection and management of the springs. BG thanked him for an excellent presentation.	
9.2	PS made reference to William Smith, known as the ‘Father of English Geology’, with Joy R noting in the chat box that Smith is commemorated with a plaque at 29 Pulteney Street and TC adding that WS’s office was in Trim Street. DR wondered whether thermal water may be an issue for the proposed Bristol Underground system, PS having mentioned the springs in Hotwells, Bristol. NT mentioned in the chat box 5 landslips in Bath between 1875 and 1885, during which 135 houses in what is now Hedgemoor Park either collapsed or had to be pulled down. Eventually, 271 houses were ‘removed’.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Board Member updates (continued)</b>	
10.1	<b>Joy Roberts</b> , Mayor of Bath’s Corp of Honorary Guides. Joy thanked BG and AE for preparing the Georgian Group Award submission on behalf of the Mayor’s Guides. Tours resume on 17 <sup>th</sup> May, with face coverings to be worn. A booking system will still be used, as although the legal limit is now 30 people this is un-wieldy, so group size will be restricted to 10. The Guides have been using Zoom for on-line training.	
10.2	<b>Kristin Doern</b> , Bath Spa University. Kristin updated on her changing roles within the University. Since last June, she has been one of 3 interim heads of the Business School and is about to become joint Head of the School of Design. 75% of students have been back on site since 8 <sup>th</sup> March, with the remainder returning from Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> May. Degree shows will happen after 21 June, although still socially distanced. A series of graduation ‘mini celebrations’ will be held at the Newton St Loe campus in July.	
10.3	<b>Marion Harney</b> , University of Bath. It is a similar picture at the University of Bath, where 80% of students were back on campus with the remainder due to return from Monday. Business as usual is planned for the new academic term in September. Graduation celebrations will be held on campus in July.	
10.4	<b>Emma Frayling</b> , Visit Bath. Emma said she would be happy to help with the public relations for the Spas in July, working with the B&NES Comms Team. She also encouraged members to send through content for the ‘What’s On?’ section of the Visit Bath website, as this gets high viewing figures.	
10.5	<b>Tom Boden</b> , National Trust (NT). The Prior Park Dams project was now fully re-started, with the Lower Dam completed and an overall scheme completion date now likely to be in 2022. Bathampton Meadows is going through the process of legal acquisition and when completed a consultation process is planned to explore the future uses. The NT are also engaged with the Riverline Project <a href="https://www.bathriverline.co.uk/">https://www.bathriverline.co.uk/</a> At the Assembly Rooms Donald Insall Associates are preparing a conservation statement which promises to be interesting and which can be shared in due course. Dyrham House opens next week with a new exhibition space and an opening exhibition on William Blaythwaite, former owner and Bath MP. The International National Trusts Organisation held their first online conference a few weeks ago which may be of interest. <a href="https://www.into.org/">https://www.into.org/</a>	<b>TB</b>
10.6	<b>Paula Freeland</b> , B&NES Planning and Conservation. The ongoing national changes to planning law and regulation have proved operationally challenging. In particular, changes to the Use Classes Order and Permitted Development Rights. The partial review of the Local Plan is progressing with an Options document produced. PF offered to speak in more detail about these at a future	

	meeting if required. The Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) are also under review, with the intention to roll these two into one. The Locally Listed Heritage (SPD), which provides the framework for a list of locally important buildings, is being put forward for single member approval in the next few weeks. Planning application numbers have risen in 2021, thought to be due to working people having greater disposable income and improving their homes and work from home facilities (including swimming pools!). BG asked about parking consultations, which was outside of PF's remit, but she offered to report back on this issue.	<b>PF/ BG</b>
10.7	<b>Joanna Robinson</b> , Bath Preservation Trust. JR said she had information on the parking changes which she offered to share. The Trust had also noted the high number of planning applications and had attended every planning committee meeting for the past year, in addition to commenting on national and local policy changes. Projects such as City Centre Security and Riverline had also been engaged with. BPT are proposing to update their own guidance for traditional buildings. WH Day was a successful collaboration. Number 1 Royal Crescent is opening on 2 June with a new visitor experience involving new sound and film installations to experience a day in family life. A one-way system is in place for visitors with pre-booked tickets.	<b>JR</b>
10.8	BG closed the meeting and thanked all attendees and participants.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Date of next meetings:</b> <i>PLEASE DIARISE NOW</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 19 October 2pm – 4pm</li> </ul>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Papers attached with these minutes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Saynor's presentation</li> <li>• World Heritage Day 2021 Report (Helen Daniels)</li> </ul>	