

**Bath’s UNESCO World Heritage Inscriptions**

City of Bath World Heritage Site 1987

Great Spa Towns of Europe World Heritage Site 2021

**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP**

**Terms of Reference**

As signatories of the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) the UK government is obliged under Article 4 to ensure the ‘identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations’ of its World Heritage Sites which are recognised as being of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

The primary role of the management system for the World Heritage Site (WHS) is ensuring the protection of its OUV. The governance structure, as part of this system, is designed to support this aim through a participatory approach to the management of the WHS including the production, implementation, review and update of its WHS Management Plan (WHSMP).

## Purpose (overall)

The Strategic Management Group (SMG) exists to support the Advisory Board (AB). The AB is a larger group whose members represent the diverse range of relevant organisations and interests related to the WHS. It meets twice a year, providing an opportunity for wider participation in the management of the WHS and a forum for information exchange. The Terms of Reference for the AB and a list of its current membership are attached as appendices A and B. The size of the AB affords wide participation but is less well suited to detailed forward planning or discussion of complex strategic and operational challenges. The SMG is designed to address these issues and provide recommendations to the AB.

The SMG is made up of members of the AB representing organisations with a key role in managing the WHS and/or advising on its protection. The smaller and more agile SMG meets approximately quarterly and is flexible enough to be convened at short notice if required. Its size and the particular areas of expertise of its members allow for forward planning, timely and focussed discussion of strategic and operational challenges and direct support to the WHS Manager. The SMG reports to the AB on its work and presents recommendations to the AB for their discussion and sign off as required.

## Strategic Management Group (SMG): Principal responsibilities

* Provide expert advice on strategic and operational challenges related to the protection and management of the World Heritage Site (WHS) and the implementation of the WHSMP as they arise
* Provide recommendations to the AB on matters related to the preparation and/or implementation of the WHSMP
* Establish and form the core of the steering group overseeing the development of the WHSMP and ensure the quality of the outputs
* Agree the most effective approach to combining the management of the two WHS inscriptions: the City of Bath and the Great Spa Towns of Europe (GSTE)
* Seek to ensure that adequate resources are provided by the partnership to protect, present and manage the WHS effectively including the production and implementation of the WHSMP
* Prioritise actions in the WHSMP and recommend 3-year action plans to the AB
* Recommend the establishment of working groups as required to the AB
* Request and review reports, as required, from the WHS Manager on the implementation of the WHSMP. Provide any appropriate recommendations, including any proposed action plan amendments to the AB
* Request and review summary report, as required, from the WHS Manager on the condition of the WHS and its OUV, and provide any appropriate recommendations to the AB
* Review draft UNESCO periodic reports on a six yearly cycle prior to submission
* Seek to ensure national and international policies and guidance are reflected in the management of the WHS including the UN Sustainable Development Goals and UNESCO policies on climate change and sustainable development
* Identify emerging threats to the WHS and its OUV and through discussion and seek strategic solutions for avoiding or mitigating these. Report to the AB with relevant recommendations as appropriate
* Discuss planning proposals with the potential for harm to the WHS and its OUV at an early stage to assist in informing design and partner organisations’ responses
* Identify opportunities for enhancing the WHS, improving understanding and presentation and establish a strategy for partnership action.
* Review the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the independent chair of the AB and take part in the selection process for a successor
* Review the effectiveness of the WHS governance structure and management arrangements biennially and report any recommendations to the AB
* Advise and support the WHS Manager in their duties
* Assist the WHS Manager in ensuring adequate liaison and reporting to the AB

## SMG Membership, roles and responsibilities

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.

It is the members’ responsibility to:

* Provide appropriate expertise, knowledge, and experience themselves and from across their organisation to support the protection and enhancement of the WHS and its OUV
* Demonstrate a commitment to avoiding harm to the WHS and its OUV while promoting its role in sustainable development and climate action
* Seek to ensure best practice in all aspects of WHS management
* Demonstrate commitment to participatory planning and partnership working
* Champion the WHS where appropriate within their organisation and actively seek support for the implementation of the WHSMP
* Review the ToR of the SMG biennially

## Meeting frequency and location

* 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.
* Additional meetings may be called if required
* Quarterly meetings should be held in person where possible, online or hybrid
* Meetings to be hosted by B&NES and other members of the SMG where possible

## Resources

* Time, expertise, experience and knowledge of SMG members
* WHS Manager to act as secretariat for the SMG providing agenda, meeting notes and drafting recommendations agreed by the SMG to the AB

## Decision making process and transparency

* Decisions and recommendations will be made by the SMG on the basis of consensus among members
* Members of the SMG will consult their organisation where necessary and reflect their views and any statutory responsibilities
* No member organisation or individual may unilaterally alter decisions or recommendations made by the SMG without referral to the group
* The AB retains sign-off of the WHSMP and action plans for its implementation
* In areas such as planning where organisations represented have statutory duties or organisational positions, it may not be possible to achieve a SMG consensus recommendation, but this should not preclude discussion
* Commitment to the principles of effective partnership working including openness, trust and equality will be upheld

## Relationship to the Advisory Board

* The SMG supports the work of the larger AB. The SMG is made up of members of the AB who represent named organisations with a key role in managing the WHS and/or advising on its protection
* The SMG provides recommendations to the AB relevant to AB role as set out in the AB ToR (Appendix X) e.g. 3-year action plans for the delivery of the WHSMP
* The AB discuss and agree or suggest amendments to recommendations of the SMG. The AB consider any additional matters raised for consideration by the SMG