

**Bath’s UNESCO World Heritage Sites**

The City of Bath 1987

The Great Spa Towns of Europe 2021

**ADVISORY BOARD**

**Terms of Reference**

**September 2024**

**The UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention states, at Article 4 *“Each State Party to this Convention recognises that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage (referred to in Articles 1 and 2) and situated on its territory belongs primarily to the State”.***

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ADVISORY BOARD

1.The City of Bath UNESCO World Heritage Site (“WHS”) Advisory Board (‘the Board’) is the principal body (originally named Steering Group when first set up by the then Council in 2001) to advise, oversee and monitor the recurring six-year WHS Management Plan (‘MP’), which shall, going forward, cover both the 1987 Inscription (The City of Bath) and the 2021 Inscription (The Great Spa Towns of Europe) on the UNESCO World List of World Heritage Sites.

2. Bath & North East Somerset Council (“B&NES” or “the Council”) retains the role of ‘Chief Steward’ of our World Heritage Inscriptions, as a responsibility handed down by UNESCO to the UK Government and thence to the Council.

3. The Board and its members (as individuals) have a responsibility and obligation to keep abreast of World Heritage matters. It is essential that members support the principles, objectives and actions set out in the current MP.

4. An illustration of the organisational hierarchy is attached as Appendix A.

5. The Board shall have an independent, non-executive, Chair (“the Chair”) serving a maximum of two terms of three years duration, in a volunteer capacity. The Role Description for the Chair, to be appointed by the Council, as confirmed in a Letter of Appointment, is set out in Appendix B.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP (“THE SMG”)

6. SMG Membership is made up of one representative from each of the following organisations with established expertise and experience in the protection and management of WHSs:  Historic England, B&NES, Bath Preservation Trust, National Trust, ICOMOS-UK and a representative of the GSTE.  The appropriate representative will be chosen by their organisation.  The WHS Manager will be a member. The SMG group will be chaired by the independent Chair of the AB.

7. The SMG, working alongside the Council, shall be involved in the role appointment selection and renewal processes. The SMG, along with the Council, shall be responsible for appropriate succession planning for the role of Chair.

8. The SMG will meet approximately quarterly, or less as required.  Dates to be provided at the start of the year.  Adequate time required prior to AB meetings to allow for reporting of relevant recommendations for consideration, ideally two weeks.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

9. The members of the Board shall comprise representatives of the UK Government (currently DCMS), the Council and a range of national, regional and local organisations with a proven interest in heritage and the well-being of the Bath WHS in particular. The list of organisations (or stakeholders) currently represented on the Board is set out at Appendix D. The number of organisations is not finite, other than as to practicality, and should reflect the experience and expertise needed to give effect to the MP. It must be borne in mind, however, that the Board has no direct executive powers.

10. Members attend meetings in a personal capacity, reflecting their individual experience and expertise, whilst also serving as representatives of their nominating organisation. However, importantly, the members do not serve on the Board to lobby for the organisation(s) that have nominated them, nor to lobby for their own personal interests. Some members may be co-opted for their particular skills, knowledge, experience or expertise as the need dictates.

Where a conflict of interest arises, it must be declared and recorded as such. The Board has adopted the Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 to deal with any conflicts of interest that may arise. See following link for details: [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Local%20Government%20Association%20Model%20Councillor%20Code%20of%20Conduct%202020%20WEB.pdf](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.local.gov.uk%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2FLocal%2520Government%2520Association%2520Model%2520Councillor%2520Code%2520of%2520Conduct%25202020%2520WEB.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CAdrian_Neilson%40BATHNES.GOV.UK%7C1aacaea8437645ce5a9008dcc0fd5030%7Cc562c0ced9254dfd8d99c9416eb03eb9%7C1%7C0%7C638597441422175769%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=FnJa%2BqwYE6AtE0Vle4U42zbGQo31FT5VkDdd8HgKg30%3D&reserved=0)

11. Members are normally appointed for a 3-year term and are subject to review, except in the circumstances outlined above where they are representing a nominating organisation in a specialist capacity.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

12. The most recent MP was dated 2016-2022 and covered only the 1987 Inscription.  The next iteration, 2024-2030, currently in preparation, includes management planning for both Inscriptions in one document, at the request of UNESCO, rather than two separate Plans. This approach is in line with a local decision to manage both Inscriptions within the one Advisory Board, supported by a full-time employed WHS Manager. A part-time, World Heritage Manager (whose Role Description is set out at Appendix F) will exclusively focus on management of The Great Spa Towns of Europe (“GTSE”) aspects of the MP.

13. MPs cover a six-year period and generally follow a standard format.  Plan renewal involves updating any legislation or management measures and refreshing relevant issues, objectives and actions. The renewal process is project managed by the WHS Manager, who will produce an initial draft and engage with the Board to identify new priorities, issues, objectives and actions. This whole exercise will normally be undertaken through a sub-group, which may be the SMG, reporting back to the Board. The Board will sign off the draft MP and a proposed consultation plan, which will include Board member involvement in undertaking the consultation.  Following public consultation, the sub-group and the Board will consider responses and recommend alterations accordingly. B&NES, through a Full Council meeting, will also be asked to endorse the MP. The completed MP will be submitted to DCMS, who will in turn send it to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in Paris. It is unusual for UNESCO to respond other than to acknowledge receipt.

