

Durham Castle and
Cathedral
World Heritage Site

Annual Report 2020



Welcome

- To the fourth annual report – since our current Management Plan was approved by UNESCO. To see our plan in full, please go to [About Durham World Heritage Site](#) and click on “Management Plan” on the right hand side of the page
- A lot has happened in the past year. Our Action Plan (which you can see in more detail in the Management Plan) has 6 key aims, underpinned by supporting objectives:
 1. *Protecting the Site’s Outstanding Universal Value and setting*
 2. *Conserve and enhance the Site and its setting*
 3. *Support understanding and awareness of the Site and its Outstanding Universal Value and of World Heritage*
 4. *Support communities in realising the economic, social, and cultural opportunities and benefits World Heritage Status can bring*
 5. *Support visitor and communities’ access to and their enjoyment of the Site and its benefits*
 6. *Support and demonstrate exemplary WHS management to deliver all aims*
- We hope this Report will tell you about some of the activities delivered over the past year in support of these Aims.
- 2020 saw the strengthening of the WHS Coordinating Committee, with new members drawn from: Visit County Durham (Michelle Gorman), Durham Business Improvement District (Adam Deathe), Durham University’s Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies (Robin Coningham) and Durham Cathedral Development (Gaye Kirby)

Liz Waller Chair of WHS Coordinating Committee

Jane Gibson, WHS Coordinator



Who we are

As of December 2020, the WHS is managed with the support and advice of the WHS Coordinating committee, whose members are:

Liz Waller, Director of Library and Collections and University Librarian, Durham University

Dr Anne Allen, Deputy Principal, St John's College

Reverend Charlie Allen, Canon Chancellor, Durham Cathedral

Steve Bhowmick, Environment and Design Manager Durham County Council

Mike Collins, Historic England

Professor Robin Coningham, Durham University's Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Adam Deathe, Durham BID

Michelle Gorman, Visit County Durham

Gaye Kirby, Head of development, Durham Cathedral

John Lowe, The City of Durham Trust

John Pendlebury, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) UK

Jane Robson, Assistant Director (Estates Operations), Durham University



Aim 1 Protect the Site's Outstanding Universal Value and Setting

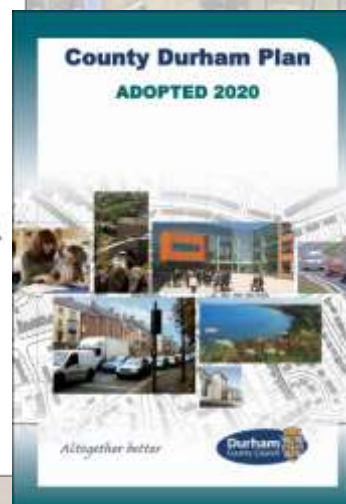
- All landowners on the WHS managed a challenging year balancing the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on income streams, access and plans and the need to ensure economic survival, whilst maintaining essential services, inspections and emergency work to safeguard the historic fabric of the World Heritage Site

- 2020 saw the adoption of the County Durham Plan, signed off by Durham County Council's cabinet and endorsed by the Secretary of State as the statutory planning and development framework for the county to 2035. Policies in respect of the historic environment and WHS have been updated and given appropriate weight

- Durham City's Neighbourhood Plan has been compiled by the City of Durham Parish Council and is now pending public referendum. It already carries significant weight in planning applications and as far as the WHS is

concerned it contains a specific policy (H1: Protection and Enhancement of the World Heritage Site) that strengthens what is in the County Plan.

- There are continuing efforts by the City of Durham Trust to respond to planning applications that impact negatively on the WHS and its setting. Of particular significance here are the applications for the Durham University Business School and the Bent House Lane housing development. In addition, the World Heritage Site Coordinator scrutinises key applications to draw attention to the need to ensure that the OUV of the site and setting is considered when considering planning applications. This is essential to demonstrate that the stakeholders take account of the need for protection of the WHS to UNESCO.



Aim 2 Conserve and enhance the Site and its Setting

- The new internal lobbies to the Cathedral's north and south doors were completed. The construction of the glass porches that frame the delicate architecture of the north and south doors improve visitor access, use of the doors for liturgical processions and events, and the environmental conditions within the church, dramatically opening up visibility into the church and on to the Cloister
- The Cathedral facilitated a safe return of the Works Yard and Gardeners from September to carry out essential maintenance and repairs, and to repair damage to the grounds from neglect or overuse.
- One of the Cathedral's masons completed the carving of the new South Transept Cross (after his design won an internal competition) as well as completing his first year of Cathedrals Workshop Fellowship programme. The Cathedral's Mason Supervisor received the Journeyman Award from the Masons Livery Company in recognition of his achievements.
- The construction phase of the Conservation Project at Bishop Cosin's

Library has reached completion. It has delivered extensive works to the roof, rainwater goods and a programme of stonework repairs and replacements to restore the external envelope. Internally, over 5 tonnes of lime plaster were applied to the interior and the cornicing was restored by a team of specialist contractors and the internal walls have been decorated in lime wash to ensure the building remains breathable

- St John's College completed the restoration of the stained glass windows in the Chapel of St Mary the Less.
- At University College (the Castle) repairs and improvements have continued to the external lighting and the various surveys which are needed to maintain the building and landscape around the castle are being updated along with a programme of potential development and enhancement activities across the site



Photo - Cathedral



Photo - Cathedral



Photo - St John's College

Aim 3 Support understanding and awareness of the Site and its Outstanding Universal Value and of World Heritage

- The World Heritage Site Visitor Centre on Owengate underwent a full refurbishment and refreshment of displays. A new gallery has been installed, focussing on the development of the City of Durham, both in respect of the actual World Heritage Site and in its surrounding setting. Another new display looks at the development of the tradition of Pilgrimage, both in Durham and in a world-wide context, building on our contacts with the Nepali WHS at Lumbini, the birthplace of The Buddha. The new displays are flexible and will facilitate regular updates
- The WHS' website was also upgraded and now includes improved links to the key stakeholders across the Site, encouraging visitors to explore the full extent of the WHS
- The Institute of Mediaeval and Early Modern Studies (IMEMS) have developed a range of training opportunities. The MA in Medieval and Early Modern Studies, whose core modules focus on the tangible and intangible heritage of Durham's WHS, welcomed its first cohort of students 2020; and two highly successful online Palaeography and Latin Schools have used digitised manuscripts from the Durham Priory Library Recreated project as primary sources.

MA Programme and Short Courses



Institute of Medieval
and Early Modern
Studies

People



Screenshots courtesy of IMEMS/WHS Centre

Aim 4 - Support communities in realising the economic, social, and cultural opportunities and benefits of World Heritage

- Both Durham University and Durham Cathedral took their schools programmes online to continue their school engagement programme during the Covid-19 restrictions
- IMEMS also developed a programme of online events, including the #OnPilgrimage series, the student-led Medieval and Early Modern Gardens Community Course, and the Early Modern and History of the Book conferences which have attracted a wider and more globally diverse audience than ever before.
- With their long-term partner Blackfriars Restaurant (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) IMEMS have delivered two innovative Eat Medieval online cookery schools, taking customers on a gastronomic journey through recipes from the earliest medieval recipe collection, originally composed by the monks at Durham Cathedral Priory.
- Durham University's Estates and Facilities directorate have implemented a woodland management plan in and around the Peninsula with surveys of trees being carried out and required works undertaken
- Links between human health and wellbeing, and access to the natural world, are well known and continue to influence work undertaken
- Our regional DMO, Visit County Durham, launched the Northern Saints Trails <http://www.northersaints.com/>. A series of four key waymarked paths radiating out from Durham across the North East of England. Supported by a suite of digital and physical resources the project aims to bring visitors to the region to enjoy our rich heritage and hospitality



Screenshots – Courtesy of University and Cathedral

Aim 5 Support visitor and communities' access, their enjoyment of the Site and its benefit