BOARD FUNCTIONS

14. In short, the main functions of the Board are, and wherever appropriate, to work in conjunction with the WHS Manager to:

* Advise and support the WHS Manager, who has a responsibility to provide and co-ordinate a channel of communication between the Board and other organisations involved in the overseeing, monitoring and implementation of the MP, together with the facilitation and circulation (after the Chair’s approval) of the agendas and minutes of the meetings of the Board. Secretarial and administrative support, including the timely distribution of Board papers 10 days in advance of Board Meetings, booking of meeting rooms etc, shall be undertaken by the Council.
* Work in concert, where appropriate, with the part-time WH Manager with a focus on the GTSE 2021 Inscription.
* Create and endorse a rolling three-year plan of work and meetings, relating to the MP, and to review the work-plan detail annually, making whatever revisions are deemed necessary.
* Discuss and agree strategic decisions on the prioritising of actions emanating from the implementation of the MP, on both Inscriptions, either jointly or separately.
* Advocate World Heritage, and the MP in particular, throughout the city as a constant outreach project, including liaison with the World Heritage Centre in York Street, and by arranging talks, liaison with visiting delegations and any appropriate consultations, as the need dictates.
* Act as a forum for the exchange of information on World Heritage, whilst maintaining a regular open dialogue between members, and reaching out to other UK (and wider) WHS as a means of identifying, considering and adopting current best practice.
* Ensure that both WHS Inscriptions are represented at meetings of World Heritage UK, a national organisation serving as a forum (with a line of direct communication to the UK Government) for the WHS in the UK and Dependent Territories.

BOARD MEETINGS & AGENDA

15. The Board shall usually meet twice a year. The meeting will usually last not less than 2 hours and not more than 3 hours, although the Board is encouraged to allocate time before and after each meeting to give the Members of the Board time to network or discuss matters informally.

16. The agenda paperwork for each bi-annual Board meeting shall contain the UNESCO Article 4 Statement (as set out in bold herein), as a useful reminder of the Board’s purpose.

17. The Agenda should include :

* Receiving reports from
* Chair
* WHS Manager (City of Bath)
* WHS Manager (Great Spa Towns of Europe)
* SMG
* WH Enhancement Fund (“WHEF”) (Terms of Reference at Appendix G)
* An opportunity for Members to share important and relevant information about their organisation’s recent contribution to enhancing the WHS.
* A presentation about a particular aspect of World Heritage, or a heritage project being undertaken within the WHS boundary, as a means of ensuring that Board members are well informed on local matters of heritage interest.
* On occasion, one ‘Soapbox’ item where the Chair invites a member to speak for no more than 5 minutes on a relevant topic about which they feel passionate.
* Any Other Business : items for AoB should be raised with the Chair and/or the WHS Manager at least 5 days in advance of the Board meeting.

18. The Board shall always have the option of an additional ‘single agenda item’ meeting for expediency, or a matter of importance, such as to discuss Climate Emergency or, for example, a planning application that might cause material or significant ‘harm’ to the WHS.

19. The Board shall have the capacity to convene a small working group of members to research, discuss and recommend a course of action to the Board on any relevant topic, including significant planning applications which may have a material impact on the WHS. Any proposed recommendation or output from such an ad-hoc working group will be subject to SMG (or, if appropriate, Board) approval, and must not be distributed to third parties, or the Council, until such approval is granted.

GENERAL

20. To encourage members to attend meetings, the Board, the SMG and the WHEF, should each operate a *‘three strikes and out’* rule. If a member misses three meetings in a row, they will be asked, by the Chair (in consultation with the SMG) to stand down and be replaced by a different individual from the organisation they represent, to be considered and reviewed in the usual procedural process as set out herein.

21. The Board shall arrange to review and, if necessary, amend these Terms of Reference on an annual basis, at the first Board meeting of the Council year (usually in April or May), subject only to the approval of this version and any recommended amendments by the Council Cabinet member responsible for World Heritage, who shall serve on the Board. In making the *‘Single Member Decision’* that Councillor may, if desired, consult with the Leader of the Council, or the Cabinet or the Full Council before granting approval.

22. NB: The Board is NOT a generic heritage body for the City, but one focused on World Heritage, nor shall it be considered a forum for ‘Tourist Information’, which is the domain of Visit West, whose CEO serves on the Board. It shall not be used as a forum for discussing matters beyond the remit of the Board, and which are more appropriately raised in other fora.

23. The member organisations of the Review Panel, all currently members of the Advisory Board, responsible for drafting these Terms of Reference, in 2023, are set out as Appendix H.

**Appendices** *[yet to be drafted]*

* **A.** Bath WHS organisation chart
* **B.** Role Description for the independent (volunteer) Chair of the Board
* **C.** Role Description for B&NES employee as World Heritage Site Manager (City of Bath)
* **D.** Terms of Reference for the Strategic Management Group (“SMG”)
* **E.** Member organisations represented on the Board at October 2023
* **F.** Role Description (or contract terms) for World Heritage Site Manager (Great Spa Towns of Europe)
* **G.** Terms of Reference for the Bath World Heritage Enhancement Fund
* **H.** The member organisations of the Review Panel, responsible for drafting these Terms of Reference, 2023