- Across the WHS the Cathedral and University have developed programmes of online engagement activities to keep in contact with all our volunteers. Activities have included regular e-newsletters and online talks and socials
- Whilst safely mothballing their historic buildings & building services the Cathedral kept the wider setting open & safe for increased public access to the outdoors
- Open Treasure introduced a successful programme of curator-led tours and delivered two temporary exhibitions in the Collections Gallery before the Covid-19 lockdown: Mapping the World displayed our amazing collection of historic maps and atlases; and Restoration, Redesign, Renovation told the stories behind the works done to the Cathedral in the 19th century
- Durham University, Estates and Facilities Directorate have recently worked

alongside Durham Rotary Club to install a defibrillator in the "Palace Green Red Telephone Box". The defibrillator is registered with North East Ambulance Service allowing anyone access in an emergency

- St John's College has developed tours for local history groups of newly refurbished Bowes House
- Both Colleges on the WHS (University College and St. John's College) were able to adapt in compliance with Covid-19 regulations to enable students who needed to, to return to the University in residence
- The Castle continued to develop their visitor offer including new material for younger visitors and maintained the high standards of visitor services for the Castle Tours which were recognised with Visit England's Visitor Welcome Accolade
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Screenshots/Guide sheet courtesy of Cathedral and University

Aim 6 Support and demonstrate exemplary WHS management to deliver all aims

- Durham County Council in collaboration with the WHS Coordinator has carried out a re -clarification of the remit of the WHS Coordinator in respect of commenting on Planning Applications as they relate to OUVs
- Early 2020 saw a day-long workshop chaired by Henry Owen-John of Historic England with representatives from stakeholders across the WHS to revisit the WHS Management Plan at its half-way stage
- and refresh its effectiveness. New operational groups were convened, with membership drawn from WHS stakeholders within and beyond the WHS's boundaries:
 - Living, Working and Visiting Durham WHS
 - Conservation
 - Resilience
 - River and woodlands
 - Research and dissemination



2021 looking forward

- 2021 will see the return of the biennial festival, *Lumiere and is* set to illuminate the city again for four nights from 18 - 21 November 2021. This year will include BRILLIANT, a commissioning scheme aimed at encouraging anyone (aged 18 or older) to suggest their brightest idea for an artwork as part of the *Lumiere* 2021 programme
- With the cancellation of the 2020 World Heritage Committee, the WHS's boundary revision proposal to include the River Wear and outer banks that surround the existing WHS has been taken forward to the 2021 WHS Committee due to be held in Fuzhou in June/July
- Looking towards 2021, the Cathedral are currently reviewing and costing their Fabric Plan and creating a Micro-Masterplan. Durham Cathedral faces significant challenges in how to support the level of investment required in fabric over the next 15-20 years, whilst also furthering its mission, serving the people, and achieving greater financial sustainability. The Micro-Masterplanning proposal offers a long-term, strategic approach to managing these challenges in a way which supports income-generation whilst furthering our mission. Consultation, especially with WHS partners, will be part of the planning process.
- We are also looking forward to our cooperation with Durham University in assessing the Cathedral's current carbon footprint and using it as a pilot project to explore how to decarbonise a Cathedral
- IMEMS staff are also launching an MA module in Protecting World Heritage within the MA International Cultural Heritage Management Programme for recruitment in 2021.
- The Castle is beginning to look forward to 2022 when the Castle will turn 950 and also engaging with the student community to create a wildlife programme around Durham Castle. The digital offer is also being developed to increase access
- A major programme of Conservation works to the Castle's Norman Chapel will begin in 2021
- In Cosins Library, the University is about to appoint a specialist contractor to undertake the conservation works to the bookcases and re-hang the paintings and re-install the friezes. Upon completion, there will be a three-year programme of conservation work on the collection itself, as it is returned to the Library once more
- A planting scheme at University College will enhance the Castle courtyard and add more biodiversity and colour to the area along with putting the site back to its 17th century heritage using native planting methods i.e., variety of Lavender, Salvia, roses, English Yew, winter flowering jasmine and topiary planters. This coming June the spring bedding will be removed and replanted with summer bedding filled with beautiful colours





United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Durham Castle and Cathedral
Inscribed on the World Heritage
List in 1986

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